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Abbreviations of Books of the Bible

The Old Testament

Genesis	Gen.
Exodus	Ex.
Leviticus	Lev.
Numbers	Num.
Deuteronomy	Deut.
Joshua	Josh.
Judges	Judg.
Ruth	Ruth
1 Samuel	1 Sam.
2 Samuel	2 Sam.
1 Kings	1 Kin.
2 Kings	2 Kin.
1 Chronicles	1 Chr.
2 Chronicles	2 Chr.
Ezra	Ezra
Nehemiah	Neh.
Esther	Esth.
Job	Job
Psalms	Ps.
Proverbs	Prov.
Ecclesiastes	Eccl.
Song of Solomon	Song
Isaiah	Is.
Jeremiah	Jer.
Lamentations	Lam.
Ezekiel	Ezek.
Daniel	Dan.
Hosea	Hos.
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Obadiah	Obad.
Jonah	Jon.
Micah	Mic.
Nahum	Nah.
Habakkuk	Hab.
Zephaniah	Zeph.
Haggai	Hag.
Zechariah	Zech.
Malachi	Mal.

The New Testament

Matthew	Matt.
Mark	Mark
Luke	Luke
John	John
Acts	Acts
Romans	Rom.
1 Corinthians	1 Cor.
2 Corinthians	2 Cor.
Galatians	Gal.
Ephesians	Eph.
Philippians	Phil.
Colossians	Col.
1 Thessalonians	1 Thess.
2 Thessalonians	2 Thess.
1 Timothy	1 Tim.
2 Timothy	2 Tim.
Titus	Titus
Philemon	Philem.
Hebrews	Heb.
James	James
1 Peter	1 Pet.
2 Peter	2 Pet.
1 John	1 John
2 John	2 John
3 John	3 John
Jude	Jude
Revelation	Rev.

Introduction to the *NKJV Foundation Study Bible*

As its name implies, the *NKJV Foundation Study Bible* is designed to provide a foundation for Bible study. It is intended for both beginning and experienced students of the Scriptures who want a Bible that contains the key features of a study Bible in a convenient, compact, and concise form.

- The full text of the New King James Version is used, in a format that shows paragraphs, poetry, and other special formats. Based on the time-honored King James Version, the NKJV is preferred by many Bible readers for its unparalleled accuracy, beauty, and clarity. The NKJV uses up-to-date English while maintaining the literary quality of the KJV.
- Concise study notes are based on the notes originally prepared for *The NKJV Study Bible*, providing succinct comments on passages of Scripture.
- Theological notes draw attention to the most important doctrinal content of the Bible. These notes are signified by a bold roman heading followed by a dash. They are indexed in the back of the Bible both by title and by location.
- New King James Version translators' footnotes offer clarification and information about original language texts.
- In-text subject headings help to organize and illuminate Bible reading and study.
- Words of Jesus are printed in red to assist identification.
- Book introductions give background information about each of the Bible's 66 books.
- Cross-references direct attention to other passages for further study of words and concepts in Scripture. Conceptual cross-references are indicated by square brackets.
- A concordance provides an alphabetical listing of important passages by key words.
- Full-color maps of Bible lands are included in the back of the Bible.

Preface to the New King James Version®

Purpose

In the preface to the 1611 edition, the translators of the Authorized Version, known popularly as the King James Bible, state that it was not their purpose "to make a new translation . . . but to make a good one better." Indebted to the earlier work of William Tyndale and others, they saw their best contribution to consist in revising and enhancing the excellence of the English versions which had sprung from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. In harmony with the purpose of the King James scholars, the translators and editors of the present work have not pursued a goal of innovation. They have perceived the Holy Bible, New King James Version, as a continuation of the labors of the earlier translators, thus unlocking for today's readers the spiritual treasures found especially in the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures.

A Living Legacy

For nearly four hundred years, and throughout several revisions of its English form, the King James Bible has been deeply revered among the English-speaking peoples of the world. The precision of translation for which it is historically renowned, and its majesty of style, have enabled that monumental version of the word of God to become the mainspring of the religion, language, and legal foundations of our civilization.

Although the Elizabethan period and our own era share in zeal for technical advance, the former period was more aggressively devoted to classical learning. Along with this awakened concern for the classics came a flourishing companion interest in the Scriptures, an interest that was enlivened by the conviction that the manuscripts were providentially handed down and were a trustworthy record of the inspired Word of God. The King James translators were committed to producing an English Bible that would be a precise translation, and by no means a paraphrase or a broadly approximate rendering. On the one hand, the scholars were almost as familiar with the original languages of the Bible as with their native English. On the other hand, their reverence for the divine Author and His Word assured a translation of the Scriptures in which only a principle of utmost accuracy could be accepted.

In 1786 Catholic scholar Alexander Geddes said of the King James Bible, "If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent." George Bernard Shaw became a literary legend in the twentieth century because of his severe and often humorous criticisms of our most cherished values. Surprisingly, however, Shaw pays the following tribute to the scholars commissioned by King James: "The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the Word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautifully artistic result." History agrees with these estimates. Therefore, while seeking to unveil the excellent *form* of the traditional English Bible, special care has also been taken in the present edition to preserve the work of *precision* which is the legacy of the 1611 translators.

Complete Equivalence in Translation

Where new translation has been necessary in the New King James Version, the most complete representation of the original has been rendered by considering the history of usage and etymology of words in their contexts. This principle of complete equivalence seeks to preserve *all* of the information

in the text, while presenting it in good literary form. Dynamic equivalence, a recent procedure in Bible translation, commonly results in paraphrasing where a more literal rendering is needed to reflect a specific and vital sense. For example, complete equivalence truly renders the original text in expressions such as "lifted her voice and wept" (Gen. 21:16); "I gave you cleanness of teeth" (Amos 4:6); "Jesus met them, saying, 'Rejoice!' " (Matt. 28:9); and "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?" (John 2:4). Complete equivalence translates fully, in order to provide an English text that is both accurate and readable.

In keeping with the principle of complete equivalence, it is the policy to translate interjections which are commonly omitted in modern language renderings of the Bible. As an example, the interjection *behold,* in the older King James editions, continues to have a place in English usage, especially in dramatically calling attention to a spectacular scene, or an event of profound importance such as the Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Consequently, *behold* is retained for these occasions in the present edition. However, the Hebrew and Greek originals for this word can be translated variously, depending on the circumstances in the passage. Therefore, in addition to *behold,* words such as *indeed, look, see,* and *surely* are also rendered to convey the appropriate sense suggested by the context in each case.

In faithfulness to God and to our readers, it was deemed appropriate that all participating scholars sign a statement affirming their belief in the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture, and in the inerrancy of the original autographs.

Devotional Quality

The King James scholars readily appreciated the intrinsic beauty of divine revelation. They accordingly disciplined their talents to render well-chosen English words of their time, as well as a graceful, often musical arrangement of language, which has stirred the hearts of Bible readers through the years. The translators, the committees, and the editors of the present edition, while sensitive to the late-twentieth-century English idiom, and while adhering faithfully to the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, have sought to maintain those lyrical and devotional qualities that are so highly regarded in the Authorized Version. This devotional quality is especially apparent in the poetic and prophetic books, although even the relatively plain style of the Gospels and Epistles cannot strictly be likened, as sometimes suggested, to modern newspaper style. The Koine Greek of the New Testament is influenced by the Hebrew background of the writers, for whom even the gospel narratives were not merely flat utterance, but often song in various degrees of rhythm.

The Style

Students of the Bible applaud the timeless devotional character of our historic Bible. Yet it is also universally understood that our language, like all living languages, has undergone profound change since 1611. Subsequent revisions of the King James Bible have sought to keep abreast of changes in English speech. The present work is a further step toward this objective. Where obsolescence and other reading difficulties exist, present-day vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar have been carefully integrated. Words representing ancient objects, such as *chariot* and *phylactery,* have no modern substitutes and are therefore retained.

A special feature of the New King James Version is its conformity to the thought flow of the 1611 Bible. The reader discovers that the sequence and selection of words, phrases, and clauses of the new edition, while much clearer, are so close to the traditional that there is remarkable ease in listening to the reading of either edition while following with the other.

In the discipline of translating biblical and other ancient languages, a standard method of transliteration, that is, the English spelling of untranslated words, such as names of persons and places, has never been commonly adopted. In keeping with the design of the present work, the King James spelling of untranslated words is retained, although made uniform throughout. For example, instead of the spellings *Isaiah* and *Elijah* in the Old Testament, and *Esaias* and *Elias* in the New Testament, *Isaiah* and *Elijah* now appear in both Testaments.

King James doctrinal and theological terms, for example, *propitiation, justification,* and *sanctification,* are generally familiar to English-speaking peoples. Such terms have been retained except where the original language

indicates need for a more precise translation.

Readers of the Authorized Version will immediately be struck by the absence of several pronouns: *thee, thou,* and *ye* are replaced by the simple *you,* while *your* and *yours* are substituted for *thy* and *thine* as applicable. *Thee, thou, thy* and *thine* were once forms of address to express a special relationship to human as well as divine persons. These pronouns are no longer part of our language. However, reverence for God in the present work is preserved by capitalizing pronouns, including *You, Your,* and *Yours,* which refer to Him. Additionally, capitalization of these pronouns benefits the reader by clearly distinguishing divine and human persons referred to in a passage. Without such capitalization the distinction is often obscure, because the antecedent of a pronoun is not always clear in the English translation.

In addition to the pronoun usages of the seventeenth century, the *-eth* and *-est* verb endings, so familiar in the earlier King James editions, are now obsolete. Unless a speaker is schooled in these verb endings, there is common difficulty in selecting the correct form to be used with a given subject of the verb in vocal prayer. That is, should we use *love, loveth,* or *lovest? do, doeth, doest,* or *dost? have, hath,* or *hast?* Because these forms are obsolete, contemporary English usage has been substituted for the previous verb endings.

In older editions of the King James Version, the frequency of the connective *and* far exceeded the limits of present English usage. Also, biblical linguists agree that the Hebrew and Greek original words for this conjunction may commonly be translated otherwise, depending on the immediate context. Therefore, instead of *and,* alternatives such as *also, but, however, now, so, then,* and *thus* are accordingly rendered in the present edition, when the original language permits.

The real character of the Authorized Version does not reside in its archaic pronouns or verbs or other grammatical forms of the seventeenth century, but rather in the care taken by its scholars to impart the letter and spirit of the original text in a majestic and reverent style.

The Format

The format of the New King James Version is designed to enhance the vividness and devotional quality of the Holy Scriptures:

- Subject headings assist the reader to identify topics and transitions in the biblical content.
- Words or phrases in *italics* indicate expressions in the original language which require clarification by additional English words, as also done throughout the history of the King James Bible.
- Oblique type in the New Testament indicates a quotation from the Old Testament.
- Prose is divided into paragraphs to indicate the structure of thought.
- Poetry is structured as contemporary verse to reflect the poetic form and beauty of the passage in the original language.
- The covenant name of God was usually translated from the Hebrew as LORD or GOD (using capital letters as shown) in the King James Old Testament. This tradition is maintained. In the present edition the name is so capitalized whenever the covenant name is quoted in the New Testament from a passage in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament Text

The Hebrew Bible has come down to us through the scrupulous care of ancient scribes who copied the original text in successive generations. By the sixth century A.D. the scribes were succeeded by a group known as the Masoretes, who continued to preserve the sacred Scriptures for another five hundred years in a form known as the Masoretic Text. Babylonia, Palestine, and Tiberias were the main centers of Masoretic activity; but by the tenth century A.D. the Masoretes of Tiberias, led by the family of ben Asher, gained the ascendancy. Through subsequent editions, the ben Asher text became in the twelfth century the only recognized form of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Daniel Bomberg printed the first Rabbinic Bible in 1516–17; that work was followed in 1524–25 by a second edition prepared by Jacob ben Chayyim and also published by Bomberg. The text of ben Chayyim was adopted in most subsequent Hebrew Bibles, including those used by the King James translators. The ben Chayyim text was also used for the first two editions of Rudolph Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* of 1906 and 1912. In 1937 Paul

Kahle published a third edition of *Biblia Hebraica*. This edition was based on the oldest dated manuscript of the ben Asher text, the Leningrad Manuscript B19a (A.D. 1008), which Kahle regarded as superior to that used by ben Chayyim.

For the New King James Version the text used was the 1967/1977 Stuttgart edition of the *Biblia Hebraica*, with frequent comparisons being made with the Bomberg edition of 1524–25. The Septuagint (Greek) Version of the Old Testament and the Latin Vulgate also were consulted. In addition to referring to a variety of ancient versions of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New King James Version draws on the resources of relevant manuscripts from the Dead Sea caves. In the few places where the Hebrew was so obscure that the 1611 King James was compelled to follow one of the versions, but where information is now available to resolve the problems, the New King James Version follows the Hebrew text. Significant variations are recorded in the New King James translators' notes.

The New Testament Text

There is more manuscript support for the New Testament than for any other body of ancient literature. Over five thousand Greek, eight thousand Latin, and many more manuscripts in other languages attest the integrity of the New Testament. There is only one basic New Testament used by Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox, by conservatives and liberals. Minor variations in hand copying have appeared through the centuries, before mechanical printing began about A.D. 1450.

Some variations exist in the spelling of Greek words, in word order, and in similar details. These ordinarily do not show up in translation and do not affect the sense of the text in any way.

Other manuscript differences such as omission or inclusion of a word or a clause, and two paragraphs in the Gospels, should not overshadow the overwhelming degree of *agreement* which exists among the ancient records. Bible readers may be assured that the most important differences in English New Testaments of today are due, not to manuscript divergence, but to the way in which translators view the task of translation: How literally should the text be rendered? How does the translator view the matter of biblical inspiration? Does the translator adopt a paraphrase when a literal rendering would be quite clear and more to the point? The New King James Version follows the historic precedent of the Authorized Version in maintaining a literal approach to translation, except where the idiom of the original language cannot be translated directly into our tongue.

The King James New Testament was based on the traditional text of the Greek-speaking churches, first published in 1516, and later called the Textus Receptus or Received Text. Although based on the relatively few available manuscripts, these were representative of many more which existed at the time but only became known later. In the late nineteenth century, B. Westcott and F. Hort taught that this text had been officially edited by the fourth-century church, but a total lack of historical evidence for this event has forced a revision of the theory. It is now widely held that the Byzantine Text that largely supports the Textus Receptus has as much right as the Alexandrian or any other tradition to be weighed in determining the text of the New Testament.

Since the 1880s most contemporary translations of the New Testament have relied upon a relatively few manuscripts discovered chiefly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such translations depend primarily on two manuscripts, Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, because of their greater age. The Greek text obtained by using these sources and the related papyri (our most ancient manuscripts) is known as the Alexandrian Text. However, some scholars have grounds for doubting the faithfulness of Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, since they often disagree with one another, and Sinaiticus exhibits excessive omission.

A third viewpoint of New Testament scholarship holds that the best text is based on the consensus of the majority of existing Greek manuscripts. This text is called the Majority Text. Most of these manuscripts are in substantial agreement. Even though many are late, and none is earlier than the fifth century, usually their readings are verified by papyri, ancient versions, quotations from the early church fathers, or a combination of these. The Majority Text is similar to the Textus Receptus, but it corrects those readings which have little or no support in the Greek manuscript tradition.

Today, scholars agree that the science of New Testament textual

criticism is in a state of flux. Very few scholars still favor the Textus Receptus as such, and then often for its historical prestige as the text of Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and the King James Version. For about a century most have followed a Critical Text (so called because it is edited according to specific principles of textual criticism) which depends heavily upon the Alexandrian type of text. More recently many have abandoned this Critical Text (which is quite similar to the one edited by Westcott and Hort) for one that is more eclectic. Finally, a small but growing number of scholars prefer the Majority Text, which is close to the traditional text except in the Revelation.

In light of these facts, and also because the New King James Version is the fifth revision of a historic document translated from specific Greek texts, the editors decided to retain the traditional text in the body of the New Testament and to indicate major Critical and Majority Text variant readings in the translators' notes. Although these variations are duly indicated in the translators' notes of the present edition, it is most important to emphasize that fully eighty-five percent of the New Testament text is the same in the Textus Receptus, the Alexandrian Text, and the Majority Text.

New King James Translators' Notes

Significant textual explanations, alternate translations, and New Testament citations of Old Testament passages are supplied in the New King James translators' notes.

Important textual variants in the Old Testament are identified in a standard form.

The textual notes in the present edition of the New Testament make no evaluation of readings, but do clearly indicate the manuscript sources of readings. They objectively present the facts without such tendentious remarks as "the best manuscripts omit" or "the most reliable manuscripts read." Such notes are value judgments that differ according to varying viewpoints on the text. By giving a clearly defined set of variants the New King James Version benefits readers of all textual persuasions.

Where significant variations occur in the New Testament Greek manuscripts, textual notes are classified as follows:

NU-Text
: These variations from the traditional text generally represent the Alexandrian or Egyptian type of text described previously in "The New Testament Text." They are found in the Critical Text published in the twenty-seventh edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (N) and in the United Bible Societies' fourth edition (U), hence the acronym, "NU-Text."

M-Text
: This symbol indicates points of variation in the Majority Text from the traditional text, as also previously discussed in "The New Testament Text." It should be noted that M stands for whatever reading is printed in the published *Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, whether supported by overwhelming, strong, or only a divided majority textual tradition.

The textual notes reflect the scholarship of the past two centuries and will assist the reader to observe the variations between the different manuscript traditions of the New Testament. Such information is generally not available in English translations of the New Testament.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
GENESIS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Nowhere in the Book of Genesis is the author named. Although the events of the book end 300 years before Moses was born, the rest of the Bible and most church historians attribute the authorship of Genesis to Moses. Both the Old and New Testaments have many references to Moses as its author (Ex. 7:14; Lev. 1:1–2; Num. 33:2; Deut. 1:1; Dan. 9:11–13; Mal. 4:4; Matt. 8:4; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; John 7:19; Acts 26:22; Rom. 10:19). Both early Jewish and Christian writers name Moses as the author.

▶ **TIME:** c. 4000–1804 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Gen. 3:15

▶ **THEME:** After the initial story of the world's creation, Genesis (beginnings) covers two basic subjects: God and man. God creates man. Man disobeys God and alienates himself from God. Genesis is the story then of the subsequent interactions between God and man that bring them back together into a right relationship. As such, the book points to the beginnings of the way of change, of restoration, and of a new way of life. Genesis sets the tone for the rest of the Bible with clear teaching on following God's call, believing in His promises, and being obedient to His commands. The main characters who dominate the story are the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

The History of Creation

1 In the [a]beginning [b]God created the heavens and the earth. **2**The earth was [c]without form, and void; and darkness *was** on the face of the deep. [d]And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3[e]Then God said, [f]"Let there be [g]light"; and there was light. **4**And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness. **5**God called the light Day, and the [h]darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

6Then God said, [i]"Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." **7**Thus God made the firmament, [j]and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* [k]above the firmament; and it was so. **8**And God called the

* **1:2** Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Hebrew or Aramaic.

1:1 Creation—Biblical revelation begins with a simple, strong, and sublime affirmation. Instead of arguing the existence of God, it declares that the very existence of the universe depends on the creative power of God. The world we live in was created by God and belongs to Him. His absolute ownership requires our faithful stewardship of all things.

1:1 *In the beginning.* No information is given to us about what happened before the creation of the physical universe, though John 1:1 speaks of this time. It is possible that the rise, rebellion, and judgment of Satan transpired before the events of this chapter. ***God.*** This standard Hebrew term for deity *Elohim* is in the form called the plural of majesty or plural of intensity. In contrast to the ordinary plural (gods), this plural means "the fullness of deity" or "God—very God." Furthermore, the use of the plural allows for the later revelation of the Trinity (see 11:7; Matt. 28:19; John 1:1–3).

1:3 *Let there be light.* These words express a principal theme of the Bible: God bringing light into darkness (see Is. 9:1–2). Here, God produced physical light. The New Testament records God sending His Son to be the light of the world (John 8:12), bringing release from the spiritual darkness of bondage to sin. In the end, there will no longer be any darkness at all and we will be face to face with the source of light (Rev. 21:23).

1:7 *divided the waters.* The description of upper and lower waters is somewhat mysterious; it has been theorized that this is simply a reference to the division between the water of the seas and rivers on the surface of the earth and the water vapor which is part of the atmosphere.

1:1 [a] [John 1:1–3] [b] Acts 17:24 **1:2** [c] Jer. 4:23 [d] Is. 40:13, 14 **1:3** [e] Ps. 33:6, 9 [f] 2 Cor. 4:6 [g] [Heb. 11:3] **1:5** [h] Ps. 19:2; 33:6; 74:16; 104:20; 136:5 **1:6** [i] Jer. 10:12 **1:7** [j] Prov. 8:27–29 [k] Ps. 148:4

firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9Then God said, [l]"Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and [m]let the dry *land* appear"; and it was so. 10And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was* good.

11Then God said, "Let the earth [n]bring forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed, *and* the [o]fruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. 13So the evening and the morning were the third day.

14Then God said, "Let there be [p]lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and [q]seasons, and for days and years; 15and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16Then God made two great lights: the [r]greater light to rule the day, and the [s]lesser light to rule the night. *He made* [t]the stars also. 17God set them in the firmament of the [u]heavens to give light on the earth, 18and to [v]rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was* good. 19So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21So [w]God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. 22And God blessed them, saying, [x]"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, *each* according to its kind"; and it was so. 25And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.

26Then God said, [y]"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; [z]let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all* the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27So God created man [a]in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; [b]male and female He created them. 28Then God blessed them, and God said to them, [c]"Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and [d]subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29And God said, "See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; [e]to you it shall be for food.

* **1:26** Syriac reads *all the wild animals of.*

1:11–12 *seed . . . kind.* God not only created plant life; He also set in motion the process that makes plant life reproduce.

1:14 *for signs and seasons.* Some have mistakenly viewed these words as a biblical basis for astrology. The signs in this case relate to phases of the moon and the relative positions of stars that mark the passage of time from the vantage point of earth. The two words form a pair that may be translated *seasonal signs.*

1:16 *He made the stars also.* This is a remarkable statement. In the ancient Middle East, other religions worshiped, deified, and mystified the stars. Israel's neighbors revered the stars and looked to them for guidance. In contrast, the biblical creation story gives the stars only the barest mention, as though the writer shrugged and said, *And, oh, yes, He also made the stars.* Such a statement showed great contempt for ancient Babylonian astrology (Ps. 29; 93).

1:24 *living creature.* This expression contains the word sometimes used for the soul, but the word can also mean "life," "being," "living thing," or "person," depending on the context. The same phrase is used for man in 2:7.

1:26 *in Our image.* Since God is spirit (John 4:24), there can be no "image" or "likeness" of Him in the normal sense of these words. The traditional view of this passage is that God's image in man is in specific moral, ethical, and intellectual abilities. A more recent view, based on a possible interpretation of Hebrew grammar and the knowledge of the Middle East, interprets the phrase as meaning "Let Us make man *as* Our image." In ancient times an emperor might command statues of himself to be placed in remote parts of his empire. These symbols would declare that these areas were under his power and reign. So God placed humans as living symbols of Himself on earth to represent His reign. This interpretation fits well with the command that follows—to reign over all that God has made.

1:28 *fill the earth and subdue it.* The word translated *subdue* means "bring into bondage." This harsh term is used elsewhere of military conquest (Zech. 9:15) and of God subduing our iniquities (Mic. 7:19). Since this direction was given before the fall, it appears that the need to subdue the earth is not because of sin but because God left part of the arranging and ordering of the creation as work for mankind to do. Whatever the case, subdue does not mean "destroy" or "ruin." It does mean to "act as managers who have

1:9 [l] Job 26:10 [m] Ps. 24:1, 2; 33:7; 95:5 **1:11** [n] Heb. 6:7 [o] 2 Sam. 16:1 **1:14** [p] Ps. 74:16; 136:5–9 [q] Ps. 104:19 **1:16** [r] Ps. 136:8 [s] Ps. 8:3 [t] Job 38:7 **1:17** [u] Gen. 15:5 **1:18** [v] Jer. 31:35 **1:21** [w] Ps. 104:25–28 **1:22** [x] Gen. 8:17 **1:26** [y] [Eph. 4:24] [z] Gen. 9:2 **1:27** [a] Gen. 5:2 [b] Matt. 19:4 **1:28** [c] Gen. 9:1, 7 [d] 1 Cor. 9:27 **1:29** [e] Gen. 9:3

30 Also, to [f]every beast of the earth, to every [g]bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for food"; and it was so. 31 Then [h]God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth, and [a]all the host of them, were finished. 2 [b]And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God [c]blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

4 [d]This *is* the history* of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 before any [e]plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not [f]caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man [g]to till the ground; 6 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LORD God formed man *of* the [h]dust of the ground, and [i]breathed into his [j]nostrils the breath of life; and [k]man became a living being.

Life in God's Garden

8 The LORD God planted [l]a garden [m]eastward in [n]Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made [o]every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. [p]The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and [q]evil.

10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. 11 The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts [r]the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. 12 And the gold of that land *is* good. [s]Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. 13 The name of the second river *is* Gihon; it *is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river *is* [t]Hiddekel;* it *is* the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [u]you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it [v]you shall surely [w]die."

18 And the LORD God said, "*It is* not good that man should be alone; [x]I will make him a helper comparable to him." 19 [y]Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air,

* **2:4** Hebrew *toledoth*, literally *generations*
* **2:14** Or *Tigris*

the authority to run everything as God planned." This command applies equally to male and female.

2:2 *He rested on the seventh day.* God did not rest because of fatigue, but because of His accomplishment. God is never weary (Is. 40:28–29). The verb translated "rested" is related to the word for Sabbath, which means "rest." God's rest on the seventh day showed that He was satisfied with the work He had done.

2:4 *the LORD God.* This is a significant term. The word translated *God* is the same word as in 1:1. The word translated *LORD* is the proper name of God, Yahweh (or Jehovah; see Ex. 3:14–15). The God of chapter 1 and the LORD God of chapter 2 are one and the same.

2:6 *mist.* The precise meaning of this word is uncertain. Obviously it refers to some manner of irrigation before the Lord brought the cycles of rain into being.

2:7 *the breath of life.* Although God created light with a mere word (1:3), He created man by fashioning a body out of mud and clay, transforming the clay into something new, and then breathing life into it. This "breath of life" is something which only God can bestow. Medical knowledge enables doctors to keep a human body "alive," keeping the heart pumping and the vital organs functioning, but it does not enable them to keep or to call back the breath of life. Some have speculated that the "breath of life" is the human soul, but later on, animals are also described as having the "breath of life" in their nostrils (7:22), which would seem to indicate that this is simply a reference to the miracle of living, breathing flesh.

2:15–17 The First Covenant—In biblical times the purpose of a covenant was to establish an agreement between two persons or groups. The elements of a covenant included a promise on the part of one person and the conditions that needed to be fulfilled on the part of the other person in order for the promises to be carried out by both parties to the covenant. The Edenic covenant is the first covenant mentioned in the Bible. God gave Adam a place in His creation and charged him with the responsibility of caring for the garden. The only condition in the covenant was that Adam could not allow himself to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or he would die. This covenant was terminated by Adam's disobedience which also resulted in man's spiritual and physical death. God then established a new covenant with Adam in Genesis 3:14–21.

2:17 *shall surely die.* These emphatic words are made of two forms of the verb meaning "to die." The point is not that the guilty person would drop dead on the instant, but that death would surely happen—there is no escape (Heb. 9:27).

2:18 *It is not good.* Until this point, everything in creation was very good.

2:19 *to see what he would call them.* In giving each

1:30 [f] Ps. 145:15 [g] Job 38:41 **1:31** [h] [Ps. 104:24]
2:1 [a] Ps. 33:6 **2:2** [b] Ex. 20:9–11; 31:17 **2:3** [c] [Is. 58:13]
2:4 [d] Gen. 1:1 **2:5** [e] Gen. 1:11, 12 [f] Gen. 7:4 [g] Gen. 3:23
2:7 [h] Gen. 3:19, 23 [i] Job 33:4 [j] Gen. 7:22 [k] 1 Cor. 15:45
2:8 [l] Is. 51:3 [m] Gen. 3:23, 24 [n] Gen. 4:16 **2:9** [o] Ezek. 31:8 [p] [Gen. 3:22] [q] [Deut. 1:39] **2:11** [r] Gen. 25:18
2:12 [s] Num. 11:7 **2:14** [t] Dan. 10:4 **2:17** [u] Gen. 3:1, 3, 11, 17 [v] Gen. 3:3, 19 [w] Rom. 5:12 **2:18** [x] 1 Cor. 11:8, 9
2:19 [y] Gen. 1:20, 24

and [z]brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. 20So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

21And the LORD God caused a [a]deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, [b]and He [c]brought her to the man.

23And Adam said:

"This *is* now [d]bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was [e]taken out of Man."

24[f]Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and [g]be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

25[h]And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not [i]ashamed.

The Temptation and Fall of Man

3 Now [a]the serpent was [b]more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

2And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the [c]fruit of the trees of the garden; 3but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you [d]touch it, lest you die.'"

4[e]Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6So when the woman [f]saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit [g]and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7Then the eyes of both of them were opened, [h]and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8And they heard [i]the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife [j]hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?"

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animal its name, Adam demonstrated his right as God's agent (1:26–28), the one set in place as lord of the created order.

2:20 *helper comparable to him.* Some have felt that calling the woman man's helper indicates that she is inferior in value, but this is far from true. In fact, the term "help" is used to describe God Himself, when He comes to our aid. The word "helper" indicates role, not value or position. The helper Adam needed was not merely a servant or a slave, nor another man exactly like himself. He needed a complement, equal in value and with the same intelligence, personality, spirituality, and ethical and moral sense; but with different qualities and a different role, a helper who could join with him in his work of subduing the earth.

2:21 *He took one of his ribs.* God's use of Adam's rib was fitting. He might have started over with dust and clay. But by using a part of Adam himself, the identification of Adam with his partner would be ensured. As Martin Luther observed, God might have taken a bone from a toe, and thus signified that Adam was to rule over her; or He might have taken a bone from his head to indicate her rule over him. But by taking a bone from his side, God implied equality and mutual respect.

2:24 *one flesh.* This phrase suggests both a physical, sexual bonding and a lifelong relationship. They are still separate persons, but together they are as one (Eph. 5:31). In the New Testament, Jesus refers to this text as the foundation of the biblical view of marriage (Matt. 19:5). A married couple functions as "we," rather than "me and you." They are a new unit, separate from the family units they each came from. This does not mean that they will no longer relate to their extended families, but that their "one flesh" is a unit distinct from either family.

3:1 *the serpent.* With no introduction, Satan appears in the garden of Eden. This is the first clue in Scripture of creation outside the one Adam and Eve experienced. It is interesting to note that Eve expressed no surprise at the serpent speaking to her in intelligible language.

3:3 *You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it.* Some interpreters suggest that the woman was already sinning by adding to the word of God, for these words were not part of God's instructions in 2:17. Scripture, however, always refers to the eating of the fruit as the sin, and never comments on Eve's addition. Her words reflected the original command well enough, and indeed they would have ensured that the command would be kept.

3:5 *you will be like God.* God's fullness of knowledge was only one of the superiorities that set Him apart from the woman. But the serpent combined all of God's superiority over the woman into this one audacious appeal to her pride.

3:6–7 Sin's Consequences—At first Adam's sin does not appear to be all that significant. All he did was take a bite of some fruit. But Scripture takes it very seriously. Adam's sin was one of disobedience and rebellion. God told Adam not to eat the fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" under penalty of death (2:17). That action of eating the fruit changed Adam's whole nature as well as his relationship with God. Adam became a sinner and as such he died. His spiritual death was immediate, the physical death progressive. Adam, who began the human race, then became the source of sin for the world. We

2:19 [z] Ps. 8:6 **2:21** [a] 1 Sam. 26:12 **2:22** [b] 1 Tim. 2:13 [c] Heb. 13:4 **2:23** [d] Gen. 29:14 [e] 1 Cor. 11:8, 9 **2:24** [f] Matt. 19:5 [g] Mark 10:6–8 **2:25** [h] Gen. 3:7, 10 [i] Is. 47:3 **3:1** [a] 1 Chr. 21:1 [b] 2 Cor. 11:3 **3:2** [c] Gen. 2:16, 17 **3:3** [d] Ex. 19:12, 13 **3:4** [e] [2 Cor. 11:3] **3:6** [f] 1 John 2:16 [g] 1 Tim. 2:14 **3:7** [h] Gen. 2:25 **3:8** [i] Job 38:1 [j] Job 31:33

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the
garden, [k]and I was afraid because I was
naked; and I hid myself."
11 And He said, "Who told you that you
were naked? Have you eaten from the tree
of which I commanded you that you should
not eat?"
12 Then the man said, [l]"The woman
whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave
me of the tree, and I ate."
13 And the LORD God said to the woman,
"What *is* this you have done?"
The woman said, [m]"The serpent de-
ceived me, and I ate."
14 So the LORD God said to the serpent:

"Because you have done this,
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And [n]you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.
15 And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between [o]your seed and [p]her Seed;
[q]He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel."

16 To the woman He said:

"I will greatly multiply your sorrow and
your conception;
[r]In pain you shall bring forth children;
[s]Your desire *shall be* for your husband,
And he shall [t]rule over you."

17 Then to Adam He said, [u]"Because you
have heeded the voice of your wife, and
have eaten from the tree [v]of which I com-
manded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

[w]"Cursed *is* the ground for your sake;
[x]In toil you shall eat *of* it
All the days of your life.
18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring
forth for you,
And [y]you shall eat the herb of the field.
19 [z]In the sweat of your face you shall eat
bread
Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;
[a]For dust you *are*,
And [b]to dust you shall return."

20 And Adam called his wife's name [c]Eve,
because she was the mother of all living.
21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD
God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.
22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the
man has become like one of Us, to know
good and evil. And now, lest he put out
his hand and take also of the tree of life,
and eat, and live forever"— 23 therefore the
LORD God sent him out of the garden of
Eden [d]to till the ground from which he was
taken. 24 So [e]He drove out the man; and He
placed [f]cherubim [g]at the east of the garden
of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned
every way, to guard the way to the tree of
[h]life.

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are all sinners by nature because Adam sinned (Rom. 5:12–14). We inherit sin from Adam in our natures in the same way we inherit many of our physical characteristics from our parents. Sin is a universal part of our spiritual inheritance.

3:14–21 The Covenant with Adam—The Adamic covenant is the second covenant God made with man. It sets forth conditions that will be in effect until the curse of death is lifted (Is. 11:6–10; Rom. 8:18–23). In Christ's death and resurrection we have the beginning (firstfruits) of the lifting of the curse. The ultimate lifting of the curse will happen as Christ establishes His final reign on earth.

3:14 *to the serpent.* The Lord turned first to the serpent and brought judgment upon him. God did not excuse the woman because she was deceived, but He did bring the harsher judgment on the one who had deceived her.

3:15 Christ—This passage is sometimes referred to as the "preaching of Messiah in the garden of Eden," because it introduces the One who will deliver mankind from the power of the Tempter. The seed of the serpent, those of the human race who choose evil and thus give themselves into the control of the Evil One, would hate and destroy the Seed of the woman, who was Jesus Christ. But in that very act, Evil condemned itself. Jesus rose triumphant from the grave, having paid the blood atonement for the sin of the world and conquered death forever. Thus the Seed of woman crushed the head of the serpent.

3:16 *your sorrow and your conception.* The woman's joy in conceiving and bearing children would be saddened by the pain of it. ***desire . . . rule.*** The word *desire* can also mean "an attempt to usurp authority or control" as in 4:7. The last two lines of this verse could be paraphrased, "You will now have a tendency to try to dominate your husband and he will have the tendency to act as a tyrant." Each strives for control and neither lives in the best interest of the other (Phil. 2:3–4). The antidote is in the restoration of mutual respect and dignity through Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:21–23).

3:17–19 *Cursed is the ground . . . In the sweat of your face.* Humans sometimes tend to look upon work itself as a curse, but it is important to remember that work in itself is part of the "very good" creation. The curse on the ground simply means that work is now painful and tiresome toil instead of the pure satisfaction that it was designed to be. ***to dust you shall return.*** The word of God was sure: God had stated that they would certainly die (2:17). Now they were served notice concerning the process of aging and decay that was already at work (5:5; 6:3).

3:22 *tree of life.* Adam and Eve apparently had free access to this tree before the fall, and by continuing to eat its fruit they would live forever. The penalty for sin was not instant death, but banishment from this tree and eventual death and decay. One day this tree will be planted anew and its fruit will be for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2).

3:10 [k] Gen. 2:25 **3:12** [l] [Prov. 28:13] **3:13** [m] 2 Cor. 11:3 **3:14** [n] Deut. 28:15–20 **3:15** [o] John 8:44 [p] Is. 7:14 [q] Rom. 16:20 **3:16** [r] John 16:21 [s] Gen. 4:7 [t] 1 Cor. 11:3 **3:17** [u] 1 Sam. 15:23 [v] Gen. 2:17 [w] Rom. 8:20–22 [x] Eccl. 2:23 **3:18** [y] Ps. 104:14 **3:19** [z] 2 Thess. 3:10 [a] Gen. 2:7; 5:5 [b] Job 21:26 **3:20** [c] 2 Cor. 11:3 **3:23** [d] Gen. 4:2; 9:20 **3:24** [e] Ezek. 31:3, 11 [f] Ps. 104:4 [g] Gen. 2:8 [h] Gen. 2:9

Cain Murders Abel

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."
2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now [a]Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit [b]of the ground to the LORD. 4 Abel also brought of [c]the firstborn of his flock and of [d]their fat. And the LORD respected [e]Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

6 So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it."

8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother;* and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and [f]killed him.

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where *is* Abel your brother?"

He said, [g]"I do not know. *Am* I [h]my brother's keeper?"

10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood [i]cries out to Me from the ground. 11 So now [j]you *are* cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth."

13 And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment *is* greater than I can bear! 14 Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; [k]I shall be [l]hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen *that* [m]anyone who finds me will kill me."

15 And the LORD said to him, "Therefore,* whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him [n]sevenfold." And the LORD set a [o]mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.

The Family of Cain

16 Then Cain [p]went out from the [q]presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. 17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, [r]and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch. 18 To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.

19 Then Lamech took for himself [s]two wives: the name of one *was* Adah, and the name of the second *was* Zillah. 20 And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. 21 His brother's name *was* Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. 22 And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain *was* Naamah.

23 Then Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech!
For I have killed a man for wounding me,
Even a young man for hurting me.
24 [t]If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

* **4:8** Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate add *"Let us go out to the field."*
* **4:15** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Not so.*

4:3 ***Cain brought an offering.*** Genesis does not explain how the practice of sacrificial worship began, but it is clear that Adam and Eve's two sons understood the custom. Some people assume that Cain's offering was unsuitable because it was not a blood offering, and blood is required for the forgiveness of sins (Heb. 9:22). But nothing in this chapter indicates that Cain and Abel were coming to God for forgiveness. Their sacrifices were acts of worship, and as such a bloodless offering was not necessarily inappropriate (see Lev. 6:14–23). Apparently the deficiency was in Cain's heart, not in the actual offering. Abel's offering was "more excellent" than Cain's because of his faith in the Lord (Heb. 11:4).

4:8 ***killed him.*** The murder was stunning in its lack of precedent, its suddenness, and its finality. Jesus spoke of this ghastly event as a historical fact (Matt. 23:35).

4:17 ***Cain knew his wife.*** The identity of Cain's wife has long been a source of puzzlement and argument to the readers and critics of the Book of Genesis. Some have postulated that God created other humans outside of the garden of Eden, but the Scriptures give no such indication, and in fact Adam refers to his wife as "the mother of all living" (3:20). It makes the most sense to assume that Cain married one of his sisters. While this idea seems repugnant to us today, it must be remembered that Adam and Eve's children had a near perfect gene pool, and there would not have been any genetic complications with close intermarrying. God's strict prohibition against siblings and other close relatives marrying did not come until much later (Lev. 18); even Abraham's wife Sarah was his half sister. ***Enoch.*** The fact that Cain named a city after his son indicates the rapid and dramatic increase in population.

4:2 [a] Luke 11:50, 51 **4:3** [b] Num. 18:12 **4:4** [c] Num. 18:17 [d] Lev. 3:16 [e] Heb. 11:4 **4:8** [f] [1 John 3:12–15] **4:9** [g] John 8:44 [h] 1 Cor. 8:11–13 **4:10** [i] Heb. 12:24 **4:11** [j] Gen. 3:14 **4:14** [k] Ps. 51:11 [l] Is. 1:15 [m] Num. 35:19, 21, 27 **4:15** [n] Gen. 4:24 [o] Ezek. 9:4, 6 **4:16** [p] 2 Kin. 13:23; 24:20 [q] Jon. 1:3 **4:17** [r] Ps. 49:11 **4:19** [s] Gen. 2:24; 16:3 **4:24** [t] Gen. 4:15

A New Son

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and
she bore a son and [u]named him Seth, "For
God has appointed another seed for me in-
stead of Abel, whom Cain killed." 26 And as
for Seth, [v]to him also a son was born; and
he named him Enosh.* Then *men* began
[w]to call on the name of the LORD.

The Family of Adam

5 This is the book of the [a]genealogy of
Adam. In the day that God created
man, He made him in [b]the likeness of God.
2 He created them [c]male and female, and
[d]blessed them and called them Mankind
in the day they were created. 3 And Adam
lived one hundred and thirty years, and be-
got *a son* [e]in his own likeness, after his im-
age, and named him [f]Seth. 4 After he begot
Seth, [g]the days of Adam were eight hundred
years; [h]and he had sons and daughters. 5 So
all the days that Adam lived were nine hun-
dred and thirty years; [i]and he died.

6 Seth lived one hundred and five years,
and begot Enosh. 7 After he begot [j]Enosh,
Seth lived eight hundred and seven years,
and had sons and daughters. 8 So all the
days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve
years; and he died.

9 Enosh lived ninety years, and begot
Cainan.* 10 After he begot Cainan, Enosh
lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and
had sons and daughters. 11 So all the days
of Enosh were nine hundred and five years;
and he died.

12 Cainan lived seventy years, and be-
got Mahalalel. 13 After he begot Mahala-
lel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty
years, and had sons and daughters. 14 So all
the days of Cainan were nine hundred and
ten years; and he died.

15 Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and
begot Jared. 16 After he begot Jared, Maha-
lalel lived eight hundred and thirty years,
and had sons and daughters. 17 So all the
days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and
ninety-five years; and he died.

18 Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two
years, and begot [k]Enoch. 19 After he begot
Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years,
and had sons and daughters. 20 So all the
days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-
two years; and he died.

21 Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot
Methuselah. 22 After he begot Methuselah,
Enoch [l]walked with God three hundred
years, and had sons and daughters. 23 So all
the days of Enoch were three hundred and
sixty-five years. 24 And [m]Enoch walked with
God; and he *was* not, for God [n]took him.

25 Methuselah lived one hundred and
eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech.
26 After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived
seven hundred and eighty-two years, and
had sons and daughters. 27 So all the days of
Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-
nine years; and he died.

28 Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-
two years, and had a son. 29 And he called
his name [o]Noah, saying, "This *one* will
comfort us concerning our work and the
toil of our hands, because of the ground
[p]which the LORD has cursed." 30 After he
begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred
and ninety-five years, and had sons and
daughters. 31 So all the days of Lamech
were seven hundred and seventy-seven
years; and he died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years
old, and Noah begot [q]Shem, Ham, [r]and
Japheth.

The Wickedness and Judgment of Man

6 Now it came to pass, [a]when men began
to multiply on the face of the earth, and

* **4:26** Greek *Enos* * **5:9** Hebrew *Qenan*

4:25 ***Seth.*** While it is certain that Adam and Eve had other daughters, and possibly other sons as well, the death of righteous Abel and the banishment of their firstborn, Cain, had left them with no one to carry on their line for good and for the promise of the Messiah. Seth is specifically mentioned among Adam and Eve's children because it would be through his descendants that the Messiah would come. His name is related to a Hebrew verb meaning "to place" or "to set" for he was appointed to take this special place in the plan of God.

4:26 ***men began to call on the name of the LORD.*** These words can hardly mean that only now did people begin to pray to God. Rather, the verb *call* means "to make proclamation." That is, this is the beginning of preaching, of witnessing, and testifying in the name of the Lord (12:8).

5:3 ***one hundred and thirty years.*** The long lives of the people of the early chapters of Genesis have led to considerable speculation. One suggestion is that these ages were possible because of tremendously different climate and environmental conditions that were in effect before the flood.

5:5 ***and he died.*** God created humans for eternity; if Adam and Eve had not disobeyed, they would have lived forever. There is a profound sadness in Adam's death, for it reminds us of Adam's mortality—and hence our own.

5:21–24 ***for God took him.*** Only Enoch and Elijah were taken by God without experiencing death (2 Kin. 2:11). This was both a testimony of Enoch's deep faith in God (Heb. 11:5–6) and a strong reminder at the beginning of biblical history that for God's people, there is life in God's presence after our physical bodies have died.

4:25 [u] Gen. 5:3 **4:26** [v] Gen. 5:6 [w] Zeph. 3:9 **5:1** [a] Gen. 2:4; 6:9 [b] Gen. 1:26; 9:6 **5:2** [c] Mark 10:6 [d] Gen. 1:28; 9:1 **5:3** [e] 1 Cor. 15:48, 49 [f] Gen. 4:25 **5:4** [g] Luke 3:36–38 [h] Gen. 1:28; 4:25 **5:5** [i] [Heb. 9:27] **5:7** [j] Gen. 4:26 **5:18** [k] Jude 14, 15 **5:22** [l] Gen. 6:9; 17:1; 24:40; 48:15 **5:24** [m] 2 Kin. 2:11 [n] Heb. 11:5 **5:29** [o] Luke 3:36 [p] Gen. 3:17–19; 4:11 **5:32** [q] Gen. 6:10; 7:13 [r] Gen. 10:21 **6:1** [a] Gen. 1:28

daughters were born to them, 2that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they [b]took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.

3And the LORD said, [c]"My Spirit shall not [d]strive* with man forever, [e]for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4There were giants on the earth in those [f]days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those *were* the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown.

5Then the LORD* saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every [g]intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. 6And [h]the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and [i]He was grieved in His [j]heart. 7So the LORD said, "I will [k]destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8But Noah [l]found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah Pleases God

9This is the genealogy of Noah. [m]Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah [n]walked with God. 10And Noah begot three sons: [o]Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11The earth also was corrupt [p]before God, and the earth was [q]filled with violence. 12So God [r]looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for [s]all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

The Ark Prepared

13And God said to Noah, [t]"The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; [u]and behold, [v]I will destroy them with the earth. 14Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. 15And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it *with* lower, second, and third *decks*. 17[w]And behold, I Myself am bringing [x]floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which *is* the breath of life; everything that *is* on the earth shall [y]die. 18But I will establish My [z]covenant with you; and [a]you

* **6:3** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *abide*. * **6:5** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Vulgate reads *God;* Septuagint reads *LORD God*.

6:2 *sons of God . . . daughters of men.* This passage is very difficult to interpret. Some believe that the "sons of God" were the men of the righteous line of Seth, while the "daughters of men" were Cain's offspring. This does not account for the fact that their offspring were giants, men of extraordinary size and talents; it is also problematic in that it assumes that Cain's descendants were universally more sinful than Seth's descendants. Since Noah was the only descendant of Seth who was considered righteous, this is obviously not accurate. A second view is that the "sons of God" were angelic beings. The phrase "sons of God" is used elsewhere in Scripture to refer to angelic beings (Job 1:6), but it seems impossible since angels in heaven do not marry (Matt. 22:30). It may be, however, that these "sons of God" were some of the rebellious angels who had joined Satan (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6); they took on human form (as Satan was apparently able to take on the form of a snake), and out of perverted lust, seduced human women. The problem with this theory is that verse 4 says that these unions produced children. Nothing in the rest of Scripture would indicate that angels reproduce, or that a spirit being could mate with a human being. Nor is there any reference to half-man/half-spirit beings. Whichever view one settles on, it is clear that what happened here was corrupt and one of the reasons for the flood.

6:11 *corrupt.* The verb translated *corrupt* has the idea of being ruined, spoiled, or destroyed. Sinful people were bringing ruin to the world that belonged to the living God (Ps. 24:1).

6:11–13 Disobedience—In the beginning, God pronounced His creative work good. But with the entrance of sin and decadence on the scene, the world became corrupt in His sight. It was not merely that some individuals or groups had corrupted their ways, but a matter of pervasive perversity. Because sin is repugnant to His holiness, God declared His purpose of destroying both mankind and the earth he had polluted. Defying God's will affects our environment as well as ourselves. Judgment for disobedience is only averted through repentance and fresh submission to God.

6:14 *ark.* The word *ark* simply means "box." The same word is used for the box in which the baby Moses was placed in the Nile (Ex. 2:3), and for the gold-covered chest which contained the stone tablets of the covenant (Ex. 25:10). We usually picture Noah's ark as a huge ship, with curved bow and stern, but it was very likely more like a large box. It was not designed for navigation, but simply to stay safely afloat.

6:15 *cubits.* A cubit was supposed to be the measurement of a man's forearm, from the tip of the bent elbow to the fingertips. This is naturally a somewhat imprecise measurement, but it is generally considered to equal about 18 inches. Hence the ark was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.

6:17 *I Myself.* The Hebrew text places significant emphasis on the personal role of God in the ensuing storm.

6:18–19 *covenant.* This is the first time the word *covenant* is used in the Bible. The details of this covenant

6:2 [b] Deut. 7:3, 4 **6:3** [c] [Gal. 5:16, 17] [d] 2 Thess. 2:7 [e] Ps. 78:39 **6:4** [f] Num. 13:32, 33 **6:5** [g] Gen. 8:21 **6:6** [h] 1 Sam. 15:11, 29 [i] Is. 63:10 [j] Mark 3:5 **6:7** [k] Gen. 7:4, 23 **6:8** [l] Gen. 19:19 **6:9** [m] 2 Pet. 2:5 [n] Gen. 5:22, 24 **6:10** [o] Gen. 5:32; 7:13 **6:11** [p] Rom. 2:13 [q] Ezek. 8:17 **6:12** [r] Ps. 14:2; 53:2, 3 [s] Ps. 14:1–3 **6:13** [t] 1 Pet. 4:7 [u] Gen. 6:17 [v] 2 Pet. 2:4–10 **6:17** [w] 2 Pet. 2:5 [x] 2 Pet. 3:6 [y] Luke 16:22 **6:18** [z] Gen. 8:20—9:17; 17:7 [a] Gen. 7:1, 7, 13

shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring [b]two of every *sort* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every *kind* [c]will come to you to keep *them* alive. 21And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them."

22[d]Thus Noah did; [e]according to all that [f]God commanded him, so he did.

The Great Flood

7 Then the [a]LORD said to Noah, [b]"Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen *that* [c]you *are* righteous before Me in this generation. 2You shall take with you seven each of every [d]clean animal, a male and his female; [e]two each of animals that *are* unclean, a male and his female; 3also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth. 4For after [f]seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth [g]forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." 5[h]And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him. 6Noah *was* [i]six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.

7[j]So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. 8Of clean animals, of animals that *are* unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, 9two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. 11In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on [k]that day all [l]the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the [m]windows of heaven were opened. 12[n]And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

13On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— 14[o]they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every [p]sort. 15And they [q]went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which *is* the breath of life. 16So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in [r]as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

17[s]Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, [t]and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. 21[u]And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22All in [v]whose nostrils *was* the breath of the spirit* of life, all that *was* on the dry *land*, died. 23So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only [w]Noah and those who *were* with him in the ark remained *alive*. 24[x]And the waters

* **7:22** Septuagint and Vulgate omit *of the spirit*.

were given after the flood (9:9). Here, in the midst of judgment, the Lord stooped down to meet the needs of His servant (Ps. 40:1; 113:6) and to enter into a binding oath with him.

7:9 ***they went into the ark to Noah.*** The gathering and cooperation of the animals must have been arranged by God. It appears that after Noah and his wife and sons entered the ark, the animals followed of their own accord.

7:11 ***fountains of the great deep . . . windows of heaven.*** Until this time, no rain had fallen on the earth, but it was watered by a mist (2:5–6). This description of the first rain portrays a thundering, catastrophic event, accompanied by violent upheaval of the earth's crust and geysers of water bursting from the depths. The violence and the amount of water involved are more than enough to account for many peculiarities of the earth's surface, such as the formation of the Grand Canyon. The flood also explains the enormous quantity of fossilized remains of plants, animals, and shellfish that are buried in layers of rock over the entire surface of the earth and even on the tops of mountains.

7:16 ***shut him in.*** The Lord who had drawn them now closed the door on them. That shut door was a symbol of closure, safety, and God's deliverance.

7:19 ***the high hills under the whole heaven were covered.*** This explicit declaration, accompanied by the assertion in verse 21 that every living thing died, makes it clear that this was no localized event, but in actuality a worldwide catastrophic flood (see 8:5). Jesus affirmed the historicity of the "days of Noah" when he compared them to the end days (Matt. 24:37–38; Luke 17:26–27). Peter similarly used the story of Noah and the flood as a pattern for the final judgment (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:5–6).

6:19 [b] Gen. 7:2, 8, 9, 14–16 **6:20** [c] Gen. 7:9, 15
6:22 [d] Gen. 7:5; 12:4, 5 [e] Gen. 7:5, 9, 16 [f] [1 John 5:3]
7:1 [a] Matt. 11:28 [b] Matt. 24:38 [c] Gen. 6:9 **7:2** [d] Lev. 11 [e] Lev. 10:10 **7:4** [f] Gen. 7:10 [g] Gen. 7:12, 17 **7:5** [h] Gen. 6:22 **7:6** [i] Gen. 5:4, 32 **7:7** [j] Matt. 24:38 **7:11** [k] Matt. 24:39 [l] Gen. 8:2 [m] Ps. 78:23 **7:12** [n] Gen. 7:4, 17
7:14 [o] Gen. 6:19 [p] Gen. 1:21 **7:15** [q] Gen. 6:19, 20; 7:9
7:16 [r] Gen. 7:2, 3 **7:17** [s] Gen. 7:4, 12; 8:6 **7:18** [t] Ps. 104:26 **7:21** [u] Gen. 6:7, 13, 17; 7:4 **7:22** [v] Gen. 2:7
7:23 [w] 2 Pet. 2:5 **7:24** [x] Gen. 8:3, 4

prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

Noah's Deliverance

8 Then God [a]remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that *were* with him in the ark. [b]And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. **2** [c]The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also [d]stopped, and [e]the rain from heaven was restrained. **3** And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end [f]of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. **4** Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. **5** And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

6 So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah [g]opened the window of the ark which he had made. **7** Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. **8** He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. **9** But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. **10** And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. **11** Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf *was* in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. **12** So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. **14** And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

15 Then God spoke to Noah, saying, **16** "Go out of the ark, [h]you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. **17** Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that *is* with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and [i]be fruitful and multiply on the earth." **18** So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. **19** Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, *and* whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

God's Covenant with Creation

20 Then Noah built an [j]altar to the LORD, and took of [k]every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered [l]burnt offerings on the altar. **21** And the LORD smelled [m]a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again [n]curse the ground for man's sake, although the [o]imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; [p]nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

22 "While the earth [q]remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And [r]day and night
Shall not cease."

9 So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: [a]"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.* **2** [b]And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move *on* the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. **3** [c]Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you [d]all

* **9:1** Compare Genesis 1:28

8:14 ***the earth was dried.*** After more than a full year, the waters had returned to their place (7:11). As in the beginning, God brought the waters of earth into their place (1:9–13). The flood began in Noah's 600th year, in the 2nd month, on day 17 (7:11) and ended in Noah's 601st year, in the 2nd month, on day 27 (8:14).

8:20 ***an altar.*** This is the first mention of sacrificial worship since the days of Cain and Abel (4:3–5); yet we may assume that the principle of sacrificial worship was perpetuated through the line of faithful people (ch. 5).

8:22 ***While the earth remains.*** The words of this verse are a poem of powerful effect. These words might easily have become a song of faith, the response of the people of God to the promise He made (v. 21). Later in Israel's history, the prophets recalled God's great promise to Noah (Is. 54:9–10).

9:1–19 God's Promise to Noah—Only when we think of God as Creator, as well as Redeemer, can we begin to understand His covenant of redemption as being related to the covenant of creation (Gen. 1:26–30; 2:15–17). God doesn't abandon His creation. On the contrary, though evil has corrupted it, He graciously (for it is undeserved) establishes a covenantal relationship with Noah's descendants as well as with every beast of the earth. This note of universality is given further expression by Hosea (2:18) and Jonah (4:11). When Paul encourages Roman believers about struggles in this life, he reminds them that they are not alone, but assures them that the whole creation also groans and suffers, eagerly anticipating that final

8:1 [a] Gen. 19:29 [b] Ex. 14:21; 15:10 **8:2** [c] Gen. 7:11 [d] Deut. 11:17 [e] Job 38:37 **8:3** [f] Gen. 7:24 **8:6** [g] Gen. 6:16 **8:16** [h] Gen. 7:13 **8:17** [i] Gen. 1:22, 28; 9:1, 7 **8:20** [j] Gen. 12:7 [k] Lev. 11 [l] Ex. 10:25 **8:21** [m] Ex. 29:18, 25 [n] Gen. 3:17; 6:7, 13, 17 [o] Gen. 6:5; 11:6 [p] Gen. 9:11, 15 **8:22** [q] Is. 54:9 [r] Jer. 33:20, 25 **9:1** [a] Gen. 1:28, 29; 8:17; 9:7, 19; 10:32 **9:2** [b] Ps. 8:6 **9:3** [c] Deut. 12:15; 14:3, 9, 11 [d] Rom. 14:14, 20

things, even as the [e]green herbs. 4[f]But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is,* its blood. 5Surely for your lifeblood I will demand *a reckoning;* [g]from the hand of every beast I will require it, and [h]from the hand of man. From the hand of every [i]man's brother I will require the life of man.

6 "Whoever [j]sheds man's blood,
By man his blood shall be shed;
[k]For in the image of God
He made man.
7 And as for you, [l]be fruitful and multiply;
Bring forth abundantly in the earth
And multiply in it."

8Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: 9"And as for Me, [m]behold, I establish [n]My covenant with you and with your descendants* after you, 10[o]and with every living creature that *is* with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. 11Thus [p]I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

12And God said: [q]"This *is* the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: 13I set [r]My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; 15and [s]I will remember My covenant which *is* between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember [t]the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* on the earth." 17And God said to Noah, "This *is* the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that *is* on the earth."

Noah and His Sons

18Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. [u]And Ham *was* the father of Canaan. 19[v]These three *were* the sons of Noah, [w]and from these the whole earth was populated.

20And Noah began *to be* [x]a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. 21Then he drank of the wine [y]and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. 22And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23[z]But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid *it* on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces *were* turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

24So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. 25Then he said:

[a]"Cursed *be* Canaan;
A [b]servant of servants
He shall be to his brethren."

26And he said:

[c]"Blessed *be* the LORD,
The God of Shem,
And may Canaan be his servant.
27 May God [d]enlarge Japheth,
[e]And may he dwell in the tents of Shem;
And may Canaan be his servant."

28And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.

Nations Descended from Noah

10 Now this *is* the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

* **9:9** Literally *seed*

redemption from the curse of sin. The promise given here is to never destroy the earth again by flood (v. 11). The rainbow is then a testimony of the existence of this promise.

9:4 *blood.* This restriction gets more attention in Leviticus (see Lev. 17:11–12). Blood represents the animal's life. It may be used in sacrifice, for all life belongs to the Lord.

9:6 *image of God.* Sin did not destroy man as the image of God. God values human life more highly than animal life because only humankind possesses God's image.

9:9 *covenant.* This is the second occurrence in Genesis of the important concept of covenant (6:18). God promised that He would establish His covenant with Noah and here He accomplished this great work.

9:26–27 *Shem.* Shem was given precedence over his brothers. Eber and Abram were descended from Shem (11:10–30), so Shem's blessing is ultimately a blessing on Israel.

9:29 *and he died.* Noah's death was the end of an era. Only he and his family spanned two worlds, that of the earth before and after the flood. His long life (950 years) gave him opportunity to transmit to his many descendants the dramatic story that he had lived out with his family. Peoples in places and cultures the world over have memories and stories of a great flood in antiquity. The details differ, but the stories remain.

9:3 [e] Gen. 1:29 **9:4** [f] 1 Sam. 14:33, 34 **9:5** [g] Ex. 21:28 [h] Gen. 4:9, 10 [i] Acts 17:26 **9:6** [j] Lev. 24:17 [k] Gen. 1:26, 27 **9:7** [l] Gen. 9:1, 19 **9:9** [m] Gen. 6:18 [n] Is. 54:9 **9:10** [o] Ps. 145:9 **9:11** [p] Is. 54:9 **9:12** [q] Gen. 9:13, 17; 17:11 **9:13** [r] Ezek. 1:28 **9:15** [s] Lev. 26:42, 45 **9:16** [t] Gen. 17:13, 19 **9:18** [u] Gen. 9:25–27; 10:6 **9:19** [v] Gen. 5:32 [w] 1 Chr. 1:4 **9:20** [x] Gen. 3:19, 23; 4:2 **9:21** [y] Prov. 20:1 **9:23** [z] Ex. 20:12 **9:25** [a] Deut. 27:16 [b] Josh. 9:23 **9:26** [c] Gen. 14:20; 24:27 **9:27** [d] Gen. 10:2–5; 39:3 [e] Eph. 2:13, 14; 3:6

[a]And sons were born to them after the flood.

2[b]The sons of Japheth *were* Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 3The sons of Gomer *were* Ashkenaz, Riphath,* and Togarmah. 4The sons of Javan *were* Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.* 5From these [c]the coastland *peoples* of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

6[d]The sons of Ham *were* Cush, Mizraim, Put,* and Canaan. 7The sons of Cush *were* Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah *were* Sheba and Dedan.

8Cush begot [e]Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9He was a mighty [f]hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter [g]before the LORD." 10[h]And the beginning of his kingdom was [i]Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11From that land he went to [j]Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that *is* the principal city).

13Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 14Pathrusim, and Casluhim [k](from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim).

15Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and [l]Heth; 16[m]the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; 17the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; 18the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. 19[n]And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20These *were* the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands *and* in their nations.

21And *children* were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. 22The [o]sons of Shem *were* Elam, Asshur, [p]Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. 23The sons of Aram *were* Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.* 24Arphaxad begot [q]Salah,* and Salah begot Eber. 25[r]To Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan. 26Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 28Obal,* Abimael, Sheba, 29Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan. 30And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. 31These *were* the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

32[s]These *were* the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; [t]and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

The Tower of Babel

11 Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. 2And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land [a]of Shinar, and they dwelt there. 3Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake *them* thoroughly." They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. 4And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower [b]whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a [c]name for ourselves, lest we [d]be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

5[e]But the LORD came down to see the

* **10:3** Spelled *Diphath* in 1 Chronicles 1:6 * **10:4** Spelled *Rodanim* in Samaritan Pentateuch and 1 Chronicles 1:7 * **10:6** Or *Phut* * **10:23** Called *Meshech* in Septuagint and 1 Chronicles 1:17 * **10:24** Following Masoretic Text, Vulgate, and Targum; Septuagint reads *Arphaxad begot Cainan, and Cainan begot Salah* (compare Luke 3:35, 36). * **10:28** Spelled *Ebal* in 1 Chronicles 1:22

10:2 *The sons of Japheth.* The listing of Japheth's descendants is briefer than the others. Among the persons and peoples mentioned is Javan, an ancient name for the Greek people. It is thought that many of Japheth's descendants migrated to Europe.

10:6 *The sons of Ham.* Cush is the ancient name for Ethiopia; Mizraim is a name for Egypt.

10:7–11 *Nimrod.* Like Lamech the descendant of Cain, Nimrod's infamy was proverbial. His territory was in the lands of the east, the fabled ancient cities of Mesopotamia. The prophet Micah would later use the name Nimrod to describe the region of Assyria, which would come under God's judgment (Mic. 5:5–6).

10:21–24 *Eber.* This is the name that gives rise to the term *Hebrew,* which is first used of Abram in 14:13. Eber descended from Shem, the one of Noah's sons who was appointed to carry on the messianic line. Abram was a direct descendant of Eber.

10:32 *the families of the sons of Noah.* Although not every ancient people group is listed in this "Table of the Nations," its clear teaching is that all the varied peoples of the earth, no matter of what land or language, are descended from Noah.

11:2 *the land of Shinar.* This is the region of ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia (10:10).

11:4 Pride—God divided the human race into different language groups because they had refused to obey His command to fill the earth, and had become united for an evil purpose. This does not mean that God wants the world to remain divided. Christ came

10:1 [a] Gen. 9:1, 7, 19 **10:2** [b] 1 Chr. 1:5–7 **10:5** [c] Ps. 72:10 **10:6** [d] 1 Chr. 1:8–16 **10:8** [e] Mic. 5:6 **10:9** [f] Jer. 16:16 [g] Gen. 21:20 **10:10** [h] Mic. 5:6 [i] Gen. 11:9 **10:11** [j] Mic. 5:6 **10:14** [k] 1 Chr. 1:12 **10:15** [l] Gen. 23:3 **10:16** [m] Gen. 14:7; 15:19–21 **10:19** [n] Num. 34:2–12 **10:22** [o] 1 Chr. 1:17–28 [p] Luke 3:36 **10:24** [q] Gen. 11:12 **10:25** [r] 1 Chr. 1:19 **10:32** [s] Gen. 10:1 [t] Gen. 9:19; 11:8 **11:2** [a] Gen. 10:10; 14:1 **11:4** [b] Deut. 1:28; 9:1 [c] Gen. 6:4 [d] Deut. 4:27 **11:5** [e] Gen. 18:21

city and the tower which the sons of men had built. 6And the LORD said, "Indeed [f]the people *are* one and they all have [g]one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they [h]propose to do will be withheld from them. 7Come, [i]let Us go down and there [j]confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." 8So [k]the LORD scattered them abroad from there [l]over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. 9Therefore its name is called Babel, [m]because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Shem's Descendants

10[n]This *is* the genealogy of Shem: Shem *was* one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. 11After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

12Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, [o]and begot Salah. 13After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

14Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. 15After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

16[p]Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot [q]Peleg. 17After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters.

18Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. 19After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.

20Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot [r]Serug. 21After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.

22Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. 23After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

24Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot [s]Terah. 25After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.

26Now Terah lived seventy years, and [t]begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Terah's Descendants

27This *is* the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot [u]Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. 28And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* [v]Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, [w]Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. 30But [x]Sarai was barren; she had no child.

31And Terah [y]took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from [z]Ur of the Chaldeans to go to [a]the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. 32So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

Promises to Abram

12 Now the [a]LORD had said to Abram:

"Get [b]out of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you.

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to reconcile the world to God (2 Cor. 5:19), and when we are in Christ we are not only reconciled to God, but to one another (Eph. 2:11–19). The unity God destroyed by judgment at Babel was restored by grace on the Day of Pentecost. On that day people from different nations came together to hear the gospel in their own languages.

11:7 *let Us go down.* The plural "Us" in this passage is similar to the language of 1:26–28. The plural pronoun emphasizes the majesty of the speaker.

11:9 *Babel.* There is a pun in this name that no Hebrew reader would miss. The verb for *confuse* sounds similar to the name of the city. ***confused . . . scattered.*** Because of their pride and arrogance, God scattered the peoples of the earth and confused their language, but one day peoples of all languages and cultures will unite to celebrate the grace of God's risen Son, lifting their voices together in praise of the Lamb (Rev. 5:8–14).

11:10–25 *the genealogy.* This genealogy shows that Abram was a descendant of Noah through Shem, just as Noah was a descendant of Adam through Seth. It is interesting to note that while the people mentioned in this genealogy lived to be very old, they did not reach the great ages of the peoples before the flood. Instead, their lives appear to be growing progressively shorter.

11:28 *Ur of the Chaldeans.* For generations, scholars have believed this to be the famous Ur located near the ancient delta in the Persian Gulf where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers flow together. More recently, some scholars have noted the tablets at Ebla that speak of an Ur in the region of north Syria and suggest that this is the city of Haran's death.

11:29 *Sarai.* The name Sarai means "princess," implying a person of noble birth. Later we learn that Sarai was Abram's half sister (20:12).

12:1 *LORD.* Even though the name Yahweh (translated LORD) is not explained until Exodus 3:14–15, it is used here to make it clear to the readers that this was the same God who later formed the nation of Israel, and who was the Creator (2:4).

12:1–3 God's Covenant with Abram—The covenant with Abram is the first covenant that pertains to the rule of God. It is unconditional, and depends

11:6 [f]Gen. 9:19 [g]Gen. 11:1 [h]Ps. 2:1 **11:7** [i]Gen. 1:26 [j]Ex. 4:11 **11:8** [k][Luke 1:51] [l]Gen. 10:25, 32 **11:9** [m]1 Cor. 14:23 **11:10** [n]Gen. 10:22–25 **11:12** [o]Luke 3:35 **11:16** [p]1 Chr. 1:19 [q]Luke 3:35 **11:20** [r]Luke 3:35 **11:24** [s]Josh. 24:2 **11:26** [t]1 Chr. 1:26 **11:27** [u]Gen. 11:31; 17:5 **11:29** [v]Gen. 17:15; 20:12 [w]Gen. 22:20, 23; 24:15 **11:30** [x]Gen. 16:1, 2 **11:31** [y]Gen. 12:1 [z]Acts 7:4 [a]Gen. 10:19 **12:1** [a]Acts 7:2, 3 [b]Gen. 13:9

2 [c]I will make you a great nation;
[d]I will bless you
And make your name great;
[e]And you shall be a blessing.
3 [f]I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in [g]you all the families of the
earth shall be [h]blessed."

4So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram *was* seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and [i]the people whom they had acquired in [j]Haran, and they [k]departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. 6Abram [l]passed through the land to the place of Shechem, [m]as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh.* [n]And the Canaanites *were* then in the land.

7[o]Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, [p]"To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an [q]altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. 8And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent *with* Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and [r]called on the name of the LORD. 9So Abram journeyed, [s]going on still toward the South.*

Abram in Egypt

10Now there was [t]a famine in the land, and Abram [u]went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine *was* [v]severe in the land. 11And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "Indeed I know that you *are* [w]a woman of beautiful countenance. 12Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This *is* his wife'; and they [x]will kill me, but they will let you live. 13[y]Please say you *are* my [z]sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I* may live because of you."

14So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she *was* very beautiful. 15The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house. 16He [a]treated Abram well for her sake. He [b]had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

17But the LORD [c]plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18And Pharaoh called Abram and said, [d]"What *is* this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she *was* your wife? 19Why did you say, 'She *is* my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take *her* and go your way." 20[e]So Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

Abram Inherits Canaan

13 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and [a]Lot with him, [b]to the South.* 2[c]Abram *was* very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. 3And he went on his journey [d]from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4to the [e]place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram [f]called on the name of the LORD.

5Lot also, who went with Abram, had

* **12:6** Hebrew *Alon Moreh* * **12:9** Hebrew *Negev*
* **12:13** Literally *my soul* * **13:1** Hebrew *Negev*

only on God who obligates Himself in grace, indicated by the unconditional declaration, "I will." The Abrahamic covenant is also the basis of other covenants and it promises blessings in three areas: (1) *national*—"I will make you a great nation," (2) *personal*—"I will bless you and make your name great; and (3) *universal*—"in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." The Abrahamic covenant is an important link in all that God began to do, has done throughout history, and will continue to do until the consummation of history. God blesses Abram and all his descendants through the Messiah, who is Abram's progeny and provides salvation for the entire world.

12:2–3 *I will bless you.* There are seven elements in God's promise to Abram. The number seven is often used in Scripture to suggest fullness and completeness.

12:7 *To your descendants.* The land of Canaan was a gift to the descendants of Abram. God owned the land (Ps. 24:1); it was His to do with as He pleased. The people of Canaan had lost their right to occupy the land due to their awful depravity (see 15:16). Thus God declared that this land would become the land of Israel (15:18–21; 17:6–8).

12:8 *called on the name of the LORD.* This was not a private prayer but a public proclamation. Abram was telling others about the Lord.

12:11 *woman of beautiful countenance.* Sarai's physical beauty was remarkable considering her age. She was ten years younger than Abram, or about 65 (12:4; 17:17).

12:13 *my sister.* Sarai *was* Abram's half sister, the daughter of his father but not of his mother (20:12).

12:17 *the LORD plagued Pharaoh.* This is the first example of the cursing and blessing element of God's promise (see 12:2–3).

12:2 [c] Deut. 26:5 [d] Gen. 22:17; 24:35 [e] Gen. 28:4
12:3 [f] Num. 24:9 [g] Acts 3:25; [Gal. 3:8] [h] Is. 41:27
12:5 [i] Gen. 14:14 [j] Gen. 11:31 [k] Gen. 13:18 **12:6** [l] Heb. 11:9 [m] Deut. 11:30 [n] Gen. 10:18, 19 **12:7** [o] Gen. 17:1; 18:1 [p] Gen. 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; Acts 7:5; Gal. 3:16 [q] Gen. 13:4, 18; 22:9 **12:8** [r] Gen. 4:26; 13:4; 21:33 **12:9** [s] Gen. 13:1, 3; 20:1; 24:62 **12:10** [t] Gen. 26:1 [u] Ps. 105:13 [v] Gen. 43:1
12:11 [w] Gen. 12:14; 26:7; 29:17 **12:12** [x] Gen. 20:11; 26:7
12:13 [y] Gen. 20:1–18; 26:6–11 [z] Gen. 20:12 **12:16** [a] Gen. 20:14 [b] Gen. 13:2 **12:17** [c] 1 Chr. 16:21 **12:18** [d] Gen. 20:9, 10; 26:10 **12:20** [e] [Prov. 21:1] **13:1** [a] Gen. 12:4; 14:12, 16 [b] Gen. 12:9 **13:2** [c] Gen. 24:35; 26:14
13:3 [d] Gen. 12:8, 9 **13:4** [e] Gen. 12:7, 8; 21:33 [f] Ps. 116:17

flocks and herds and tents. 6Now [g]the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. 7And there was [h]strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. [i]The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

8So Abram said to Lot, [j]"Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we *are* brethren. 9[k]*Is* not the whole land before you? Please [l]separate from me. [m]If *you take* the left, then I will go to the right; or, if *you go* to the right, then I will go to the left."

10And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all [n]the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered everywhere (before the LORD [o]destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) [p]like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward [q]Zoar. 11Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. 12Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot [r]dwelt in the cities of the plain and [s]pitched *his* tent even as far as Sodom. 13But the men of Sodom [t]*were* exceedingly wicked and [u]sinful against the LORD.

14And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot [v]had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—[w]northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15for all the land which you see [x]I give to you and [y]your descendants* forever. 16And [z]I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered. 17Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

18[a]Then Abram moved *his* tent, and went and [b]dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre,* [c]which *are* in Hebron, and built an [d]altar there to the LORD.

Lot's Captivity and Rescue

14 And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king [a]of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of [b]Elam, and Tidal king of nations,* 2*that* they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of [c]Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, [d]Zoar). 3All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim [e](that is, the Salt Sea). 4Twelve years [f]they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that *were* with him came and attacked [g]the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, [h]the Zuzim in Ham, [i]the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6[j]and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which *is* by the wilderness. 7Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that *is,* Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt [k]in Hazezon Tamar.

8And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that *is,* Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim 9against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations,* Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. 10Now the Valley of Siddim *was full of* [l]asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; *some* fell there, and the remainder fled [m]to the mountains. 11Then they took [n]all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. 12They also took Lot, Abram's [o]brother's son [p]who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

13Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the [q]Hebrew, for [r]he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre* the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; [s]and they *were* allies with Abram. 14Now [t]when Abram heard that [u]his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained *servants* who were [v]born in his own house, and went in pursuit [w]as far as Dan. 15He divided his forces against

* **13:15** Literally *seed*, and so throughout the book
* **13:18** Hebrew *Alon Mamre* * **14:1** Hebrew *goyim* * **14:9** Hebrew *goyim* * **14:13** Hebrew *Alon Mamre*

13:7 ***The Canaanites and the Perizzites.*** As in 12:6, the point of this phrase is that the land was already populated; Abram and Lot did not come into an empty region but had to compete for land for their rapidly growing herds and flocks.

13:14–17 This section forms part of the set of texts that set the stage for the Abrahamic covenant (see the list at 15:1–21). This section builds on 12:1–3,7, the passage in which God first gave His great promise to Abram.

14:3 ***the Valley of Siddim.*** This valley is most likely submerged under the waters of the Dead Sea today.

14:14 ***three hundred and eighteen.*** The fact that Abram could find this many fighting men from among his own servants is an indication of the great wealth and honor that the Lord had given him (12:2–3).

13:6 [g] Gen. 36:7 **13:7** [h] Gen. 26:20 [i] Gen. 12:6; 15:20, 21 **13:8** [j] 1 Cor. 6:7 **13:9** [k] Gen. 20:15; 34:10 [l] Gen. 13:11, 14 [m] [Rom. 12:18] **13:10** [n] Gen. 19:17–29 [o] Gen. 19:24 [p] Gen. 2:8, 10 [q] Deut. 34:3 **13:12** [r] Gen. 19:24, 25, 29 [s] Gen. 14:12; 19:1 **13:13** [t] Gen. 18:20, 21 [u] Gen. 6:11; 39:9 **13:14** [v] Gen. 13:11 [w] Gen. 28:14 **13:15** [x] Acts 7:5 [y] 2 Chr. 20:7 **13:16** [z] Gen. 22:17 **13:18** [a] Gen. 26:17 [b] Gen. 14:13 [c] Gen. 23:2; 35:27 [d] Gen. 8:20; 22:8, 9 **14:1** [a] Gen. 10:10; 11:2 [b] Is. 11:11; 21:2 **14:2** [c] Deut. 29:23 [d] Gen. 13:10; 19:22 **14:3** [e] Num. 34:12 **14:4** [f] Gen. 9:26 **14:5** [g] Gen. 15:20 [h] Deut. 2:20 [i] Deut. 2:10 **14:6** [j] Deut. 2:12, 22 **14:7** [k] 2 Chr. 20:2 **14:10** [l] Gen. 11:3 [m] Gen. 19:17, 30 **14:11** [n] Gen. 14:16, 21 **14:12** [o] Gen. 11:27; 12:5 [p] Gen. 13:12 **14:13** [q] Gen. 39:14; 40:15 [r] Gen. 13:18 [s] Gen. 14:24; 21:27, 32 **14:14** [t] Gen. 19:29 [u] Gen. 13:8; 14:12 [v] Gen. 12:5; 15:3; 17:27 [w] Deut. 34:1

them by night, and he and his servants [x]attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which *is* north of Damascus. **16**So he [y]brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

17And the king of Sodom [z]went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that *is*, [a]the King's Valley), [b]after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who *were* with him.

Abram and Melchizedek

18Then [c]Melchizedek king of Salem brought out [d]bread and wine; he *was* [e]the priest of [f]God Most High. **19**And he blessed him and said:

[g]"Blessed be Abram of God Most High,
[h]Possessor of heaven and earth;
20 And [i]blessed be God Most High,
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

And he [j]gave him a tithe of all.

21Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself."

22But Abram [k]said to the king of Sodom, "I [l]have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, [m]the Possessor of heaven and earth, **23**that [n]I *will take* nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that *is* yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'— **24**except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

God's Covenant with Abram

15 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram [a]in a vision, saying, [b]"Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your [c]shield, your exceedingly [d]great reward."

2[e]But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, [f]seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house *is* Eliezer of Damascus?" **3**Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed [g]one born in my house is my heir!"

4And behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who [h]will come from your own body shall be your heir." **5**Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and [i]count the [j]stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, [k]"So shall your [l]descendants be."

6And he [m]believed in the LORD, and He [n]accounted it to him for righteousness.

7Then He said to him, "I *am* the LORD, who [o]brought you out of [p]Ur of the Chaldeans, [q]to give you this land to inherit it."

8And he said, "Lord GOD, [r]how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

9So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove,

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14:18 ***Melchizedek.*** This name means "my king is righteous." Melchizedek was a contemporary of Abram who worshiped the living God. He is described as the "king of Salem," an older, shorter name for Jerusalem. The word is based on the root from which the word *shalom* (peace) comes. Melchizedek is a mysterious figure, apparently appearing from nowhere, and with no explanation of his family or background. He is a priest of God Most High, even though there is no indication that he is of Abram's family or even a descendant of Shem. The writer of Hebrews compares Melchizedek with another priest, the Lord Jesus Christ (see Heb. 5:9; Ps. 110:4).

14:20 ***blessed be God Most High.*** When we bless God, we acknowledge Him as the source of all our blessings (Ps. 103:1–2). ***tithe.*** This is the first mention of tithing in the Bible. Even though there is no record of tithing as a command until much later (Deut. 14:22), the concept of a tenth belonging to God was apparently known. Abram's gift indicates that he considered Melchizedek a true priest of the living God; in giving this gift Abram was giving to the Lord.

14:22 ***the LORD, God Most High.*** Abraham identified Yahweh, translated here as "the LORD," with the most high God for whom Melchizedek was priest. This is a clear statement that he and Melchizedek worshiped the same God.

15:1–21 This section is one of the texts that present the Abrahamic covenant (see 17:1–22; 18:1–15; 22:15–18; 26:23–24; 35:9–15; compare also 12:1–3,7; 13:14–17).

15:2 ***Eliezer of Damascus.*** This man had the honor of being Abram's heir because Abram and Sarai had no child of their own. Some have wondered if Eliezer is also the unnamed servant of Abraham who went on the quest for a wife for Isaac (24:2–5).

15:6 ***he believed.*** Almost ten years had passed since the original promises were given. As Abram grew older and still had no children, it was natural for him to wonder how the promises could be fulfilled. In answer to Abram's questions, God, who had revealed Himself in word, and who had faithfully protected him and sustained him, again pledged His word of promise. Abram believed and his faith was accounted to him as righteousness. Some have thought that in Old Testament times people were saved by their good deeds rather than by faith, but this idea is mistaken. Abram was not saved because of righteous living or obedience, but by believing in God and so being declared righteous by Him. The only valid work is the work of faith (John 6:28–29; James 2:2).

15:9 ***Bring Me.*** Abram prepared the sacrifice, but God enacted the sign (v. 17). This emphasizes the unilateral, unconditional nature of the covenant.

14:15 [x] Is. 41:2, 3 **14:16** [y] Gen. 31:18 **14:17** [z] 1 Sam. 18:6 [a] 2 Sam. 18:18 [b] Heb. 7:1 **14:18** [c] Heb. 7:1–10 [d] Gen. 18:5 [e] Ps. 110:4 [f] Acts 16:17 **14:19** [g] Ruth 3:10 [h] Gen. 14:22 **14:20** [i] Gen. 24:27 [j] Heb. 7:4 **14:22** [k] Gen. 14:2, 8, 10 [l] Dan. 12:7 [m] Gen. 14:19 **14:23** [n] 2 Kin. 5:16 **15:1** [a] Dan. 10:1 [b] Gen. 21:17; 26:24 [c] Deut. 33:29 [d] Prov. 11:18 **15:2** [e] Gen. 17:18 [f] Acts 7:5 **15:3** [g] Gen. 14:14 **15:4** [h] 2 Sam. 7:12 **15:5** [i] Ps. 147:4 [j] Jer. 33:22 [k] Ex. 32:13 [l] Gen. 17:19 **15:6** [m] Rom. 4:3, 9, 22 [n] Ps. 32:2; 106:31 **15:7** [o] Gen. 12:1 [p] Gen. 11:28, 31 [q] Ps. 105:42, 44 **15:8** [r] Luke 1:18

and a young pigeon." 10Then he brought all these to Him and [s]cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut [t]the birds in two. 11And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12Now when the sun was going down, [u]a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror *and* great darkness fell upon him. 13Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly [v]that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and [w]they will afflict them four hundred years. 14And also the nation whom they serve [x]I will judge; afterward [y]they shall come out with great possessions. 15Now as for you, [z]you shall go [a]to your fathers in peace; [b]you shall be buried at a good old age. 16But [c]in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity [d]of the Amorites [e]*is* not yet complete."

17And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that [f]passed between those pieces. 18On the same day the LORD [g]made a covenant with Abram, saying:

[h]"To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— 19the Kenites, the Kenezzites, the Kadmonites, 20the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

Hagar and Ishmael

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, [a]had borne him no *children*. And she had [b]an Egyptian maidservant whose name was [c]Hagar. 2[d]So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD [e]has restrained me from bearing *children*. Please, [f]go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram [g]heeded the voice of Sarai. 3Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram [h]had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. 4So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became [i]despised in her eyes.

5Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong *be* upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. [j]The LORD judge between you and me."

6[k]So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid *is* in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, [l]she fled from her presence.

7Now the [m]Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, [n]by the spring on the way to [o]Shur. 8And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

9The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and [p]submit yourself under her hand." 10Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, [q]"I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." 11And the Angel of the LORD said to her:

"Behold, you *are* with child,
[r]And you shall bear a son.
You shall call his name Ishmael,
Because the LORD has heard your affliction.

15:12 ***horror . . . darkness.*** These two words give great emphasis to the meaning "an overwhelmingly dark terror." This kind of reaction to the indescribable holiness of the Lord (Is. 6:3; 40:25) is natural—Abram was about to experience the presence of the Almighty. This was a moment of profound dread and holy awe.

15:13 ***four hundred years.*** Moses wrote down the story of Abram's life from the vantage point of the generation who fulfilled this prophecy (Ex. 12:40–42).

15:17 ***between those pieces.*** This last element has profound implications. In solemn agreements between equals (parity treaties), both parties would pass between the bloody pieces of slain animals and birds. The symbol would be evident to all: "May I become like this if I do not keep my part of the agreement." But Abram was not to walk this grisly pathway. Only God made the journey in the symbols of smoke and fire. The fulfillment of the promise of God to Abram, the Abrahamic covenant, is as sure as the ongoing life of the Lord.

15:18 ***this land.*** God's promise to Abram included his descendants and the Promised One, the Seed of Genesis 3:15. But the promise also included the land of Canaan. God removed the people of Israel from the land of Canaan several times, but He never revoked His everlasting promise (17:8). The promise will be fulfilled in its fullness when Jesus Christ returns (Is. 9:1–7).

the river of Egypt. The "river of Egypt" may refer to the Nile, or it may be what is called today the Wadi el Arish, a smaller watercourse at the natural boundary of Egypt and the land of Israel. ***the River Euphrates.*** This is the northern arm of the Euphrates in Syria.

15:20 ***Rephaim.*** A people of unusually tall stature; they are called giants in 2 Samuel 21:15–22 (see Num. 13:33; Deut. 2:11; 3:11).

16:2 ***go in to my maid.*** This seems to have been an accepted practice in the ancient Middle East. If a woman was unable to bear children, she might use her servant as a surrogate mother, and adopt the child as her own.

16:11 ***Ishmael.*** The name Ishmael uses the divine name El, and means "God hears."

15:10 [s] Jer. 34:18 [t] Lev. 1:17 **15:12** [u] Gen. 2:21; 28:11 **15:13** [v] Ex. 1:11 [w] Ex. 12:40 **15:14** [x] Ex. 6:6 [y] Ex. 12:36 **15:15** [z] Job 5:26 [a] Gen. 25:8; 47:30 [b] Gen. 25:8 **15:16** [c] Ex. 12:41 [d] 1 Kin. 21:26 [e] Matt. 23:32 **15:17** [f] Jer. 34:18, 19 **15:18** [g] Gen. 24:7 [h] Gen. 12:7; 17:8 **16:1** [a] Gen. 11:30; 15:2, 3 [b] Gen. 12:16; 21:9 [c] Gal. 4:24 **16:2** [d] Gen. 30:3 [e] Gen. 20:18 [f] Gen. 30:3, 9 [g] Gen. 3:17 **16:3** [h] Gen. 12:4, 5 **16:4** [i] [Prov. 30:21, 23] **16:5** [j] Gen. 31:53 **16:6** [k] 1 Pet. 3:7 [l] Ex. 2:15 **16:7** [m] Gen. 21:17, 18; 22:11, 15; 31:11 [n] Gen. 20:1; 25:18 [o] Ex. 15:22 **16:9** [p] [Titus 2:9] **16:10** [q] Gen. 17:20 **16:11** [r] Luke 1:13, 31

12 [s]He shall be a wild man;
His hand *shall be* against every man,
And every man's hand against him.
[t]And he shall dwell in the presence of
all his brethren."

13Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him [u]who sees me?" 14Therefore the well was called [v]Beer Lahai Roi;* observe, *it is* [w]between Kadesh and Bered.

15So [x]Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. 16Abram *was* eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

The Sign of the Covenant

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD [a]appeared to Abram and said to him, [b]"I *am* Almighty God; [c]walk before Me and be [d]blameless. 2And I will make My [e]covenant between Me and you, and [f]will multiply you exceedingly." 3Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: 4"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a [g]father of many nations. 5No longer shall [h]your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; [i]for I have made you a father of many nations. 6I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations [j]of you, and [k]kings shall come from you. 7And I will [l]establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, [m]to be God to you and [n]your descendants after you. 8Also [o]I give to you and your descendants after you the land [p]in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and [q]I will be their God."

9And God said to Abraham: "As for you, [r]you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. 10This *is* My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: [s]Every male child among you shall be circumcised; 11and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be [t]a sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12He who is eight days old among you [u]shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. 13He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person [v]shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

15Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name. 16And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, [w]and she shall be *a mother* [x]*of* nations; [y]kings of peoples shall be from her."

17Then Abraham fell on his face [z]and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall *a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child*?" 18And Abraham

* **16:14** Literally *Well of the One Who Lives and Sees Me*

17:4 *covenant.* While the peoples who descended directly from Abram (the nation of Israel, the Midianites, Ishmaelites, and Edomites) were certainly numerous, Abram was "father of many" in a much broader sense yet. The message of the New Testament reveals that God's promise to Abram is to be fulfilled in the community of faith in every nation. The promise was so certain that his name was changed to Abraham, as an everlasting reminder of God's gracious covenant. Furthermore, the emphatic "as for Me" underscores the identity of the all-sufficient God who takes the initiative for establishing the covenantal relationship. This relationship is both spiritual and personal, anticipating the divine pledge, "and I will be their God." The wonder of it all is that we who believe in Jesus Christ are part of that "multitude of nations" who share in the faith of Abraham "who is the father of us all."

17:5 *Abram . . . Abraham.* This name change is significant. Abram means "exalted father." Abraham means "father of many"—a direct reflection of his new role.

17:8 *the land . . . an everlasting possession.* The promise clearly included the Israelite people *and* the land of Canaan. The two are linked in the language of the covenant in chapter 15. Even though God removed Israel more than once from the land, He promised them ultimate possession of Canaan.

17:13 *circumcised.* Circumcision in and of itself did not make people acceptable to God. It was meant as a tangible symbol of God's covenant in their lives, as an outward sign standing for the inward reality of a thorough commitment to God. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul speaks of having a "circumcised heart," pointing to the fact that a circumcised body means nothing if the heart is not in accord (Rom. 2:25–29).

17:15 *Sarai . . . Sarah.* Both names come from the same root, meaning "princess." No explanation is given for the change in Sarah's name, but like the name change from Abram to Abraham (vv. 4–5) the new name accompanied a new relationship with God.

16:12 [s] Gen. 21:20 [t] Gen. 25:18 **16:13** [u] Gen. 31:42 **16:14** [v] Gen. 24:62 [w] Num. 13:26 **16:15** [x] Gal. 4:22 **17:1** [a] Gen. 12:7; 18:1 [b] Gen. 28:3; 35:11 [c] 2 Kin. 20:3 [d] Deut. 18:13 **17:2** [e] Gen. 15:18 [f] Gen. 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 18:18 **17:4** [g] [Rom. 4:11, 12, 16] **17:5** [h] Neh. 9:7 [i] Rom. 4:17 **17:6** [j] Gen. 17:16; 35:11 [k] Matt. 1:6 **17:7** [l] [Gal. 3:17] [m] Gen. 26:24; 28:13 [n] Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:16 **17:8** [o] Acts 7:5 [p] Gen. 23:4; 28:4 [q] Lev. 26:12 **17:9** [r] Ex. 19:5 **17:10** [s] Acts 7:8 **17:11** [t] Ex. 12:13, 48 **17:12** [u] Lev. 12:3 **17:14** [v] Ex. 4:24–26 **17:16** [w] Gen. 18:10 [x] Gen. 35:11 [y] Gen. 17:6; 36:31 **17:17** [z] Gen. 17:3; 18:12; 21:6

[a]said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

19 Then God said: "No, [b]Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My [c]covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his descendants after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and [d]will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget [e]twelve princes, [f]and I will make him a great nation. 21 But My [g]covenant I will establish with Isaac, [h]whom Sarah shall bear to you at this [i]set time next year." 22 Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

23 So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. 24 Abraham *was* ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26 That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael; 27 and [j]all the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

The Son of Promise

18 Then the LORD appeared to him by the [a]terebinth trees of Mamre,* as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 [b]So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; [c]and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, 3 and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. 4 Please let [d]a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5 And [e]I will bring a morsel of bread, that [f]you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, [g]inasmuch as you have come to your servant."

They said, "Do as you have said."

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead *it* and make cakes." 7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave *it* to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. 8 So [h]he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

9 Then they said to him, "Where *is* Sarah your wife?"

So he said, "Here, [i]in the tent."

10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you [j]according to the time of life, and behold, [k]Sarah your wife shall have a son."

(Sarah was listening in the tent door which *was* behind him.) 11 Now [l]Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; *and* Sarah [m]had passed the age of childbearing.* 12 Therefore Sarah [n]laughed within herself, saying, [o]"After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my [p]lord being old also?"

13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear *a child*, since I am old?' 14 [q]Is anything too hard for the LORD? [r]At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

15 But Sarah denied *it*, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid.

And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom

16 Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them [s]to send them on the way. 17 And the LORD said, [t]"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, 18 since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be [u]blessed in him? 19 For I have known him, in order [v]that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to

* **18:1** Hebrew *Alon Mamre* * **18:11** Literally *the manner of women had ceased to be with Sarah*

17:19 ***Isaac.*** The name Isaac means "laughter" (see 21:1–6).

18:1 ***the LORD appeared.*** This was the fifth time the Lord appeared to Abraham since he came into the land of Canaan (12:7; 13:14–17; 15:1–21; 17:1–22).

18:2–3 ***three men.*** Verse 1 states that the Lord appeared to Abraham, then the next verse refers to "three men." It seems clear from verses 1, 13, and 17 that one of the three was the Lord Himself, and from 19:1 on the other two are referred to as angels. Apparently all three were in human form, and were able to eat the meal that Abraham had prepared. Many have speculated that this was an appearance of the preincarnate Christ.

18:19 ***For I have known him.*** Some translations say, "I have chosen him." The language speaks of the intimate relationship which motivates the Lord to accomplish His purpose in Abraham (22:12).

17:18 [a] Gen. 18:23 **17:19** [b] Gen. 18:10; 21:2; [Gal. 4:28] [c] Gen. 22:16 **17:20** [d] Gen. 16:10 [e] Gen. 25:12–16 [f] Gen. 21:13, 18 **17:21** [g] Gen. 26:2–5 [h] Gen. 21:2 [i] Gen. 18:14 **17:27** [j] Gen. 18:19 **18:1** [a] Gen. 13:18; 14:13 **18:2** [b] Heb. 13:2 [c] Gen. 19:1 **18:4** [d] Gen. 19:2; 24:32; 43:24 **18:5** [e] Judg. 6:18, 19; 13:15, 16 [f] Judg. 19:5 [g] Gen. 19:8; 33:10 **18:8** [h] Gen. 19:3 **18:9** [i] Gen. 24:67 **18:10** [j] 2 Kin. 4:16 [k] Rom. 9:9 **18:11** [l] Gen. 17:17 [m] Gen. 31:35 **18:12** [n] Gen. 17:17 [o] Luke 1:18 [p] 1 Pet. 3:6 **18:14** [q] Jer. 32:17 [r] Gen. 17:21; 18:10 **18:16** [s] Rom. 15:24 **18:17** [t] Ps. 25:14 **18:18** [u] [Acts 3:25, 26; Gal. 3:8] **18:19** [v] [Deut. 4:9, 10; 6:6, 7]

him." 20And the LORD said, "Because [w]the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their [x]sin is very grave, 21[y]I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, [z]I will know."

22Then the men turned away from there [a]and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. 23And Abraham [b]came near and said, [c]"Would You also [d]destroy the [e]righteous with the wicked? 24Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare *it* for the fifty righteous that were in it? 25Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that [f]the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! [g]Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

26So the LORD said, [h]"If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

27Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who *am* [i]*but* dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: 28Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for *lack of* five?"

So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*."

29And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?"

So He said, "I will not do *it* for the sake of forty."

30Then he said, [j]"Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?"

So He said, "I will not do *it* if I find thirty there."

31And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?"

So He said, "I will not destroy *it* for the sake of twenty."

32Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?"

[k]And He said, "I will not destroy *it* for the sake of ten." 33So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

Sodom's Depravity

19 Now [a]the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and [b]Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them,* he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. 2And he said, "Here now, my lords, please [c]turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and [d]wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way."

And they said, [e]"No, but we will spend the night in the open square."

3But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. [f]Then he made them a feast, and baked [g]unleavened bread, and they ate.

4Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. 5[h]And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? [i]Bring them out to us that we [j]may know them *carnally*."

6So [k]Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, 7and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! 8[l]See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, [m]since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof."

9And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one [n]came in to stay *here,* [o]and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. 10But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 11And they [p]struck the men who *were* at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary *trying* to find the door.

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

12Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—[q]take *them* out of this place! 13For we will destroy this place, because the [r]outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and [s]the LORD has sent us to destroy it."

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do righteousness and justice. One idea in two words—"genuine righteousness."

19:2 ***my lords.*** This is a greeting of respect for special visitors.

19:5 ***know them.*** This term usually refers to sexual relations between a man and a woman (4:1); here it is referring to homosexual activity, which God has declared is an abomination (Lev. 18:22).

18:20 [w] Gen. 4:10; 19:13 [x] Gen. 13:13 **18:21** [y] Gen. 11:5 [z] Deut. 8:2; 13:3 **18:22** [a] Gen. 18:16; 19:1 **18:23** [b] [Heb. 10:22] [c] Num. 16:22 [d] Job 9:22 [e] Gen. 20:4 **18:25** [f] Is. 3:10, 11 [g] Deut. 1:16, 17; 32:4 **18:26** [h] Jer. 5:1 **18:27** [i] [Gen. 3:19] **18:30** [j] Judg. 6:39 **18:32** [k] James 5:16
19:1 [a] Gen. 18:2, 16, 22 [b] Gen. 18:1–5 **19:2** [c] [Heb. 13:2] [d] Gen. 18:4; 24:32 [e] Luke 24:28 **19:3** [f] Gen. 18:6–8 [g] Ex. 12:8 **19:5** [h] Is. 3:9 [i] Judg. 19:22 [j] Gen. 4:1 **19:6** [k] Judg. 19:23 **19:8** [l] Judg. 19:24 [m] Gen. 18:5 **19:9** [n] 2 Pet. 2:7, 8 [o] Ex. 2:14 **19:11** [p] Gen. 20:17, 18 **19:12** [q] 2 Pet. 2:7, 9
19:13 [r] Gen. 18:20 [s] 1 Chr. 21:15

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-
in-law, [t]who had married his daughters,
and said, [u]"Get up, get out of this place; for
the LORD will destroy this city!" [v]But to his
sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.
15 When the morning dawned, the an-
gels urged Lot to hurry, saying, [w]"Arise,
take your wife and your two daughters
who are here, lest you be consumed in the
punishment of the city." 16 And while he
lingered, the men [x]took hold of his hand,
his wife's hand, and the hands of his two
daughters, the [y]LORD being merciful to
him, [z]and they brought him out and set
him outside the city. 17 So it came to pass,
when they had brought them outside, that
he* said, [a]"Escape for your life! [b]Do not
look behind you nor stay anywhere in the
plain. Escape [c]to the mountains, lest you
be destroyed."
18 Then Lot said to them, "Please, [d]no, my
lords! 19 Indeed now, your servant has found
favor in your sight, and you have increased
your mercy which you have shown me by
saving my life; but I cannot escape to the
mountains, lest some evil overtake me and
I die. 20 See now, this city *is* near *enough*
to flee to, and it *is* a little one; please let me
escape there (*is* it not a little one?) and my
soul shall live."
21 And he said to him, "See, [e]I have fa-
vored you concerning this thing also, in
that I will not overthrow this city for which
you have spoken. 22 Hurry, escape there.
For [f]I cannot do anything until you arrive
there."
Therefore [g]the name of the city was
called Zoar.
23 The sun had risen upon the earth when
Lot entered Zoar. 24 Then the LORD rained
[h]brimstone and [i]fire on Sodom and Gomor-
rah, from the LORD out of the heavens. 25 So
He overthrew those cities, all the plain,
all the inhabitants of the cities, and [j]what
grew on the ground.
26 But his wife looked back behind him,
and she became [k]a pillar of salt.
27 And Abraham went early in the
morning to the place where [l]he had stood
before the LORD. 28 Then he looked toward
Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the
land of the plain; and he saw, and behold,
[m]the smoke of the land which went up like
the smoke of a furnace. 29 And it came to
pass, when God destroyed the cities of the
plain, that God [n]remembered Abraham,
and sent Lot out of the midst of the over-
throw, when He overthrew the cities in
which Lot had dwelt.

The Descendants of Lot

30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and
[o]dwelt in the mountains, and his two
daughters were with him; for he was
afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two
daughters dwelt in a cave. 31 Now the first-
born said to the younger, "Our father *is* old,
and *there is* no man on the earth [p]to come
in to us as is the custom of all the earth.
32 Come, let us make our father drink wine,
and we will lie with him, that we [q]may pre-
serve the lineage of our father." 33 So they
made their father drink wine that night.
And the firstborn went in and lay with her
father, and he did not know when she lay
down or when she arose.
34 It happened on the next day that the
firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay
with my father last night; let us make him
drink wine tonight also, and you go in *and*
lie with him, that we may preserve the lin-
eage of our father." 35 Then they made their
father drink wine that night also. And the
younger arose and lay with him, and he did
not know when she lay down or when she
arose.
36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were
with child by their father. 37 The firstborn
bore a son and called his name Moab; [r]he *is*
the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 And
the younger, she also bore a son and called
his name Ben-Ammi; [s]he *is* the father of the
people of Ammon to this day.

* **19:17** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *they*.

19:16 ***the LORD being merciful to him.*** This is the whole point of the story. God could have destroyed the city of Sodom with no word to Lot or Abraham (18:17). But because of His mercy, God's angels grabbed Lot and his family and brought them forcibly to safety. In this passage, Lot appears weak, indecisive, and unsure of whether he really wants to be rescued. However, the New Testament speaks a good word for Lot's character, calling him a "righteous man" and telling us that he was grieved by the sin he saw in Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Pet. 2:6–8).
19:22 ***Zoar.*** This name means "insignificant in size."
19:23–26 ***brimstone and fire.*** This may be simply a supernatural judgment on the cities, but some have also theorized that the fire and brimstone which "rained" down on them may have been from a volcanic eruption. In any case, it is clear that the destruction was a judgment from God, and that it was under His control.
19:26 ***pillar of salt.*** Near the Dead Sea, which is believed to now cover the site of Sodom and Gomorrah, there are numerous rock salt formations, including pillars about the size of a human. Jesus referred to the fate of Lot's wife as a historical fact (Luke 17:32).
19:36–38 ***Moab . . . Ben-Ammi.*** The shameful act of incest led to the births of two sons whose descendants (the Moabites and the Ammonites) would greatly trouble Israel.

19:14 [t] Matt. 1:18 [u] Num. 16:21, 24, 26, 45 [v] Ex. 9:21
19:15 [w] Rev. 18:4 **19:16** [x] 2 Pet. 2:7 [y] Luke 18:13 [z] Ps. 34:22 **19:17** [a] Jer. 48:6 [b] Matt. 24:16–18 [c] Gen. 14:10
19:18 [d] Acts 10:14 **19:21** [e] Job 42:8, 9 **19:22** [f] Ex. 32:10 [g] Gen. 13:10; 14:2 **19:24** [h] Deut. 29:23 [i] Lev. 10:2
19:25 [j] Ps. 107:34 **19:26** [k] Luke 17:32 **19:27** [l] Gen. 18:22 **19:28** [m] Rev. 9:2; 18:9 **19:29** [n] Gen. 8:1; 18:23
19:30 [o] Gen. 19:17, 19 **19:31** [p] Gen. 16:2, 4; 38:8, 9
19:32 [q] [Mark 12:19] **19:37** [r] Deut. 2:9 **19:38** [s] Deut. 2:19

Abraham and Abimelech

20 And Abraham journeyed from [a]there to the South, and dwelt between [b]Kadesh and Shur, and [c]stayed in Gerar.
2Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, [d]"She *is* my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and [e]took Sarah.
3But [f]God came to Abimelech [g]in a dream by night, and said to him, [h]"Indeed you *are* a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she *is* a man's wife."
4But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, [i]will You slay a righteous nation also? **5**Did he not say to me, 'She *is* my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He *is* my brother.' [j]In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this."
6And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For [k]I also withheld you from sinning [l]against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. **7**Now therefore, restore the man's wife; [m]for he *is* a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore *her,* [n]know that you shall surely die, you [o]and all who *are* yours."
8So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid. **9**And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, [p]that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me [q]that ought not to be done." **10**Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?"
11And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely [r]the fear of God *is* not in this place; and [s]they will kill me on account of my wife. **12**But indeed [t]*she is* truly my sister. She *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. **13**And it came to pass, when [u]God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This *is* your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, [v]say of me, "He *is* my brother."'"
14Then Abimelech [w]took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave *them* to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. **15**And Abimelech said, "See, [x]my land *is* before you; dwell where it pleases you." **16**Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand *pieces* of silver; [y]indeed this vindicates you* [z]before all who *are* with you and before everybody." Thus she was rebuked.
17So Abraham prayed [a]to God; and God [b]healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore *children;* **18**for the LORD [c]had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Isaac Is Born

21 And the LORD [a]visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah [b]as He had spoken. **2**For Sarah [c]conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, [d]at the set time of which God had spoken to him. **3**And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—[e]Isaac. **4**Then Abraham [f]circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, [g]as God had commanded him. **5**Now [h]Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. **6**And Sarah said, [i]"God has made me laugh, *and* all who hear [j]will laugh with me." **7**She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? [k]For I have borne *him* a son in his old age."

Hagar and Ishmael Depart

8So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.
9And Sarah saw the son of Hagar [l]the

* **20:16** Literally *it is a covering of the eyes for you*

20:2 ***She is my sister.*** The complete truth told in such a way as to deceive or mislead is still a falsehood. Abraham's words were true: "She is my sister," but the message he intended to convey was false: "She is not married to me." His intent was deceit and the consequences he reaped were the same as if he had directly lied. A man speaks the real truth when he speaks the truth in his heart (Ps. 15:2).
20:3 ***God came . . . in a dream.*** Presumably, Abimelech was a pagan king. Yet God warned him of the wrong he was about to commit. This is another instance of the protective care that the Lord gives His people (31:24; Num. 22:12–20).
20:12 ***indeed she is truly my sister.*** Later the law would prohibit the marriage of people so closely related, but in the early years of the earth it was apparently acceptable for half siblings to marry (see note at 4:17).
21:1 ***And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said.*** The Bible stresses that the Lord causes conceptions; that children are a gift of the Lord (Ps. 127:3). The verb *visit* is an extraordinary choice here, indicating that the Lord entered directly into the affairs of His people.
21:3 ***Isaac.*** Isaac means "He (God) is laughing (now)." At one time Abraham and Sarah had both laughed at the improbability of having a son in their old age

20:1 [a] Gen. 18:1 [b] Gen. 12:9; 16:7, 14 [c] Gen. 26:1, 6 **20:2** [d] Gen. 12:11–13; 26:7 [e] Gen. 12:15 **20:3** [f] Ps. 105:14 [g] Job 33:15 [h] Gen. 20:7 **20:4** [i] Gen. 18:23–25 **20:5** [j] 2 Kin. 20:3 **20:6** [k] 1 Sam. 25:26, 34 [l] Gen. 39:9 **20:7** [m] 1 Sam. 7:5 [n] Gen. 2:17 [o] Num. 16:32, 33 **20:9** [p] Gen. 26:10; 39:9 [q] Gen. 34:7 **20:11** [r] Prov. 16:6 [s] Gen. 12:12; 26:7 **20:12** [t] Gen. 11:29 **20:13** [u] Gen. 12:1–9, 11 [v] Gen. 12:13; 20:5 **20:14** [w] Gen. 12:16 **20:15** [x] Gen. 13:9; 34:10; 47:6 **20:16** [y] Gen. 26:11 [z] Mal. 2:9 **20:17** [a] Job 42:9 [b] Gen. 21:2 **20:18** [c] Gen. 12:17 **21:1** [a] 1 Sam. 2:21 [b] [Gal. 4:23, 28] **21:2** [c] Heb. 11:11, 12 [d] Gen. 17:21; 18:10, 14 **21:3** [e] Gen. 17:19, 21 **21:4** [f] Acts 7:8 [g] Gen. 17:10, 12 **21:5** [h] Gen. 17:1, 17 **21:6** [i] Is. 54:1 [j] Luke 1:58 **21:7** [k] Gen. 18:11, 12 **21:9** [l] Gen. 16:1, 4, 15

Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, [m]scoffing. 10Therefore she said to Abraham, [n]"Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *namely* with Isaac." 11And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight [o]because of his son.

12But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for [p]in Isaac your seed shall be called. 13Yet I will also make [q]a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he *is* your seed."

14So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting *it* on her shoulder, he gave *it* and the boy to Hagar, and [r]sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. 15And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. 16Then she went and sat down across from *him* at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite *him*, and lifted her voice and wept.

17And [s]God heard the voice of the lad. Then the [t]angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he *is*. 18Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for [u]I will make him a great nation."

19Then [v]God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. 20So God [w]was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, [x]and became an archer. 21He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother [y]took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

A Covenant with Abimelech

22And it came to pass at that time that [z]Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, [a]"God *is* with you in all that you do. 23Now therefore, [b]swear to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt."

24And Abraham said, "I will swear."

25Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants [c]had seized. 26And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard *of it* until today." 27So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them [d]made a covenant. 28And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

29Then Abimelech asked Abraham, [e]"What *is the meaning of* these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?"

30And he said, "You will take *these* seven ewe lambs from my hand, that [f]they may be my witness that I have dug this well." 31Therefore he [g]called that place Beersheba,* because the two of them swore an oath there.

32Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines. 33Then *Abraham* planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and [h]there called on the name of the LORD, [i]the Everlasting God. 34And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.

Abraham's Faith Confirmed

22 Now it came to pass after these things that [a]God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!"

And he said, "Here I am."

*__21:31__ Literally *Well of the Oath* or *Well of the Seven*

(17:17; 18:12); now with the birth of the promised child their laughter took on a happier meaning.

21:12 ***listen to her voice.*** As painful as the situation was, God confirmed that Sarah was right that Ishmael would have to leave. Only Isaac was the child of promise, the one through whom the covenant would be fulfilled. This complicated situation was part of the price Abraham had to pay for trying to bring about God's promises in his own time. Nevertheless, God is merciful and He did not abandon Hagar and Ishmael.

21:17 ***God heard.*** What wonderful words these are! There is no pain of His people that He does not see or hear about (Is. 40:27–28; Heb. 2:10,18; 4:15). Even though Ishmael was not the son of promise, God still had His hand on his life.

21:23 ***kindness.*** This exceedingly important term, sometimes translated *loyal love* or *lovingkindness* is often used in the Psalms to describe God's character. Here we see its proper context in a binding relationship. The term basically describes covenant loyalty (24:12).

21:27 ***covenant.*** This is a binding agreement between two equals, similar to today's business contracts.

21:28–31 ***seven ewe lambs . . . Beersheba.*** The Hebrew number seven is similar in sound to the verb meaning "to swear" (v. 24). Thus Beersheba would be the well where they swore and the well of the seven ewe lambs.

21:34 ***the land of the Philistines.*** The name Palestine comes from the word for Philistine.

21:9 [m] [Gal. 4:29] **21:10** [n] Gal. 3:18; 4:30 **21:11** [o] Gen. 17:18 **21:12** [p] Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:34; [Rom. 9:7, 8]; Heb. 11:18 **21:13** [q] Gen. 16:10; 17:20; 21:18; 25:12–18 **21:14** [r] John 8:35 **21:17** [s] Ex. 3:7 [t] Gen. 22:11 **21:18** [u] Gen. 16:10; 21:13; 25:12–16 **21:19** [v] Num. 22:31 **21:20** [w] Gen. 28:15; 39:2, 3, 21 [x] Gen. 16:12 **21:21** [y] Gen. 24:4 **21:22** [z] Gen. 20:2, 14; 26:26 [a] Gen. 26:28 **21:23** [b] Josh. 2:12 **21:25** [c] Gen. 26:15, 18, 20–22 **21:27** [d] Gen. 26:31; 31:44 **21:29** [e] Gen. 33:8 **21:30** [f] Gen. 31:48, 52 **21:31** [g] Gen. 21:14; 26:33 **21:33** [h] Gen. 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 26:25 [i] Deut. 32:40; 33:27 **22:1** [a] Heb. 11:17

2 Then He said, "Take now your son,
[b]your only *son* Isaac, whom you [c]love, and
go [d]to the land of Moriah, and offer him
there as a [e]burnt offering on one of the
mountains of which I shall tell you."
3 So Abraham rose early in the morning
and saddled his donkey, and took two of
his young men with him, and Isaac his
son; and he split the wood for the burnt
offering, and arose and went to the place
of which God had told him. 4 Then on the
third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw
the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to
his young men, "Stay here with the donkey;
the lad* and I will go yonder and worship,
and we will [f]come back to you."
6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt
offering and [g]laid *it* on Isaac his son; and
he took the fire in his hand, and a knife,
and the two of them went together. 7 But
Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and
said, "My father!"
And he said, "Here I am, my son."
Then he said, "Look, the fire and the
wood, but where *is* the lamb for a burnt
offering?"
8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will
provide for Himself the [h]lamb for a [i]burnt
offering." So the two of them went together.
9 Then they came to the place of which
God had told him. And Abraham built an
altar there and placed the wood in order;
and he bound Isaac his son and [j]laid him on
the altar, upon the wood. 10 And Abraham
stretched out his hand and took the knife
to slay his son.
11 But the [k]Angel of the LORD called to
him from heaven and said, "Abraham,
Abraham!"
So he said, "Here I am."
12 And He said, [l]"Do not lay your hand
on the lad, or do anything to him; for [m]now
I know that you fear God, since you have
not [n]withheld your son, your only *son*,
from Me."
13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and
looked, and there behind *him was* a ram
caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abra-
ham went and took the ram, and offered it
up for a burnt offering instead of his son.
14 And Abraham called the name of the
place, The-LORD-Will-Provide;* as it is said
to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it
shall be provided."
15 Then the Angel of the LORD called
to Abraham a second time out of heav-
en, 16 and said: [o]"By Myself I have sworn,
says the LORD, because you have done this
thing, and have not withheld your son,
your only *son*— 17 blessing I will [p]bless
you, and multiplying I will multiply your
descendants [q]as the stars of the heaven
[r]and as the sand which *is* on the seashore;
and [s]your descendants shall possess the
gate of their enemies. 18 [t]In your seed all
the nations of the earth shall be blessed,
[u]because you have obeyed My voice." 19 So
Abraham returned to his young men, and
they rose and went together to [v]Beersheba;
and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

The Family of Nahor

20 Now it came to pass after these things
that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed
[w]Milcah also has borne children to your
brother Nahor: 21 [x]Huz his firstborn, Buz
his brother, Kemuel the father [y]of Aram,
22 Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and
Bethuel." 23 And [z]Bethuel begot Rebekah.*
These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abra-
ham's brother. 24 His concubine, whose
name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Ga-
ham, Thahash, and Maachah.

* **22:5** Or *young man* * **22:14** Hebrew *YHWH Yireh* * **22:23** Spelled *Rebecca* in Romans 9:10

22:5 ***worship, and . . . come back to you.*** Abraham's comment to his servants is a significant avowal of his faith in God. Even though he was going to sacrifice his son, he was confident that they both would return.

22:8 ***God will provide.*** Abraham's faith in God's promise is shown in his response to a very real and terrible test. Many times this is seen as a test of the quality of Abraham's love for God—who would he choose, God or his son? However, there is no sign that Abraham made this mistake. He knew beyond a shadow of doubt that Isaac was given to him directly by God, the son of promise. Therefore it was right that he should love his son of promise as a gift from God. God's covenant said that a great nation would descend from Isaac, therefore it would be so. Abraham's test was not "whom do you love most?" but "do you really believe Me?" The answer was a resounding, "Yes!" Abraham carried his faith to the knife edge on his son's flesh. God had promised, and it would be so, even if Isaac had to be raised from the dead to make His words come to pass (Heb. 11:17–19).

22:9 ***bound Isaac his son.*** Surely Isaac could have struggled or run away at this point, but there is no evidence that he did so. Apparently Isaac's faith and trust both in God and in his father was sufficient to stand the test.

22:14 ***The-LORD-Will-Provide.*** As God provided a ram to take the place of Abraham's son, so one day He would provide His own Son to take our place. Some believe that Mount Moriah later became part of the city of Jerusalem, and was the site of Solomon's temple.

22:17 ***bless . . . multiply.*** In the Hebrew, this is stated by doubling the verbs, a Hebrew idiom that powerfully emphasizes the certainty of the action.

22:18 ***seed.*** Here this is a grand play on words. The seed was Isaac, and by extension the Jewish nation.

22:2 [b] Gen. 22:12, 16 [c] John 5:20 [d] 2 Chr. 3:1 [e] Gen. 8:20; 31:54 **22:5** [f] [Heb. 11:19] **22:6** [g] John 19:17 **22:8** [h] John 1:29, 36 [i] Ex. 12:3–6 **22:9** [j] [Heb. 11:17–19] **22:11** [k] Gen. 16:7–11; 21:17, 18; 31:11 **22:12** [l] 1 Sam. 15:22 [m] James 2:21, 22 [n] Gen. 22:2, 16 **22:16** [o] Ps. 105:9 **22:17** [p] Gen. 17:16; 26:3, 24 [q] Gen. 15:5; 26:4 [r] Gen. 13:16; 32:12 [s] Gen. 24:60 **22:18** [t] Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 26:4; [Acts 3:25, 26]; Gal. 3:8, 9, 16, 18 [u] Gen. 18:19; 22:3, 10; 26:5 **22:19** [v] Gen. 21:31 **22:20** [w] Gen. 11:29; 24:15 **22:21** [x] Job 1:1 [y] Job 32:2 **22:23** [z] Gen. 24:15

Sarah's Death and Burial

23 Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-
seven years; *these were* the years of
the life of Sarah. 2So Sarah died in [a]Kir-
jath Arba (that *is,* [b]Hebron) in the land of
Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for
Sarah and to weep for her.

3Then Abraham stood up from before
his dead, and spoke to the sons of [c]Heth,
saying, 4[d]"I *am* a foreigner and a visitor
among you. [e]Give me property for a burial
place among you, that I may bury my dead
out of my sight."

5And the sons of Heth answered Abra-
ham, saying to him, 6"Hear us, my lord:
You *are* [f]a mighty prince among us; bury
your dead in the choicest of our burial plac-
es. None of us will withhold from you his
burial place, that you may bury your dead."

7Then Abraham stood up and bowed
himself to the people of the land, the sons
of Heth. 8And he spoke with them, saying,
"If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of
my sight, hear me, and meet with Ephron
the son of Zohar for me, 9that he may give
me the cave of [g]Machpelah which he has,
which *is* at the end of his field. Let him give
it to me at the full price, as property for a
burial place among you."

10Now Ephron dwelt among the sons
of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered
Abraham in the presence of the sons of
Heth, all who [h]entered at the gate of his
city, saying, 11[i]"No, my lord, hear me: I give
you the field and the cave that *is* in it; I give
it to you in the presence of the sons of my
people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!"

12Then Abraham bowed himself down
before the people of the land; 13and he
spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the peo-
ple of the land, saying, "If you *will give it,*
please hear me. I will give you money for
the field; take *it* from me and I will bury
my dead there."

14And Ephron answered Abraham, say-
ing to him, 15"My lord, listen to me; the
land *is worth* four hundred [j]shekels of sil-
ver. What *is* that between you and me? So
bury your dead." 16And Abraham listened
to Ephron; and Abraham [k]weighed out the
silver for Ephron which he had named in the
hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred
shekels of silver, currency of the merchants.

17So [l]the field of Ephron which *was* in
Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the
field and the cave which *was* in it, and all
the trees that *were* in the field, which *were*
within all the surrounding borders, were
deeded 18to Abraham as a possession in the
presence of the sons of Heth, before all who
went in at the gate of his city.

19And after this, Abraham buried Sarah
his wife in the cave of the field of Mach-
pelah, before Mamre (that *is,* Hebron) in the
land of Canaan. 20So the field and the cave
that *is* in it [m]were deeded to Abraham by the
sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

A Bride for Isaac

24 Now Abraham [a]was old, well ad-
vanced in age; and the LORD [b]had
blessed Abraham in all things. 2So Abra-
ham said [c]to the oldest servant of his house,
who [d]ruled over all that he had, "Please,
[e]put your hand under my thigh, 3and I will
make you [f]swear by the LORD, the God of
heaven and the God of the earth, that [g]you
will not take a wife for my son from the
daughters of the Canaanites, among whom
I dwell; 4[h]but you shall go [i]to my country
and to my family, and take a wife for my
son Isaac."

5And the servant said to him, "Perhaps
the woman will not be willing to follow me
to this land. Must I take your son back to
the land from which you came?"

6But Abraham said to him, "Beware that
you do not take my son back there. 7The
LORD God of heaven, who [j]took me from
my father's house and from the land of my
family, and who spoke to me and swore
to me, saying, [k]'To your descendants* I
give this land,' [l]He will send His angel be-
fore you, and you shall take a wife for my

* **24:7** Literally *seed*

Specifically the Seed was one descendant of Abraham, Jesus the Messiah.

23:13 ***I will give you money for the field.*** Abraham would not have been offering "money" as we think of it today; minted coins were not invented until at least 650 B.C. Instead, trading was done by barter, or with precious metals by weight.

23:15 ***What is that between you and me?*** The dialogue in this chapter gives a wonderfully detailed example of the bargaining process of the day. Abraham clearly understood Ephron's generous statement as a politely phrased way of setting his price.

23:20 ***field . . . cave . . . were deeded to Abraham.*** It is interesting to note that the only piece of the Promised Land that Abraham ever personally possessed was this field and cave to bury his wife.

24:2 ***the oldest servant.*** Some have thought that this might be Eliezer of Damascus, the one who had been named as Abraham's heir before the births of Ishmael and Isaac.

24:3 ***the daughters of the Canaanites.*** This was not an issue of racism, as is sometimes thought—it was theological. The Canaanite peoples worshiped the false gods Baal and Asherah (Deut. 7:3).

23:2 [a] Josh. 14:15; 15:13; 21:11 [b] Gen. 13:18; 23:19 **23:3** [c] Gen. 10:15; 15:20 **23:4** [d] [Gen. 17:8] [e] Acts 7:5, 16 **23:6** [f] Gen. 13:2; 14:14; 24:35 **23:9** [g] Gen. 25:9 **23:10** [h] Gen. 23:18; 34:20, 24 **23:11** [i] 2 Sam. 24:21–24 **23:15** [j] Ex. 30:13 **23:16** [k] Jer. 32:9, 10 **23:17** [l] Gen. 25:9; 49:29–32; 50:13 **23:20** [m] Jer. 32:10, 11 **24:1** [a] Gen. 18:11; 21:5 [b] Gen. 12:2; 13:2; 24:35 **24:2** [c] Gen. 15:2 [d] Gen. 24:10; 39:4–6 [e] Gen. 47:29 **24:3** [f] Gen. 14:19, 22 [g] Deut. 7:3 **24:4** [h] Gen. 28:2 [i] Gen. 12:1 **24:7** [j] Gen. 12:1; 24:3 [k] Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8 [l] Ex. 23:20, 23; 33:2

son from there. 8And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then [m]you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there." 9So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

10Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, [n]for all his master's goods *were in* his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to [o]the city of Nahor. 11And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time [p]when women go out to draw *water.* 12Then he [q]said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please [r]give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. 13Behold, *here* [s]I stand by the well of water, and [t]the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. 14Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—*let* her *be the one* You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And [u]by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master."

15And it happened, [v]before he had finished speaking, that behold, [w]Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of [x]Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. 16Now the young woman [y]*was* very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. 17And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher."

18[z]So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. 19And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw *water* for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." 20Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw *water,* and drew for all his camels. 21And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether [a]the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

22So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden [b]nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten *shekels* of gold, 23and said, "Whose daughter *are* you? Tell me, please, is there room *in* your father's house for us to lodge?"

24So she said to him, [c]"I *am* the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor." 25Moreover she said to him, "We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge."

26Then the man [d]bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD. 27And he said, [e]"Blessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken [f]His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD [g]led me to the house of my master's brethren." 28So the young woman ran and told her mother's household these things.

29Now Rebekah had a brother whose name *was* [h]Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. 30So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well. 31And he said, "Come in, [i]O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels."

32Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and [j]provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to [k]wash his feet and the feet of the men who *were* with him. 33*Food* was set before him to eat, but he said, [l]"I will not eat until I have told about my errand."

And he said, "Speak on."

34So he said, "I *am* Abraham's servant. 35The LORD [m]has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. 36And Sarah my master's wife [n]bore a son to my master when she was old; and [o]to him he has given all that he has. 37Now my master [p]made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; 38[q]but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.'

24:12 ***O LORD God of my master Abraham.*** This language does not mean that the servant himself did not believe in God. The servant was making his appeal on the basis of God's covenant loyalty to Abraham.

24:15 Providence—Abraham sent his servant to choose Isaac's bride, confident that his servant would be led by the Lord and that in God's providence he would make the right choice. The servant prayed for very specific guidance, and God sent him Rebekah. He was impressed not only with her physical beauty, but also with her kind, generous, and hospitable character. His decision was confirmed when her parents gave their consent and she agreed to return with him. Today we must remember to seek the Lord's guidance and trust in His providence just as Abraham's servant, Rebekah, and her family did.

24:8 [m] Josh. 2:17–20 **24:10** [n] Gen. 24:2, 22 [o] Gen. 11:31, 32; 22:20; 27:43; 29:5 **24:11** [p] Ex. 2:16 **24:12** [q] Ex. 3:6, 15 [r] Neh. 1:11 **24:13** [s] Gen. 24:43 [t] Ex. 2:16 **24:14** [u] Judg. 6:17, 37 **24:15** [v] Is. 65:24 [w] Gen. 24:45; 25:20 [x] Gen. 22:20, 23 **24:16** [y] Gen. 12:11; 26:7; 29:17 **24:18** [z] [1 Pet. 3:8, 9] **24:21** [a] Gen. 24:12–14, 27, 52 **24:22** [b] Ex. 32:2, 3 **24:24** [c] Gen. 22:23; 24:15 **24:26** [d] Ex. 4:31 **24:27** [e] Ex. 18:10 [f] Gen. 32:10 [g] Gen. 24:21, 48 **24:29** [h] Gen. 29:5, 13 **24:31** [i] Judg. 17:2 **24:32** [j] Gen. 43:24 [k] Gen. 19:2 **24:33** [l] John 4:34 **24:35** [m] Gen. 13:2; 24:1 **24:36** [n] Gen. 21:1–7 [o] Gen. 21:10; 25:5 **24:37** [p] Gen. 24:2–4 **24:38** [q] Gen. 24:4

39 [r]And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the
woman will not follow me.' 40 [s]But he said
to me, 'The LORD, [t]before whom I walk,
will send His angel with you and prosper
your way; and you shall take a wife for my
son from my family and from my father's
house. 41 [u]You will be clear from this oath
when you arrive among my family; for if
they will not give *her* to you, then you will
be released from my oath.'

42 "And this day I came to the well and
said, [v]'O LORD God of my master Abraham,
if You will now prosper the way in which
I go, 43 [w]behold, I stand by the well of wa-
ter; and it shall come to pass that when the
virgin comes out to draw *water,* and I say
to her, "Please give me a little water from
your pitcher to drink," 44 and she says to
me, "Drink, and I will draw for your cam-
els also,"—*let* her *be* the woman whom the
LORD has appointed for my master's son.'

45 [x]"But before I had finished [y]speaking
in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming
out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and
she went down to the well and drew *wa-
ter.* And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.'
46 And she made haste and let her pitcher
down from her *shoulder,* and said, 'Drink,
and I will give your camels a drink also.' So
I drank, and she gave the camels a drink
also. 47 Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose
daughter *are* you?' And she said, 'The
daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom
Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring
on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists.
48 [z]And I bowed my head and worshiped
the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my
master Abraham, who had led me in the
way of truth to [a]take the daughter of my
master's brother for his son. 49 Now if you
will [b]deal kindly and truly with my master,
tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn
to the right hand or to the left."

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered
and said, [c]"The thing comes from the
LORD; we cannot [d]speak to you either bad
or good. 51 [e]Here *is* Rebekah before you;
take *her* and go, and let her be your mas-
ter's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."

52 And it came to pass, when Abraham's
servant heard their words, that [f]he wor-
shiped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the
earth. 53 Then the servant brought out [g]jew-
elry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing,
and gave *them* to Rebekah. He also gave
[h]precious things to her brother and to her
mother.

54 And he and the men who *were* with
him ate and drank and stayed all night.
Then they arose in the morning, and he
said, [i]"Send me away to my master."

55 But her brother and her mother said,
"Let the young woman stay with us *a few*
days, at least ten; after that she may go."

56 And he said to them, "Do not hinder
me, since the LORD has prospered my way;
send me away so that I may go to my mas-
ter."

57 So they said, "We will call the young
woman and ask her personally." 58 Then
they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will
you go with this man?"

And she said, "I will go."

59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister
[j]and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and
his men. 60 And they blessed Rebekah and
said to her:

"Our sister, *may* you *become*
[k]*The mother of* thousands of ten
thousands;
[l]And may your descendants possess
The gates of those who hate them."

61 Then Rebekah and her maids arose,
and they rode on the camels and followed
the man. So the servant took Rebekah and
departed.

62 Now Isaac came from the way of [m]Beer
Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. 63 And
Isaac went out [n]to meditate in the field in the
evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked,
and there, the camels *were* coming. 64 Then
Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when [o]she saw
Isaac she dismounted from her camel; 65 for
she had said to the servant, "Who *is* this
man walking in the field to meet us?"

The servant said, "It *is* my master." So
she took a veil and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all the
things that he had done. 67 Then Isaac
brought her into his mother Sarah's tent;
and he [p]took Rebekah and she became his
wife, and he loved her. So Isaac [q]was com-
forted after his mother's *death.*

24:50 ***The thing comes from the LORD.*** It appears that the family of Bethuel and Laban also worshiped the living God, or at least acknowledged Him along with other gods (see 31:19; Josh. 24:2).

24:60 ***they blessed Rebekah.*** These words are not mere sentiment, nor are they a magical charm, but a prayer for God's blessing on her life. ***gates.*** The possession of the gates of one's enemies meant power over them (22:17).

24:67 ***he loved her.*** The love of Isaac for Rebekah is a wonderful fulfillment and illustration of God's original purpose for marriage. Realizing it was not good for man to be alone (2:18), the Creator graciously created Eve, a helper for Adam. God Himself then performed history's first wedding. Isaac and Rebekah serve not only as a lovely example of godly marriage, but also as a beautiful picture of the love between Christ and the church in the New

24:39 [r] Gen. 24:5 **24:40** [s] Gen. 24:7 [t] Gen. 5:22, 24; 17:1 **24:41** [u] Gen. 24:8 **24:42** [v] Gen. 24:12 **24:43** [w] Gen. 24:13 **24:45** [x] Gen. 24:15 [y] 1 Sam. 1:13 **24:48** [z] Gen. 24:26, 52 [a] Gen. 22:23; 24:27 **24:49** [b] Josh. 2:14 **24:50** [c] Ps. 118:23 [d] Gen. 31:24, 29 **24:51** [e] Gen. 20:15 **24:52** [f] Gen. 24:26, 48 **24:53** [g] Ex. 3:22; 11:2; 12:35 [h] 2 Chr. 21:3 **24:54** [i] Gen. 24:56, 59; 30:25 **24:59** [j] Gen. 35:8 **24:60** [k] Gen. 17:16 [l] Gen. 22:17; 28:14 **24:62** [m] Gen. 16:14; 25:11 **24:63** [n] Josh. 1:8 **24:64** [o] Josh. 15:18 **24:67** [p] Gen. 25:20; 29:20 [q] Gen. 23:1, 2; 38:12

Abraham and Keturah

25 Abraham again took a wife, and her
name *was* [a]Keturah. **2**And [b]she bore
him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian,
Ishbak, and Shuah. **3**Jokshan begot Sheba
and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were
Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. **4**And
the sons of Midian *were* Ephah, Epher, Ha-
noch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these *were*
the children of Keturah.

5And [c]Abraham gave all that he had to
Isaac. **6**But Abraham gave gifts to the sons
of the concubines which Abraham had;
and while he was still living he [d]sent them
eastward, away from Isaac his son, to [e]the
country of the east.

Abraham's Death and Burial

7This *is* the sum of the years of Abra-
ham's life which he lived: one hundred
and seventy-five years. **8**Then Abraham
breathed his last and [f]died in a good old
age, an old man and full *of years*, and [g]was
gathered to his people. **9**And [h]his sons
Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of
[i]Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre, in
the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hit-
tite, **10**[j]the field which Abraham purchased
from the sons of Heth. [k]There Abraham
was buried, and Sarah his wife. **11**And it
came to pass, after the death of Abraham,
that God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac
dwelt at [l]Beer Lahai Roi.

The Families of Ishmael and Isaac

12Now this *is* the [m]genealogy of Ishmael,
Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian,
Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.
13And [n]these *were* the names of the sons
of Ishmael, by their names, according to
their generations: The firstborn of Ishma-
el, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,
14Mishma, Dumah, Massa, **15**Hadar,* Tema,
Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. **16**These
were the sons of Ishmael and these *were*
their names, by their towns and their set-
tlements, [o]twelve princes according to their
nations. **17**These *were* the years of the life
of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven
years; and [p]he breathed his last and died,
and was gathered to his people. **18**[q](They
dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which
is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.)
He died [r]in the presence of all his brethren.

19This *is* the [s]genealogy of Isaac, Abra-
ham's son. [t]Abraham begot Isaac. **20**Isaac
was forty years old when he took Rebekah
as wife, [u]the daughter of Bethuel the Syri-
an of Padan Aram, [v]the sister of Laban the
Syrian. **21**Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD
for his wife, because she *was* barren; [w]and
the LORD granted his plea, [x]and Rebekah
his wife conceived. **22**But the children
struggled together within her; and she
said, "If *all is* well, why *am I like* this?" [y]So
she went to inquire of the LORD.

23And the LORD said to her:

> [z]"Two nations *are* in your womb,
> Two peoples shall be separated from
> your body;
> *One* people shall be stronger than [a]the
> other,
> [b]And the older shall serve the younger."

24So when her days were fulfilled *for her*
to give birth, indeed *there were* twins in
her womb. **25**And the first came out red.
He was [c]like a hairy garment all over; so
they called his name Esau.* **26**Afterward
his brother came out, and [d]his hand took
hold of Esau's heel; so [e]his name was called
Jacob.* Isaac *was* sixty years old when she
bore them.

27So the boys grew. And Esau was [f]a

* **25:15** Masoretic Text reads *Hadad*. * **25:25** Literally *Hairy* * **25:26** Literally *Supplanter*

Testament. Rebekah, like the church, loved her bridegroom without first seeing him (compare Gen. 24:58 with 1 Pet. 1:8). Like the church, Rebekah was prayed for by her bridegroom (Gen. 24:63; Rom. 8:34). Isaac, having previously been presented for offering on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:1–14), was content to await the arrival of his bride. He was an early portrayal of the Son of God who now awaits the arrival of His bride in heaven (Heb. 10:12–14).

25:1 *took a wife.* In 1 Chronicles 1:32, Keturah is described as Abraham's concubine. It is not really known exactly what position she had in Abraham's household, or when the relationship began. Her sons had a status similar to that of Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar (ch. 16), but without Ishmael's particular blessing (16:10–16).

25:2 *Midian.* This son was the father of the Midianites, some of whom later bought Joseph from his brothers (37:28,36).

25:11 *God blessed.* God blessed Isaac because He had already established "an everlasting covenant" with him (17:19; Heb. 11:17). Later God renewed the covenant with Isaac personally (26:2–5).

25:21 *pleaded.* The Hebrew verb here indicates that Isaac prayed passionately for his wife. For examples of passionate prayer, see Ex. 8:30; 2 Sam. 21:14; 24:25.

25:25 *Esau.* This name sounds like the Hebrew word that means "hairy."

25:26 *Jacob.* The Hebrew word that means "heel" sounds similar to the name Jacob. The name may mean either "he who grasps at the heel (of another)" or "He (the Lord) is at his heels (is his protector)."

25:1 [a] 1 Chr. 1:32, 33 **25:2** [b] 1 Chr. 1:32, 33 **25:5** [c] Gen. 24:35, 36 **25:6** [d] Gen. 21:14 [e] Judg. 6:3 **25:8** [f] Gen. 15:15; 47:8, 9 [g] Gen. 25:17; 35:29; 49:29, 33 **25:9** [h] Gen. 35:29; 50:13 [i] Gen. 23:9, 17; 49:30 **25:10** [j] Gen. 23:3–16 [k] Gen. 49:31 **25:11** [l] Gen. 16:14 **25:12** [m] Gen. 11:10, 27; 16:15 **25:13** [n] 1 Chr. 1:29–31 **25:16** [o] Gen. 17:20 **25:17** [p] Gen. 25:8; 49:33 **25:18** [q] 1 Sam. 15:7 [r] Gen. 16:12 **25:19** [s] Gen. 36:1, 9 [t] Matt. 1:2 **25:20** [u] Gen. 22:23; 24:15, 29, 67 [v] Gen. 24:29 **25:21** [w] 1 Chr. 5:20 [x] Rom. 9:10–13 **25:22** [y] 1 Sam. 1:15; 9:9; 10:22 **25:23** [z] Gen. 17:4–6, 16; 24:60 [a] 2 Sam. 8:14 [b] Rom. 9:12 **25:25** [c] Gen. 27:11, 16, 23 **25:26** [d] Hos. 12:3 [e] Gen. 27:36 **25:27** [f] Gen. 27:3, 5

skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was [g]a mild man, [h]dwelling in tents.
28And Isaac loved Esau because he [i]ate *of his* game, [j]but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Esau Sells His Birthright

29Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he *was* weary.
30And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red *stew,* for I *am* weary." Therefore his name was called Edom.*
31But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."
32And Esau said, "Look, I *am* about to die; so [k]what *is* this birthright to me?"
33Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day."

So he swore to him, and [l]sold his birthright to Jacob. 34And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then [m]he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau [n]despised *his* birthright.

Isaac and Abimelech

26 There was a famine in the land, besides [a]the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to [b]Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar.
2Then the LORD appeared to him and said: [c]"Do not go down to Egypt; live in [d]the land of which I shall tell you. 3[e]Dwell in this land, and [f]I will be with you and [g]bless you; for to you and your descendants [h]I give all these lands, and I will perform [i]the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. 4And [j]I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; [k]and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5[l]because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."
6So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. 7And the men of the place asked about his wife. And [m]he said, "She *is* my sister"; for [n]he was afraid to say, "*She is* my wife," *because he thought,* "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she *is* [o]beautiful to behold." 8Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebekah his wife.
9Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Quite obviously she *is* your wife; so how could you say, 'She *is* my sister'?"

Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.'"
10And Abimelech said, "What *is* this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and [p]you would have brought guilt on us." 11So Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, "He who [q]touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."
12Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year [r]a hundredfold; and the LORD [s]blessed him. 13The man [t]began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; 14for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines [u]envied him. 15Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells [v]which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth. 16And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for [w]you are much mightier than we."
17Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. 18And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. [x]He called them by the names which his father had called them.
19Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there.
20But the herdsmen of Gerar [y]quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water *is* ours." So he called the name of the well Esek,* because they quarreled with him.
21Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that *one* also. So he called

* **25:30** Literally *Red* * **26:20** Literally *Quarrel*

25:30 *Edom.* This name means "red." The nickname is here connected to the red stew for which he traded his birthright; many have speculated that Esau may have had ruddy skin, or even red hair since the name stuck and even became the name of his land and the nation of his descendants (36:8).
26:1 *Philistines.* The Philistines are thought to have come to the coastland of Canaan following their defeat by the Egyptians around 1200 B.C. The Egyptians called them the "Sea Peoples"; they were apparently Greek peoples who migrated eastward (see 1 Sam. 4:1; 2 Sam. 5:17).
26:3 *bless you.* The Lord fulfilled His promise to Abraham concerning Isaac (17:19). He established His everlasting covenant with Isaac, just as He had with Abraham.
26:7 *sister.* Rebekah was Isaac's close relative, but she was not his sister (she was his first cousin once removed). Isaac was even more deceitful than his father Abraham (20:2,12).
26:12–13 *blessed.* God's special work for Abraham was extended to the son.

25:27 [g] Job 1:1, 8 [h] Heb. 11:9 **25:28** [i] Gen. 27:4, 19, 25, 31 [j] Gen. 27:6–10 **25:32** [k] Mark 8:36, 37 **25:33** [l] Heb. 12:16 **25:34** [m] Eccl. 8:15 [n] Heb. 12:16, 17 **26:1** [a] Gen. 12:10 [b] Gen. 20:1, 2 **26:2** [c] Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 35:9 [d] Gen. 12:1 **26:3** [e] Heb. 11:9 [f] Gen. 28:13, 15 [g] Gen. 12:2 [h] Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:18 [i] Gen. 22:16 **26:4** [j] Gen. 15:5; 22:17 [k] Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Gal. 3:8 **26:5** [l] Gen. 22:16, 18 **26:7** [m] Gen. 12:13; 20:2, 12, 13 [n] Prov. 29:25 [o] Gen. 12:11; 24:16; 29:17 **26:10** [p] Gen. 20:9 **26:11** [q] Ps. 105:15 **26:12** [r] Matt. 13:8, 23 [s] Gen. 24:1; 25:8, 11; 26:3 **26:13** [t] [Prov. 10:22] **26:14** [u] Gen. 37:11 **26:15** [v] Gen. 21:25, 30 **26:16** [w] Ex. 1:9 **26:18** [x] Gen. 21:31 **26:20** [y] Gen. 21:25

its name Sitnah.* 22And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth,* because he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall [z]be fruitful in the land."

23Then he went up from there to Beersheba. 24And the LORD [a]appeared to him the same night and said, [b]"I *am* the God of your father Abraham; [c]do not fear, for [d]I *am* with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." 25So he [e]built an altar there and [f]called on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

26Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, [g]and Phichol the commander of his army. 27And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, [h]since you hate me and have [i]sent me away from you?"

28But they said, "We have certainly seen that the LORD [j]is with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a covenant with you, 29that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. [k]You *are* now the blessed of the LORD.'"

30[l]So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. 31Then they arose early in the morning and [m]swore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

32It came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." 33So he called it Shebah.* [n]Therefore the name of the city *is* Beersheba* to this day.

34[o]When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. 35And [p]they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

Isaac Blesses Jacob

27 Now it came to pass, when Isaac was [a]old and [b]his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son."

And he answered him, "Here I am."

2Then he said, "Behold now, I am old. I [c]do not know the day of my death. 3[d]Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. 4And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring *it* to me that I may eat, that my soul [e]may bless you before I die."

5Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring *it*. 6So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 7'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.' 8Now therefore, my son, [f]obey my voice according to what I command you. 9Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make [g]savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. 10Then you shall take *it* to your father, that he may eat *it*, and that he [h]may bless you before his death."

11And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "Look, [i]Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-*skinned* man. 12Perhaps my father will [j]feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring [k]a curse on myself and not a blessing."

13But his mother said to him, [l]"*Let* your curse *be* on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me." 14And he went and got *them* and brought *them* to his mother, and his mother [m]made savory food, such as his father loved. 15Then Rebekah took the [n]choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. 16And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. 17Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

*26:21 Literally *Enmity* *26:22 Literally *Spaciousness* *26:33 Literally *Oath* or *Seven* • Literally *Well of the Oath* or *Well of the Seven*

26:25 ***called on the name of the LORD.*** Isaac followed the practice of his father (12:8). At this altar Isaac not only prayed to the Lord, he also affirmed the reality of the living God in this special land (12:8; 21:33).

26:34 ***Hittite.*** Because the Hittites believed in many different gods, Esau's marriages were unacceptable for one belonging to God's covenant family.

27:4 ***my soul.*** This phrase is simply a substitute for the personal pronoun "I."

27:8 ***obey my voice . . . what I command you.*** Rebekah certainly appears calculating and devious in this passage, but God had told her before they were even born that the younger son would have precedence over the older (25:23). He had not, however, told her to make sure that it happened, and the results of her deception were family strife and the loss of her younger son.

26:22 [z] Gen. 17:6; 28:3; 41:52 **26:24** [a] Gen. 26:2 [b] Gen. 17:7, 8; 24:12 [c] Gen. 15:1 [d] Gen. 26:3, 4 **26:25** [e] Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18; 22:9; 33:20 [f] Ps. 116:17 **26:26** [g] Gen. 21:22 **26:27** [h] Judg. 11:7 [i] Gen. 26:16 **26:28** [j] Gen. 21:22, 23 **26:29** [k] Gen. 24:31 **26:30** [l] Gen. 19:3 **26:31** [m] Gen. 21:31 **26:33** [n] Gen. 21:31; 28:10 **26:34** [o] Gen. 28:8; 36:2 **26:35** [p] Gen. 27:46; 28:1, 8 **27:1** [a] Gen. 35:28 [b] Gen. 48:10 **27:2** [c] [Prov. 27:1] **27:3** [d] Gen. 25:27, 28 **27:4** [e] Deut. 33:1 **27:8** [f] Gen. 27:13, 43 **27:9** [g] Gen. 27:4 **27:10** [h] Gen. 27:4; 48:16 **27:11** [i] Gen. 25:25 **27:12** [j] Gen. 27:21, 22 [k] Deut. 27:18 **27:13** [l] Gen. 43:9 **27:14** [m] Prov. 23:3 **27:15** [n] Gen. 27:27

18 So he went to his father and said, "My father."

And he said, "Here I am. Who *are* you, my son?"

19 Jacob said to his father, "I *am* Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, [o]that your soul may bless me."

20 But Isaac said to his son, "How *is it* that you have found *it* so quickly, my son?"

And he said, "Because the LORD your God brought *it* to me."

21 Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I [p]may feel you, my son, whether you *are* really my son Esau or not." 22 So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau." 23 And he did not recognize him, because [q]his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

24 Then he said, "*Are* you really my son Esau?"

He said, "I *am*."

25 He said, "Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so [r]that my soul may bless you." So he brought *it* near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26 Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son." 27 And he came near and [s]kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said:

"Surely, [t]the smell of my son
Is like the smell of a field
Which the LORD has blessed.
28 Therefore may [u]God give you
Of [v]the dew of heaven,
Of [w]the fatness of the earth,
And [x]plenty of grain and wine.
29 [y]Let peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you.
Be master over your brethren,
And [z]let your mother's sons bow down to you.
[a]Cursed *be* everyone who curses you,
And blessed *be* those who bless you!"

Esau's Lost Hope

30 Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31 He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, "Let my father arise and [b]eat of his son's game, that your soul may bless me."

32 And his father Isaac said to him, "Who *are* you?"

So he said, "I *am* your son, your firstborn, Esau."

33 Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where *is* the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me? I ate all *of it* before you came, and I have blessed him—[c]*and* indeed he shall be blessed."

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, [d]he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me—me also, O my father!"

35 But he said, "Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing."

36 And *Esau* said, [e]"Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!" And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

37 Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, [f]"Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with [g]grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?"

38 And Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice [h]and wept.

39 Then Isaac his father answered and said to him:

"Behold, [i]your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth,
And of the dew of heaven from above.
40 By your sword you shall live,
And [j]you shall serve your brother;
And [k]it shall come to pass, when you become restless,
That you shall break his yoke from your neck."

Jacob Escapes from Esau

41 So Esau [l]hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, [m]"The days of mourning for my father are at hand; [n]then I will kill my brother Jacob."

42 And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, "Surely your brother Esau [o]comforts

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27:18–29 Falsehood—Jacob may have felt justified in deceiving his father, since Esau had already sold him the birthright. Esau had clearly demonstrated his contempt of the position (including the spiritual responsibility) which was his by right, while Jacob valued and desired it. However, lofty purposes and aspirations cannot justify deceit and trickery. We must be content to leave the fulfillment of God's promises in His hand and wait for His time.

27:29 ***peoples serve you.*** Isaac predicted that Jacob's descendants would obtain supremacy over

27:19 [o] Gen. 27:4 **27:21** [p] Gen. 27:12 **27:23** [q] Gen. 27:16 **27:25** [r] Gen. 27:4, 10, 19, 31 **27:27** [s] Gen. 29:13 [t] Song 4:11 **27:28** [u] Heb. 11:20 [v] Deut. 33:13, 28 [w] Gen. 45:18 [x] Deut. 7:13; 33:28 **27:29** [y] Gen. 9:25; 25:23 [z] Gen. 37:7, 10; 49:8 [a] Gen. 12:2, 3 **27:31** [b] Gen. 27:4 **27:33** [c] Gen. 25:23; 28:3, 4 **27:34** [d] [Heb. 12:17] **27:36** [e] Gen. 25:26, 32–34 **27:37** [f] 2 Sam. 8:14 [g] Gen. 27:28, 29 **27:38** [h] Heb. 12:17 **27:39** [i] Heb. 11:20 **27:40** [j] Gen. 25:23; 27:29 [k] 2 Kin. 8:20–22 **27:41** [l] Gen. 26:27; 32:3–11; 37:4, 5, 8 [m] Gen. 50:2–4, 10 [n] Obad. 10 **27:42** [o] Ps. 64:5

himself concerning you *by intending* to kill you. 43Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban [p]in Haran. 44And stay with him a [q]few days, until your brother's fury turns away, 45until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?"

46And Rebekah said to Isaac, [r]"I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; [s]if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these *who are* the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28 Then Isaac called Jacob and [a]blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: [b]"You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 2[c]Arise, go to [d]Padan Aram, to the house of [e]Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of [f]Laban your mother's brother.

3 "May [g]God Almighty bless you,
And make you [h]fruitful and multiply you,
That you may be an assembly of peoples;
4 And give you [i]the blessing of Abraham,
To you and your descendants with you,
That you may inherit the land
[j]In which you are a stranger,
Which God gave to Abraham."

5So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

Esau Marries Mahalath

6Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, *and that* as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," 7and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram. 8Also Esau saw [k]that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. 9So Esau went to Ishmael and [l]took [m]Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, [n]the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

Jacob's Vow at Bethel

10Now Jacob [o]went out from Beersheba and went toward [p]Haran. 11So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. 12Then he [q]dreamed, and behold, a ladder *was* set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there [r]the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

13[s]And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: [t]"I *am* the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; [u]the land on which you lie I will give to you and your [v]descendants. 14Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad [w]to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and [x]in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. 15Behold, [y]I *am* with you and will [z]keep you wherever you go, and will [a]bring you back to this land; for [b]I will not leave you [c]until I have done what I have spoken to you."

16Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in [d]this place, and I did not know *it*." 17And he was afraid and said, "How awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven!"

18Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, [e]set it up as a pillar, [f]and poured oil on top of it. 19And he called the name of [g]that place Bethel;* but the name of that city had been Luz previously. 20[h]Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If [i]God will be

* **28:19** Literally *House of God*

other peoples. Jesus, as the King of kings, and a descendant of Jacob, ultimately fulfilled this prediction (1 Tim. 6:14–16).

27:46 ***daughters of Heth.*** Intermarrying with the pagan women of Canaan was dangerous because they would bring their pagan gods and pagan worship into their new homes.

28:2 ***Padan Aram.*** This is a region of Haran in northern Aram (Syria) near the Euphrates River.

28:3 ***God Almighty.*** This Hebrew name *El Shaddai* is used by or in the hearing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (35:11). God later identified Himself to Moses with this same name (Ex. 6:3).

28:9 ***Mahalath.*** This daughter of Ishmael is probably the same woman as Basemath (36:3). Her name means "dance."

28:10–15 Jacob's Dream—The ladder of Jacob's dream reminds us of Jesus' words about the angels "ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John 1:51), vividly depicting Himself as the Way into the heavenlies. Certainly Jacob did not deserve such

27:43 [p] Gen. 11:31; 25:20; 28:2, 5 **27:44** [q] Gen. 31:41 **27:46** [r] Gen. 26:34, 35; 28:8 [s] Gen. 24:3 **28:1** [a] Gen. 27:33 [b] Gen. 24:3 **28:2** [c] Hos. 12:12 [d] Gen. 25:20 [e] Gen. 22:23 [f] Gen. 24:29; 27:43; 29:5 **28:3** [g] Gen. 17:16; 35:11; 48:3 [h] Gen. 26:4, 24 **28:4** [i] Gen. 12:2, 3; 22:17 [j] Gen. 17:8; 23:4; 36:7 **28:8** [k] Gen. 24:3; 26:34, 35; 27:46 **28:9** [l] Gen. 26:34, 35 [m] Gen. 36:2, 3 [n] Gen. 25:13 **28:10** [o] Hos. 12:12 [p] Gen. 12:4, 5; 27:43; 29:4 **28:12** [q] Gen. 31:10; 41:1 [r] John 1:51 **28:13** [s] Gen. 35:1; 48:3 [t] Gen. 26:24 [u] Gen. 13:15, 17; 26:3; 35:12 [v] Gen. 13:16; 22:17 **28:14** [w] Gen. 13:14, 15 [x] Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4 **28:15** [y] Gen. 26:3, 24; 31:3 [z] Gen. 48:16 [a] Gen. 35:6; 48:21 [b] Deut. 7:9; 31:6, 8 [c] Num. 23:19 **28:16** [d] Ex. 3:5 **28:18** [e] Gen. 31:13, 45 [f] Lev. 8:10–12 **28:19** [g] Judg. 1:23, 26 **28:20** [h] Judg. 11:30 [i] Gen. 28:15

with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me [i]bread to eat and clothing to put on, 21so that [k]I come back to my father's house in peace, [l]then the LORD shall be my God. 22And this stone which I have set as a pillar [m]shall be God's house, [n]and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Jacob Meets Rachel

29 So Jacob went on his journey [a]and came to the land of the people of the East. 2And he looked, and saw a [b]well in the field; and behold, there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone *was* on the well's mouth. 3Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth.

4And Jacob said to them, "My brethren, where *are* you from?"

And they said, "We *are* from [c]Haran."

5Then he said to them, "Do you know [d]Laban the son of Nahor?"

And they said, "We know him."

6So he said to them, [e]"Is he well?"

And they said, "*He is* well. And look, his daughter Rachel [f]is coming with the sheep."

7Then he said, "Look, *it is* still high day; *it is* not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go and feed *them*."

8But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

9Now while he was still speaking with them, [g]Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. 10And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and [h]rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11Then Jacob [i]kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. 12And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* [j]her father's relative and that he *was* Rebekah's son. [k]So she ran and told her father.

13Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister's son, that [l]he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things. 14And Laban said to him, [m]"Surely you *are* my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him for a month.

Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

15Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you *are* my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, [n]what *should* your wages *be?*" 16Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel. 17Leah's eyes *were* delicate, but Rachel was [o]beautiful of form and appearance.

18Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, [p]"I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."

19And Laban said, "*It is* better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me." 20So Jacob [q]served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed *only* a few days to him because of the love he had for her.

21Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give *me* my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may [r]go in to her." 22And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and [s]made a feast. 23Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. 24And Laban gave his maid [t]Zilpah to his daughter Leah *as* a maid. 25So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it *was* Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you [u]deceived me?"

26And Laban said, "It must not be done

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grace after cheating his brother out of the blessings of Isaac. Indeed, he was already suffering by being banished from the fellowship of his family. Nevertheless, God mercifully confirmed the covenant promises made to Abraham and Isaac concerning the land and the descendants. His words, "I am with you and will keep you" speak of God's personal presence for protection and guidance, anticipating Jacob's return to the land, so that all the promises might be fulfilled. Surely the grace of God goes far beyond our small expectations.

28:22 ***a tenth.*** Jacob promised to give a tenth of his possessions to God. Abraham had given the same proportion to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Later the Mosaic law required giving a tenth to God (Deut. 14:22).

29:5 ***son.*** This term is being used in a loose sense. Nahor was actually the grandfather of Laban (22:20–23; 24:15,50).

29:6 ***Rachel.*** This name is a term of endearment meaning "ewe lamb."

29:21–25 Deception—Many times we see God's prohibitions as mere taboos. We somehow imagine that God says no just because He can, instead of acknowledging both His goodwill towards us, and His wisdom. God does not merely prohibit lying

28:20 [j] 1 Tim. 6:8 **28:21** [k] Judg. 11:31 [l] Deut. 26:17 **28:22** [m] Gen. 35:7, 14 [n] Gen. 14:20 **29:1** [a] Num. 23:7 **29:2** [b] Gen. 24:10, 11 **29:4** [c] Gen. 11:31; 28:10 **29:5** [d] Gen. 24:24, 29; 28:2 **29:6** [e] Gen. 43:27 [f] Ex. 2:16, 17 **29:9** [g] Ex. 2:16 **29:10** [h] Ex. 2:17 **29:11** [i] Gen. 33:4; 45:14, 15 **29:12** [j] Gen. 13:8; 14:14, 16; 28:5 [k] Gen. 24:28 **29:13** [l] Gen. 24:29–31 **29:14** [m] Gen. 2:23; 37:27 **29:15** [n] Gen. 30:28; 31:41 **29:17** [o] Gen. 12:11, 14; 26:7 **29:18** [p] Gen. 31:41 **29:20** [q] Gen. 30:26 **29:21** [r] Judg. 15:1 **29:22** [s] John 2:1, 2 **29:24** [t] Gen. 30:9, 10 **29:25** [u] 1 Sam. 28:12

so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. 27[v]Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."

28Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. 29And Laban gave his maid [w]Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. 30Then *Jacob* also went in to Rachel, and he also [x]loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban [y]still another seven years.

The Children of Jacob

31When the LORD [z]saw that Leah *was* unloved, He [a]opened her womb; but Rachel *was* barren. 32So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben;* for she said, "The LORD has surely [b]looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." 33Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I *am* unloved, He has therefore given me this *son* also." And she called his name Simeon.* 34She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.* 35And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name [c]Judah.* Then she stopped bearing.

30 Now when Rachel saw that [a]she bore Jacob no children, Rachel [b]envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, [c]or else I die!"

2And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, [d]"*Am* I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

3So she said, "Here is [e]my maid Bilhah; go in to her, [f]and she will bear *a child* on my knees, [g]that I also may have children by her." 4Then she gave him Bilhah her maid [h]as wife, and Jacob went in to her. 5And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 6Then Rachel said, "God has [i]judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan.* 7And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 8Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, *and* indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.*

9When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and [j]gave her to Jacob as wife. 10And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11Then Leah said, "A troop comes!"* So she called his name Gad.* 12And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 13Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters [k]will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.*

14Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, [l]"Please give me *some* of your son's mandrakes."

15But she said to her, [m]"*Is it* a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?"

And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."

16When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.

17And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. 18Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar.* 19Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. 20And Leah said, "God has endowed me *with* a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun.* 21Afterward she bore a [n]daughter, and called her name Dinah.

22Then God [o]remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and [p]opened her womb. 23And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away [q]my reproach."

* **29:32** Literally *See, a Son* * **29:33** Literally *Heard* * **29:34** Literally *Attached* * **29:35** Literally *Praise* * **30:6** Literally *Judge* * **30:8** Literally *My Wrestling* * **30:11** Following Qere, Syriac, and Targum; Kethib, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *in fortune.* • Literally *Troop* or *Fortune* * **30:13** Literally *Happy* * **30:18** Literally *Wages* * **30:20** Literally *Dwelling*

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because He can, it is because it is destructive. Jacob learned through experience that trickery and deceit bring complicated and painful consequences. False dealing destroys trust in a relationship, and once trust has been broken it is difficult, if not impossible, to entirely restore it.

29:31 *unloved.* God was kind to Leah in her predicament. Even though she was the unloved wife, it was through her son Judah that the messianic line was carried out.

30:14 *mandrakes.* This is a plant which was regarded as an aid to conception. Its aroma was associated with lovemaking (Song 7:13).

30:22 *remembered . . . listened to her . . . opened.* These three verbs emphasize conception as a gift from God.

29:27 [v] Judg. 14:2 **29:29** [w] Gen. 30:3–5 **29:30** [x] Deut. 21:15–17 [y] Gen. 30:26; 31:41 **29:31** [z] Ps. 127:3 [a] Gen. 30:1 **29:32** [b] Deut. 26:7 **29:35** [c] Matt. 1:2 **30:1** [a] Gen. 16:1, 2; 29:31 [b] Gen. 37:11 [c] [Job 5:2] **30:2** [d] 1 Sam. 1:5 **30:3** [e] Gen. 16:2 [f] Gen. 50:23 [g] Gen. 16:2, 3 **30:4** [h] Gen. 16:3, 4 **30:6** [i] Lam. 3:59 **30:9** [j] Gen. 30:4 **30:13** [k] Luke 1:48 **30:14** [l] Gen. 25:30 **30:15** [m] [Num. 16:9, 13] **30:21** [n] Gen. 34:1 **30:22** [o] 1 Sam. 1:19, 20 [p] Gen. 29:31 **30:23** [q] Luke 1:25

24So she called his name Joseph,* and said, [r]"The LORD shall add to me another son."

Jacob's Agreement with Laban

25And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, [s]"Send me away, that I may go to [t]my own place and to my country. 26Give *me* my wives and my children [u]for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which [v]I have done for you."

27And Laban said to him, "Please *stay*, if I have found favor in your eyes, *for* I have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake." 28Then he said, [w]"Name me your wages, and I will give *it*."

29So *Jacob* said to him, [x]"You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me. 30For what you had before I *came was* little, and it has increased to a great amount; the LORD has blessed you since my coming. And now, when shall I also [y]provide for my own house?"

31So he said, "What shall I give you?"

And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: 32Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and [z]*these* shall be my wages. 33So my [a]righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if *it is* with me."

34And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!" 35So he removed that day the male goats that were [b]speckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons. 36Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37Now [c]Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which *was* in the rods. 38And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink. 39So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. 40Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flock.

41And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. 42But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put *them* in; so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. 43Thus the man [d]became exceedingly prosperous, and [e]had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

Jacob Flees from Laban

31 Now *Jacob* heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this [a]wealth." 2And Jacob saw the [b]countenance of Laban, and indeed it *was* not [c]*favorable* toward him as before. 3Then the LORD said to Jacob, [d]"Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will [e]be with you."

4So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock, 5and said to them, [f]"I see your father's countenance, that it *is* not *favorable* toward me as before; but the God of my father [g]has been with me. 6And [h]you know that with all my might I have served your father. 7Yet your father has deceived me and [i]changed my wages [j]ten times, but God [k]did not allow him to hurt me. 8If he said thus: 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks

* **30:24** Literally *He Will Add*

30:25 ***own place.*** Even though Jacob had lived for twenty years with Laban's family, he had not adopted that place as his own. He never forgot that the promise and covenant of God were for the land of Canaan, and he knew that he must return.

30:27 ***blessed.*** God had promised to bless others through Abraham's descendants (12:2–3). Now God blessed Laban through Jacob.

30:37 ***rods of green poplar.*** Just what significance these sticks hold is unknown. Some have theorized that they were simply symbols of Jacob's faith in God. Whatever the case, God blessed Jacob by causing Laban's stock to give birth to speckled and spotted young.

31:7 ***deceived me.*** Jacob had surely lived up to his name, deceiving his old father and tricking his brother out of the birthright. But in Laban he met his match, and tasted some of his own medicine. The consequences of dishonesty reach both ways. Because of his own trickery, Jacob had to flee from his home. He apparently never saw his mother again, and

30:24 [r] Gen. 35:16–18 **30:25** [s] Gen. 24:54, 56 [t] Gen. 18:33 **30:26** [u] Gen. 29:18–20, 27, 30 [v] Gen. 26:24; 39:3 **30:28** [w] Gen. 29:15; 31:7, 41 **30:29** [x] Gen. 31:6, 38–40 **30:30** [y] [1 Tim. 5:8] **30:32** [z] Gen. 31:8 **30:33** [a] Ps. 37:6 **30:35** [b] Gen. 31:9–12 **30:37** [c] Gen. 31:9–12 **30:43** [d] Gen. 12:16; 30:30 [e] Gen. 13:2; 24:35; 26:13, 14 **31:1** [a] Ps. 49:16 **31:2** [b] Gen. 4:5 [c] Deut. 28:54 **31:3** [d] Gen. 28:15, 20, 21; 32:9 [e] Gen. 46:4 **31:5** [f] Gen. 31:2, 3 [g] Is. 41:10 **31:6** [h] Gen. 30:29; 31:38–41 **31:7** [i] Gen. 29:25; 31:41 [j] Num. 14:22 [k] Job 1:10

bore speckled. And if he said thus: [l]'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked. 9So God has [m]taken away the livestock of your father and given *them* to me.

10"And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks *were* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted. 11Then [n]the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' 12And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks *are* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for [o]I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13I *am* the God of Bethel, [p]where you anointed the pillar *and* where you made a vow to Me. Now [q]arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.'"

14Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, [r]"Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? 15Are we not considered strangers by him? For [s]he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. 16For all these riches which God has taken from our father are *really* ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."

17Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of [t]Canaan. 19Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the [u]household idols that were her father's. 20And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. 21So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and [v]headed toward the mountains of Gilead.

Laban Pursues Jacob

22And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled. 23Then he took [w]his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. 24But God [x]had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you [y]speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."

25So Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountains, and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountains of Gilead.

26And Laban said to Jacob: "What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and [z]carried away my daughters like captives *taken* with the sword? 27Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp? 28And you did not allow me [a]to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now [b]you have done foolishly in *so* doing. 29It is in my power to do you harm, but the [c]God of your father spoke to me [d]last night, saying, 'Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.' 30And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father's house, *but* why did you [e]steal my gods?"

31Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was [f]afraid, for I said, 'Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.' 32With whomever you find your gods, [g]do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take *it* with you." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

33And Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the two maids' tents, but he did not find *them*. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent. 34Now Rachel had taken the household idols, put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find *them*. 35And she said to her father, "Let it not displease my lord that I cannot [h]rise before you, for the manner of women *is* with me." And he searched but did not find the household idols.

36Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: "What *is* my trespass? What *is* my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? 37Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have you found? Set *it* here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both! 38These twenty years I *have been* with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. 39[i]That which was torn *by beasts* I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. [j]You required it from my hand, *whether* stolen

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his relationship with his father and his only brother was broken. Lying not only harms the liar, but it also affects those he lies to. Because of Laban's trickery, Jacob was saddled with an unloved wife, quarreling sons, and constant domestic strife.

31:19 ***idols.*** Laban's family may have been polytheistic (believing in many gods), as Abraham's father Terah evidently was (Josh. 24:1–3). Considering the evidence of verses 25–50 it seems likely that they worshiped Yahweh along with other "lesser gods." In this culture, the possession of the idols was the right

31:8 [l] Gen. 30:32 **31:9** [m] Gen. 31:1, 16 **31:11** [n] Gen. 16:7–11; 22:11, 15; 31:13; 48:16 **31:12** [o] Ex. 3:7 **31:13** [p] Gen. 28:16–22; 35:1, 6, 15 [q] Gen. 31:3; 32:9 **31:14** [r] Gen. 2:24 **31:15** [s] Gen. 29:15, 20, 23, 27 **31:18** [t] Gen. 17:8; 33:18; 35:27 **31:19** [u] Judg. 17:5 **31:21** [v] 2 Kin. 12:17 **31:23** [w] Gen. 13:8 **31:24** [x] Gen. 20:3; 31:29; 46:2–4 [y] Gen. 24:50; 31:7, 29 **31:26** [z] 1 Sam. 30:2 **31:28** [a] Gen. 31:55 [b] 1 Sam. 13:13 **31:29** [c] Gen. 28:13; 31:5, 24, 42, 53 [d] Gen. 31:24 **31:30** [e] Judg. 17:5; 18:24 **31:31** [f] Gen. 26:7; 32:7, 11 **31:32** [g] Gen. 44:9 **31:35** [h] Lev. 19:32 **31:39** [i] Ex. 22:10 [j] Ex. 22:10–13

by day or stolen by night. 40 *There* I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. 41 Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I [k]served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and [l]you have changed my wages ten times. 42 [m]Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and [n]the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. [o]God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and [p]rebuked *you* last night."

Laban's Covenant with Jacob

43 And Laban answered and said to Jacob, "*These* daughters *are* my daughters, and *these* children *are* my children, and *this* flock *is* my flock; all that you see *is* mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? 44 Now therefore, come, [q]let us make a covenant, [r]you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me."

45 So Jacob [s]took a stone and set it up *as* a pillar. 46 Then Jacob said to his brethren, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there on the heap. 47 Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha,* but Jacob called it Galeed.* 48 And Laban said, [t]"This heap *is* a witness between you and me this day." Therefore its name was called Galeed, 49 also [u]Mizpah,* because he said, "May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from another. 50 If you afflict my daughters, or if you take *other* wives besides my daughters, *although* no man *is* with us—see, God *is* witness between you and me!"

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Here is this heap and here is *this* pillar, which I have placed between you and me. 52 This heap *is* a witness, and *this* pillar *is* a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. 53 The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father [v]judge between us." And Jacob [w]swore by [x]the Fear of his father Isaac. 54 Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain. 55 And early in the morning Laban arose, and [y]kissed his sons and daughters and [z]blessed them. Then Laban departed and [a]returned to his place.

Esau Comes to Meet Jacob

32 So Jacob went on his way, and [a]the angels of God met him. 2 When Jacob saw them, he said, "This *is* God's [b]camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.*

3 Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother [c]in the land of Seir, [d]the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, [e]"Speak thus to my lord Esau, 'Thus your servant Jacob says: "I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. 5 [f]I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that [g]I may find favor in your sight."'"

6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and [h]he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men *are* with him." 7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and [i]distressed; and he divided the people that *were* with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. 8 And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape."

9 [j]Then Jacob said, [k]"O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD [l]who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the [m]mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with [n]my staff, and now I have become two companies. 11 [o]Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me *and* [p]the mother with the children. 12 For [q]You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the [r]sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

* **31:47** Literally, in Aramaic, *Heap of Witness*
• Literally, in Hebrew, *Heap of Witness*
* **31:49** Literally *Watch* * **32:2** Literally *Double Camp*

of the principal heir. Rachel probably did not steal the idols in order to worship them, but because they represented ownership of her father's property.

31:44 *covenant.* This instance of a covenant was an agreement between two equals.

31:49 *Mizpah.* This name means "outlook point," a place to keep watch. God above had His eyes on both men to make them keep their covenant.

31:53 *The God of Abraham.* The wording in Laban's oath suggests that Abraham, Nahor, and their father Terah all worshiped the same One True God. Joshua records the fact that Terah at least worshiped other gods as well (Josh. 24:1–3). It is possible that they were henotheistic—worshiping God not as the only God but as the most important and powerful among many.

32:11 *Deliver me, I pray.* Jacob did not pray in generalities. He named his concerns openly, and concluded with another appeal to God's promises. Christians

31:41 [k] Gen. 29:20, 27–30 [l] Gen. 31:7 **31:42** [m] Ps. 124:1, 2 [n] Is. 8:13 [o] Ex. 3:7 [p] 1 Chr. 12:17 **31:44** [q] Gen. 21:27, 32; 26:28 [r] Josh. 24:27 **31:45** [s] Gen. 28:18; 35:14 **31:48** [t] Josh. 24:27 **31:49** [u] Judg. 10:17; 11:29 **31:53** [v] Gen. 16:5 [w] Gen. 21:23 [x] Gen. 31:42 **31:55** [y] Gen. 29:11, 13; 31:28, 43 [z] Gen. 28:1 [a] Num. 24:25 **32:1** [a] Num. 22:31 **32:2** [b] Josh. 5:14 **32:3** [c] Gen. 14:6; 33:14, 16 [d] Gen. 25:30; 36:6–9 **32:4** [e] Prov. 15:1 **32:5** [f] Gen. 30:43 [g] Gen. 33:8, 15 **32:6** [h] Gen. 33:1 **32:7** [i] Gen. 32:11; 35:3 **32:9** [j] [Ps. 50:15] [k] Gen. 28:13; 31:42 [l] Gen. 31:3, 13 **32:10** [m] Gen. 24:27 [n] Job 8:7 **32:11** [o] Ps. 59:1, 2 [p] Hos. 10:14 **32:12** [q] Gen. 28:13–15 [r] Gen. 22:17

13So he lodged there that same night,
and took what came to his hand as [s]a present for Esau his brother: 14two hundred
female goats and twenty male goats, two
hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15thirty
milk camels with their colts, forty cows
and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and
ten foals. 16Then he delivered *them* to the
hand of his servants, every drove by itself,
and said to his servants, "Pass over before
me, and put some distance between successive droves." 17And he commanded the first
one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets
you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you
belong, and where are you going? Whose
are these in front of you?' 18then you shall
say, 'They *are* your servant Jacob's. It *is* a
present sent to my lord Esau; and behold,
he also *is* behind us.'" 19So he commanded
the second, the third, and all who followed
the droves, saying, "In this manner you
shall speak to Esau when you find him;
20and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob
is behind us.'" For he said, "I will [t]appease
him with the present that goes before me,
and afterward I will see his face; perhaps
he will accept me." 21So the present went on
over before him, but he himself lodged that
night in the camp.

Wrestling with God

22And he arose that night and took his
two wives, his two female servants, and his
eleven sons, [u]and crossed over the ford of
Jabbok. 23He took them, sent them over the
brook, and sent over what he had. 24Then
Jacob was left alone; and [v]a Man wrestled
with him until the breaking of day. 25Now
when He saw that He did not prevail
against him, He touched the socket of his
hip; and [w]the socket of Jacob's hip was out
of joint as He wrestled with him. 26And [x]He
said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."

But he said, [y]"I will not let You go unless
You bless me!"

27So He said to him, "What *is* your
name?"

He said, "Jacob."

28And He said, [z]"Your name shall no
longer be called Jacob, but Israel;* for you
have [a]struggled with God and [b]with men,
and have prevailed."

29Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell *me*
Your name, I pray."

And He said, [c]"Why *is* it *that* you ask
about My name?" And He [d]blessed him
there.

30So Jacob called the name of the place
Peniel:* "For [e]I have seen God face to face,
and my life is preserved." 31Just as he
crossed over Penuel* the sun rose on him,
and he limped on his hip. 32Therefore to
this day the children of Israel do not eat
the muscle that shrank, which *is* on the hip
socket, because He touched the socket of
Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

Jacob and Esau Meet

33 Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked,
and there, [a]Esau was coming, and
with him were four hundred men. So he
divided the children among Leah, Rachel,
and the two maidservants. 2And he put the
maidservants and their children in front,
Leah and her children behind, and Rachel
and Joseph last. 3Then he crossed over
before them and [b]bowed himself to the
ground seven times, until he came near to
his brother.

4[c]But Esau ran to meet him, and em-
braced him, [d]and fell on his neck and
kissed him, and they wept. 5And he lifted
his eyes and saw the women and children,
and said, "Who *are* these with you?"

So he said, "The children [e]whom God
has graciously given your servant." 6Then
the maidservants came near, they and their
children, and bowed down. 7And Leah
also came near with her children, and they
bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Ra-
chel came near, and they bowed down.

8Then Esau said, "What *do* you *mean by*
[f]all this company which I met?"

And he said, "*These are* [g]to find favor in
the sight of my lord."

9But Esau said, "I have enough, my
brother; keep what you have for yourself."

10And Jacob said, "No, please, if I [h]have
now found favor in your sight, then receive
my present from my hand, inasmuch as I
have seen your face as though I had seen

* **32:28** Literally *Prince with God* * **32:30** Literally *Face of God* * **32:31** Same as *Peniel*, verse 30

today can likewise base their prayers on God's proven character and His promises in the Bible.

32:24 ***a Man wrestled with him.*** Some believe that the Man who wrestled with Jacob was the preincarnate Jesus Christ. Others believe the Man was the Angel of God (21:17; 31:11). In any case, Jacob wrestled with a manifestation of God (vv. 28–30), and because of God's mercy he survived.

32:28 ***Israel.*** Before Jacob wrestled with the angel, his name, "one who supplants," described a man who was deceitful in character. Afterwards he was given the new status of a champion, "one who strives (or prevails) with God," or "prince with God."

32:30 ***God face to face.*** The dramatic name ("face of God") given to the location shows the awesome nature of the encounter. Here God's messenger in human form was the same as God Himself, a fact which Jacob recognized to his amazement. In Hebrew thought, the penalty for seeing God face to face was death (Ex. 33:20), yet Jacob had passed through such an experience and had survived.

32:13 [s] Gen. 43:11 **32:20** [t] [Prov. 21:14] **32:22** [u] Deut. 3:16 **32:24** [v] Hos. 12:2–4 **32:25** [w] 2 Cor. 12:7 **32:26** [x] Luke 24:28 [y] Hos. 12:4 **32:28** [z] Gen. 35:10 [a] Hos. 12:3, 4 [b] Gen. 25:31; 27:33 **32:29** [c] Judg. 13:17, 18 [d] Gen. 35:9 **32:30** [e] Gen. 16:13 **33:1** [a] Gen. 32:6 **33:3** [b] Gen. 18:2; 42:6 **33:4** [c] Gen. 32:28 [d] Gen. 45:14, 15 **33:5** [e] Gen. 48:9 **33:8** [f] Gen. 32:13–16 [g] Gen. 32:5 **33:10** [h] Gen. 43:3

the face of God, and you were pleased with me. 11Please, take [i]my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt [j]graciously with me, and because I have enough." [k]So he urged him, and he took *it*.

12Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you."

13But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children *are* weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing *are* with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. 14Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord [l]in Seir."

15And Esau said, "Now let me leave with you *some* of the people who *are* with me."

But he said, "What need is there? [m]Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." 16So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. 17And Jacob journeyed to [n]Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.*

Jacob Comes to Canaan

18Then Jacob came safely to [o]the city of [p]Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. 19And [q]he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. 20Then he erected an altar there and called it [r]El Elohe Israel.*

The Dinah Incident

34 Now [a]Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. 2And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he [b]took her and lay with her, and violated her. 3His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman. 4So Shechem [c]spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."

5And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob [d]held his peace until they came. 6Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 7And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard *it;* and the men were grieved and very angry, because he [e]had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, [f]a thing which ought not to be done. 8But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. 9And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. 10So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it."

11Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12Ask me ever so much [g]dowry and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife."

13But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke [h]deceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister. 14And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is [i]uncircumcised, for [j]that *would be* a reproach to us. 15But on this *condition* we will consent to you: If you will become as we *are,* if every male of you is circumcised, 16then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. 17But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone."

18And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son. 19So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. He *was* [k]more honorable than all the household of his father.

20And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the [l]gate of their city, and spoke with the men of their city, saying: 21"These men *are* at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land *is* large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22Only on this *condition* will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people: if every male among us is circumcised as they *are* circumcised. 23*Will* not their livestock, their property, and every animal of theirs *be* ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us." 24And all who

* **33:17** Literally *Booths* * **33:20** Literally *God, the God of Israel*

33:11 ***Please, take my blessing.*** Before, Jacob had done all he could to take Esau's blessing (25:29–34; 27:1–45). Now a wiser man, Jacob wanted to bless his brother with what God had given him.

33:20 ***he erected an altar there.*** The name Jacob gave this altar reflected his mature faith in "God, the God of Israel." The God of Jacob's fathers was now Jacob's personal God, for He had fulfilled His promises and protected him (28:13–15).

33:11 *i* 1 Sam. 25:27; 30:26 *j* Ex. 33:19 *k* 2 Kin. 5:23 **33:14** *l* Gen. 32:3; 36:8 **33:15** *m* Ruth 2:13 **33:17** *n* Josh. 13:27 **33:18** *o* John 3:23 *p* Josh. 24:1 **33:19** *q* John 4:5 **33:20** *r* Gen. 35:7 **34:1** *a* Gen. 30:21 **34:2** *b* Gen. 20:2 **34:4** *c* Judg. 14:2 **34:5** *d* 2 Sam. 13:22 **34:7** *e* Judg. 20:6 *f* 2 Sam. 13:12 **34:12** *g* Ex. 22:16, 17 **34:13** *h* Gen. 31:7 **34:14** *i* Ex. 12:48 *j* Josh. 5:2–9 **34:19** *k* 1 Chr. 4:9 **34:20** *l* Ruth 4:1, 11

[m]went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

25Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, [n]Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. 26And they [o]killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out. 27The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. 28They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what *was* in the city and what *was* in the field, 29and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that *was* in the houses.

30Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, [p]"You have [q]troubled me [r]by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; [s]and since I *am* few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I."

31But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"

Jacob's Return to Bethel

35 Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to [a]Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, [b]who appeared to you [c]when you fled from the face of Esau your brother."

2And Jacob said to his [d]household and to all who *were* with him, "Put away [e]the foreign gods that *are* among you, [f]purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, [g]who answered me in the day of my distress [h]and has been with me in the way which I have gone." 4So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which *were* in their hands, and the [i]earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under [j]the terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem.

5And they journeyed, and [k]the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. 6So Jacob came to [l]Luz (that *is,* Bethel), which *is* in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who *were* with him. 7And he [m]built an altar there and called the place El Bethel,* because [n]there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

8Now [o]Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth.*

9Then [p]God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and [q]blessed him. 10And God said to him, "Your name *is* Jacob; [r]your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, [s]but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel. 11Also God said to him: [t]"I *am* God Almighty. [u]Be fruitful and multiply; [v]a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. 12The [w]land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land." 13Then God [x]went up from him in the place where He talked with him. 14So Jacob [y]set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. 15And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, [z]Bethel.

Death of Rachel

16Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored *in childbirth,*

* **35:7** Literally *God of the House of God*
* **35:8** Literally *Terebinth of Weeping*

34:25 ***killed all the males.*** Jacob's sons were correct that God did not want them to intermarry with the pagan Canaanite families. According to later Levitical law, they were even correct that rape was punishable by death. However, their treacherous pretended friendship and the massacre of all the men of Shechem, along with their greedy looting of all the Shechemites' goods, was clearly not a justifiable execution of justice, and God condemned their violence and anger (49:5–7).

35:2 ***foreign gods.*** Jacob's command included the idols that Rachel had stolen (31:22–35) as well as any idols among his servants. These were not gods Jacob himself had been worshiping, but he had apparently been allowing others in his household to do so.

35:10–12 ***Israel shall be your name.*** The renewal of God's covenant with Jacob was introduced by confirming Jacob's change of name to Israel, the one who "wrestled with God and prevailed." The promises made to Abraham and Isaac were once again repeated, underscoring the continuity of the covenant. Furthermore, a rather significant phrase is added, "be fruitful and multiply," which incorporated the creation ordinance, thus exhibiting the continuity with the covenant of creation. The covenant Lord is the God of creation and of redemption.

35:16 ***Ephrath.*** This is an alternative name for the region around Bethlehem (v. 19; 48:7; Ruth 1:2; Mic. 5:2). The King of Glory would one day be born near the birthplace of Benjamin (Matt. 2:1).

34:24 [m] Gen. 23:10, 18 **34:25** [n] Gen. 29:33, 34; 42:24; 49:5–7 **34:26** [o] Gen. 49:5, 6 **34:30** [p] Gen. 49:6 [q] Josh. 7:25 [r] Ex. 5:21 [s] Deut. 4:27 **35:1** [a] Gen. 28:19; 31:13 [b] Gen. 28:13 [c] Gen. 27:43 **35:2** [d] Josh. 24:15 [e] Josh. 24:2, 14, 23 [f] Ex. 19:10, 14 **35:3** [g] Gen. 32:7, 24 [h] Gen. 28:15, 20; 31:3, 42 **35:4** [i] Hos. 2:13 [j] Josh. 24:26 **35:5** [k] Ex. 15:16; 23:27 **35:6** [l] Gen. 28:19, 22; 48:3 **35:7** [m] Eccl. 5:4 [n] Gen. 28:13 **35:8** [o] Gen. 24:59 **35:9** [p] Josh. 5:13 [q] Gen. 32:29 **35:10** [r] Gen. 17:5 [s] Gen. 32:28 **35:11** [t] Ex. 6:3 [u] Gen. 9:1, 7 [v] Gen. 17:5, 6, 16; 28:3; 48:4 **35:12** [w] Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 26:3, 4; 28:13; 48:4 **35:13** [x] Gen. 17:22; 18:33 **35:14** [y] Gen. 28:18, 19; 31:45 **35:15** [z] Gen. 28:19

and she had hard labor. 17Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear; [a]you will have this son also." 18And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni;* but his father called him Benjamin.* 19So [b]Rachel died and was buried on the way to [c]Ephrath (that *is,* Bethlehem). 20And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave [d]to this day.

21Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond [e]the tower of Eder. 22And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and [f]lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard *about it.*

Jacob's Twelve Sons

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: 23the sons of Leah *were* [g]Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; 24the sons of Rachel *were* Joseph and Benjamin; 25the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, *were* Dan and Naphtali; 26and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, *were* Gad and Asher. These *were* the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan Aram.

Death of Isaac

27Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at [h]Mamre, or [i]Kirjath Arba* (that *is,* Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. 28Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. 29So Isaac breathed his last and died, and [j]was gathered to his people, *being* old and full of days. And [k]his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

The Family of Esau

36 Now this *is* the genealogy of Esau, [a]who is Edom. 2[b]Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the [c]Hittite; [d]Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; 3and [e]Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth. 4Now [f]Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel. 5And Aholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These *were* the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

6Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the persons of his household, his cattle and all his animals, and all his goods which he had gained in the land of Canaan, and went to a country away from the presence of his brother Jacob. 7[g]For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together, and [h]the land where they were strangers could not support them because of their livestock. 8So Esau dwelt in [i]Mount Seir. [j]Esau *is* Edom.

9And this *is* the genealogy of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir. 10These *were* the names of Esau's sons: [k]Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. 11And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho,* Gatam, and Kenaz.

12Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore [l]Amalek to Eliphaz. These *were* the sons of Adah, Esau's wife.

13These *were* the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

14These were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon. And she bore to Esau: Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah.

The Chiefs of Edom

15These *were* the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn *son* of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, 16Chief Korah,* Chief Gatam, *and* Chief Amalek. These *were* the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They *were* the sons of Adah.

17These *were* the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: Chief Nahath, Chief Zerah, Chief Shammah, and Chief Mizzah. These *were* the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom. These *were* the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

18And these *were* the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife: Chief Jeush, Chief Jaalam, and Chief Korah. These *were* the chiefs *who descended* from Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah. 19These *were* the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these *were* their chiefs.

The Sons of Seir

20[m]These *were* the sons of Seir [n]the Horite who inhabited the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21Dishon, Ezer,

* **35:18** Literally *Son of My Sorrow* • Literally *Son of the Right Hand* * **35:27** Literally *Town of Arba* * **36:11** Spelled *Zephi* in 1 Chronicles 1:36 * **36:16** Samaritan Pentateuch omits *Chief Korah.*

35:27 ***Jacob came to his father Isaac.*** After more than 20 years of exile Jacob finally visited his father. Sadly, his mother Rebekah was probably dead since she is not mentioned.

36:12 ***Amalek.*** Esau's grandson Amalek founded a people that later would trouble the Israelites (Num. 14:39–45).

35:17 [a] Gen. 30:24 **35:19** [b] Gen. 48:7 [c] Mic. 5:2 **35:20** [d] 1 Sam. 10:2 **35:21** [e] Mic. 4:8 **35:22** [f] Gen. 49:4 **35:23** [g] Ex. 1:1–4 **35:27** [h] Gen. 13:18; 18:1; 23:19 [i] Josh. 14:15 **35:29** [j] Gen. 15:15; 25:8; 49:33 [k] Gen. 25:9; 49:31 **36:1** [a] Gen. 25:30 **36:2** [b] Gen. 26:34; 28:9 [c] 2 Kin. 7:6 [d] Gen. 36:25 **36:3** [e] Gen. 28:9 **36:4** [f] 1 Chr. 1:35 **36:7** [g] Gen. 13:6, 11 [h] Gen. 17:8; 28:4 **36:8** [i] Gen. 32:3 [j] Gen. 36:1, 19 **36:10** [k] 1 Chr. 1:35 **36:12** [l] Num. 24:20 **36:20** [m] 1 Chr. 1:38–42 [n] Gen. 14:6

and Dishan. These *were* the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom.

22And the sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam.* Lotan's sister *was* Timna.

23These *were* the sons of Shobal: Alvan,* Manahath, Ebal, Shepho,* and Onam.

24These *were* the sons of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah. This *was the* Anah who found the water* in the wilderness as he pastured [o]the donkeys of his father Zibeon.

25These *were* the children of Anah: Dishon and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.

26These *were* the sons of Dishon:* Hemdan,* Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 27These *were* the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.* 28These *were* the sons of Dishan: [p]Uz and Aran.

29These *were* the chiefs of the Horites: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah, 30Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer, and Chief Dishan. These *were* the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

The Kings of Edom

31[q]Now these *were* the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel: 32Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. 33And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. 34When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. 35And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city *was* Avith. 36When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. 37And when Samlah died, Saul of [r]Rehoboth-*by*-the-River reigned in his place. 38When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. 39And when Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, Hadar* reigned in his place; and the name of his city *was* Pau.* His wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

The Chiefs of Esau

40And these *were* the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families and their places, by their names: Chief Timnah, Chief Alvah,* Chief Jetheth, 41Chief Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, 42Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, 43Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These *were* the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession. Esau *was* the father of the Edomites.

Joseph Dreams of Greatness

37 Now Jacob dwelt in the land [a]where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2This *is* the history of Jacob.

Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a [b]bad report of them to his father.

3Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* [c]the son of his old age. Also he [d]made him a tunic of *many* colors. 4But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they [e]hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

5Now Joseph had a dream, and he told *it* to his brothers; and they hated him even more. 6So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7[f]There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

8And his brothers said to him, "Shall you

* **36:22** Spelled *Homam* in 1 Chronicles 1:39 * **36:23** Spelled *Alian* in 1 Chronicles 1:40 • Spelled *Shephi* in 1 Chronicles 1:40
* **36:24** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate (*hot springs*); Septuagint reads *Jamin;* Targum reads *mighty men;* Talmud interprets as *mules.*
* **36:26** Hebrew *Dishan* • Spelled *Hamran* in 1 Chronicles 1:41 * **36:27** Spelled *Jaakan* in 1 Chronicles 1:42 * **36:39** Spelled *Hadad* in Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac, and 1 Chronicles 1:50 • Spelled *Pai* in 1 Chronicles 1:50
* **36:40** Spelled *Aliah* in 1 Chronicles 1:51

36:40–43 ***Esau was the father of the Edomites.*** Although Esau was not the heir of God's everlasting covenant with the family of Abraham, God still blessed his family and made them into a nation.

37:1 ***a stranger.*** The Lord had promised that this land would become a permanent possession of Abraham's family (12:7). To the third generation, that promise was still not realized. Jacob and his family were still aliens in the land.

37:2 ***a bad report.*** Since Joseph in general demonstrated his integrity (see ch. 39), he was probably not slandering his brothers, but accurately reporting some negligence on their part.

37:3 ***a tunic of many colors.*** This is the traditional translation. The Hebrew phrase may simply mean a garment with long sleeves. The robe was certainly distinctive in some way, and probably costly.

37:4 ***hated him.*** Because fallen and unregenerate man hates God, he displays hatred in his relations with others. The hatred of Joseph's brothers is attributed primarily to the love which Jacob had for his youngest son. As a result of their hatred the brothers were not able to speak kindly to Joseph, and the hatred led to a plot to kill him. Jesus remarked that the world's hatred of His people is a reflection of hatred against Himself (John 15:18). Love is the leading characteristic of the godly as hatred is the mark of the worldly person.

36:24 [o] Lev. 19:19 **36:28** [p] Job 1:1 **36:31** [q] 1 Chr. 1:43
36:37 [r] Gen. 10:11 **37:1** [a] Gen. 17:8; 23:4; 28:4; 36:7
37:2 [b] 1 Sam. 2:22–24 **37:3** [c] Gen. 44:20 [d] Gen. 37:23, 32
37:4 [e] Gen. 27:41; 49:23 **37:7** [f] Gen. 42:6, 9; 43:26; 44:14

indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, [g]the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

10 So he told *it* to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What *is* this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and [h]your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" 11 And [i]his brothers envied him, but his father [j]kept the matter *in mind*.

Joseph Sold by His Brothers

12 Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding *the flock* in [k]Shechem? Come, I will send you to them."

So he said to him, "Here I am."

14 Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of [l]Hebron, and he went to Shechem.

15 Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?"

16 So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. [m]Please tell me where they are feeding *their flocks*."

17 And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in [n]Dothan.

18 Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, [o]they conspired against him to kill him. 19 Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming! 20 [p]Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!"

21 But [q]Reuben heard *it*, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him." 22 And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit which *is* in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him"—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.

23 So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they [r]stripped Joseph *of* his tunic, the tunic of *many* colors that *was* on him. 24 Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit *was* empty; *there was* no water in it.

25 [s]And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of [t]Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, [u]balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry *them* down to Egypt. 26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit *is there* if we kill our brother and [v]conceal his blood? 27 Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and [w]let not our hand be upon him, for he *is* [x]our brother *and* [y]our flesh." And his brothers listened. 28 Then [z]Midianite traders passed by; so *the brothers* pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, [a]and sold him to the Ishmaelites for [b]twenty *shekels* of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

29 Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph *was* not in the pit; and he [c]tore his clothes. 30 And he returned to his brothers and said, "The lad [d]*is* no *more;* and I, where shall I go?"

31 So they took [e]Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. 32 Then they sent the tunic of *many* colors, and they brought *it* to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it *is* your son's tunic or not?"

33 And he recognized it and said, "*It is* my son's tunic. A [f]wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces." 34 Then Jacob [g]tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and [h]mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters [i]arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said,

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37:17 ***Dothan.*** This is about ten miles north of Shechem, near Mount Gilboa.

37:21 ***Let us not kill him.*** Reuben, as the firstborn son and principal heir, had the most to lose if Joseph's dreams came true. Yet Reuben intervened to spare Joseph's life. This was something of a contrast with his earlier wicked actions (35:22).

37:25 ***Ishmaelites.*** The Ishmaelites of this passage were wandering traders. The name (referring to descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar) is loosely equivalent with the name Midianite (Midian was another son of Abraham, by Keturah). Probably the families of the two half brothers had a strong alliance and were so closely associated that the names became interchangeable (v. 28).

37:28 ***twenty shekels of silver.*** The standard price for a slave in later Israelite law was 30 shekels of silver.

37:29 ***tore his clothes.*** Tearing one's clothes was a common expression of grief and dismay. Reuben's grief was genuine feeling for his younger brother mixed with fear that he, the oldest brother, would be blamed.

37:9 [g] Gen. 46:29; 47:25 **37:10** [h] Gen. 27:29
37:11 [i] Acts 7:9 [j] Dan. 7:28 **37:13** [k] Gen. 33:18–20
37:14 [l] Gen. 13:18; 23:2, 19; 35:27 **37:16** [m] Song 1:7
37:17 [n] 2 Kin. 6:13 **37:18** [o] Mark 14:1 **37:20** [p] Prov. 1:11 **37:21** [q] Gen. 42:22 **37:23** [r] Matt. 27:28
37:25 [s] Prov. 30:20 [t] Gen. 16:11, 12; 37:28, 36; 39:1 [u] Jer. 8:22 **37:26** [v] Gen. 37:20 **37:27** [w] 1 Sam. 18:17 [x] Gen. 42:21 [y] Gen. 29:14 **37:28** [z] Judg. 6:1–3; 8:22, 24 [a] Ps. 105:17 [b] Matt. 27:9 **37:29** [c] Job 1:20 **37:30** [d] Gen. 42:13, 36 **37:31** [e] Gen. 37:3, 23 **37:33** [f] Gen. 37:20
37:34 [g] 2 Sam. 3:31 [h] Gen. 50:10 **37:35** [i] 2 Sam. 12:17

"For [i]I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him.

36Now [k]the Midianites* had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh *and* captain of the guard.

Judah and Tamar

38 It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and [a]visited a certain Adullamite whose name *was* Hirah. 2And Judah [b]saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name *was* [c]Shua, and he married her and went in to her. 3So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name [d]Er. 4She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name [e]Onan. 5And she conceived yet again and bore a son, and called his name [f]Shelah. He was at Chezib when she bore him.

6Then Judah [g]took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* [h]Tamar. 7But [i]Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, [j]and the LORD killed him. 8And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to [k]your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." 9But Onan knew that the heir would not be [l]his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. 10And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed [m]him also.

11Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, [n]"Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt [o]in her father's house.

12Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died; and Judah [p]was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up [q]to Timnah to shear his sheep." 14So she took off her widow's garments, covered *herself* with a veil and wrapped herself, and [r]sat in an open place which *was* on the way to Timnah; for she saw [s]that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife. 15When Judah saw her, he thought she *was* a harlot, because she had covered her face. 16Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she *was* his daughter-in-law.

So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"

17And he said, [t]"I will send a young goat from the flock."

So she said, [u]"Will you give *me* a pledge till you send *it*?"

18Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?"

So she said, [v]"Your signet and cord, and your staff that *is* in your hand." Then he gave *them* to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. 19So she arose and went away, and [w]laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her. 21Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who *was* openly by the roadside?"

And they said, "There was no harlot in this *place*."

22So he returned to Judah and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this *place*."

23Then Judah said, "Let her take *them* for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent this young goat and you have not found her."

* **37:36** Masoretic Text reads *Medanites*.

38:1–30 At first glance it appears that the story of Judah and Tamar is an intrusion into the story of Joseph, but it is here for a reason. It provides a stunning contrast between the morals of Judah and Joseph. It illustrates the further disintegration of Jacob's family. If this process continued, Jacob's family, the family of promise, would become like the people of Canaan.

38:8 *to your brother's wife.* In order to maintain the family line and the name of the deceased, it was the custom in ancient times for the dead man's brother to marry the widow and father a child that would carry on the man's family. This is called *levirate* marriage, from the Latin word meaning "husband's brother." The custom became part of the Mosaic law (Deut. 25:5–10; Ruth 4:1–12).

38:15–18 Fornication—God designed sexual relations to be enjoyed exclusively within the framework of marriage: one man, for one woman, mutually committed for life. Outside of this framework, all sexual relations are sin. This is not because God wants to deprive His people of pleasure, but because He wants to protect them from the painful and destructive consequences of sin. Sexual union is not only a union of the body, but of the whole person (1 Cor. 6:15–20). Illicit sexual relations defile the temple of God, breed both physical and social disease, and serve as a source for many other sins.

38:18 *signet.* This was an ancient means of identification. The signet was distinctively etched in stone, metal, or ivory. To confirm a business transaction, or make an order official, the signet was pressed into soft clay, leaving its distinctive impression. Basically, Judah gave Tamar the equivalent of a modern credit card.

37:35 [j] Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 42:38; 44:29, 31 **37:36** [k] Gen. 39:1 **38:1** [a] 2 Kin. 4:8 **38:2** [b] Gen. 34:2 [c] 1 Chr. 2:3 **38:3** [d] Gen. 46:12 **38:4** [e] Num. 26:19 **38:5** [f] Num. 26:20 **38:6** [g] Gen. 21:21 [h] Ruth 4:12 **38:7** [i] Gen. 46:12 [j] 1 Chr. 2:3 **38:8** [k] Deut. 25:5, 6 **38:9** [l] Deut. 25:6 **38:10** [m] Gen. 46:12 **38:11** [n] Ruth 1:12, 13 [o] Lev. 22:13 **38:12** [p] 2 Sam. 13:39 **38:13** [q] Josh. 15:10, 57 **38:14** [r] Prov. 7:12 [s] Gen. 38:11, 26 **38:17** [t] Ezek. 16:33 [u] Gen. 38:20 **38:18** [v] Gen. 38:25; 41:42 **38:19** [w] Gen. 38:14

24 And it came to pass, about three
months after, that Judah was told, saying,
"Tamar your daughter-in-law has [x]played
the harlot; furthermore she *is* with child by
harlotry."

So Judah said, "Bring her out [y]and let
her be burned!"

25 When she *was* brought out, she sent to
her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to
whom these belong, I *am* with child." And
she said, [z]"Please determine whose these
are—the signet and cord, and staff."

26 So Judah [a]acknowledged *them* and
said, [b]"She has been more righteous than
I, because [c]I did not give her to Shelah my
son." And he [d]never knew her again.

27 Now it came to pass, at the time for
giving birth, that behold, twins *were* in
her womb. 28 And so it was, when she was
giving birth, that *the one* put out *his* hand;
and the midwife took a scarlet *thread* and
bound it on his hand, saying, "This one
came out first." 29 Then it happened, as he
drew back his hand, that his brother came
out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did
you break through? *This* breach *be* upon
you!" Therefore his name was called [e]Pe-
rez.* 30 Afterward his brother came out who
had the scarlet *thread* on his hand. And his
name was called [f]Zerah.

Joseph a Slave in Egypt

39 Now Joseph had been taken [a]down
to Egypt. And [b]Potiphar, an officer
of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyp-
tian, [c]bought him from the Ishmaelites who
had taken him down there. 2 [d]The LORD
was with Joseph, and he was a successful
man; and he was in the house of his mas-
ter the Egyptian. 3 And his master saw that
the LORD *was* with him and that the LORD
[e]made all he did to prosper in his hand.
4 So Joseph [f]found favor in his sight, and
served him. Then he made him [g]overseer of
his house, and all *that* he had he put under
his authority. 5 So it was, from the time *that*
he had made him overseer of his house and
all that he had, that [h]the LORD blessed the
Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the
blessing of the LORD was on all that he had
in the house and in the field. 6 Thus he left
all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did
not know what he had except for the bread
which he ate.

Now Joseph [i]was handsome in form and
appearance.

7 And it came to pass after these things
that his master's wife cast longing eyes on
Joseph, and she said, [j]"Lie with me."

8 But he refused and said to his master's
wife, "Look, my master does not know
what *is* with me in the house, and he has
committed all that he has to my hand.
9 *There is* no one greater in this house than
I, nor has he kept back anything from me
but you, because you *are* his wife. [k]How
then can I do this great wickedness, and
[l]sin against God?"

10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day
by day, that he [m]did not heed her, to lie with
her *or* to be with her.

11 But it happened about this time, when
Joseph went into the house to do his work,
and none of the men of the house *was*
inside, 12 that she [n]caught him by his gar-
ment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his
garment in her hand, and fled and ran out-
side. 13 And so it was, when she saw that he
had left his garment in her hand and fled
outside, 14 that she called to the men of her
house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he
has brought in to us a [o]Hebrew to mock us.
He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried
out with a loud voice. 15 And it happened,
when he heard that I lifted my voice and
cried out, that he left his garment with me,
and fled and went outside."

16 So she kept his garment with her until
his master came home. 17 Then she [p]spoke
to him with words like these, saying, "The
Hebrew servant whom you brought to us
came in to me to mock me; 18 so it hap-
pened, as I lifted my voice and cried out,
that he left his garment with me and fled
outside."

* **38:29** Literally *Breach* or *Breakthrough*

38:26 ***She has been more righteous than I.*** Judah, one of the heirs of the everlasting covenant with the living God, was put to shame by a Canaanite woman. To his credit, Judah confessed his sins.

38:29 ***Perez.*** Perez was in the lineage of David, and eventually Jesus the Messiah (Ruth 4:18; Matt. 1:3).

39:2 ***The LORD was with Joseph.*** This key phrase of this section is repeated (vv. 21,23). This phrase indicates that God cared for, protected, and blessed Joseph.

39:4 ***found favor.*** Joseph's life illustrates the principle that one who is faithful in little will be given charge over much (Matt. 25:21; 1 Cor. 4:2).

39:5 ***the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house.*** God blessed Potiphar's house because of Joseph, just as He had blessed Laban because of Jacob.

39:9 ***sin against God.*** Joseph rejected the solicitation to sin, regarding it both as a wicked act of treachery against his master, and as a defiling and rebellious act before a holy God. Because Joseph's conscience was bound by God and His truth, he was able to resist this evil suggestion more than once. Pleasing God was more important to Joseph than engaging in the pleasures of sin for a season. His fear and reverence of God was the directing power of his life.

38:24 [x] Judg. 19:2 [y] Lev. 20:14; 21:9 **38:25** [z] Gen. 37:32; 38:18 **38:26** [a] Gen. 37:33 [b] 1 Sam. 24:17 [c] Gen. 38:14 [d] Job 34:31, 32 **38:29** [e] Gen. 46:12 **38:30** [f] 1 Chr. 2:4 **39:1** [a] Gen. 12:10; 43:15 [b] Gen. 37:36 [c] Gen. 37:28; 45:4 **39:2** [d] Acts 7:9 **39:3** [e] Ps. 1:3 **39:4** [f] Gen. 18:3; 19:19; 39:21 [g] Gen. 24:2, 10; 39:8, 22; 41:40 **39:5** [h] Gen. 18:26; 30:27 **39:6** [i] 1 Sam. 16:12 **39:7** [j] 2 Sam. 13:11 **39:9** [k] Prov. 6:29, 32 [l] Ps. 51:4 **39:10** [m] Prov. 1:10 **39:12** [n] Prov. 7:13 **39:14** [o] Gen. 14:13; 41:12 **39:17** [p] Ex. 23:1

19 So it was, when his master heard the
words which his wife spoke to him, saying,
"Your servant did to me after this manner,"
that his [q]anger was aroused. 20 Then Jo-
seph's master took him and [r]put him into
the [s]prison, a place where the king's pris-
oners *were* confined. And he was there in
the prison. 21 But the LORD was with Joseph
and showed him mercy, and He [t]gave him
favor in the sight of the keeper of the pris-
on. 22 And the keeper of the prison [u]com-
mitted to Joseph's hand all the prisoners
who *were* in the prison; whatever they did
there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of
the prison did not look into anything *that*
was under *Joseph's* authority,* because the
[v]LORD was with him; and whatever he did,
the LORD made *it* prosper.

The Prisoners' Dreams

40 It came to pass after these things
that the [a]butler and the baker of the
king of Egypt offended their lord, the king
of Egypt. 2 And Pharaoh was [b]angry with
his two officers, the chief butler and the
chief baker. 3 [c]So he put them in custody
in the house of the captain of the guard,
in the prison, the place where Joseph *was*
confined. 4 And the captain of the guard
charged Joseph with them, and he served
them; so they were in custody for a while.

5 Then the butler and the baker of the
king of Egypt, who *were* confined in the
prison, [d]had a dream, both of them, each
man's dream in one night *and* each man's
dream with its *own* interpretation. 6 And
Joseph came in to them in the morning and
looked at them, and saw that they *were* sad.
7 So he asked Pharaoh's officers who *were*
with him in the custody of his lord's house,
saying, [e]"Why do you look *so* sad today?"

8 And they said to him, [f]"We each have
had a dream, and *there is* no interpreter
of it."

So Joseph said to them, [g]"Do not inter-
pretations belong to God? Tell *them* to me,
please."

9 Then the chief butler told his dream to
Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in my
dream a vine *was* before me, 10 and in the
vine *were* three branches; it *was* as though
it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its
clusters brought forth ripe grapes. 11 Then
Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand; and I took
the grapes and pressed them into Pha-
raoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's
hand."

12 And Joseph said to him, [h]"This *is* the
interpretation of it: The three branches [i]*are*
three days. 13 Now within three days Pha-
raoh will [j]lift up your head and restore you
to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's
cup in his hand according to the former
manner, when you were his butler. 14 But
[k]remember me when it is well with you,
and [l]please show kindness to me; make
mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out
of this house. 15 For indeed I was [m]stolen
away from the land of the Hebrews; [n]and
also I have done nothing here that they
should put me into the dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that the in-
terpretation was good, he said to Joseph,
"I also *was* in my dream, and there *were*
three white baskets on my head. 17 In the
uppermost basket *were* all kinds of baked
goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them
out of the basket on my head."

18 So Joseph answered and said, [o]"This
is the interpretation of it: The three baskets
are three days. 19 [p]Within three days Pha-
raoh will lift off your head from you and
[q]hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat
your flesh from you."

20 Now it came to pass on the third day,
which was Pharaoh's [r]birthday, that he
[s]made a feast for all his servants; and he
[t]lifted up the head of the chief butler and
of the chief baker among his servants.
21 Then he [u]restored the chief butler to his
butlership again, and [v]he placed the cup in
Pharaoh's hand. 22 But he [w]hanged the chief
baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them.
23 Yet the chief butler did not remember Jo-
seph, but [x]forgot him.

Pharaoh's Dreams

41 Then it came to pass, at the end of
two full years, that [a]Pharaoh had a
dream; and behold, he stood by the river.

* **39:23** Literally *his hand*

39:20 ***into the prison.*** Surprisingly, Potiphar did not simply kill Joseph outright. It is possible that knowledge of Joseph's character (or his own wife's character) caused him to suspect that the story was not wholly true.

39:21 ***mercy.*** This word can be translated *loyal love* (Ps. 13:5). God faithfully kept His promises by staying with His people (12:1–3; 50:24).

39:23 ***the LORD made it prosper.*** Because of God's blessing, everything Joseph did prospered (Ps. 1:1–3).

40:8 ***interpretations belong to God.*** Joseph not only announced his faith, he then quickly acted upon it. Joseph had received dreams and visions as a younger man, and he had understood their meaning (37:5–11).

40:22 ***he hanged the chief baker.*** Pharaoh was clearly a ruthless ruler who rewarded those who served him well, but destroyed those he perceived as threats.

39:19 [q] Prov. 6:34, 35 **39:20** [r] Ps. 105:18 [s] Gen. 40:3, 15; 41:14 **39:21** [t] Acts 7:9, 10 **39:22** [u] Gen. 39:4; 40:3, 4 **39:23** [v] Gen. 39:2, 3 **40:1** [a] Neh. 1:11 **40:2** [b] Prov. 16:14 **40:3** [c] Gen. 39:1, 20, 23; 41:10 **40:5** [d] Gen. 37:5; 41:1 **40:7** [e] Neh. 2:2 **40:8** [f] Gen. 41:15 [g] [Dan. 2:11, 20–22, 27, 28, 47] **40:12** [h] Dan. 2:36; 4:18, 19 [i] Gen. 40:18; 42:17 **40:13** [j] 2 Kin. 25:27 **40:14** [k] Luke 23:42 [l] Josh. 2:12 **40:15** [m] Gen. 37:26–28 [n] Gen. 39:20 **40:18** [o] Gen. 40:12 **40:19** [p] Gen. 40:13 [q] Deut. 21:22 **40:20** [r] Matt. 14:6–10 [s] Mark 6:21 [t] Gen. 40:13, 19 **40:21** [u] Gen. 40:13 [v] Neh. 2:1 **40:22** [w] Gen. 40:19 **40:23** [x] Eccl. 9:15, 16 **41:1** [a] Gen. 40:5

2Suddenly there came up out of the river
seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they
fed in the meadow. 3Then behold, seven
other cows came up after them out of the
river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the *oth-*
er cows on the bank of the river. 4And the
ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine
looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke.
5He slept and dreamed a second time; and
suddenly seven heads of grain came up on
one stalk, plump and good. 6Then behold,
seven thin heads, blighted by the [b]east
wind, sprang up after them. 7And the seven
thin heads devoured the seven plump and
full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed,
it was a dream. 8Now it came to pass in the
morning [c]that his spirit was troubled, and
he sent and called for all [d]the magicians of
Egypt and all its [e]wise men. And Pharaoh
told them his dreams, but *there was* no one
who could interpret them for Pharaoh.

9Then the [f]chief butler spoke to Pha-
raoh, saying: "I remember my faults this
day. 10When Pharaoh was [g]angry with
his servants, [h]and put me in custody in the
house of the captain of the guard, *both* me
and the chief baker, 11[i]we each had a dream
in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed
according to the interpretation of his *own*
dream. 12Now there *was* a young [j]Hebrew
man with us there, a [k]servant of the cap-
tain of the guard. And we told him, and he
[l]interpreted our dreams for us; to each man
he interpreted according to his *own* dream.
13And it came to pass, just [m]as he interpret-
ed for us, so it happened. He restored me to
my office, and he hanged him."

14[n]Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph,
and they [o]brought him quickly [p]out of the
dungeon; and he shaved, [q]changed his
clothing, and came to Pharaoh. 15And Pha-
raoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream,
and *there is* no one who can interpret it.
[r]But I have heard it said of you *that* you can
understand a dream, to interpret it."

16So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying,
[s]"*It is* not in me; [t]God will give Pharaoh an
answer of peace."

17Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold,
[u]in my dream I stood on the bank of the
river. 18Suddenly seven cows came up out
of the river, fine looking and fat; and they
fed in the meadow. 19Then behold, seven
other cows came up after them, poor and
very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I
have never seen in all the land of Egypt.
20And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the
first seven, the fat cows. 21When they had
eaten them up, no one would have known
that they had eaten them, for they *were* just
as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke.
22Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly
seven heads came up on one stalk, full and
good. 23Then behold, seven heads, with-
ered, thin, *and* blighted by the east wind,
sprang up after them. 24And the thin heads
devoured the seven good heads. So [v]I told
this to the magicians, but *there was* no one
who could explain *it* to me."

25Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The
dreams of Pharaoh *are* one; [w]God has
shown Pharaoh what He *is* about to do:
26The seven good cows *are* seven years,
and the seven good heads *are* seven years;
the dreams *are* one. 27And the seven thin
and ugly cows which came up after them
are seven years, and the seven empty
heads blighted by the east wind are [x]sev-
en years of famine. 28[y]This *is* the thing
which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has
shown Pharaoh what He *is* about to do.
29Indeed [z]seven years of great plenty will
come throughout all the land of Egypt;
30but after them seven years of famine will
[a]arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten
in the land of Egypt; and the famine [b]will
deplete the land. 31So the plenty will not be
known in the land because of the famine
following, for it *will be* very severe. 32And
the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice
because the [c]thing *is* established by God,
and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33"Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a
discerning and wise man, and set him over
the land of Egypt. 34Let Pharaoh do *this*,
and let him appoint officers over the land,
[d]to collect one-fifth *of the produce* of the
land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.
35And [e]let them gather all the food of those
good years that are coming, and store up

41:8 ***magicians.*** The Hebrew term is related to the word for *stylus*, a writing instrument. Thus the magicians were associated in some manner with writing and knowledge, no doubt of the occult. ***wise men.*** These were a class of scholars associated with the courts of the ancient Middle East. They were either functionaries of pagan religions, or merely observers and interpreters of life.

41:14 ***shaved.*** Egyptian men not only shaved their faces, but their entire bodies and heads. Egyptian officials scorned the "hairy" Canaanites, including the Hebrews (43:32). While he lived in Egypt Joseph apparently adopted the dress and manner of the Egyptians.

41:16 ***God.*** Joseph praised the power of the living God in the pagan court of Pharaoh. He would not take any credit to himself, nor did he try to use the situation to plead for his own release.

41:32 ***God, and God.*** Joseph made it clear that he was speaking about the one God, not the numerous false gods that filled the Egyptian court, or Pharaoh himself who was believed to be a god (22:1; 42:18).

41:6 [b] Ex. 10:13 **41:8** [c] Dan. 2:1, 3; 4:5, 19 [d] Ex. 7:11, 22 [e] Matt. 2:1 **41:9** [f] Gen. 40:1, 14, 23 **41:10** [g] Gen. 40:2, 3 [h] Gen. 39:20 **41:11** [i] Gen. 40:5 **41:12** [j] Gen. 39:14; 43:32 [k] Gen. 37:36 [l] Gen. 40:12 **41:13** [m] Gen. 40:21, 22 **41:14** [n] Ps. 105:20 [o] Dan. 2:25 [p] [1 Sam. 2:8] [q] 2 Kin. 25:27–29 **41:15** [r] Dan. 5:16 **41:16** [s] Dan. 2:30 [t] Dan. 2:22, 28, 47 **41:17** [u] Gen. 41:1 **41:24** [v] Is. 8:19 **41:25** [w] Dan. 2:28, 29, 45 **41:27** [x] 2 Kin. 8:1 **41:28** [y] [Gen. 41:25, 32] **41:29** [z] Gen. 41:47 **41:30** [a] Gen. 41:54, 56 [b] Gen. 47:13 **41:32** [c] Num. 23:19 **41:34** [d] [Prov. 6:6–8] **41:35** [e] Gen. 41:48

grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land [f]may not perish during the famine."

Joseph's Rise to Power

37So [g]the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. 38And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find *such a one* as this, a man [h]in whom *is* the Spirit of God?"

39Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, *there is* no one as discerning and wise as you. 40[i]You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you." 41And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have [j]set you over all the land of Egypt."

42Then Pharaoh [k]took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he [l]clothed him in garments of fine linen [m]and put a gold chain around his neck. 43And he had him ride in the second [n]chariot which he had; [o]and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him [p]over all the land of Egypt. 44Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I *am* Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 45And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife [q]Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.

46Joseph was thirty years old when he [r]stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. 47Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly. 48So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them. 49Joseph gathered very much grain, [s]as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for *it was* immeasurable.

50[t]And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. 51Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh:* "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my [u]father's house." 52And the name of the second he called Ephraim:* "For God has caused me to be [v]fruitful in the land of my affliction."

53Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended, 54[w]and the seven years of famine began to come, [x]as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 55So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; [y]whatever he says to you, do." 56The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses* and [z]sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. 57[a]So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to [b]buy *grain*, because the famine was severe in all lands.

Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

42 When [a]Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" 2And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may [b]live and not die."

3So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. 4But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, c"Lest some calamity befall him." 5And the sons of Israel went to buy *grain* among those who journeyed, for the famine was [d]in the land of Canaan.

*41:51 Literally *Making Forgetful* *41:52 Literally *Fruitfulness* *41:56 Literally *all that was in them*

41:38 ***in whom is the Spirit of God.*** Even if he did not follow God himself, Pharaoh was at least acknowledging that Joseph was extraordinarily wise, and that the power of his God was obvious in his life.

41:39 ***discerning and wise.*** Joseph is an illustration of the instructions Paul gave Colosse: "Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside" (Col. 4:5). Pharaoh recognized that Joseph's wisdom was not the ordinary powers of a clever man, but something unique and outside of himself. Joseph was wise because he listened to God, not just because of his extraordinary intelligence and perspicacity. God's wisdom is moral. It discerns between good and evil. It is seen through prudence in secular affairs and comes through personal experience with the Lord.

41:45 ***Zaphnath-Paaneah.*** This Egyptian name probably means something like "the god speaks and lives." ***Asenath.*** This name means "belonging to (the goddess) Neith." ***Poti-Pherah.*** This name means "he whom Ra (the sun god) gave." Even though his father-in-law was the priest of a pagan god, Joseph and Asenath's sons were worshipers of the Lord, not Ra.

42:4 ***Benjamin.*** Jacob still played favorites, but this time there is no mention of jealousy among the other brothers as there had been before (37:8).

41:36 [f] Gen. 47:15, 19 **41:37** [g] Acts 7:10 **41:38** [h] Num. 27:18 **41:40** [i] Ps. 105:21 **41:41** [j] Dan. 6:3 **41:42** [k] Esth. 3:10 [l] Esth. 8:2, 15 [m] Dan. 5:7, 16, 29 **41:43** [n] Gen. 46:29 [o] Esth. 6:9 [p] Gen. 42:6 **41:45** [q] Gen. 46:20 **41:46** [r] 1 Sam. 16:21 **41:49** [s] Gen. 22:17 **41:50** [t] Gen. 46:20; 48:5 **41:51** [u] Ps. 45:10 **41:52** [v] Gen. 17:6; 28:3; 49:22 **41:54** [w] Acts 7:11 [x] Gen. 41:30 **41:55** [y] John 2:5 **41:56** [z] Gen. 42:6 **41:57** [a] Ezek. 29:12 [b] Gen. 27:28, 37; 42:3 **42:1** [a] Acts 7:12 **42:2** [b] Gen. 43:8 **42:4** [c] Gen. 42:38 **42:5** [d] Acts 7:11

6 Now Joseph *was* governor [e]over the
land; and it was he who sold to all the peo-
ple of the land. And Joseph's brothers came
and [f]bowed down before him with *their*
faces to the earth. 7 Joseph saw his broth-
ers and recognized them, but he acted as
[g]a stranger to them and spoke roughly to
them. Then he said to them, "Where do you
come from?"

And they said, "From the land of Canaan
to buy food."

8 So Joseph recognized his brothers, but
they did not recognize him. 9 Then Joseph
[h]remembered the dreams which he had
dreamed about them, and said to them,
"You *are* spies! You have come to see the
nakedness of the land!"

10 And they said to him, "No, my lord, but
your servants have come to buy food. 11 We
are all one man's sons; we *are* honest *men;*
your servants are not spies."

12 But he said to them, "No, but you have
come to see the nakedness of the land."

13 And they said, "Your servants *are*
twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the
land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest *is*
with our father today, and one [i]*is* no more."

14 But Joseph said to them, "It *is* as I spoke
to you, saying, 'You *are* spies!' 15 In this *man-*
ner you shall be tested: [j]By the life of Pha-
raoh, you shall not leave this place unless
your youngest brother comes here. 16 Send
one of you, and let him bring your brother;
and you shall be kept in prison, that your
words may be tested to see whether *there is*
any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pha-
raoh, surely you *are* spies!" 17 So he put them
all together in prison [k]three days.

18 Then Joseph said to them the third day,
"Do this and live, [l]*for* I fear God: 19 If you
are honest *men,* let one of your brothers
be confined to your prison house; but you,
go and carry grain for the famine of your
houses. 20 And [m]bring your youngest broth-
er to me; so your words will be verified, and
you shall not die."

And they did so. 21 Then they said to one
another, [n]"We *are* truly guilty concerning
our brother, for we saw the anguish of
his soul when he pleaded with us, and we
would not hear; [o]therefore this distress has
come upon us."

22 And Reuben answered them, saying,
[p]"Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not
sin against the boy'; and you would not
listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now
[q]required of us." 23 But they did not know
that Joseph understood *them,* for he spoke
to them through an interpreter. 24 And he
turned himself away from them and [r]wept.
Then he returned to them again, and talked
with them. And he took [s]Simeon from them
and bound him before their eyes.

The Brothers Return to Canaan

25 Then Joseph [t]gave a command to fill
their sacks with grain, to [u]restore every
man's money to his sack, and to give them
provisions for the journey. [v]Thus he did for
them. 26 So they loaded their donkeys with
the grain and departed from there. 27 But
as [w]one *of them* opened his sack to give his
donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his
money; and there it was, in the mouth of
his sack. 28 So he said to his brothers, "My
money has been restored, and there it is,
in my sack!" Then their hearts failed *them*
and they were afraid, saying to one anoth-
er, "What *is* this *that* God has done to us?"

29 Then they went to Jacob their father in
the land of Canaan and told him all that had
happened to them, saying: 30 "The man *who*
is lord of the land [x]spoke roughly to us, and
took us for spies of the country. 31 But we
said to him, 'We *are* honest *men;* we are not
spies. 32 We *are* twelve brothers, sons of our
father; one *is* no *more,* and the youngest *is*
with our father this day in the land of Ca-
naan.' 33 Then the man, the lord of the coun-
try, said to us, [y]'By this I will know that you
are honest *men:* Leave one of your brothers
here with me, take *food for* the famine of
your households, and be gone. 34 And bring
your [z]youngest brother to me; so I shall
know that you *are* not spies, but *that* you
are honest *men.* I will grant your brother to
you, and you may [a]trade in the land.'"

35 Then it happened as they emptied their
sacks, that surprisingly [b]each man's bun-
dle of money *was* in his sack; and when
they and their father saw the bundles of
money, they were afraid. 36 And Jacob their
father said to them, "You have [c]bereaved
me: Joseph is no *more,* Simeon is no *more,*

42:6 ***bowed down before him.*** God fulfilled the dreams He gave to Joseph at the age of 17 (37:5–11).

42:9 ***You are spies.*** Joseph set out to learn whether his brothers had changed for the better. Would they betray each other when under pressure?

42:18 ***I fear God.*** Joseph gave his brothers a clue about who he was.

42:22 ***Did I not speak to you.*** Joseph's brothers were fearful because they knew they were guilty before God and that they deserved any punishment that God might choose to send. They must have been troubled by feelings of guilt for years, and even though they did not realize who Joseph really was, they immediately attributed their troubles to their guilt.

42:25 ***money.*** This refers to a certain weight of silver. Coins had not been invented at this time.

42:6 [e] Gen. 41:41, 55 [f] Gen. 37:7–10; 41:43 **42:7** [g] Gen. 45:1, 2 **42:9** [h] Gen. 37:5–9 **42:13** [i] Gen. 37:30; 42:32; 44:20 **42:15** [j] 1 Sam. 1:26; 17:55 **42:17** [k] Gen. 40:4, 7, 12 **42:18** [l] Lev. 25:43 **42:20** [m] Gen. 42:34; 43:5; 44:23 **42:21** [n] Hos. 5:15 [o] Prov. 21:13 **42:22** [p] Gen. 37:21, 22, 29 [q] Gen. 9:5, 6 **42:24** [r] Gen. 43:30; 45:14, 15 [s] Gen. 34:25, 30; 43:14, 23 **42:25** [t] Gen. 44:1 [u] Gen. 43:12 [v] [Rom. 12:17, 20, 21] **42:27** [w] Gen. 43:21, 22 **42:30** [x] Gen. 42:7 **42:33** [y] Gen. 42:15, 19, 20 **42:34** [z] Gen. 42:20; 43:3, 5 [a] Gen. 34:10 **42:35** [b] Gen. 43:12, 15, 21 **42:36** [c] Gen. 43:14

and you want to take [d]Benjamin. All these things are against me."

37 Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him *back* to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."

38 But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for [e]his brother is dead, and he is left alone. [f]If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would [g]bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."

Joseph's Brothers Return with Benjamin

43 Now the famine *was* [a]severe in the land. 2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go [b]back, buy us a little food."

3 But Judah spoke to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your [c]brother *is* with you.' 4 If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. 5 But if you will not send *him*, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother *is* with you.'"

6 And Israel said, "Why did you deal *so* wrongfully with me *as* to tell the man whether you had still *another* brother?"

7 But they said, "The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, '*Is* your father still alive? Have you *another* brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?"

8 Then Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may [d]live and not die, both we and you *and* also our little ones. 9 I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. [e]If I do not bring him *back* to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. 10 For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time."

11 And their father Israel said to them, "If *it must be* so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and [f]carry down a present for the man—a little [g]balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. 12 Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money [h]that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. 13 Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man. 14 And may God [i]Almighty [j]give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. [k]If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!"

15 So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went [l]down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph. 16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the [m]steward of his house, "Take *these* men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for *these* men will dine with me at noon." 17 Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

18 Now the men were [n]afraid because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, "*It is* because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys."

19 When they drew near to the steward of Joseph's house, they talked with him at the door of the house, 20 and said, "O sir, [o]we indeed came down the first time to buy food; 21 but [p]it happened, when we came to the encampment, that we opened our sacks, and there, *each* man's money *was* in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it back in our hand. 22 And we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."

23 But he said, "Peace *be* with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought [q]Simeon out to them.

24 So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and [r]gave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. 25 Then they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there.

26 And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and [s]bowed down before him to the earth. 27 Then he asked them about *their* well-being, and said, "*Is* your father well, the old man [t]of whom you spoke? *Is* he still alive?"

43:8 ***Send the lad with me.*** Judah promised that he would keep Benjamin safe. Judah had changed tremendously (38:1). Instead of leaving the family, he protected his brother and was concerned about his father's welfare.

43:23 ***Your God and the God of your father.*** Surprisingly, the steward expressed his own faith in the God of Joseph and Jacob.

43:26 ***bowed.*** For the second time (42:6) the brothers of Joseph bowed down to him, just as his dreams had predicted (37:5–11).

42:36 [d] [Rom. 8:28, 31] **42:38** [e] Gen. 37:22; 42:13; 44:20, 28 [f] Gen. 42:4; 44:29 [g] Gen. 37:35; 44:31 **43:1** [a] Gen. 41:54, 57; 42:5; 45:6, 11 **43:2** [b] Gen. 42:2; 44:25 **43:3** [c] Gen. 42:20; 43:5; 44:23 **43:8** [d] Gen. 42:2; 47:19 **43:9** [e] Gen. 42:37; 44:32 **43:11** [f] Gen. 32:20; 33:10; 43:25, 26 [g] Jer. 8:22 **43:12** [h] Gen. 42:25, 35; 43:21, 22 **43:14** [i] Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 48:3 [j] Ps. 106:46 [k] Esth. 4:16 **43:15** [l] Gen. 39:1; 46:3, 6 **43:16** [m] Gen. 24:2; 39:4; 44:1 **43:18** [n] Gen. 42:28 **43:20** [o] Gen. 42:3, 10 **43:21** [p] Gen. 42:27, 35 **43:23** [q] Gen. 42:24 **43:24** [r] Gen. 18:4; 19:2; 24:32 **43:26** [s] Gen. 37:7, 10; 42:6; 44:14 **43:27** [t] Gen. 29:6; 42:11, 13; 43:7; 45:3

28 And they answered, "Your servant our
father *is* in good health; he *is* still alive."
[u]And they bowed their heads down and
prostrated themselves.
29 Then he lifted his eyes and saw his
brother Benjamin, [v]his mother's son, and
said, "*Is* this your younger brother [w]of
whom you spoke to me?" And he said,
"God be gracious to you, my son." 30 Now
[x]his heart yearned for his brother; so Jo-
seph made haste and sought *somewhere* to
weep. And he went into *his* chamber and
[y]wept there. 31 Then he washed his face and
came out; and he restrained himself, and
said, "Serve the [z]bread."
32 So they set him a place by himself, and
them by themselves, and the Egyptians
who ate with him by themselves; because
the Egyptians could not eat food with the
[a]Hebrews, for that *is* [b]an abomination to
the Egyptians. 33 And they sat before him,
the firstborn according to his [c]birthright
and the youngest according to his youth;
and the men looked in astonishment at
one another. 34 Then he took servings to
them from before him, but Benjamin's serv-
ing was [d]five times as much as any of theirs.
So they drank and were merry with him.

Joseph's Cup

44 And he commanded the [a]steward of
his house, saying, [b]"Fill the men's
sacks with food, as much as they can carry,
and put each man's money in the mouth of
his sack. 2 Also put my cup, the silver cup,
in the mouth of the sack of the youngest,
and his grain money." So he did according
to the word that Joseph had spoken. 3 As
soon as the morning dawned, the men were
sent away, they and their donkeys. 4 When
they had gone out of the city, *and* were not
yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get
up, follow the men; and when you overtake
them, say to them, 'Why have you [c]repaid
evil for good? 5 *Is* not this *the one* from
which my lord drinks, and with which
he indeed practices divination? You have
done evil in so doing.'"
6 So he overtook them, and he spoke to
them these same words. 7 And they said to
him, "Why does my lord say these words?
Far be it from us that your servants should
do such a thing. 8 Look, we brought back to
you from the land of Canaan [d]the money
which we found in the mouth of our sacks.
How then could we steal silver or gold from
your lord's house? 9 With whomever of your
servants it is found, [e]let him die, and we
also will be my lord's slaves."
10 And he said, "Now also *let* it *be* accord-
ing to your words; he with whom it is found
shall be my slave, and you shall be blame-
less." 11 Then each man speedily let down
his sack to the ground, and each opened
his sack. 12 So he searched. He began with
the oldest and left off with the youngest;
and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.
13 Then they [f]tore their clothes, and each
man loaded his donkey and returned to
the city.
14 So Judah and his brothers came to Jo-
seph's house, and he *was* still there; and
they [g]fell before him on the ground. 15 And
Joseph said to them, "What deed *is* this you
have done? Did you not know that such a
man as I can certainly practice divina-
tion?"
16 Then Judah said, "What shall we say
to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how
shall we clear ourselves? God has [h]found
out the iniquity of your servants; here [i]we
are, my lord's slaves, both we and *he* also
with whom the cup was found."
17 But he said, [j]"Far be it from me that I
should do so; the man in whose hand the
cup was found, he shall be my slave. And
as for you, go up in peace to your father."

Judah Intercedes for Benjamin

18 Then Judah came near to him and said:
"O my lord, please let your servant speak a
word in my lord's hearing, and [k]do not let
your anger burn against your servant; for
you *are* even like Pharaoh. 19 My lord asked
his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or
a brother?' 20 And we said to my lord, 'We
have a father, an old man, and [l]a child of *his*
old age, *who is* young; his brother is [m]dead,
and he [n]alone is left of his mother's chil-
dren, and his [o]father loves him.' 21 Then you
said to your servants, [p]'Bring him down to
me, that I may set my eyes on him.' 22 And

43:32 ***an abomination.*** This word can indicate the strongest revulsion, something that might cause physical illness (46:34). The Egyptians (who carefully shaved their entire bodies) may have been repulsed by the "hairy" Hebrews.

44:15 ***can certainly practice divination.*** This curious verse is not very clear in meaning. Clearly a God-fearing man like Joseph who knew that only God can interpret dreams and visions (40:8) would not have been one to dabble with the occult. He may just have been trying to frighten his brothers by appearing to know things supernaturally (this would certainly have been backed up by his uncanny knowledge of their birth order in 43:33).

44:17 ***go up in peace to your father.*** Joseph was testing his brothers again, to see if they had changed in their attitude to the son of their father's favorite wife. Would they leave Benjamin a slave in Egypt as they had Joseph?

43:28 [u] Gen. 37:7, 10 **43:29** [v] Gen. 35:17, 18 [w] Gen. 42:13 **43:30** [x] 1 Kin. 3:26 [y] Gen. 42:24; 45:2, 14, 15; 46:29 **43:31** [z] Gen. 43:25 **43:32** [a] Gen. 41:12 [b] Gen. 46:34 **43:33** [c] Gen. 27:36; 42:7 **43:34** [d] Gen. 35:24; 45:22 **44:1** [a] Gen. 43:16 [b] Gen. 42:25 **44:4** [c] 1 Sam. 25:21 **44:8** [d] Gen. 43:21 **44:9** [e] Gen. 31:32 **44:13** [f] 2 Sam. 1:11 **44:14** [g] Gen. 37:7, 10 **44:16** [h] [Num. 32:23] [i] Gen. 44:9 **44:17** [j] Prov. 17:15 **44:18** [k] Ex. 32:22 **44:20** [l] Gen. 37:3; 43:8; 44:30 [m] Gen. 42:38 [n] Gen. 46:19 [o] Gen. 42:4 **44:21** [p] Gen. 42:15, 20

we said to my lord, [q]'The lad cannot leave his father, for *if* he should leave his father, *his father* would die.' 23But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.'

24"So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. 25And [r]our father said, 'Go back *and* buy us a little food.' 26But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother *is* with us.' 27Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that [s]my wife bore me two sons; 28and the one went out from me, and I said, [t]"Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. 29But if you [u]take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.'

30"Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad *is* not with us, since [v]his life is bound up in the lad's life, 31it will happen, when he sees that the lad *is* not *with us*, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. 32For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, [w]'If I do not bring him *back* to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.' 33Now therefore, please [x]let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. 34For how shall I go up to my father if the lad *is* not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?"

Joseph Revealed to His Brothers

45 Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him [a]while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2And he [b]wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard *it*.

3Then Joseph said to his brothers, [c]"I *am* Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. 4And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I *am* Joseph your brother, [d]whom you sold into Egypt. 5But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; [e]for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6For these two years the [f]famine *has been* in the land, and *there are* still five years in which *there will be* neither plowing nor harvesting. 7And God [g]sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8So now *it was* not you *who* sent me here, but [h]God; and He has made me [i]a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a [j]ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9"Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. 10[k]You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. 11There I will [l]provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for *there are* still five years of famine."'

12"And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that *it is* [m]my mouth that speaks to you. 13So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and [n]bring my father down here."

14Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. 15Moreover he [o]kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

16Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, "Joseph's brothers have come." So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. 17And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. 18Bring your father and

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45:1–4 Real Love—A profound comparison can be made between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ. Both Joseph and Jesus were persecuted unjustly (Gen. 37:11–28; Matt. 26:59). Both were lost to their brothers for a while (Gen. 45:1–15; Rom. 10:1–4). Both later forgave and restored their repentant brothers (Gen. 45:1–15; Zech. 8:1–8).

45:3 ***I am Joseph.*** Joseph must have said this in Hebrew, finally dropping the ruse of the interpreter (42:23).

45:5 ***God sent me.*** God often permits the wicked to carry out their evil plans in order to fulfill some larger purpose He has for the objects of their violence and cruelty. Since it is not possible for us to see the whole picture from God's perspective, we must exercise faith and believe that the God of all the earth will do right and that all things do work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to His purpose. Joseph was able to freely forgive his brothers partly because he recognized that their sin had been turned by God into something good.

45:10 ***You shall dwell in the land of Goshen.*** This was God's plan. He had told Abraham that his descendants would live in a foreign land (15:13–16).

44:22 [q] Gen. 43:3, 5 **44:25** [r] Gen. 43:2 **44:27** [s] Gen. 30:22–24; 35:16–18; 46:19 **44:28** [t] Gen. 37:31–35 **44:29** [u] Gen. 42:36, 38; 44:31 **44:30** [v] [1 Sam. 18:1; 25:29] **44:32** [w] Gen. 43:9 **44:33** [x] Ex. 32:32 **45:1** [a] Acts 7:13 **45:2** [b] Gen. 43:30; 46:29 **45:3** [c] Acts 7:13 **45:4** [d] Gen. 37:28; 39:1 **45:5** [e] Gen. 45:7, 8; 50:20 **45:6** [f] Gen. 43:1; 47:4, 13 **45:7** [g] Gen. 45:5; 50:20 **45:8** [h] [Rom. 8:28] [i] Is. 22:21 [j] Gen. 41:43; 42:6 **45:10** [k] Gen. 46:28, 34; 47:1, 6 **45:11** [l] Gen. 47:12 **45:12** [m] Gen. 42:23 **45:13** [n] Acts 7:14 **45:15** [o] Gen. 48:10

your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat [p]the fat of the land. 19Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. 20Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt *is* yours.'"

21Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them [q]carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. 22He gave to all of them, to each man, [r]changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver and [s]five changes of garments. 23And he sent to his father these *things:* ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey. 24So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, "See that you do not become troubled along the way."

25Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father. 26And they told him, saying, "Joseph *is* still alive, and he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt." [t]And Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them. 27But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit [u]of Jacob their father revived. 28Then Israel said, "*It is* enough. Joseph my son *is* still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Jacob's Journey to Egypt

46 So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to [a]Beersheba, and offered sacrifices [b]to the God of his father Isaac. 2Then God spoke to Israel [c]in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!"

And he said, "Here I am."

3So He said, "I *am* God, [d]the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will [e]make of you a great nation there. 4[f]I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely [g]bring you up *again;* and [h]Joseph will put his hand on your eyes."

5Then [i]Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the carts [j]which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, [k]Jacob and all his descendants with him. 7His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

8Now [l]these *were* the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: [m]Reuben *was* Jacob's firstborn. 9The [n]sons of Reuben *were* Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 10[o]The sons of Simeon *were* Jemuel,* Jamin, Ohad, Jachin,* Zohar,* and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. 11The sons of [p]Levi *were* Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 12The sons of [q]Judah *were* [r]Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). [s]The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 13The sons of Issachar *were* Tola, Puvah,* Job,* and Shimron. 14The [t]sons of Zebulun *were* Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. 15These *were* the [u]sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, with his daughter Dinah. All the persons, his sons and his daughters, *were* thirty-three.

16The sons of Gad *were* Ziphion,* Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon,* Eri, Arodi,* and Areli. 17[v]The sons of Asher *were* Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui, Beriah, and Serah, their sister. And the sons of Beriah *were* Heber and Malchiel. 18[w]These *were* the sons of Zilpah, [x]whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob: sixteen persons.

19The [y]sons of Rachel, [z]Jacob's wife, *were* Joseph and Benjamin. 20[a]And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. 21[b]The sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, [c]Ehi, Rosh, [d]Muppim, Huppim,* and Ard. 22These *were* the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: fourteen persons in all.

* **46:10** Spelled *Nemuel* in 1 Chronicles 4:24 • Called *Jarib* in 1 Chronicles 4:24 • Called *Zerah* in 1 Chronicles 4:24 * **46:13** Spelled *Puah* in 1 Chronicles 7:1 • Same as *Jashub* in Numbers 26:24 and 1 Chronicles 7:1 * **46:16** Spelled *Zephon* in Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Numbers 26:15 • Called *Ozni* in Numbers 26:16 • Spelled *Arod* in Numbers 26:17 * **46:21** Called *Hupham* in Numbers 26:39

46:1 ***Israel took his journey.*** Jacob's journey to Egypt began a four-hundred-year sojourn away from the promised land of Canaan. Jacob entered Egypt with his twelve sons and their families; Jacob's descendants would leave Egypt as a small nation.

46:2 ***Israel . . . Jacob.*** The fact that these names are used interchangeably indicates that the earlier negative connotations of the name Jacob had faded (31:11; 32:28; 35:10).

46:11 ***Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.*** These sons of Levi became the founders of the Levitical families (Ex. 6:16–19). Aaron and Moses descended from Kohath (Ex. 6:20–25).

45:18 [p] Gen. 27:28; 47:6 **45:21** [q] Gen. 45:19; 46:5 **45:22** [r] 2 Kin. 5:5 [s] Gen. 43:34 **45:26** [t] Job 29:24 **45:27** [u] Judg. 15:19 **46:1** [a] Gen. 21:31, 33; 26:32, 33; 28:10 [b] Gen. 26:24, 25; 28:13; 31:42; 32:9 **46:2** [c] Gen. 15:1; 22:11; 31:11 **46:3** [d] Gen. 17:1; 28:13 [e] Deut. 26:5 **46:4** [f] Gen. 28:15; 31:3; 48:21 [g] Gen. 15:16; 50:12, 24, 25 [h] Gen. 50:1 **46:5** [i] Acts 7:15 [j] Gen. 45:19–21 **46:6** [k] Deut. 26:5 **46:8** [l] Ex. 1:1–4 [m] Num. 26:4, 5 **46:9** [n] Ex. 6:14 **46:10** [o] Ex. 6:15 **46:11** [p] 1 Chr. 6:1, 16 **46:12** [q] 1 Chr. 2:3; 4:21 [r] Gen. 38:3, 7, 10 [s] Gen. 38:29 **46:14** [t] Num. 26:26 **46:15** [u] Gen. 35:23; 49:31 **46:17** [v] 1 Chr. 7:30 **46:18** [w] Gen. 30:10; 37:2 [x] Gen. 29:24 **46:19** [y] Gen. 35:24 [z] Gen. 44:27 **46:20** [a] Gen. 41:45, 50–52; 48:1 **46:21** [b] 1 Chr. 7:6; 8:1 [c] Num. 26:38 [d] Num. 26:39

23 The son of Dan *was* Hushim.* 24 [e]The
sons of Naphtali *were* Jahzeel,* Guni,
Jezer, and Shillem.* 25 [f]These *were* the sons
of Bilhah, [g]whom Laban gave to Rachel his
daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: sev-
en persons in all.
26 [h]All the persons who went with Jacob
to Egypt, who came from his body, [i]besides
Jacob's sons' wives, *were* sixty-six persons
in all. 27 And the sons of Joseph who were
born to him in Egypt *were* two persons. [j]All
the persons of the house of Jacob who went
to Egypt were seventy.

Jacob Settles in Goshen

28 Then he sent Judah before him to Jo-
seph, [k]to point out before him *the way* to
Goshen. And they came [l]to the land of Go-
shen. 29 So Joseph made ready his [m]chariot
and went up to Goshen to meet his father
Israel; and he presented himself to him,
and [n]fell on his neck and wept on his neck
a good while.
30 And Israel said to Joseph, [o]"Now let me
die, since I have seen your face, because
you *are* still alive."
31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and
to his father's household, [p]"I will go up and
tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers
and those of my father's house, who *were*
in the land of Canaan, have come to me.
32 And the men *are* [q]shepherds, for their
occupation has been to feed livestock; and
they have brought their flocks, their herds,
and all that they have.' 33 So it shall be,
when Pharaoh calls you and says, [r]'What
is your [s]occupation?' 34 that you shall say,
'Your servants' occupation has been with
livestock [t]from our youth even till now,
both we *and* also our fathers,' that you may
dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shep-
herd *is* [u]an abomination to the Egyptians."

47 Then Joseph [a]went and told Pharaoh,
and said, "My father and my broth-
ers, their flocks and their herds and all that
they possess, have come from the land of
Canaan; and indeed they *are* in [b]the land
of Goshen." 2 And he took five men from
among his brothers and [c]presented them to
Pharaoh. 3 Then Pharaoh said to his broth-
ers, [d]"What *is* your occupation?"
And they said to Pharaoh, [e]"Your ser-
vants *are* shepherds, both we *and* also our
fathers." 4 And they said to Pharaoh, [f]"We
have come to dwell in the land, because
your servants have no pasture for their
flocks, [g]for the famine *is* severe in the land
of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your
servants [h]dwell in the land of Goshen."
5 Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying,
"Your father and your brothers have come
to you. 6 [i]The land of Egypt *is* before you.
Have your father and brothers dwell in the
best of the land; let them dwell [j]in the land
of Goshen. And if you know *any* competent
men among them, then make them chief
herdsmen over my livestock."
7 Then Joseph brought in his father Ja-
cob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob
[k]blessed Pharaoh. 8 Pharaoh said to Jacob,
"How old *are* you?"
9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, [l]"The days
of the years of my pilgrimage *are* [m]one
hundred and thirty years; [n]few and evil
have been the days of the years of my life,
and [o]they have not attained to the days
of the years of the life of my fathers in
the days of their pilgrimage." 10 So Jacob
[p]blessed Pharaoh, and went out from be-
fore Pharaoh.
11 And Joseph situated his father and his

* **46:23** Called *Shuham* in Numbers 26:42
* **46:24** Spelled *Jahziel* in 1 Chronicles 7:13 • Spelled *Shallum* in 1 Chronicles 7:13

46:26–27 ***sixty-six . . . seventy.*** When Joseph, his two sons, and Jacob himself are added, the number of males in Jacob's family equals seventy.

46:34 ***every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.*** God used the racial and ethnic prejudice of the Egyptians as a way of preserving the ethnic and spiritual identity of His own people. Jacob's family was already intermarrying with the Canaanites (ch. 38) and was in danger of losing its identity as the people of God.

47:5–6 ***Pharaoh.*** There is some uncertainty concerning the identity of this pharaoh. Many believe he was Amenhotep I of the eleventh dynasty. Prior to his reign Egypt had suffered political and economic chaos for 200 years. Irrigation and building projects fell into ruin, and civil war raged. But Pharaoh Amenhotep was able to reunite Egypt, rebuilding the country and developing world trade. One of the reasons for his success no doubt stemmed from the fact that he was a generous man as we are told here. Not only was he generous to his own people, but he was kind to Israel. God had already promised to bless those who blessed the descendants of Abraham (Gen. 12:3). The lesson is clear. If a pagan king can experience God's blessing for his generosity, how much more can born-again believers know the riches of heaven for their generosity? Solomon reminds us of this principle: "The generous soul will be made rich" (Prov. 11:25).

47:8 ***How old are you?*** Pharaoh's question suggests that the long ages of the patriarchal family were truly exceptional, even for this period. Jacob's final 147 years (47:28) were fewer than the 175 years of Abraham (25:7) and the 180 years of Isaac (35:28), but still a significant age.

46:24 [e] Num. 26:48 **46:25** [f] Gen. 30:5, 7 [g] Gen. 29:29 **46:26** [h] Ex. 1:5 [i] Gen. 35:11 **46:27** [j] Deut. 10:22 **46:28** [k] Gen. 31:21 [l] Gen. 47:1 **46:29** [m] Gen. 41:43 [n] Gen. 45:14, 15 **46:30** [o] Luke 2:29, 30 **46:31** [p] Gen. 47:1 **46:32** [q] Gen. 47:3 **46:33** [r] Gen. 47:2, 3 [s] Gen. 47:3 **46:34** [t] Gen. 30:35; 34:5; 37:17 [u] Gen. 43:32 **47:1** [a] Gen. 46:31 [b] Gen. 45:10; 46:28; 50:8 **47:2** [c] Acts 7:13 **47:3** [d] Gen. 46:33 [e] Gen. 46:32, 34 **47:4** [f] Deut. 26:5 [g] Gen. 43:1 [h] Gen. 46:34 **47:6** [i] Gen. 20:15; 45:10, 18; 47:11 [j] Gen. 47:4 **47:7** [k] Gen. 47:10; 48:15, 20 **47:9** [l] [Heb. 11:9, 13] [m] Gen. 47:28 [n] [Job 14:1] [o] Gen. 5:5; 11:10, 11; 25:7, 8; 35:28 **47:10** [p] Gen. 47:7

brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of [q]Rameses, [r]as Pharaoh had commanded. 12Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all [s]his father's household with bread, according to the number in *their* families.

Joseph Deals with the Famine

13Now *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very severe, [t]so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. 14[u]And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for [v]why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed."

16Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you *bread* for your livestock, if the money is gone." 17So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread *in exchange* for all their livestock that year.

18When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. 19Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give *us* seed, that we may [w]live and not die, that the land may not be desolate."

20Then Joseph [x]bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's. 21And as for the people, he moved them into the cities,* from *one* end of the borders of Egypt to the *other* end. 22[y]Only the land of the [z]priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations *allotted to them* by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.

23Then Joseph said to the people, "Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, *here is* seed for you, and you shall sow the land. 24And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones."

25So they said, "You have saved [a]our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants." 26And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, *that* Pharaoh should have one-fifth, [b]except for the land of the priests only, *which* did not become Pharaoh's.

Joseph's Vow to Jacob

27So Israel [c]dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and [d]grew and multiplied exceedingly. 28And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years. 29When the time [e]drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "Now if I have found favor in your sight, please [f]put your hand under my thigh, and [g]deal kindly and truly with me. [h]Please do not bury me in Egypt, 30but [i]let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and [j]bury me in their burial place."

And he said, "I will do as you have said."

31Then he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. So [k]Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.

Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons

48 Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, "Indeed your father *is* sick"; and he took with him his two sons, [a]Manasseh and Ephraim. 2And Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you"; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. 3Then Jacob said to Joseph: "God [b]Almighty appeared to me at [c]Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4and said to me, 'Behold, I will [d]make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and [e]give this land to your descendants after you [f]*as* an everlasting possession.'

* **47:21** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *made the people virtual slaves*.

47:20 *the land.* Pharaoh's ownership of all the land of Egypt would one day lead to gross abuses of power (see the Book of Exodus).

47:29 *deal kindly and truly with me.* In other words, "demonstrate to me the utmost covenant loyalty." Jacob showed his vigorous faith in God's promises by asking to be buried in the land promised to his descendants.

47:11 [q] Ex. 1:11; 12:37 [r] Gen. 47:6, 27 **47:12** [s] Gen. 45:11; 50:21 **47:13** [t] Gen. 41:30 **47:14** [u] Gen. 41:56; 42:6 **47:15** [v] Gen. 47:19 **47:19** [w] Gen. 43:8 **47:20** [x] Jer. 32:43 **47:22** [y] Ezra 7:24 [z] Gen. 41:45 **47:25** [a] Gen. 33:15 **47:26** [b] Gen. 47:22 **47:27** [c] Gen. 47:11 [d] Gen. 17:6; 26:4; 35:11; 46:3 **47:29** [e] Deut. 31:14 [f] Gen. 24:2–4 [g] Gen. 24:49 [h] Gen. 50:25 **47:30** [i] 2 Sam. 19:37 [j] Gen. 49:29; 50:5–13 **47:31** [k] 1 Kin. 1:47 **48:1** [a] Gen. 41:51, 56; 46:20; 50:23 **48:3** [b] Gen. 43:14; 49:25 [c] Gen. 28:13, 19; 35:6, 9 **48:4** [d] Gen. 46:3 [e] Ex. 6:8 [f] Gen. 17:8

5 And now your [g]two sons, Ephraim and
Manasseh, who were born to you in the
land of Egypt before I came to you in
Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon,
they shall be mine. 6 Your offspring whom
you beget after them shall be yours; they
will be called by the name of their broth-
ers in their inheritance. 7 But as for me,
when I came from Padan, [h]Rachel died be-
side me in the land of Canaan on the way,
when *there was* but a little distance to go to
Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way
to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

8 Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and
said, "Who *are* these?"

9 Joseph said to his father, "They *are*
my sons, whom God has given me in this
place."

And he said, "Please bring them to me,
and [i]I will bless them." 10 Now [j]the eyes of
Israel were dim with age, *so that* he could
not see. Then Joseph brought them near
him, and he [k]kissed them and embraced
them. 11 And Israel said to Joseph, [l]"I had
not thought to see your face; but in fact,
God has also shown me your offspring!"

12 So Joseph brought them from beside
his knees, and he bowed down with his
face to the earth. 13 And Joseph took them
both, Ephraim with his right hand toward
Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his
left hand toward Israel's right hand, and
brought *them* near him. 14 Then Israel
stretched out his right hand and [m]laid *it* on
Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and
his left hand on Manasseh's head, [n]guiding
his hands knowingly, for Manasseh *was*
the [o]firstborn. 15 And [p]he blessed Joseph,
and said:

"God, [q]before whom my fathers
Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all my life
long to this day,
16 The Angel [r]who has redeemed me
from all evil,
Bless the lads;
Let [s]my name be named upon them,
And the name of my fathers Abraham
and Isaac;
And let them [t]grow into a multitude in
the midst of the earth."

17 Now when Joseph saw that his fa-
ther [u]laid his right hand on the head of
Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took
hold of his father's hand to remove it from
Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 And
Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my fa-
ther, for this *one is* the firstborn; put your
right hand on his head."

19 But his father refused and said, [v]"I
know, my son, I know. He also shall be-
come a people, and he also shall be great;
but truly [w]his younger brother shall be
greater than he, and his descendants shall
become a multitude of nations."

20 So he blessed them that day, saying,
[x]"By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God
make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'"
And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I
am dying, but [y]God will be with you and
bring you back to the land of your fathers.
22 Moreover [z]I have given to you one portion
above your brothers, which I took from the
hand [a]of the Amorite with my sword and
my bow."

Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

49 And Jacob called his sons and said,
"Gather together, that I may [a]tell you
what shall befall you [b]in the last days:

2 "Gather together and hear, you sons of
Jacob,
And listen to Israel your father.

3 "Reuben, you are [c]my firstborn,
My might and the beginning of my
strength,
The excellency of dignity and the
excellency of power.
4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel,
Because you [d]went up to your father's
bed;
Then you defiled *it*—
He went up to my couch.

5 "Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
Instruments of cruelty *are in* their
dwelling place.
6 [e]Let not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united [f]to their
assembly;
[g]For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they hamstrung
an ox.
7 Cursed *be* their anger, for *it is* fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!

48:5–7 *Ephraim and Manasseh.* As firstborn, Reuben should have received a double portion of the inheritance, but he had forfeited his birthright by his sins (35:22). By adopting Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons, Jacob gave the double portion to Joseph.

48:22 *one portion above.* Jacob promised Joseph that he would one day return to the land of Canaan. The promise was fulfilled after Joseph's death (50:24–26).

49:5–7 *Simeon and Levi.* This prophecy was fulfilled when the Israelites settled in the Promised Land. Simeon's allotment was scattered within the larger portion of the tribe of Judah, and Levi's allotment was scattered cities throughout the land (Josh. 21).

48:5 [g] Josh. 13:7; 14:4 **48:7** [h] Gen. 35:9, 16, 19, 20 **48:9** [i] Gen. 27:4; 47:15 **48:10** [j] Gen. 27:1 [k] Gen. 27:27; 45:15; 50:1 **48:11** [l] Gen. 45:26 **48:14** [m] Matt. 19:15 [n] Gen. 48:19 [o] Josh. 17:1 **48:15** [p] [Heb. 11:21] [q] Gen. 17:1; 24:40 **48:16** [r] Gen. 22:11, 15–18; 28:13–15; 31:11 [s] Amos 9:12 [t] Num. 26:34, 37 **48:17** [u] Gen. 48:14 **48:19** [v] Gen. 48:14 [w] Num. 1:33, 35 **48:20** [x] Ruth 4:11, 12 **48:21** [y] Gen. 28:15; 46:4; 50:24 **48:22** [z] Josh. 24:32 [a] Gen. 34:28 **49:1** [a] Deut. 33:1, 6–25 [b] Is. 2:2; 39:6 **49:3** [c] Gen. 29:32 **49:4** [d] Gen. 35:22 **49:6** [e] Prov. 1:15, 16 [f] Ps. 26:9 [g] Gen. 34:26

[h]I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.

8 "Judah,[i] you *are he* whom your brothers shall praise;
[j]Your hand *shall be* on the neck of your enemies;
[k]Your father's children shall bow down before you.
9 Judah *is* [l]a lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
[m]He bows down, he lies down as a lion;
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?
10 [n]The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor [o]a lawgiver from between his feet,
[p]Until Shiloh comes;
[q]And to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people.
11 Binding his donkey to the vine,
And his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
He washed his garments in wine,
And his clothes in the blood of grapes.
12 His eyes *are* darker than wine,
And his teeth whiter than milk.

13 "Zebulun[r] shall dwell by the haven of the sea;
He *shall become* a haven for ships,
And his border shall [s]adjoin Sidon.

14 "Issachar[t] is a strong donkey,
Lying down between two burdens;
15 He saw that rest *was* good,
And that the land *was* pleasant;
He bowed [u]his shoulder to bear *a burden*,
And became a band of slaves.

16 "Dan[v] shall judge his people
As one of the tribes of Israel.
17 [w]Dan shall be a serpent by the way,
A viper by the path,
That bites the horse's heels
So that its rider shall fall backward.
18 [x]I have waited for your salvation,
O LORD!

19 "Gad,[y] a troop shall tramp upon him,
But he shall triumph at last.

20 "Bread from [z]Asher *shall be* rich,
And he shall yield royal dainties.

21 "Naphtali[a] *is* a deer let loose;
He uses beautiful words.

22 "Joseph *is* a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a well;
His branches run over the wall.
23 The archers have [b]bitterly grieved him,
Shot *at him* and hated him.
24 But his [c]bow remained in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made strong
By the hands of [d]the Mighty *God* of Jacob
[e](From there [f]*is* the Shepherd, [g]the Stone of Israel),
25 [h]By the God of your father who will help you,
[i]And by the Almighty [j]who will bless you
With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
26 The blessings of your father
Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors,
[k]Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.
[l]They shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.

27 "Benjamin is a [m]ravenous wolf;
In the morning he shall devour the prey,
[n]And at night he shall divide the spoil."

28 All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel, and this *is* what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing.

49:10 ***scepter.*** With these words, Jacob predicted that a royal line would rise from Judah's descendants. Shiloh is an obscure word, probably meaning "the one to whom it belongs." In other words, Judah's descendants would be the rulers of Israel until the coming of "Shiloh," the One to whom all royal authority belongs. In this context, Shiloh, like "the Seed," is a reference to the coming Messiah.

49:11–12 ***wine . . . blood.*** The imagery in this verse describes the warfare that the Messiah will wage to establish His reign (Ps. 2; 110; Rev. 19:11–21).

49:24 ***Shepherd.*** The image of God as a shepherd occurs many times in Scripture. This term would have had great significance for a family of shepherds. God shepherded and cared for their families just as they shepherded and cared for their own flocks. God is the one Good Shepherd (Ps. 23; John 10).

49:28 ***the twelve tribes of Israel.*** Jacob's blessings are prophecies about the destiny of each tribe. Some of the blessings are obscure, but the blessings on Judah and Joseph are clear prophecies from God

49:7 [h] Josh. 19:1, 9; 21:1–42 **49:8** [i] Deut. 33:7 [j] Ps. 18:40 [k] 1 Chr. 5:2 **49:9** [l] [Rev. 5:5] [m] Num. 23:24; 24:9 **49:10** [n] Num. 24:17; Matt. 1:3; 2:6; Luke 3:33; Rev. 5:5 [o] Ps. 60:7 [p] Is. 11:1 [q] Ps. 2:6–9; 72:8–11 **49:13** [r] Deut. 33:18, 19 [s] Gen. 10:19 **49:14** [t] 1 Chr. 12:32 **49:15** [u] 1 Sam. 10:9 **49:16** [v] Deut. 33:22 **49:17** [w] Judg. 18:27 **49:18** [x] Is. 25:9 **49:19** [y] Deut. 33:20 **49:20** [z] Deut. 33:24 **49:21** [a] Deut. 33:23 **49:23** [b] Gen. 37:4, 24 **49:24** [c] Job 29:20 [d] Ps. 132:2, 5 [e] Gen. 45:11; 47:12 [f] [Ps. 23:1; 80:1] [g] Is. 28:16 **49:25** [h] Gen. 28:13; 32:9; 35:3; 43:23; 50:17 [i] Gen. 17:1; 35:11 [j] Deut. 33:13 **49:26** [k] Deut. 33:15 [l] Deut. 33:16 **49:27** [m] Judg. 20:21, 25 [n] Zech. 14:1

Jacob's Death and Burial

29 Then he charged them and said to
them: "I [o]am to be gathered to my peo-
ple; [p]bury me with my fathers [q]in the
cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the
Hittite, 30in the cave that *is* in the field
of Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre
in the land of Canaan, [r]which Abraham
bought with the field of Ephron the Hit-
tite as a possession for a burial place.
31[s]There they buried Abraham and Sarah
his wife, [t]there they buried Isaac and Re-
bekah his wife, and there I buried Leah.
32The field and the cave that *is* there *were*
purchased from the sons of Heth." 33And
when Jacob had finished commanding his
sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and
breathed his last, and was gathered to his
people.

50 Then Joseph [a]fell on his father's face
and [b]wept over him, and kissed him.
2And Joseph commanded his servants the
physicians to [c]embalm his father. So the
physicians embalmed Israel. 3Forty days
were required for him, for such are the
days required for those who are embalmed;
and the Egyptians [d]mourned for him sev-
enty days.

4Now when the days of his mourning
were past, Joseph spoke to [e]the household
of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found
favor in your eyes, please speak in the
hearing of Pharaoh, saying, 5[f]'My father
made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dy-
ing; in my grave [g]which I dug for myself in
the land of Canaan, there you shall bury
me." Now therefore, please let me go up
and bury my father, and I will come back.'"

6And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury
your father, as he made you swear."

7So Joseph went up to bury his father;
and with him went up all the servants of
Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the
elders of the land of Egypt, 8as well as all
the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his
father's house. Only their little ones, their
flocks, and their herds they left in the land
of Goshen. 9And there went up with him
both chariots and horsemen, and it was a
very great gathering.

10Then they came to the threshing floor
of Atad, which *is* beyond the Jordan, and
they [h]mourned there with a great and very
solemn lamentation. [i]He observed seven
days of mourning for his father. 11And
when the inhabitants of the land, the Ca-
naanites, saw the mourning at the thresh-
ing floor of Atad, they said, "This *is* a deep
mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its
name was called Abel Mizraim,* which *is*
beyond the Jordan.

12So his sons did for him just as he had
commanded them. 13For [j]his sons carried
him to the land of Canaan, and buried him
in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before
Mamre, which Abraham [k]bought with the
field from Ephron the Hittite as property
for a burial place. 14And after he had bur-
ied his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he
and his brothers and all who went up with
him to bury his father.

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

15When Joseph's brothers saw that their
father was dead, [l]they said, "Perhaps Jo-
seph will hate us, and may actually repay
us for all the evil which we did to him." 16So
they sent *messengers* to Joseph, saying,
"Before your father died he commanded,
saying, 17'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I
beg you, please forgive the trespass of your
brothers and their sin; [m]for they did evil to
you."' Now, please, forgive the trespass of
the servants of [n]the God of your father."
And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

18Then his brothers also went and [o]fell
down before his face, and they said, "Be-
hold, we *are* your servants."

19Joseph said to them, [p]"Do not be
afraid, [q]for *am* I in the place of God? 20[r]But
as for you, you meant evil against me; *but*
[s]God meant it for good, in order to bring it
about as *it is* this day, to save many people
alive. 21Now therefore, do not be afraid; [t]I
will provide for you and your little ones."
And he comforted them and spoke kindly
to them.

Death of Joseph

22So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and
his father's household. And Joseph lived

* **50:11** Literally *Mourning of Egypt*

about their destinies (compare Moses' blessing of the tribes of Israel, Deut. 33).

50:5–6 *swear.* Bound by an oath, Joseph requested leave to bury his father in Canaan in a place ready for his remains. It seems today that we do not take vows as seriously as Joseph took his promise to his father, and everything from casual promises to solemn marriage vows are broken with little remorse. Honoring vows, both in small matters and significant, honors God because He asks us to put away lying and speak truth (Eph. 4:25). Broken vows result in broken hearts and ruined relationships, blasted memories, ineffective lives and testimonies. Even a foolish or wrong vow cannot be lightly set aside, but must be repented of before God. We must learn to promise wisely, and honor our promises faithfully.

50:20 *God meant it for good.* God transformed the

49:29 [o] Gen. 15:15; 25:8; 35:29 [p] Gen. 47:30 [q] Gen. 23:16–20; 50:13 **49:30** [r] Gen. 23:3–20 **49:31** [s] Gen. 23:19, 20; 25:9 [t] Gen. 35:29; 50:13 **50:1** [a] Gen. 46:4, 29 [b] 2 Kin. 13:14 **50:2** [c] Gen. 50:26 **50:3** [d] Deut. 34:8 **50:4** [e] Esth. 4:2 **50:5** [f] Gen. 47:29–31 [g] Is. 22:16 **50:10** [h] Acts 8:2 [i] 1 Sam. 31:13 **50:13** [j] Acts 7:16 [k] Gen. 23:16–20 **50:15** [l] [Job 15:21] **50:17** [m] [Prov. 28:13] [n] Gen. 49:25 **50:18** [o] Gen. 37:7–10; 41:43; 44:14 **50:19** [p] Gen. 45:5 [q] 2 Kin. 5:7 **50:20** [r] Ps. 56:5 [s] [Acts 3:13–15] **50:21** [t] [Matt. 5:44]

one hundred and ten years. 23Joseph saw Ephraim's children [u]to the third *generation.* [v]The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, [w]were also brought up on Joseph's knees.

24And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but [x]God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land [y]of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25Then [z]Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and [a]you shall carry up my [b]bones from here." 26So Joseph died, *being* one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

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evil of a group of men into an exceedingly great work. Joseph not only saved the lives of numerous people in the ancient world, he also testified to the power and goodness of the living God.

50:24 *to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.* This phrase is the standard way of referring to God's covenant with Abraham's family (50:24; Ex. 2:24; 3:16). The recital of the three names reaffirms the certainty of the promise and God's commitment to fulfill it.

50:25 *carry up my bones.* Hundreds of years later, Moses would keep the Israelites' oath by taking Joseph's bones with the people into the wilderness (Ex. 13:19). Finally, Joshua would bury the bones of Joseph at Shechem (Josh. 24:32).

50:23 [u] Job 42:16 [v] Num. 26:29; 32:39 [w] Gen. 30:3
50:24 [x] Ex. 3:16, 17 [y] Gen. 26:3; 35:12; 46:4 **50:25** [z] Ex. 13:19 [a] Deut. 1:8; 30:1–8 [b] Ex. 13:19

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
EXODUS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Exodus has been attributed to Moses since the time of Joshua (cf. 20:25; Josh. 8:30–32), and there is a great deal of both internal and external evidence that supports Moses as the author. The claims in Joshua are backed by similar testimony from Malachi (4:4), the disciples (John 1:45), Paul (Rom. 10:5), and Christ (Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 20:37; John 5:46–47; 7:19,22–23). Portions of the book itself claim the authorship of Moses (ch. 15; 17:8–14; 20:1–17; 24:4,7,12; 31:18; 34:1–27). The author of Exodus must have been a man familiar with the customs and climate of Egypt. Its consistency of style points to a single author and its ancient literary devices support its antiquity.

▶ **TIME:** c. 1875–1445 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Ex. 19:5–6

▶ **THEME:** The main character of Exodus is clearly Moses. God gives him the job of leading the exodus from Egypt. Moses also takes on the job of establishing, at God's direction, the essential elements of the Jewish patterns of life and worship. He is simultaneously God's designated representative of the people to God and God's messenger and representative to the people. The critical events in Exodus are the Passover and the giving of the Ten Commandments. The remainder of the Old Testament continually refers back to God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and the law as delivered at Sinai. In these events God's identity and purpose is revealed. There are many signs and wonders of His power. Aspects of His nature and His expectations of the people also become increasingly clear.

Israel's Suffering in Egypt

1 Now [a]these *are* the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob:
2Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah;
3Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin;
4Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.
5All those who were descendants* of Jacob were [b]seventy* persons (for Joseph was in Egypt *already*).
6And [c]Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation.
7[d]But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.
8Now there arose a new king over Egypt, [e]who did not know Joseph.
9And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and [f]mightier than we;
10[g]come, let us [h]deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and *so* go up out of the land."
11Therefore they set taskmasters over them [i]to afflict them

* **1:5** Literally *who came from the loins of* • Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint read *seventy-five* (compare Acts 7:14).

1:1 ***Israel.*** Originally, Israel was called Jacob. His twelve sons became the founders of the twelve tribes of the nation Israel.

1:2–4 The sons are listed according to their mothers and their ages. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun were all sons of Leah. Benjamin was the son of Rachel. Dan and Naphtali were sons of Bilhah, the maid of Rachel. Gad and Asher were sons of Zilpah, the maid of Leah (for each son's birth, see Gen. 29:31–35; 35:16–20,23–26).

1:8 ***a new king.*** This king did not remember Joseph, his privileged position in the older pharaoh's administration, his administrative skill that saved the Egyptians from starvation, and his enrichment of the pharaoh's treasury. This pharaoh was probably one of the Hyksos kings who descended from foreign invaders. Ethnically they were a minority in Egypt, and they may have perceived the growing numbers of Hebrews as a personal challenge.

1:11–22 ***to afflict them.*** Long before the sons of Israel came to Egypt, Abraham received a remarkable revelation from the Lord (Gen. 15:13–16): his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land and would be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. "In all their affliction He was afflicted" (Is. 63:9). At the point when Israel's afflictions became unbearable they cried for help, and God responded in faithfulness to His promise.

1:11 ***Pithom and Raamses.*** These storage cities are mentioned according to the names by which they

1:1 [a] Gen. 46:8–27 **1:5** [b] Gen. 46:26, 27 **1:6** [c] Gen. 50:26 **1:7** [d] Acts 7:17 **1:8** [e] Acts 7:18, 19 **1:9** [f] Gen. 26:16 **1:10** [g] Ps. 83:3, 4 [h] Acts 7:19 **1:11** [i] Ex. 3:7; 5:6

with their [j]burdens. And they built for Pharaoh [k]supply cities, Pithom [l]and Raamses.
12But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. 13So the Egyptians made the children of Israel [m]serve with rigor. 14And they [n]made their lives bitter with hard bondage—[o]in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve *was* with rigor.

15Then the king of Egypt spoke to the [p]Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; 16and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it *is* a [q]son, then you shall kill him; but if it *is* a daughter, then she shall live." 17But the midwives [r]feared God, and did not do [s]as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. 18So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?"

19And [t]the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women *are* not like the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively and give birth before the midwives come to them."

20[u]Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21And so it was, because the midwives feared God, [v]that He provided households for them.

22So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, [w]"Every son who is born* you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."

Moses Is Born

2 And [a]a man of the house of Levi went and took *as wife* a daughter of Levi.
2So the woman conceived and bore a son. And [b]when she saw that he *was* a beautiful *child*, she hid him three months. 3But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of [c]bulrushes for him, daubed it with [d]asphalt and [e]pitch, put the child in it, and laid *it* in the reeds [f]by the river's bank.
4[g]And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

5Then the [h]daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. 6And when she opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

7Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?"

8And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. 9Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give *you* your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. 10And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became [i]her son. So she called his name Moses,* saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

Moses Flees to Midian

11Now it came to pass in those days, [j]when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12So he looked

* **1:22** Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Targum add *to the Hebrews.* * **2:10** Literally *Drawn Out*

were known in later times. The Pharaoh Ramses (whose name presumably relates to the name of one of these cities) was not yet in power.

1:15 *king of Egypt.* This king was probably not the Hyksos king alluded to in verses 8–14. This king, perhaps Thutmose I (c. 1539–1514 B.C.), ruled Egypt when Moses was born (2:1–10). ***Hebrew midwives.*** The names of these women (Shiphrah—"beautiful one," and Puah—"splendid one") are preserved in this account because they were godly women with a courageous faith. At the same time, the names of the pharaohs—the "important" people of the day—are omitted.

1:17 *feared.* The Hebrew term for "fear" is the word regularly used for piety, obedience, and the true worship of God (20:20; Gen. 22:12).

2:2 *bore a son.* This was not their first child; both Miriam and Aaron were older than Moses (v. 4; 7:7).

2:6 *one of the Hebrews' children.* A Hebrew baby would have been circumcised on the eighth day. Although circumcision was practiced in Egypt, it was not done to infants. Upon unwrapping the infant's clothing, the women would have seen his special mark.

2:10 *Because I drew him out.* In Hebrew, the name Moses means "he who draws out." In this manner, Moses' name can refer the reader to the living God, who is the true Deliverer, and also to Moses, who was used by God to deliver the Israelites from the Red Sea (chs. 14–15). The one who was drawn out of water would be the means of drawing the Israelite nation out of water.

2:11 *when Moses was grown.* The years of Moses' experience in the pharaoh's court are not detailed. Yet Stephen, the New Testament martyr, reported the long-held and surely accurate tradition: "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds" (Acts 7:22). The

1:11 [j] Ex. 1:14; 2:11; 5:4–9; 6:6 [k] 1 Kin. 9:19 [l] Gen. 47:11 **1:13** [m] Gen. 15:13 **1:14** [n] Num. 20:15 [o] Ps. 81:6 **1:15** [p] Ex. 2:6 **1:16** [q] Acts 7:19 **1:17** [r] Prov. 16:6 [s] Dan. 3:16, 18 **1:19** [t] Josh. 2:4 **1:20** [u] [Prov. 11:18] **1:21** [v] 1 Sam. 2:35 **1:22** [w] Acts 7:19 **2:1** [a] Ex. 6:16–20 **2:2** [b] Acts 7:20 **2:3** [c] Is. 18:2 [d] Gen. 14:10 [e] Gen. 6:14 [f] Is. 19:6 **2:4** [g] Num. 26:59 **2:5** [h] Acts 7:21 **2:10** [i] Acts 7:21 **2:11** [j] Heb. 11:24–26

this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he [k]killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13And [l]when he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrew men [m]were fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?"

14Then he said, [n]"Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"

So Moses [o]feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!" 15When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But [p]Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of [q]Midian; and he sat down by [r]a well.

16[s]Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. [t]And they came and drew water, and they filled the [u]troughs to water their father's flock. 17Then the [v]shepherds came and [w]drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and [x]watered their flock.

18When they came to [y]Reuel their father, [z]he said, "How *is it that* you have come so soon today?"

19And they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock."

20So he said to his daughters, "And where *is* he? Why *is* it *that* you have left the man? Call him, that he may [a]eat bread."

21Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave [b]Zipporah his daughter to Moses. 22And she bore *him* a son. He called his name [c]Gershom,* for he said, "I have been [d]a stranger in a foreign land."

23Now it happened [e]in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel [f]groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and [g]their cry came up to God because of the bondage. 24So God [h]heard their groaning, and God [i]remembered His [j]covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. 25And God [k]looked upon the children of Israel, and God [l]acknowledged *them*.

Moses at the Burning Bush

3 Now Moses was tending the flock of [a]Jethro his father-in-law, [b]the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to [c]Horeb, [d]the mountain of God. 2And [e]the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush *was* not consumed. 3Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this [f]great sight, why the bush does not burn."

4So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called [g]to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!"

And he said, "Here I am."

5Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. [h]Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand *is* holy ground." 6Moreover He said, [i]"I *am* the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for [j]he was afraid to look upon God.

7And the LORD said: [k]"I have surely seen the oppression of My people who *are* in

* **2:22** Literally *Stranger There*

training Moses received was the best education the world had to offer at the time. He would have learned three languages: Egyptian, Akkadian, and Hebrew. When Moses came into the presence of Pharaoh to demand freedom for his people, he was no "uneducated slave," but had received an education on a par with the king's.

2:15 ***the land of Midian.*** This is the region of the Sinai Peninsula and Arabian deserts where the seminomadic Midianites lived (for the Abrahamic origin of this people group, see Gen. 25:1).

2:16 ***the priest of Midian.*** This man appears to have been a foreigner who had come to worship the true and living God.

2:18 ***Reuel.*** Reuel is also called Jethro (4:18).

2:19 ***An Egyptian.*** Moses apparently still dressed and spoke as an Egyptian, rather than as a Hebrew.

2:22 ***Gershom.*** Gershom means "a stranger there." Moses was doubly removed from his land. He and his people, the Israelites, were strangers in Egypt, and now he was estranged even from his people.

2:23 ***the king of Egypt died.*** The death of Pharaoh (likely Thutmose III, who died about 1447 B.C.) meant that Moses could return to Egypt (4:19).

3:1 ***Horeb.*** This alternate name for Mount Sinai means "desolate place." Yet because of God's appearance on the mountain, this desolate place would become holy. Usually the site of this mountain is identified as Jebel el-Musa, a mountain in the southern Sinai Peninsula.

3:2 ***Angel.*** The word *angel* simply means "messenger" (Mal. 1:1). In the Old Testament, the term "the Angel of the LORD" is used numerous times, and is identified with God as well as being distinguished from Him. In this passage, having mentioned that the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses, it is immediately established that it was the Lord Himself (v. 4).

3:6 ***the God of your father.*** God identified Himself as the God worshiped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In announcing these names, the Lord was assuring Moses that the covenant He had made with them was still intact.

2:12 [k] Acts 7:24, 25 **2:13** [l] Acts 7:26–28 [m] Prov. 25:8 **2:14** [n] Acts 7:27, 28 [o] Judg. 6:27 **2:15** [p] Acts 7:29 [q] Ex. 3:1 [r] Gen. 24:11; 29:2 **2:16** [s] Ex. 3:1; 4:18; 18:12 [t] Gen. 24:11, 13, 19; 29:6–10 [u] Gen. 30:38 **2:17** [v] Gen. 47:3 [w] Gen. 26:19–21 [x] Gen. 29:3, 10 **2:18** [y] Num. 10:29 [z] Ex. 3:1; 4:18 **2:20** [a] Gen. 31:54; 43:25 **2:21** [b] Ex. 4:25; 18:2 **2:22** [c] Ex. 4:20; 18:3, 4 [d] Acts 7:29 **2:23** [e] Acts 7:34 [f] Deut. 26:7 [g] James 5:4 **2:24** [h] Ex. 6:5 [i] Gen. 15:13; 22:16–18; 26:2–5; 28:13–15 [j] Gen. 12:1–3; 15:14; 17:1–14 **2:25** [k] Ex. 4:31 [l] Ex. 3:7 **3:1** [a] Ex. 4:18 [b] Ex. 2:16 [c] Ex. 17:6 [d] Ex. 18:5 **3:2** [e] Deut. 33:16 **3:3** [f] Acts 7:31 **3:4** [g] Deut. 33:16 **3:5** [h] Josh. 5:15 **3:6** [i] [Matt. 22:32] [j] 1 Kin. 19:13 **3:7** [k] Ex. 2:23–25

Egypt, and have heard their cry [l]because of their taskmasters, [m]for I know their sorrows. 8So [n]I have come down to [o]deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to [p]a good and large land, to a land [q]flowing with milk and honey, to the place of [r]the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. 9Now therefore, behold, [s]the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the [t]oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. 10[u]Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

11But Moses said to God, [v]"Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

12So He said, [w]"I will certainly be with you. And this *shall be* a [x]sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

13Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What *is* His name?' what shall I say to them?"

14And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, [y]'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* [z]My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.' 16Go and [a]gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, [b]"I have surely visited you and *seen* what is done to you in Egypt; 17and I have said [c]I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."' 18Then [d]they will heed your voice; and [e]you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt; and you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has [f]met with us; and now, please, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.' 19But I am sure that the king of Egypt [g]will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. 20So I will [h]stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with [i]all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and [j]after that he will let you go. 21And [k]I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. 22[l]But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, [m]articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put *them* on your sons and on your daughters. So [n]you shall plunder the Egyptians."

Miraculous Signs for Pharaoh

4 Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.'"

2So the LORD said to him, "What *is* that in your hand?"

He said, "A rod."

3And He said, "Cast it on the ground." So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. 4Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take *it* by the tail" (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand), 5"that they may [a]believe that the [b]LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

6Furthermore the LORD said to him, "Now put your hand in your bosom." And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous, [c]like snow. 7And He said, "Put your hand in your bosom again." So he put his hand in his bosom again, and drew it out of his bosom, and behold, [d]it was restored like his *other* flesh. 8"Then it will be, if they do not believe you, nor heed the message of the [e]first sign, that they may believe the message of the latter sign. 9And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take

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3:14 ***I AM WHO I AM.*** The One who spoke to Moses declared Himself to be the Eternal One—uncaused and independent. Only the Creator of all things can call Himself the I AM in the absolute sense; all other creatures are in debt to Him for their existence. But in addition, God the Creator declares His relationship with the people of Israel. The future tense of the Hebrew verb related to God's name is used in verse 12: The I AM *will be* with His people. Thus God declares His covenantal relationship with Israel by His name.

3:15 ***The LORD.*** LORD in capital letters is the form translators have chosen to represent the Hebrew name YHWH (also transliterated Yahweh, or Jehovah). The Hebrew word meaning "I Am" used in verse 14 is very similar.

4:6–7 ***leprous.*** The term *leprosy* included a wide variety of skin diseases.

3:7 [l] Ex. 1:11 [m] Ex. 2:25 **3:8** [n] Gen. 15:13–16; 46:4; 50:24, 25 [o] Ex. 6:6–8; 12:51 [p] Deut. 1:25; 8:7–9 [q] Jer. 11:5 [r] Gen. 15:19–21 **3:9** [s] Ex. 2:23 [t] Ex. 1:11, 13, 14 **3:10** [u] [Mic. 6:4] **3:11** [v] Ex. 4:10; 6:12 **3:12** [w] Gen. 31:3 [x] Ex. 4:8; 19:3 **3:14** [y] [John 8:24, 28, 58] **3:15** [z] Ps. 30:4; 97:12; 102:12; 135:13 **3:16** [a] Ex. 4:29 [b] Ex. 2:25; 4:31 **3:17** [c] Gen. 15:13–21; 46:4; 50:24, 25 **3:18** [d] Ex. 4:31 [e] Ex. 5:1, 3 [f] Num. 23:3, 4, 15, 16 **3:19** [g] Ex. 5:2 **3:20** [h] Ex. 6:6; 9:15 [i] Deut. 6:22 [j] Ex. 11:1; 12:31–37 **3:21** [k] Ex. 11:3; 12:36 **3:22** [l] Ex. 11:2 [m] Ex. 33:6 [n] Job 27:17 **4:5** [a] Ex. 4:31; 19:9 [b] Ex. 3:6, 15 **4:6** [c] Num. 12:10 **4:7** [d] Deut. 32:39 **4:8** [e] Ex. 7:6–13

water from the river* and pour *it* on the dry *land.* [f]The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry *land.*"

10Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but [g]I *am* slow of speech and slow of tongue."

11So the LORD said to him, [h]"Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have* not I, the LORD? **12**Now therefore, go, and I will be [i]with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."

13But he said, "O my Lord, [j]please send by the hand of whomever *else* You may send."

14So [k]the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your [l]brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, [m]he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. **15**Now [n]you shall speak to him and [o]put the words in his mouth. And [p]I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. **16**So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and [q]you shall be to him as God. **17**And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs."

Moses Goes to Egypt

18So Moses went and returned to [r]Jethro his father-in-law, and said to him, "Please let me go and return to my brethren who *are* in Egypt, and see whether they are still alive."

And Jethro said to Moses, [s]"Go in peace."

19Now the LORD said to Moses in [t]Midian, "Go, return to [u]Egypt; for all the men who [v]sought your life are dead." **20**Then Moses [w]took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took [x]the rod of God in his hand.

21And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those [y]wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But [z]I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. **22**Then you shall [a]say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: [b]"Israel *is* My son, [c]My firstborn. **23**So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed [d]I will kill your son, your firstborn."'"

24And it came to pass on the way, at the [e]encampment, that the LORD [f]met him and sought to [g]kill him. **25**Then [h]Zipporah took [i]a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast *it* at *Moses'** feet, and said, "Surely you *are* a husband of blood to me!" **26**So He let him go. Then she said, "*You are* a husband of blood!"—because of the circumcision.

27And the LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness [j]to meet Moses." So he went and met him [k]on the mountain of God, and kissed him. **28**So Moses [l]told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the [m]signs which He had commanded him. **29**Then Moses and Aaron [n]went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. **30**[o]And Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people. **31**So the people [p]believed; and when they heard that the LORD had [q]visited the children of Israel and that He [r]had looked on their affliction, then [s]they bowed their heads and worshiped.

* **4:9** That is, the Nile * **4:25** Literally *his*

4:19 ***who sought your life.*** God promised Abraham that those who persecuted Israel would be judged (Gen. 12:3), and it is clear from history that God fulfilled His promise. In Exodus 14, the Egyptians attempted to destroy the Israelites by driving them into the Red Sea, but instead were drowned themselves. Those who threw Daniel to the lions were devoured by those same beasts (Dan. 6). Haman plotted to destroy all the Jews in Persia, and ended up signing his own death warrant (Esth. 7). "The LORD preserves all who love Him" (Ps. 145:20).

4:21 ***Pharaoh.*** This pharaoh was most likely Amenhotep II (c. 1447–1421). ***I will harden his heart.*** Some interpret these words to mean that God would confirm what Pharaoh had stubbornly determined to do. In the first five plagues, the hardening was attributed to Pharaoh (7:13,22; 8:15,19,32; 9:7). Then for the sixth plague, God hardened a heart that had already rejected Him (9:12). Others insist that God had determined Pharaoh's negative response to Moses long before Pharaoh could harden his heart. These interpreters point to this verse and to 9:16, in which God says that He raised up Pharaoh for the purpose of demonstrating His power.

4:24 ***sought to kill him.*** The precise meaning of this passage is unclear. Apparently someone in Moses' family was not circumcised, despite God's command. It is possible that Moses had kept one of his sons uncircumcised in order to please his Midianite family. (The Midianites practiced adult male circumcision at the time of marriage, rather than infant circumcision as the Hebrews did.) Moses' neglect of the sign of God's covenant was very serious, especially for the future leader of God's people.

4:9 [f]Ex. 7:19, 20 **4:10** [g]Ex. 3:11; 4:1; 6:12 **4:11** [h]Ps. 94:9; 146:8 **4:12** [i]Is. 50:4 **4:13** [j]Jon. 1:3 **4:14** [k]Num. 11:1, 33 [l]Num. 26:59 [m]Ex. 4:27 **4:15** [n]Ex. 4:12, 30; 7:1, 2 [o]Num. 23:5, 12 [p]Deut. 5:31 **4:16** [q]Ex. 7:1, 2 **4:18** [r]Ex. 2:21; 3:1; 4:18 [s]Judg. 18:6 **4:19** [t]Ex. 3:1; 18:1 [u]Gen. 46:3, 6 [v]Ex. 2:15, 23 **4:20** [w]Ex. 18:2–5 [x]Num. 20:8, 9, 11 **4:21** [y]Ex. 3:20; 11:9, 10 [z]John 12:40 **4:22** [a]Ex. 5:1 [b]Hos. 11:1 [c]Jer. 31:9 **4:23** [d]Ex. 11:5; 12:29 **4:24** [e]Gen. 42:27 [f]Num. 22:22 [g]Gen. 17:14 **4:25** [h]Ex. 2:21; 18:2 [i]Josh. 5:2, 3 **4:27** [j]Ex. 4:14 [k]Ex. 3:1; 18:5; 24:13 **4:28** [l]Ex. 4:15, 16 [m]Ex. 4:8, 9 **4:29** [n]Ex. 3:16; 12:21 **4:30** [o]Ex. 4:15, 16 **4:31** [p]Ex. 3:18; 4:8, 9; 19:9 [q]Gen. 50:24 [r]Ex. 2:25; 3:7 [s]Gen. 24:26

First Encounter with Pharaoh

5 Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold [a]a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

2And Pharaoh said, [b]"Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, [c]nor will I let Israel go."

3So they said, [d]"The God of the Hebrews has [e]met with us. Please, let us go three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with [f]pestilence or with the sword."

4Then the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Get *back* to your [g]labor." 5And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land *are* [h]many now, and you make them rest from their labor!"

6So the same day Pharaoh commanded the [i]taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, 7"You shall no longer give the people straw to make [j]brick as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. 8And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it. For they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, 'Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God.' 9Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it, and let them not regard false words."

10And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus says Pharaoh: 'I will not give you straw. 11Go, get yourselves straw where you can find it; yet none of your work will be reduced.'" 12So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. 13And the taskmasters forced *them* to hurry, saying, "Fulfill your work, *your* daily quota, as when there was straw." 14Also the [k]officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were [l]beaten *and* were asked, "Why have you not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as before?"

15Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, "Why are you dealing thus with your servants? 16There is no straw given to your servants, and they say to us, 'Make brick!' And indeed your servants *are* beaten, but the fault *is* in your *own* people."

17But he said, "You *are* idle! Idle! Therefore you say, 'Let us go *and* sacrifice to the LORD.' 18Therefore go now *and* work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks." 19And the officers of the children of Israel saw *that* they *were* in trouble after it was said, "You shall not reduce *any* bricks from your daily quota."

20Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them. 21[m]And they said to them, "Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."

Israel's Deliverance Assured

22So Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why *is* it You have sent me? 23For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all."

6 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For [a]with a strong hand he will let them go, and with a strong hand [b]he will drive them out of his land."

2And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I *am* the LORD. 3[c]I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as [d]God Almighty, but *by* My name [e]LORD* I was not known to them. 4[f]I have also established My covenant with them, [g]to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, [h]in which they were strangers. 5And [i]I have also heard the groaning of the children of

* **6:3** Hebrew *YHWH*, traditionally *Jehovah*

5:2 ***Who is the LORD.*** Later these words would haunt Pharaoh (12:31–32). Meanwhile, Pharaoh believed himself to be a god in his own right, and certainly felt no need to cave in to the demands of a god who claimed to be the champion of his slave labor force.

5:7–9 ***Let them go and gather straw for themselves.*** It is easy to rationalize our cruel treatment of others when it is in our selfish interest to do so. We often hear "Pharaoh's reasoning" about minority peoples or people on welfare today. Of course laziness and discontent is a genuine problem for some who are on welfare, or who feel oppressed (just as it is for some who were born into wealth and privilege), but too often we turn off the concern we should have for the poor and oppressed with the comfortable conviction that somehow they deserve their problems. If we continue in this attitude, we may be sure that God will judge our sin. God cares deeply for the weak, the poor, and the downtrodden; if we are genuine disciples we will share His concern.

5:23 ***speak in Your name.*** It seems that Moses expected Pharaoh to cave in as soon as he heard the use of the Lord's name Yahweh (3:13–15; 5:1). Yet God had warned Moses that Pharaoh would do the opposite (3:19; 4:21).

6:4 ***My covenant.*** This is a reference to the Abrahamic covenant celebrated in Genesis (Gen. 12:1–3,7; 15:12–21; 17:1–16; 22:15–18).

5:1 [a] Ex. 3:18; 7:16; 10:9 **5:2** [b] 2 Kin. 18:35 [c] Ex. 3:19; 7:14 **5:3** [d] Ex. 3:18; 7:16 [e] Num. 23:3 [f] Ex. 9:15 **5:4** [g] Ex. 1:11; 2:11; 6:6 **5:5** [h] Ex. 1:7, 9 **5:6** [i] Ex. 1:11; 3:7; 5:10, 13, 14 **5:7** [j] Ex. 1:14 **5:14** [k] Ex. 5:6 [l] Is. 10:24 **5:21** [m] Ex. 6:9; 14:11; 15:24; 16:2 **6:1** [a] Ex. 3:19 [b] Ex. 12:31, 33, 39 **6:3** [c] Gen. 17:1; 35:9; 48:3 [d] Gen. 28:3; 35:11 [e] Ps. 68:4; 83:18 **6:4** [f] Gen. 12:7; 15:18; 17:4, 7, 8; 26:3; 28:4, 13 [g] Lev. 25:23 [h] Gen. 28:4 **6:5** [i] Ex. 2:24

Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.
6 Therefore say to the children of Israel: [j]'I *am* the LORD; [k]I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will [l]rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 I will [m]take you as My people, and [n]I will be your God. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God who brings you out [o]from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you into the land which I [p]swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you *as* a heritage: I *am* the LORD.'" 9 So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; [q]but they did not heed Moses, because of [r]anguish of spirit and cruel bondage.

10 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 11 "Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the children of Israel go out of his land."

12 And Moses spoke before the LORD, saying, "The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for [s]I *am* of uncircumcised lips?"

13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, and gave them a [t]command for the children of Israel and for Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

The Family of Moses and Aaron

14 These *are* the heads of their fathers' houses: [u]The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, *were* Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. These are the families of Reuben. 15 [v]And the sons of Simeon *were* Jemuel,* Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. These *are* the families of Simeon. 16 These *are* the names of [w]the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the years of the life of Levi *were* one hundred and thirty-seven. 17 [x]The sons of Gershon *were* Libni and Shimi according to their families. 18 And [y]the sons of Kohath *were* Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. And the years of the life of Kohath *were* one hundred and thirty-three. 19 [z]The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi. These *are* the families of Levi according to their generations.

20 Now [a]Amram took for himself [b]Jochebed, his father's sister, as wife; and she bore him [c]Aaron and Moses. And the years of the life of Amram *were* one hundred and thirty-seven. 21 [d]The sons of Izhar *were* Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. 22 And [e]the sons of Uzziel *were* Mishael, Elzaphan, and Zithri. 23 Aaron took to himself Elisheba, daughter of [f]Amminadab, sister of Nahshon, as wife; and she bore him [g]Nadab, Abihu, [h]Eleazar, and Ithamar. 24 And [i]the sons of Korah *were* Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These are the families of the Korahites. 25 Eleazar, Aaron's son, took for himself one of the daughters of Putiel as wife; and [j]she bore him Phinehas. These *are* the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites according to their families.

26 These *are the same* Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, "Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their [k]armies." 27 These *are* the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt, [l]to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt. These *are the same* Moses and Aaron.

Aaron Is Moses' Spokesman

28 And it came to pass, on the day the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, 29 that the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "I *am* the LORD. [m]Speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you."

30 But Moses said before the LORD, "Behold, [n]I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh heed me?"

7 So the LORD said to Moses: "See, I have made you [a]*as* God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be [b]your prophet. 2 You [c]shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land. 3 And [d]I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and [e]multiply My [f]signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. 4 But [g]Pharaoh will not heed you, so [h]that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies *and* My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt [i]by great judgments. 5 And the Egyptians [j]shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I [k]stretch out My hand on Egypt and [l]bring out the children of Israel from among them."

6 Then Moses and Aaron [m]did *so;* just as

* **6:15** Spelled *Nemuel* in Numbers 26:12

6:14–27 *their fathers'.* The family history of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam is important because all of Israel's future priests would come from this family.

7:1 *your prophet.* As Moses was the prophet of the Lord, so Aaron became Moses' prophet. Aaron would speak for Moses, for a prophet was the "mouth" of the one who sent him.

7:3 *I will harden Pharaoh's heart.* It was a part of God's plan that Pharaoh would be inflexibly stubborn, thus setting the scene for God to deliver His people by powerful signs and wonders.

6:6 [j] Deut. 6:12 [k] Deut. 26:8 [l] Deut. 7:8 **6:7** [m] 2 Sam. 7:24 [n] Ex. 29:45, 46 [o] Ex. 5:4, 5 **6:8** [p] Gen. 15:18; 26:3 **6:9** [q] Ex. 5:21 [r] Ex. 2:23 **6:12** [s] Jer. 1:6
6:13 [t] Deut. 31:14 **6:14** [u] Gen. 46:9 **6:15** [v] Gen. 46:10 **6:16** [w] Gen. 46:11 **6:17** [x] 1 Chr. 6:17 **6:18** [y] 1 Chr. 6:2, 18 **6:19** [z] 1 Chr. 6:19; 23:21 **6:20** [a] Ex. 2:1, 2 [b] Num. 26:59 [c] Num. 26:59 **6:21** [d] 1 Chr. 6:37, 38 **6:22** [e] Lev. 10:4 **6:23** [f] Ruth 4:19, 20 [g] Lev. 10:1 [h] Ex. 28:1
6:24 [i] Num. 26:11 **6:25** [j] Num. 25:7, 11 **6:26** [k] Ex. 7:4; 12:17, 51 **6:27** [l] Ps. 77:20 **6:29** [m] Ex. 6:11; 7:2 **6:30** [n] Ex. 4:10; 6:12 **7:1** [a] Ex. 4:16 [b] Ex. 4:15, 16 **7:2** [c] Ex. 4:15 **7:3** [d] Ex. 4:21; 9:12 [e] Ex. 11:9 [f] Deut. 4:34 **7:4** [g] Ex. 3:19, 20; 10:1; 11:9 [h] Ex. 9:14 [i] Ex. 6:6; 12:12
7:5 [j] Ps. 9:16 [k] Ex. 9:15 [l] Ex. 3:20; 6:6; 12:51 **7:6** [m] Ex. 7:2

the LORD commanded them, so they did.
7And Moses *was* [n]eighty years old and
[o]Aaron eighty-three years old when they
spoke to Pharaoh.

Aaron's Miraculous Rod

8Then the LORD spoke to Moses and
Aaron, saying, 9"When Pharaoh speaks
to you, saying, [p]'Show a miracle for your-
selves,' then you shall say to Aaron, [q]'Take
your rod and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and*
let it become a serpent.'" 10So Moses and
Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so,
just [r]as the LORD commanded. And Aaron
cast down his rod before Pharaoh and be-
fore his servants, and it [s]became a serpent.
11But Pharaoh also [t]called the wise men
and [u]the sorcerers; so the magicians of
Egypt, they also [v]did in like manner with
their enchantments. 12For every man threw
down his rod, and they became serpents.
But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.
13And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he
did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

The First Plague: Waters Become Blood

14So the LORD said to Moses: [w]"Pha-
raoh's heart *is* hard; he refuses to let the
people go. 15Go to Pharaoh in the morn-
ing, when he goes out to the [x]water, and
you shall stand by the river's bank to meet
him; and [y]the rod which was turned to a
serpent you shall take in your hand. 16And
you shall say to him, [z]'The LORD God of the
Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let
My people go, [a]that they may serve Me in
the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you
would not hear! 17Thus says the LORD: "By
this [b]you shall know that I *am* the LORD.
Behold, I will strike the waters which *are*
in the river with the rod that *is* in my hand,
and [c]they shall be turned [d]to blood. 18And
the fish that *are* in the river shall die, the
river shall stink, and the Egyptians will
[e]loathe to drink the water of the river."'"
19Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to
Aaron, 'Take your rod and [f]stretch out your
hand over the waters of Egypt, over their
streams, over their rivers, over their ponds,
and over all their pools of water, that they
may become blood. And there shall be
blood throughout all the land of Egypt,
both in *buckets of* wood and *pitchers of*
stone.'" 20And Moses and Aaron did so, just
as the LORD commanded. So he [g]lifted up
the rod and struck the waters that *were* in
the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the
sight of his servants. And all the [h]waters
that *were* in the river were turned to blood.
21The fish that *were* in the river died, the
river stank, and the Egyptians [i]could not
drink the water of the river. So there was
blood throughout all the land of Egypt.
22[j]Then the magicians of Egypt did [k]so
with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's
heart grew hard, and he did not heed them,
[l]as the LORD had said. 23And Pharaoh
turned and went into his house. Neither
was his heart moved by this. 24So all the
Egyptians dug all around the river for wa-
ter to drink, because they could not drink
the water of the river. 25And seven days
passed after the LORD had struck the river.

The Second Plague: Frogs

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go to
Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the
LORD: "Let My people go, [a]that they may
serve Me. 2But if you [b]refuse to let *them* go,

7:7 *eighty . . . eighty-three.* These men had already lived as long as the average lifetime of our day before their principal life work had begun. Moses and Aaron each lived another forty years as leaders of the nation of Israel.

7:9–10 Miracles—A miracle could be defined as the temporary suspension of some natural law (like turning a staff into a snake), or the manipulation of natural forces (such as weather) over which humans ordinarily have no jurisdiction. We tend to look for miracles only for their immediate results (healing, retribution, etc.), but in the Bible miracles are always for a "sign." The focus isn't on the actual miracle, but on the supernatural as a sign of God's working in the situation. This is clearly seen in the miracles of Jesus. If His purpose had just been physical healing, He would have set up a clinic and systematically healed everyone. Instead, His miracles were for a sign, to let people know who and what He was (John 20:30–31).

7:11 *wise men . . . sorcerers . . . magicians.* The king's wise men were his counselors, men of learning and insight. In ancient times, the "wise men" of a court were often associated with occult practices. The power of these men may have been in trickery and sleight-of-hand illusions, or demonic power. Later the royal courts of Israel had wise men (1 Kin. 4:34; Prov. 25:1), but the black arts of sorcery, divination, and astrology were forbidden (Deut. 18:9–14).

7:12 *his rod . . . serpents.* The text does not say whether this was a genuine transformation or a trick of Pharaoh's evil sorcerers. Whatever the case, their serpents were no match for the serpent of God's sign.

7:15 *to the water . . . the river's bank.* Pharaoh went to the waters of the Nile not to bathe but to be empowered. Pharaoh's bath in the Nile was a sacred Egyptian rite connected to his claim of divinity. The plague on the waters of the Nile was a direct attack on the Egyptian religion.

7:23 *turned and went into his house.* Pharaoh showed his utter disdain for the revelation of God's power and his complete lack of concern for the suffering of his own people.

7:7 [n] Deut. 29:5; 31:2; 34:7 [o] Num. 33:39 **7:9** [p] Is. 7:11 [q] Ex. 4:2, 3, 17 **7:10** [r] Ex. 7:9 [s] Ex. 4:3 **7:11** [t] Gen. 41:8 [u] 2 Tim. 3:8 [v] Ex. 7:22; 8:7, 18 **7:14** [w] Ex. 8:15; 10:1, 20, 27 **7:15** [x] Ex. 2:5; 8:20 [y] Ex. 4:2, 3; 7:10 **7:16** [z] Ex. 3:13, 18; 4:22 [a] Ex. 3:12, 18; 4:23; 5:1, 3; 8:1 **7:17** [b] Ex. 5:2; 7:5; 10:2 [c] Ex. 4:9; 7:20 [d] Rev. 11:6; 16:4, 6 **7:18** [e] Ex. 7:24 **7:19** [f] Ex. 8:5, 6, 16; 9:22; 10:12, 21; 14:21, 26 **7:20** [g] Ex. 17:5 [h] Ps. 78:44; 105:29, 30 **7:21** [i] Ex. 7:18 **7:22** [j] Ex. 7:11 [k] Ex. 8:7 [l] Ex. 3:19; 7:3 **8:1** [a] Ex. 3:12, 18; 4:23; 5:1, 3 **8:2** [b] Ex. 7:14; 9:2

behold, I will smite all your territory with [c]frogs. 3So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your [d]bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. 4And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants."'"

5Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, [e]'Stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.'" 6So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and [f]the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. 7[g]And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

8Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, [h]"Entreat the LORD that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people [i]go, that they may sacrifice to the LORD."

9And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, *that* they may remain in the river only."

10So he said, "Tomorrow." And he said, "*Let it be* according to your word, that you may know that [j]*there is* no one like the LORD our God. 11And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only."

12Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. And Moses [k]cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had brought against Pharaoh. 13So the LORD did according to the word of Moses. And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields. 14They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. 15But when Pharaoh saw that there was [l]relief, [m]he hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

The Third Plague: Lice

16So the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'" 17And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and [n]it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

18Now [o]the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they [p]could not. So there were lice on man and beast. 19Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This *is* [q]the finger of God." But Pharaoh's [r]heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said.

The Fourth Plague: Flies

20And the LORD said to Moses, [s]"Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: [t]"Let My people go, that they may serve Me. 21Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms *of flies* on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms *of flies*, and also the ground on which they *stand*. 22And in that day [u]I will set apart the land of [v]Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms *of flies* shall be there, in order that you may [w]know that I *am* the LORD in the midst of the [x]land. 23I will make a difference* between My people and your people. Tomorrow this [y]sign shall be."'" 24And the LORD did so. [z]Thick swarms *of flies* came into the house of Pharaoh, *into* his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarms *of flies*.

25Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land."

* **8:23** Literally *set a ransom* (compare Exodus 9:4 and 11:7)

8:7 ***the magicians . . . with their enchantments.*** We do not know how or in what quantities the magicians produced frogs, but doing so hardly helped the situation. Clearly the power they had was not strong enough to counteract the plagues God sent.

8:8 ***called for Moses and Aaron.*** Note that Pharaoh did not turn to his magicians to relieve the land of the frogs.

8:15 Instability—The action of this Egyptian pharaoh is a case study in instability. He gave permission for the people to go and then changed his mind more than once. He alternated between denying the power of God and actually admitting his sin. Pharaoh was a rebel against God, tossed about by his own lack of integrity. Believers can take warning from Pharaoh's behavior. The apostle James informs us that a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8). But stability isn't something we achieve by sheer willpower. Real integrity and stability come from the security of our relationship with God.

8:18 ***the magicians . . . enchantments . . . but they could not.*** Perhaps the lack of announcement meant they had no time to prepare. The magicians could not duplicate God's work, further proof that this was no trick, but the hand of God.

8:2 [c] Rev. 16:13 **8:3** [d] Ps. 105:30 **8:5** [e] Ex. 7:19 **8:6** [f] Ps. 78:45; 105:30 **8:7** [g] Ex. 7:11, 22 **8:8** [h] Ex. 8:28; 9:28; 10:17 [i] Ex. 10:8, 24 **8:10** [j] Ex. 9:14; 15:11 **8:12** [k] Ex. 8:30; 9:33; 10:18; 32:11 **8:15** [l] Eccl. 8:11 [m] Ex. 7:14, 22; 9:34 **8:17** [n] Ps. 105:31 **8:18** [o] Ex. 7:11, 12; 8:7 [p] Dan. 5:8 **8:19** [q] Ex. 7:5; 10:7 [r] Ex. 8:15 **8:20** [s] Ex. 7:15; 9:13 [t] Ex. 3:18; 4:23; 5:1, 3; 8:1 **8:22** [u] Ex. 9:4, 6, 26; 10:23; 11:6, 7; 12:13 [v] Gen. 50:8 [w] Ex. 7:5, 17; 10:2; 14:4 [x] Ex. 9:29 **8:23** [y] Ex. 4:8 **8:24** [z] Ps. 78:45; 105:31

26 And Moses said, "It is not right to do
so, for we would be sacrificing [a]the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our
God. If we sacrifice the abomination of the
Egyptians before their eyes, then will they
not stone us? 27 We will go [b]three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the
LORD our God as [c]He will command us."
28 So Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that
you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in
the wilderness; only you shall not go very
far away. [d]Intercede for me."
29 Then Moses said, "Indeed I am going
out from you, and I will entreat the LORD,
that the swarms *of flies* may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his servants, and
from his people. But let Pharaoh not [e]deal
deceitfully anymore in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."
30 So Moses went out from Pharaoh and
[f]entreated the LORD. 31 And the LORD did
according to the word of Moses; He removed the swarms *of flies* from Pharaoh,
from his servants, and from his people. Not
one remained. 32 But Pharaoh [g]hardened
his heart at this time also; neither would
he let the people go.

The Fifth Plague: Livestock Diseased

9 Then the LORD said to Moses, [a]"Go in
to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Thus says the
LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people
go, that they may [b]serve Me. 2 For if you
[c]refuse to let *them* go, and still hold them,
3 behold, the [d]hand of the LORD will be on
your cattle in the field, on the horses, on the
donkeys, on the camels, on the oxen, and on
the sheep—a very severe pestilence. 4 And
[e]the LORD will make a difference between
the livestock of Israel and the livestock of
Egypt. So nothing shall die of all *that* belongs to the children of Israel."'" 5 Then the
LORD appointed a set time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land."
6 So the LORD did this thing on the next
day, and [f]all the livestock of Egypt died; but
of the livestock of the children of Israel, not
one died. 7 Then Pharaoh sent, and indeed,
not even one of the livestock of the Israelites was dead. But the [g]heart of Pharaoh
became hard, and he did not let the people go.

The Sixth Plague: Boils

8 So the LORD said to Moses and Aaron,
"Take for yourselves handfuls of ashes
from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh.
9 And it will become fine dust in all the land
of Egypt, and it will cause [h]boils that break
out in sores on man and beast throughout
all the land of Egypt." 10 Then they took
ashes from the furnace and stood before
Pharaoh, and Moses scattered *them* toward heaven. And *they* caused [i]boils that
break out in sores on man and beast. 11 And
the [j]magicians could not stand before Moses because of the [k]boils, for the boils were
on the magicians and on all the Egyptians.
12 But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he [l]did not heed them, just [m]as
the LORD had spoken to Moses.

The Seventh Plague: Hail

13 Then the LORD said to Moses, [n]"Rise
early in the morning and stand before
Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the
LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people
go, that they may [o]serve Me, 14 for at this
time I will send all My plagues to your very
heart, and on your servants and on your
people, [p]that you may know that *there is* none like Me in all the earth. 15 Now if
I had [q]stretched out My hand and struck
you and your people with [r]pestilence,
then you would have been cut off from
the earth. 16 But indeed for [s]this *purpose* I
have raised you up, that I may [t]show My
power *in* you, and that My [u]name may be
declared in all the earth. 17 As yet you exalt
yourself against My people in that you will
not let them go. 18 Behold, tomorrow about
this time I will cause very heavy hail to
rain down, such as has not been in Egypt
since its founding until now. 19 Therefore
send now *and* gather your livestock and

8:26 ***the abomination of the Egyptians.*** Moses employed the ethnic and cultural sensibilities of the Egyptians to free the Israelites (Gen. 43:32; 46:34). The sacrificial animals of Israel would include sheep, something the Egyptians regarded as detestable.

9:11 ***for the boils were upon the magicians.*** The reference to the hapless magicians is almost humorous. Not only were they powerless, but they also suffered from the plague.

9:16 ***for this purpose I have raised you up.*** God used Pharaoh's stubbornness and disobedience to demonstrate His power. Pharaoh was not only an evil ruler in a powerful state; he was an evil man, ungodly, and unrighteous. Pharaoh set himself up as a god who maintained the stability of his kingdom. The Lord's judgment on him was an appropriate response to this fraud.

9:17 ***you exalt yourself.*** Pharaoh was behaving like the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:1–10) and Satan, whom the king of Tyre emulated (Ezek. 28:11–19).

9:19 ***gather your livestock.*** The fact that God was judging Pharaoh does not mean that He was unmerciful. The Lord could have destroyed Pharaoh and his people in a moment (v. 15), but instead He warned them of the calamities about to befall them. Apparently some of the Egyptians took the word of the Lord seriously.

8:26 [a] Gen. 43:32; 46:34 **8:27** [b] Ex. 3:18; 5:3 [c] Ex. 3:12 **8:28** [d] Ex. 8:8, 15, 29, 32; 9:28 **8:29** [e] Ex. 8:8, 15 **8:30** [f] Ex. 8:12 **8:32** [g] Ex. 4:21; 8:8, 15 **9:1** [a] Ex. 4:23; 8:1 [b] Ex. 7:16 **9:2** [c] Ex. 8:2 **9:3** [d] Ex. 7:4 **9:4** [e] Ex. 8:22 **9:6** [f] Ps. 78:48, 50 **9:7** [g] Ex. 7:14; 8:32 **9:9** [h] Rev. 16:2 **9:10** [i] Deut. 28:27 **9:11** [j] [Ex. 8:18, 19] [k] Job 2:7 **9:12** [l] Ex. 7:13 [m] Ex. 4:21 **9:13** [n] Ex. 8:20 [o] Ex. 9:1 **9:14** [p] Ex. 8:10 **9:15** [q] Ex. 3:20; 7:5 [r] Ex. 5:3 **9:16** [s] [Rom. 9:17, 18] [t] Ex. 7:4, 5; 10:1; 11:9; 14:17 [u] 1 Kin. 8:43

all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die."'"

20 He who [v]feared the word of the LORD among the [w]servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. 21 But he who did not regard the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field.

22 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be [x]hail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt." 23 And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and [y]the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. 24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 And the [z]hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. 26 [a]Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, there was no hail.

27 And Pharaoh sent and [b]called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, [c]"I have sinned this time. [d]The LORD *is* righteous, and my people and I *are* wicked. 28 [e]Entreat the LORD, that there may be no *more* mighty thundering and hail, for *it is* enough. I will let you [f]go, and you shall stay no longer."

29 So Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will [g]spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the [h]earth *is* the LORD's. 30 But as for you and your servants, [i]I know that you will not yet fear the LORD God."

31 Now the flax and the barley were struck, [j]for the barley *was* in the head and the flax *was* in bud. 32 But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they *are* late crops.

33 So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and [k]spread out his hands to the LORD; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth. 34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants. 35 So [l]the heart of Pharaoh was hard; neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

The Eighth Plague: Locusts

10 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; [a]for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, [b]that I may show these signs of Mine before him, 2 and that [c]you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may [d]know that I *am* the LORD."

3 So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: 'How long will you refuse to [e]humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may [f]serve Me. 4 Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring [g]locusts into your territory. 5 And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and [h]they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. 6 They shall [i]fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians—which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.'" And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

7 Then Pharaoh's [j]servants said to him, "How long shall this man be [k]a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?"

8 So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God. Who *are* the ones that are going?"

9 And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for [l]we must hold a feast to the LORD."

10 Then he said to them, "The LORD had

9:27 ***I have sinned.*** This was a stunning admission for such a proud man. Sadly, these words of contrition would not hold. Pharaoh repeated them later (10:16–17), only to take them back in the end.

10:1 ***I have hardened his heart.*** Three verbs are used in Exodus to describe God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart. Usually the verb meaning "to make hard" is used (4:21). In 7:3 the verb "to make stiff" is used. Here the Hebrew verb that means "to make heavy" or "to make insensitive" is used.

10:3 ***refuse to humble yourself.*** Pharaoh's pride was his undoing. He believed himself to be a god and paraded himself like one. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (Ps. 18:27; 1 Pet. 5:5).

9:20 [v] [Prov. 13:13] [w] Ex. 8:19; 10:7 **9:22** [x] Rev. 16:21 **9:23** [y] Josh. 10:11 **9:25** [z] Ps. 78:47, 48; 105:32, 33 **9:26** [a] Ex. 8:22, 23; 9:4, 6; 10:23; 11:7; 12:13 **9:27** [b] Ex. 8:8 [c] Ex. 9:34; 10:16, 17 [d] 2 Chr. 12:6 **9:28** [e] Ex. 8:8, 28; 10:17 [f] Ex. 8:25; 10:8, 24 **9:29** [g] Is. 1:15 [h] Ps. 24:1 **9:30** [i] [Is. 26:10] **9:31** [j] Ruth 1:22; 2:23 **9:33** [k] Ex. 8:12; 9:29 **9:35** [l] Ex. 4:21 **10:1** [a] John 12:40 [b] Ex. 7:4; 9:16 **10:2** [c] Joel 1:3 [d] Ex. 7:5, 17; 8:22 **10:3** [e] [1 Kin. 21:29] [f] Ex. 4:23; 8:1; 9:1 **10:4** [g] Rev. 9:3 **10:5** [h] Ex. 9:32 **10:6** [i] Ex. 8:3, 21 **10:7** [j] Ex. 7:5; 8:19; 9:20; 12:33 [k] Ex. 23:33 **10:9** [l] Ex. 5:1; 7:16

better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. 11Not so! Go now, you *who are* men, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desired." And they were driven [m]out from Pharaoh's presence.

12Then the LORD said to Moses, [n]"Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and [o]eat every herb of the land—all that the hail has left." 13So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind on the land all that day and all *that* night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. 14And [p]the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. *They were* very severe; [q]previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them. 15For they [r]covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they [s]ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

16Then Pharaoh called [t]for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, [u]"I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. 17Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and [v]entreat the LORD your God, that He may take away from me this death only." 18So he [w]went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD. 19And the LORD turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them [x]into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt. 20But the LORD [y]hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

The Ninth Plague: Darkness

21Then the LORD said to Moses, [z]"Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness *which* may even be felt." 22So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was [a]thick darkness in all the land of Egypt [b]three days. 23They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. [c]But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

24Then Pharaoh called to Moses and [d]said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your [e]little ones also go with you."

25But Moses said, "You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. 26Our [f]livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the LORD our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there."

27But the LORD [g]hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. 28Then Pharaoh said to him, [h]"Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!"

29So Moses said, "You have spoken well. [i]I will never see your face again."

Death of the Firstborn Announced

11 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. [a]Afterward he will let you go from here. [b]When he lets *you* go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. 2Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and [c]articles of gold." 3[d]And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man [e]Moses *was* very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

4Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: [f]'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; 5and [g]all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who *is*

10:12–16 Repentance—In Exodus 9 and 10 there are two vivid examples of "foxhole religion" recorded for us. This kind of "faith" freely acknowledges the person and power of God during a terrible crisis, and then promptly forgets all about Him when the danger passes. Just like little children, we want to avert punishment by saying, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" and then go about our business as usual. God is not interested in empty "I've sinned" confessions. Only true repentance from the heart is acceptable to God.

10:20 *But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart.* See 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3,13–14.

10:22 *thick darkness.* This calamity was another direct attack on the Egyptian religious system. They worshiped many gods, but none so much as the sun. An enshrouding darkness that lasted three days was a clear statement that their gods, their Pharaoh with his supposed control of nature, and all Pharaoh's counselors were, in reality, helpless before the God of Israel.

10:27 *But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart.* See 3:19; 4:21; 5:2; 7:3,13–14.

11:3 *favor.* After all that had happened, we might suppose that the Egyptians would have universally hated the Hebrews. Instead, most of the people felt positively towards them, even Pharaoh's own servants.

10:11 [m] Ex. 10:28 **10:12** [n] Ex. 7:19 [o] Ex. 10:5, 15 **10:14** [p] Ps. 78:46; 105:34 [q] Joel 1:4, 7; 2:1–11 **10:15** [r] Ex. 10:5 [s] Ps. 105:35 **10:16** [t] Ex. 8:8 [u] Ex. 9:27 **10:17** [v] 1 Kin. 13:6 **10:18** [w] Ex. 8:30 **10:19** [x] Joel 2:20 **10:20** [y] Ex. 4:21; 10:1; 11:10 **10:21** [z] Ex. 9:22 **10:22** [a] Ps. 105:28 [b] Ex. 3:18 **10:23** [c] Ex. 8:22, 23 **10:24** [d] Ex. 8:8, 25; 10:8 [e] Ex. 10:10 **10:26** [f] Ex. 10:9 **10:27** [g] Ex. 4:21; 10:1, 20; 14:4, 8 **10:28** [h] Ex. 10:11 **10:29** [i] Heb. 11:27 **11:1** [a] Ex. 12:31, 33, 39 [b] Ex. 6:1; 12:39 **11:2** [c] Ex. 3:22; 12:35, 36 **11:3** [d] Ex. 3:21; 12:36 [e] Deut. 34:10–12 **11:4** [f] Ex. 12:12, 23, 29 **11:5** [g] Ex. 4:23; 12:12, 29

behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. 6[h]Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, [i]such as was not like it *before*, nor shall be like it again. 7[j]But against none of the children of Israel [k]shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' 8And [l]all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." [m]Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

9But the LORD said to Moses, [n]"Pharaoh will not heed you, so that [o]My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." 10So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; [p]and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

The Passover Instituted

12 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2[a]"This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. 3Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the [b]tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. 4And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. 5Your lamb shall be [c]without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. 6Now you shall keep it until the [d]fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. 7And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 8Then they shall eat the flesh on that [e]night; [f]roasted in fire, with [g]unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. 9Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but [h]roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. 10[i]You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. 11And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. [j]It *is* the LORD's Passover.

12'For I [k]will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and [l]against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: [m]I *am* the LORD. 13Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

14'So this day shall be to you [n]a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a [o]feast [p]by an everlasting

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11:7 *a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.* The institution of the Passover accentuated this great distinction. The Lord in His mercy protected His people even as He executed judgment on those who opposed Him.

11:9–10 *wonders.* We tend to think that if God would only send a miracle, people would have to believe. Sadly, history shows that this is not true. Often those individuals who have seen God's mightiest miracles have responded by displaying a total lack of faith. Pharaoh had all the proof one could want of who God was, and did not believe. The Pharisees saw a man raised from the dead, and wanted to kill both the man and his healer (John 11:53; 12:9–11). God desires us to believe His word by faith, and not be dependent on supernatural and external signs and wonders. Miracles are signs, just as the creation itself is a sign of God's power and authority (Rom. 1:19–20), but a person whose heart is hardened toward God will not be any more impressed with a miracle than with a sunset.

12:1–14 The Passover—There was only one Passover. The Passover feast has always been one of the primary elements of Jewish religious tradition and is their way of remembering the "pass over" by the Lord, sparing the people of a visit by "the destroyer" (v. 23). By celebrating it, Jews remember one of the key elements of their history. It points to their national identity and to their deliverance as a community of faith. One could say that it was a defining moment of their faith. For the Christian, the event clearly foreshadows the cross of Christ. He is our Passover Lamb who delivers us from death by taking it all on Himself. The parallels between Exodus 12 and the Christian communion service are noteworthy (1 Cor. 11:23–26).

12:2 *your beginning of months.* This month, called Abib in 13:4 corresponds to April/May and is also called Nisan. The Hebrew people began to mark time in relation to the time of their departure from Egypt.

12:5 *without blemish.* Sacrifice was not a way to get rid of unwanted animals. Only the very best lambs were suitable. The Passover lamb sacrificed for the Israelites was meant as a picture of the coming death of the perfect, sinless Savior, Jesus Christ.

12:8 *unleavened bread . . . bitter herbs.* The Passover meal is full of symbolism, the unleavened bread reminded them that the first Passover was eaten in haste, ready for flight. The bitter herbs were a reminder of the bitterness of the slavery from which they were rescued.

12:12 *I will pass through . . . I will execute.* The repetition of the pronoun "I" emphasizes that God did this, not an angel or some other agent.

12:13 *sign.* The term "sign" can mean a reminder, memorial, or symbol, as it does here, or a miracle that points to the power of God.

11:6 [h] Ex. 12:30 [i] Ex. 10:14 **11:7** [j] Ex. 8:22 [k] Josh. 10:21 **11:8** [l] Ex. 12:31–33 [m] Heb. 11:27 **11:9** [n] Ex. 3:19; 7:4; 10:1 [o] Ex. 7:3; 9:16 **11:10** [p] Rom. 2:5 **12:2** [a] Deut. 16:1 **12:3** [b] Josh. 4:19 **12:5** [c] [1 Pet. 1:19] **12:6** [d] Lev. 23:5 **12:8** [e] Num. 9:12 [f] Deut. 16:7 [g] 1 Cor. 5:8 **12:9** [h] Deut. 16:7 **12:10** [i] Ex. 16:19; 23:18; 34:25 **12:11** [j] Ex. 12:13, 21, 27, 43 **12:12** [k] Ex. 11:4, 5 [l] Num. 33:4 [m] Ex. 6:2 **12:14** [n] Ex. 13:9 [o] Lev. 23:4, 5 [p] Ex. 12:17, 24; 13:10

ordinance. 15[q]Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, [r]that person shall be cut off from Israel. 16On the first day *there shall be* [s]a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that* which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. 17So you shall observe *the Feast of* Unleavened Bread, for [t]on this same day I will have brought your armies [u]out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. 18[v]In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. 19For [w]seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is* a stranger or a native of the land. 20You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.'"

21Then [x]Moses called for all the [y]elders of Israel and said to them, [z]"Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover *lamb*. 22[a]And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and [b]strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that *is* in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. 23[c]For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the [d]blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and [e]not allow [f]the destroyer to come into your houses to strike *you*. 24And you shall [g]observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. 25It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, [h]just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. 26[i]And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' 27that you shall say, [j]'It *is* the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'" So the people [k]bowed their heads and worshiped. 28Then the children of Israel went away and [l]did *so;* just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn

29[m]And it came to pass at midnight that [n]the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who *was* in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of [o]livestock. 30So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

The Exodus

31Then he [p]called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, [q]both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have [r]said. 32[s]Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also."

33[t]And the Egyptians [u]urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We *shall* all *be* dead." 34So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. 35Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians [v]articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. 36[w]And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them *what they requested*. Thus [x]they plundered the Egyptians.

37Then [y]the children of Israel journeyed from [z]Rameses to Succoth, about [a]six

12:29–33 *the LORD struck all the firstborn.* In the Passover we have a summary of God's eternal plan of salvation. Jesus, the final sacrifice, was killed at the time of the Passover feast; His blood provides salvation from eternal death. Note some similarities between the first and final Passover: (1) the blood of an innocent sacrifice must be shed, (2) the sacrifice must be blameless, and (3) the shed blood must be applied by faith.

12:29 *and all the firstborn of livestock.* Though not nearly as awful as the death of firstborn children, the death of the livestock was a blow to the Egyptians economically. These deaths were also attacks on the power of their gods (v. 12).

12:32 *and bless me also.* At last Pharaoh capitulated (10:9,26). The death of his son—and the deaths of firstborn sons everywhere—must have shattered him to the core of his being.

12:36 *plundered the Egyptians.* Newly freed slaves do not usually make their escape with their masters pushing the family silver into their hands. Far from wanting to keep the Israelites in bondage, the rest of Egypt couldn't wait to get rid of them.

12:37 *Rameses.* The reference to Rameses most likely relates to the store city Raamses, mentioned in 1:11, perhaps Tel el-Maskhuta further to the east. ***six hundred thousand men.*** This number of men would

12:15 [q] Lev. 23:6 [r] Gen. 17:14 **12:16** [s] Lev. 23:2, 7, 8 **12:17** [t] Ex. 12:14; 13:3, 10 [u] Num. 33:1 **12:18** [v] Lev. 23:5–8 **12:19** [w] Ex. 12:15; 23:15; 34:18 **12:21** [x] [Heb. 11:28] [y] Ex. 3:16 [z] Num. 9:4 **12:22** [a] Heb. 11:28 [b] Ex. 12:7 **12:23** [c] Ex. 11:4; 12:12, 13 [d] Ex. 24:8 [e] Rev. 7:3; 9:4 [f] Heb. 11:28 **12:24** [g] Ex. 12:14, 17; 13:5, 10 **12:25** [h] Ex. 3:8, 17 **12:26** [i] Ex. 10:2; 13:8, 14, 15 **12:27** [j] Ex. 12:11 [k] Ex. 4:31 **12:28** [l] [Heb. 11:28] **12:29** [m] Ex. 11:4, 5 [n] Num. 8:17; 33:4 [o] Ex. 9:6 **12:31** [p] Ex. 10:28, 29 [q] Ex. 8:25; 11:1 [r] Ex. 10:9 **12:32** [s] Ex. 10:9, 26 **12:33** [t] Ex. 10:7 [u] Ps. 105:38 **12:35** [v] Ex. 3:21, 22; 11:2, 3 **12:36** [w] Ex. 3:21 [x] Gen. 15:14 **12:37** [y] Num. 33:3, 5 [z] Gen. 47:11 [a] Ex. 38:26

hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. 38A [b]mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of [c]livestock. 39And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because [d]they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

40Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt* *was* [e]four hundred and thirty years. 41And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that [f]all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. 42It *is* [g]a night of solemn observance to the LORD for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This *is* that night of the LORD, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Passover Regulations

43And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This *is* [h]the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. 44But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have [i]circumcised him, then he may eat it. 45[j]A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it. 46In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, [k]nor shall you break one of its bones. 47[l]All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. 48And [m]when a stranger dwells with you *and wants* to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. 49[n]One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you."

50Thus all the children of Israel did; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. 51[o]And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt [p]according to their armies.

The Firstborn Consecrated

13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2[a]"Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and beast; it is Mine."

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

3And Moses said to the people: [b]"Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for [c]by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this *place.* [d]No leavened bread shall be eaten. 4[e]On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. 5And it shall be, when the LORD [f]brings you into the [g]land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He [h]swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, [i]that you shall keep this service in this month. 6[j]Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *there shall be* a feast to the LORD. 7Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And [k]no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. 8And you shall [l]tell your son in that day, saying, '*This is done* because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.' 9It shall be as [m]a sign to you

* **12:40** Samaritan Pentateuch and Septuagint read *Egypt and Canaan.*

indicate a total population of perhaps three million men, women, and children (Num. 1:46).

12:38 ***mixed multitude.*** Apparently a number of Egyptians and perhaps other non-Hebrews joined the flight out of Egypt. Some of these people later caused trouble when things did not go as smoothly as expected (Num. 11:4).

12:39 ***unleavened cakes.*** The symbolism in this has to do with the haste of their departure, not (as some have supposed) that there is something evil in leaven itself. If leaven were intrinsically evil, the Israelites would have been forbidden to eat leaven at any time. In the New Testament, leaven is often used as a symbolic way of speaking about sin, but again, leaven in and of itself is not evil.

12:40 ***four hundred and thirty years.*** If the Exodus took place around 1446 B.C., Jacob's arrival in Egypt would have been around 1876 B.C.

12:46 ***nor shall you break one of its bones.*** Not breaking the bones of the lamb foreshadowed Jesus' death. None of the Savior's bones were broken, even though He suffered a horrible death (Ps. 34:20; John 19:33–36).

13:1–22 ***Consecrate to Me.*** Before the dramatic story of the crossing of the Red Sea there is a record of foundational institutions that the Lord gave to Israel. These are: (1) the consecration of the firstborn (vv. 1–2); (2) the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 3–10); and (3) the law concerning the firstborn (vv. 11–16). This is followed by the Lord's command to the Israelites to travel in an unexpected direction (vv. 17–22).

13:9 ***sign.*** A similar commandment is found in Deuteronomy 6:8. Jews would fasten a small box containing passages of Scripture to their foreheads or arms during prayer, to serve as a memorial. The physical symbol was designed to be a reminder of the inner reality of making God's law the guiding rule of all we do.

12:38 [b] Num. 11:4 [c] Deut. 3:19 **12:39** [d] Ex. 6:1; 11:1; 12:31–33 **12:40** [e] Acts 7:6 **12:41** [f] Ex. 3:8, 10; 6:6; 7:4 **12:42** [g] Deut. 16:1, 6 **12:43** [h] Num. 9:14 **12:44** [i] Gen. 17:12, 13 **12:45** [j] Lev. 22:10 **12:46** [k] [John 19:33, 36] **12:47** [l] Ex. 12:6 **12:48** [m] Num. 9:14 **12:49** [n] Num. 15:15, 16 **12:51** [o] Ex. 12:41; 20:2 [p] Ex. 6:26 **13:2** [a] Luke 2:23 **13:3** [b] Deut. 16:3 [c] Ex. 3:20; 6:1 [d] Ex. 12:8, 19 **13:4** [e] Ex. 12:2; 23:15; 34:18 **13:5** [f] Ex. 3:8, 17 [g] Gen. 17:8 [h] Ex. 6:8 [i] Ex. 12:25, 26 **13:6** [j] Ex. 12:15–20 **13:7** [k] Ex. 12:19 **13:8** [l] Ex. 10:2; 12:26; 13:14 **13:9** [m] Deut. 6:8; 11:18

on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. 10[n]You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.

The Law of the Firstborn

11"And it shall be, when the LORD [o]brings you into the land of the [p]Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, 12[q]that you shall set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD's. 13But [r]every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons [s]you shall redeem. 14[t]So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What *is* this?' that you shall say to him, [u]'By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 15And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that [v]the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.' 16It shall be as [w]a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

The Wilderness Way

17Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them *by* way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people [x]change their minds when they see war, and [y]return to Egypt." 18So God [z]led the people around *by* way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

19And Moses took the [a]bones of [b]Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, [c]"God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."*

20So [d]they took their journey from [e]Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. 21And [f]the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. 22He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

The Red Sea Crossing

14 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2"Speak to the children of Israel, [a]that they turn and camp before [b]Pi Hahiroth, between [c]Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. 3For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, [d]'They *are* bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' 4Then [e]I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I [f]will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, [g]that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD." And they did so.

5Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and [h]the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" 6So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. 7Also, he took [i]six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. 8And the LORD [j]hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and [k]the children of Israel went out with boldness. 9So the [l]Egyptians pursued them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.

10And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel

* **13:19** Genesis 50:25

13:13 ***firstborn of a donkey.*** Donkeys were unclean animals, and could not be used as a sacrifice. Instead they were redeemed with a lamb. Similarly, a firstborn son was redeemed. God would never allow human sacrifice. Later the Lord claimed the Levites for Himself in exchange for the firstborn sons of the people (Num. 3:40–51).

13:18 ***way of the wilderness.*** The route the Israelites traveled from Egypt to Canaan has been disputed. The traditional route has the people moving in a southerly direction along the western shore of the Sinai Peninsula until they reached Mount Sinai in the far south central region of the peninsula. ***Red Sea.*** This translation comes from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament); the Hebrew phrase means "Sea of Reeds." This phrase may refer to the ancient northern extension of the Red Sea. Many believe that it was one of the marshy lakes of the region.

13:19 ***the bones of Joseph.*** The story of the last wish of Joseph and his death is found in Genesis 50:22–26.

13:10 *n* Ex. 12:14, 24 **13:11** *o* Ex. 13:5 *p* Num. 21:3 **13:12** *q* Lev. 27:26 **13:13** *r* Ex. 34:20 *s* Num. 3:46, 47; 18:15, 16 **13:14** *t* Deut. 6:20 *u* Ex. 13:3, 9 **13:15** *v* Ex. 12:29 **13:16** *w* Ex. 13:9 **13:17** *x* Ex. 14:11 *y* Deut. 17:16 **13:18** *z* Num. 33:6 **13:19** *a* Gen. 50:24, 25 *b* Ex. 1:6; Deut. 33:13–17 *c* Ex. 4:31 **13:20** *d* Num. 33:6–8 *e* Ex. 12:37 **13:21** *f* Deut. 1:33 **14:2** *a* Ex. 13:18 *b* Num. 33:7 *c* Jer. 44:1 **14:3** *d* Ps. 71:11 **14:4** *e* Ex. 4:21; 7:3; 14:17 *f* Ex. 9:16; 14:17, 18, 23 *g* Ex. 7:5; 14:25 **14:5** *h* Ps. 105:25 **14:7** *i* Ex. 15:4 **14:8** *j* Ex. 14:4 *k* Num. 33:3 **14:9** *l* Josh. 24:6

[m]cried out to the LORD. 11[n]Then they said to Moses, "Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? 12[o]*Is* this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness."

13And Moses said to the people, [p]"Do not be afraid. [q]Stand still, and see the [r]salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall [s]see again no more forever. 14[t]The LORD will fight for you, and you shall [u]hold your peace."

15And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. 16But [v]lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. 17And I indeed will [w]harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will [x]gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. 18Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

19And the Angel of God, [y]who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. 20So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one,* and it gave light by night *to the other,* so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

21Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and [z]made the sea into dry *land,* and the waters were [a]divided. 22So [b]the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground,* and the waters *were* [c]a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

23And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24Now it came to pass, in the morning [d]watch, that [e]the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. 25And He took off* their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD [f]fights for them against the Egyptians."

26Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen." 27And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea [g]returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD [h]overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28Then [i]the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. 29But [j]the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

30So the LORD [k]saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel [l]saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and [m]believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

The Song of Moses

15 Then [a]Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying:

"I will [b]sing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!

* **14:25** Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Syriac read *bound.*

14:11–12 *Why.* This marks the first of ten episodes of Israel's unbelief, beginning at the Red Sea, and concluding at Kadesh Barnea (Num. 14:22). Because of these ten events an entire generation was prevented from entering the Promised Land. The New Testament book of Hebrews recalls these events, using the Promised Land as a picture of heaven and warning that disobedience and unbelief will still keep people out of the final land of "rest" (Heb. 4).

14:13 *the salvation of the LORD.* The Hebrew word for salvation comes from a term that has to do with room or space. The people were under great pressure, squeezed between the waters before them and the armies of Pharaoh behind them. Salvation relieved the pressure in a most dramatic way.

14:19 *Angel of God.* The term "Angel of God" is an alternative expression for the angel of the Lord. The pillar of cloud is later strongly associated with the Lord Himself (33:9–11).

14:25 *the LORD fights for them.* This was the confession the Lord demanded; word spread widely that the Lord fought for the Israelites.

14:31 *the people . . . believed the LORD.* The same wording is used of Abraham's saving faith in Genesis 15:6 (see also Rom. 4). The people were transformed spiritually even as they were delivered physically.

14:10 [m] Neh. 9:9 **14:11** [n] Ps. 106:7, 8 **14:12** [o] Ex. 5:21; 6:9 **14:13** [p] 2 Chr. 20:15, 17 [q] Ps. 46:10, 11 [r] Ex. 14:30; 15:2 [s] Deut. 28:68 **14:14** [t] Deut. 1:30; 3:22 [u] [Is. 30:15] **14:16** [v] Num. 20:8, 9, 11 **14:17** [w] Ex. 14:8 [x] Ex. 14:4 **14:19** [y] [Is. 63:9] **14:21** [z] Ps. 66:6; 106:9; 136:13, 14 [a] Is. 63:12, 13 **14:22** [b] Ex. 15:19 [c] Ex. 14:29; 15:8 **14:24** [d] Judg. 7:19 [e] Ex. 13:21 **14:25** [f] Ex. 7:5; 14:4, 14, 18 **14:27** [g] Josh. 4:18 [h] Ex. 15:1, 7 **14:28** [i] Ps. 78:53; 106:11 **14:29** [j] Ps. 66:6; 78:52, 53 **14:30** [k] Ps. 106:8, 10 [l] Ps. 58:10; 59:10 **14:31** [m] John 2:11; 11:45 **15:1** [a] Ps. 106:12 [b] Is. 12:1–6

The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!
2 The LORD *is* my strength and [c]song,
And He has become my salvation;
He *is* my God, and [d]I will praise Him;
My [e]father's God, and I [f]will exalt Him.
3 The LORD *is* a man of [g]war;
The LORD *is* His [h]name.
4 [i]Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea;
[j]His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.
5 The depths have covered them;
[k]They sank to the bottom like a stone.
6 "Your [l]right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power;
Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.
7 And in the greatness of Your [m]excellence
You have overthrown those who rose against You;
You sent forth [n]Your wrath;
It [o]consumed them [p]like stubble.
8 And [q]with the blast of Your nostrils
The waters were gathered together;
[r]The floods stood upright like a heap;
The depths congealed in the heart of the sea.
9 [s]The enemy said, 'I will pursue,
I will overtake,
I will [t]divide the spoil;
My desire shall be satisfied on them.
I will draw my sword,
My hand shall destroy them.'
10 You blew with Your wind,
The sea covered them;
They sank like lead in the mighty waters.
11 "Who [u]*is* like You, O LORD, among the gods?
Who *is* like You, [v]glorious in holiness,
Fearful in [w]praises, [x]doing wonders?
12 You stretched out Your right hand;
The earth swallowed them.
13 You in Your mercy have [y]led forth
The people whom You have redeemed;
You have guided *them* in Your strength
To [z]Your holy habitation.
14 "The [a]people will hear *and* be afraid;
[b]Sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia.
15 [c]Then [d]the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed;
[e]The mighty men of Moab,
Trembling will take hold of them;
[f]All the inhabitants of Canaan will [g]melt away.
16 [h]Fear and dread will fall on them;
By the greatness of Your arm
They will be [i]*as* still as a stone,
Till Your people pass over, O LORD,
Till the people pass over
[j]Whom You have purchased.
17 You will bring them in and [k]plant them
In the [l]mountain of Your inheritance,
In the place, O LORD, *which* You have made
For Your own dwelling,
The [m]sanctuary, O Lord, *which* Your hands have established.
18 "The[n] LORD shall reign forever and ever."

19 For the [o]horses of Pharaoh went with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and [p]the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them. But the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea.

The Song of Miriam

20 Then Miriam [q]the prophetess, [r]the sister of Aaron, [s]took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her [t]with

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15:2 *My father's God.* The Israelites had worshiped, believed, and obeyed. Today, Christians are part of Abraham's line because they also believe, obey, and worship the same God (Gal. 3:6–7). Many faithful believers have preceded us.

15:3 *The LORD is His name.* Other supposed gods had secret names that only guilds of priests knew. By knowing a god's secret name, a priest supposedly had special access to that god. But the living God had made His name known to all, and salvation is found in His name alone.

15:11 *Who is like You?* Many times, the Bible uses the language of incomparability to describe the true God. In a world in which there are many supposed gods, the Lord is unique. He alone is God. He is not just better than other gods; there *are* no other gods. No person, god, or thing can be compared to the one true God (Ps. 96:4; Is. 40:25–26; Mic. 7:18).

15:18 *The LORD shall reign forever and ever.* Ultimately, the salvation of Israel from Egypt points to the coming reign of the living God on earth over His redeemed people.

This victory song ends with the assertion of the eternal rule of the Lord, promising the kingdom of God rather than the conquering of neighboring lands. Its emphasis is spiritual, not material. Now that deliverance from slavery in Egypt had been accomplished, the Hebrews would be formed by God into a nation which was designed to be a witness to the rest of the world of God's character and authority.

15:20 *prophetess.* Although there is no record of women serving as priests in ancient Israel, women did serve as prophetesses (Deborah, Judg. 4:4; the

15:2 [c] Is. 12:2 [d] Gen. 28:21, 22 [e] Ex. 3:6, 15, 16 [f] Is. 25:1 **15:3** [g] Rev. 19:11 [h] Ps. 24:8; 83:18 **15:4** [i] Ex. 14:28 [j] Ex. 14:7 **15:5** [k] Neh. 9:11 **15:6** [l] Ps. 17:7; 118:15 **15:7** [m] Deut. 33:26 [n] Ps. 78:49, 50 [o] Ps. 59:13 [p] Is. 5:24 **15:8** [q] Ex. 14:21, 22, 29 [r] Ps. 78:13 **15:9** [s] Judg. 5:30 [t] Is. 53:12 **15:11** [u] 1 Kin. 8:23 [v] Is. 6:3 [w] 1 Chr. 16:25 [x] Ps. 77:11, 14 **15:13** [y] [Ps. 77:20] [z] Ps. 78:54 **15:14** [a] Josh. 2:9 [b] Ps. 48:6 **15:15** [c] Gen. 36:15, 40 [d] Deut. 2:4 [e] Num. 22:3, 4 [f] Josh. 5:1 [g] Josh. 2:9–11, 24 **15:16** [h] Josh. 2:9 [i] 1 Sam. 25:37 [j] Jer. 31:11 **15:17** [k] Ps. 44:2; 80:8, 15 [l] Ps. 2:6; 78:54, 68 [m] Ps. 68:16; 76:2; 132:13, 14 **15:18** [n] Is. 57:15 **15:19** [o] Ex. 14:23 [p] Ex. 14:28 **15:20** [q] Judg. 4:4 [r] Num. 26:59 [s] 1 Sam. 18:6 [t] Judg. 11:34; 21:21

timbrels and with dances. 21And Miriam [u]answered them:

[v]"Sing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!"

Bitter Waters Made Sweet

22So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of [w]Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no [x]water. 23Now when they came to [y]Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.* 24And the people [z]complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" 25So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. [a]When he cast *it* into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

There He [b]made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there [c]He tested them, 26and said, [d]"If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the [e]diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I *am* the LORD [f]who heals you."

27[g]Then they came to Elim, where there *were* twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

Bread from Heaven

16 And they [a]journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and [b]Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. 2Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel [c]complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3And the children of Israel said to them, [d]"Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, [e]when we sat by the pots of meat *and* when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

4Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain [f]bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may [g]test them, whether they will [h]walk in My law or not. 5And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and [i]it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."

6Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, [j]"At evening you shall know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt. 7And in the morning you shall see [k]the glory of the LORD; for He [l]hears your complaints against the LORD. But [m]what *are* we, that you complain against us?" 8Also Moses said, "*This shall be seen* when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for the LORD hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what *are* we? Your complaints *are* not against us but [n]against the LORD."

9Then Moses spoke to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, [o]'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your complaints.'" 10Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD [p]appeared in the cloud.

11And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 12[q]"I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, [r]'At twilight you shall eat meat, and [s]in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God.'"

13So it was that [t]quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning [u]the dew lay all around the camp.

* **15:23** Literally *Bitter*

wife of Isaiah, Is. 8:3; Huldah, 2 Kin. 22:14). As a prophetess, Miriam spoke authoritatively from God. However, it is apparent that neither she nor Aaron had the level of intimacy with God that Moses had.

15:24 ***complained.*** The people's recent deliverance from the Egyptian armies makes this complaint seem fickle and a true test of God's mercy. We are like the Israelites far too often, turning from praise to complaint at a moment's notice.

15:27 ***Elim.*** Elim means "place of trees." The wells and palms of this oasis would have been a welcome relief from the barren wasteland.

16:1 ***Wilderness of Sin.*** The location of this wasteland is uncertain; its position between Elim and Sinai depends on the location of Mount Sinai. (The name Sin has nothing to do with the English word "sin.")

16:5 ***twice as much.*** Gathering extra food on the sixth day would allow for the Sabbath rest (v. 25).

16:10 ***the glory of the LORD.*** This is one of the grand appearances of God recorded in Exodus. We do not know exactly what the people saw in the cloud, but the sight certainly made them aware of God's majestic and somewhat ominous presence (Ps. 97:2–5).

15:21 [u] 1 Sam. 18:7 [v] Ex. 15:1 **15:22** [w] Gen. 16:7; 20:1; 25:18 [x] Num. 20:2 **15:23** [y] Num. 33:8 **15:24** [z] Ex. 14:11; 16:2 **15:25** [a] 2 Kin. 2:21 [b] Josh. 24:25 [c] Deut. 8:2, 16 **15:26** [d] Deut. 7:12, 15 [e] Deut. 28:27, 58, 60 [f] Ex. 23:25 **15:27** [g] Num. 33:9 **16:1** [a] Num. 33:10, 11 [b] Ex. 12:6, 51; 19:1 **16:2** [c] 1 Cor. 10:10 **16:3** [d] Lam. 4:9 [e] Num. 11:4, 5 **16:4** [f] [John 6:31–35] [g] Deut. 8:2, 16 [h] Judg. 2:22 **16:5** [i] Lev. 25:21 **16:6** [j] Ex. 6:7 **16:7** [k] John 11:4, 40 [l] Num. 14:27; 17:5 [m] Num. 16:11 **16:8** [n] 1 Sam. 8:7 **16:9** [o] Num. 16:16 **16:10** [p] Num. 16:19 **16:12** [q] Ex. 16:8 [r] Ex. 16:6 [s] Ex. 16:7 **16:13** [t] Num. 11:31 [u] Num. 11:9

14 And when the layer of dew lifted, there,
on the surface of the wilderness, was [v]a
small round [w]substance, *as* fine as frost on
the ground. 15 So when the children of Is-
rael saw *it*, they said to one another, "What
is it?" For they did not know what it *was*.

And Moses said to them, [x]"This *is* the
bread which the LORD has given you to
eat. 16 This is the thing which the LORD has
commanded: 'Let every man gather it [y]ac-
cording to each one's need, one [z]omer for
each person, *according to the* number of
persons; let every man take for *those* who
are in his tent.'"

17 Then the children of Israel did so and
gathered, some more, some less. 18 So when
they measured *it* by omers, [a]he who gath-
ered much had nothing left over, and he
who gathered little had no lack. Every man
had gathered according to each one's need.
19 And Moses said, "Let no one [b]leave any of
it till morning." 20 Notwithstanding they did
not heed Moses. But some of them left part
of it until morning, and it bred worms and
stank. And Moses was angry with them.
21 So they gathered it every morning, every
man according to his need. And when the
sun became hot, it melted.

22 And so it was, on the sixth day, *that*
they gathered twice as much bread, two
omers for each one. And all the rulers of the
congregation came and told Moses. 23 Then
he said to them, "This *is what* the LORD has
said: 'Tomorrow *is* [c]a Sabbath rest, a holy
Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will
bake *today,* and boil what you will boil;
and lay up for yourselves all that remains,
to be kept until morning.'" 24 So they laid it
up till morning, as Moses commanded; and
it did not [d]stink, nor were there any worms
in it. 25 Then Moses said, "Eat that today, for
today *is* a Sabbath to the LORD; today you
will not find it in the field. 26 [e]Six days you
shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the
Sabbath, there will be none."

27 Now it happened *that some* of the peo-
ple went out on the seventh day to gather,
but they found none. 28 And the LORD said
to Moses, "How long [f]do you refuse to keep
My commandments and My laws? 29 See!
For the LORD has given you the Sabbath;
therefore He gives you on the sixth day
bread for two days. Let every man remain
in his place; let no man go out of his place
on the seventh day." 30 So the people rested
on the seventh day.

31 And the house of Israel called its name
Manna.* And [g]it *was* like white coriander
seed, and the taste of it *was* like wafers
made with honey.

32 Then Moses said, "This *is* the thing
which the LORD has commanded: 'Fill an
omer with it, to be kept for your genera-
tions, that they may see the bread with
which I fed you in the wilderness, when
I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"
33 And Moses said to Aaron, [h]"Take a pot
and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up
before the LORD, to be kept for your gener-
ations." 34 As the LORD commanded Moses,
so Aaron laid it up [i]before the Testimony,
to be kept. 35 And the children of Israel [j]ate
manna [k]forty years, [l]until they came to an
inhabited land; they ate manna until they
came to the border of the land of Canaan.
36 Now an omer *is* one-tenth of an ephah.

Water from the Rock

17 Then [a]all the congregation of the chil-
dren of Israel set out on their journey
from the Wilderness of [b]Sin, according
to the commandment of the LORD, and
camped in Rephidim; but *there was* no
water for the people to [c]drink. 2 [d]Therefore

* **16:31** Literally *What?* (compare Exodus 16:15)

16:14 ***a small round substance as fine as frost on the ground.*** There have been many attempts to explain manna as a naturally occurring substance that still might be found in the desert, suggesting that it was some kind of plant or animal secretion. However, it is clear from the wording of these verses that this was not so. The description of the manna was necessary precisely because it was *not* a naturally occurring substance, or something they had ever seen before (Num. 11:1–15).

16:15–18 God's Provision—It is easy to think we trust in God and believe He will supply all of our needs when we have food, shelter, and clothing. It is more difficult when the food is low, the clothing has disappeared, and there is no money to pay the rent. Sometimes God allows us to be in this kind of position so that we will have to learn to consciously rely on His providence. When we really place our lives in His hands, we will experience a depth of relationship which is worth far more than all the security in the world.

16:19 ***Let no one leave any of it.*** The Israelites' daily dependence on manna was an act of faith in God's provision.

16:26 ***Six days . . . the Sabbath.*** The characteristics of manna were a built-in reminder of the importance of the Sabbath day in the life of the people of Israel.

16:31 ***coriander seed . . . honey.*** Apparently the manna was very tasty. It must also have been very nutritious since it was the staple of the Israelites for a full generation.

16:32 ***to be kept for your generations.*** This pot of manna was not only a reminder of God's miraculous provision, but a miracle in itself since it did not spoil as did the extra manna Israelites gathered for themselves.

16:14 [v] Num. 11:7, 8 [w] Ps. 147:16 **16:15** [x] 1 Cor. 10:3 **16:16** [y] Ex. 12:4 [z] Ex. 16:32, 36 **16:18** [a] 2 Cor. 8:15 **16:19** [b] Ex. 12:10; 16:23; 23:18 **16:23** [c] Gen. 2:3 **16:24** [d] Ex. 16:20 **16:26** [e] Ex. 20:9, 10 **16:28** [f] 2 Kin. 17:14 **16:31** [g] Num. 11:7–9 **16:33** [h] Heb. 9:4 **16:34** [i] Num. 17:10 **16:35** [j] Deut. 8:3, 16 [k] Num. 33:38 [l] Josh. 5:12 **17:1** [a] Ex. 16:1 [b] Num. 33:11–15 [c] Ex. 15:22 **17:2** [d] Num. 20:2, 3, 13

the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink."

So Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you [e]tempt the LORD?"

3And the people thirsted there for water, and the people [f]complained against Moses, and said, "Why *is* it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our [g]livestock with thirst?"

4So Moses [h]cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to [i]stone me!"

5And the LORD said to Moses, [j]"Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which [k]you struck the river, and go. 6[l]Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink."

And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7So he called the name of the place [m]Massah* and Meribah,* because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Victory over the Amalekites

8[n]Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. 9And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with [o]the rod of God in my hand." 10So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11And so it was, when Moses [p]held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12But Moses' hands *became* heavy; so they took a stone and put *it* under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14Then the LORD said to Moses, [q]"Write this *for* a memorial in the book and recount *it* in the hearing of Joshua, that [r]I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." 15And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner;* 16for he said, "Because the LORD has [s]sworn: the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Jethro's Advice

18 And [a]Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that [b]God had done for Moses and for Israel His people—that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. 2Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took [c]Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, 3with her [d]two sons, of whom the name of one *was* Gershom (for he said, [e]"I have been a stranger in a foreign land")* 4and the name of the other *was* Eliezer* (for *he said,* "The God of my father *was* my [f]help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"); 5and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness, where he was encamped at [g]the mountain of God. 6Now he had said to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her."

7So Moses [h]went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down, and [i]kissed him. And they asked each other about *their* well-being, and they went into the tent.

* **17:7** Literally *Tempted* • Literally *Contention*
* **17:15** Hebrew *YHWH Nissi* * **18:3** Compare Exodus 2:22 * **18:4** Literally *My God Is Help*

17:7 *Is the LORD among us.* The people had seen God's power in the plagues, the Exodus, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the provision of manna. Every day they saw the pillar of His presence. We can wonder at their lack of faith until we look at our own weakness.

17:8 *Amalek.* The people of Amalek were descendants of Esau, and thus relatives of the Hebrews (Gen. 36:12). Their attack on Israel was unprovoked. The Israelites—and the Lord—regarded this attack as particularly heinous (vv. 14–16).

17:14 *Write this.* Some people allege that the first five books of the Old Testament were not actually written down until centuries after Moses' death. Others concede that Moses may have written certain small sections, such as the one to which this verse seems to refer (24:4). However, strong tradition supports the assertion that Moses really wrote all of the first five books (except for the account of his own death); ancient Jews, including Jesus, referred to this portion of the Scripture as "the books of Moses."

17:16 *the LORD has sworn.* This Hebrew phrase is somewhat obscure, but appears to mean "Surely there is a hand on the throne of the LORD." In this phraseology, the Creator of the universe is pictured as seated on His throne while raising His hand in a solemn oath. It is a fearful thing for the wicked to fall into the hands of the just and righteous Judge of the universe.

18:6 *her two sons.* Zipporah's two sons stayed with Moses and became part of the families of Israel. However, the subsequent history of the family of Gershom involved a return to idols and inappropriate priesthood (Judg. 18:30).

18:7 *bowed down, and kissed him.* The ancient Middle Eastern acts of bowing and kissing were not acts of worship, but signs of respect and reminders of obligations between two people.

17:2 [e] [Deut. 6:16] **17:3** [f] Ex. 16:2, 3 [g] Ex. 12:38 **17:4** [h] Ex. 14:15 [i] John 8:59; 10:31 **17:5** [j] Ezek. 2:6 [k] Num. 20:8 **17:6** [l] Num. 20:10, 11 **17:7** [m] Num. 20:13, 24; 27:14 **17:8** [n] Gen. 36:12 **17:9** [o] Ex. 4:20 **17:11** [p] [James 5:16] **17:14** [q] Ex. 24:4; 34:27 [r] 1 Sam. 15:3 **17:16** [s] Gen. 22:14–16 **18:1** [a] Ex. 2:16, 18; 3:1 [b] [Ps. 106:2, 8] **18:2** [c] Ex. 2:21; 4:20–26 **18:3** [d] Acts 7:29 [e] Ex. 2:22 **18:4** [f] Gen. 49:25 **18:5** [g] Ex. 3:1, 12; 4:27; 24:13 **18:7** [h] Gen. 18:2 [i] Ex. 4:27

8And Moses told his father-in-law all that
the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the
Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship
that had come upon them on the way, and
how the LORD had [i]delivered them. 9Then
Jethro rejoiced for all the [k]good which the
LORD had done for Israel, whom He had
delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.
10And Jethro said, [l]"Blessed *be* the LORD,
who has delivered you out of the hand of the
Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh,
and who has delivered the people from
under the hand of the Egyptians. 11Now I
know that the LORD *is* [m]greater than all the
gods; [n]for in the very thing in which they
behaved [o]proudly, *He was* above them."
12Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took*
a burnt [p]offering and *other* sacrifices *to*
offer to God. And Aaron came with all the
elders of Israel [q]to eat bread with Moses'
father-in-law before God.

13And so it was, on the next day, that Mo-
ses [r]sat to judge the people; and the people
stood before Moses from morning until
evening. 14So when Moses' father-in-law
saw all that he did for the people, he said,
"What *is* this thing that you are doing for
the people? Why do you alone sit, and all
the people stand before you from morning
until evening?"

15And Moses said to his father-in-law,
"Because [s]the people come to me to inquire
of God. 16When they have [t]a difficulty, they
come to me, and I judge between one and
another; and I make known the statutes of
God and His laws."

17So Moses' father-in-law said to him,
"The thing that you do *is* not good. 18Both
you and these people who *are* with you
will surely wear yourselves out. For this
thing *is* too much for you; [u]you are not able
to perform it by yourself. 19Listen now to
my voice; I will give you counsel, and God
will be with you: Stand [v]before God for the
people, so that you may [w]bring the diffi-
culties to God. 20And you shall [x]teach them
the statutes and the laws, and show them
the way in which they must walk and [y]the
work they must do. 21Moreover you shall
select from all the people [z]able men, such
as [a]fear God, [b]men of truth, [c]hating cov-
etousness; and place *such* over them *to be*
rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds,
rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22And let
them judge the people at all times. [d]Then it
will be *that* every great matter they shall
bring to you, but every small matter they
themselves shall judge. So it will be easi-
er for you, for [e]they will bear *the burden*
with you. 23If you do this thing, and God
so commands you, then you will be able to
endure, and all this people will also go to
their [f]place in peace."

24So Moses heeded the voice of his
father-in-law and did all that he had said.
25And [g]Moses chose able men out of all Is-
rael, and made them heads over the people:
rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds,
rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 26So
they judged the people at all times; the
[h]hard cases they brought to Moses, but
they judged every small case themselves.

27Then Moses let his father-in-law de-
part, and [i]he went his way to his own land.

Israel at Mount Sinai

19 In the third month after the children
of Israel had gone out of the land of
Egypt, on the same day, [a]they came *to*
the Wilderness of Sinai. 2For they had de-
parted from [b]Rephidim, had come *to* the
Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the
wilderness. So Israel camped there before
[c]the mountain.

3And [d]Moses went up to God, and the
LORD [e]called to him from the mountain,
saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of
Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 4[f]'You
have seen what I did to the Egyptians,
and *how* [g]I bore you on eagles' wings and
brought you to Myself. 5Now [h]therefore, if
you will indeed obey My voice and [i]keep
My covenant, then [j]you shall be a special
treasure to Me above all people; for all the
earth *is* [k]Mine. 6And you shall be to Me a
[l]kingdom of priests and a [m]holy nation.'

* **18:12** Following Masoretic Text and Septuagint; Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *offered.*

18:11 ***Now I know that the LORD is greater.*** Jethro's words imply that he had once regarded the Lord as one among many gods, or perhaps as the principal deity over the lesser. Here he declares full faith in God as the supreme Deity.

18:21 ***covetousness.*** Jethro's five qualifications for judges are similar to the qualifications for elders in the New Testament (1 Tim. 3:1–13). In particular, the men recommended by Jethro were to be God-fearing and haters of dishonesty. As such they would not be susceptible to bribery, and justice would not be perverted. God takes no bribes (Deut. 10:17), so neither must a judge. A bribe blinds the eyes. Human justice must reflect divine justice, which is impartial (Rom. 2:11).

19:5–8 God Gives His Covenant—The covenant with Moses is the second covenant that pertains to the rule of God. It is different than the Abrahamic covenant in that it is conditional. It is introduced by the conditional formula "if you will indeed obey My voice . . . you shall be a special treasure to Me." This covenant was given to the nation Israel so

18:8 *j* Ex. 15:6, 16 **18:9** *k* [Is. 63:7–14] **18:10** *l* Gen. 14:20 **18:11** *m* 2 Chr. 2:5 *n* Ex. 1:10, 16, 22; 5:2, 7 *o* Luke 1:51 **18:12** *p* Ex. 24:5 *q* Deut. 12:7 **18:13** *r* Matt. 23:2 **18:15** *s* Lev. 24:12 **18:16** *t* Ex. 24:14 **18:18** *u* Num. 11:14, 17 **18:19** *v* Ex. 4:16; 20:19 *w* Num. 9:8; 27:5 **18:20** *x* Deut. 5:1 *y* Deut. 1:18 **18:21** *z* Acts 6:3 *a* 2 Sam. 23:3 *b* Ezek. 18:8 *c* Deut. 16:19 **18:22** *d* Deut. 1:17 *e* Num. 11:17 **18:23** *f* Ex. 16:29 **18:25** *g* Deut. 1:15 **18:26** *h* Job 29:16 **18:27** *i* Num. 10:29, 30 **19:1** *a* Num. 33:15 **19:2** *b* Ex. 17:1 *c* Ex. 3:1, 12; 18:5 **19:3** *d* Acts 7:38 *e* Ex. 3:4 **19:4** *f* Deut. 29:2 *g* Is. 63:9 **19:5** *h* Ex. 15:26; 23:22 *i* Deut. 5:2 *j* Ps. 135:4 *k* Ex. 9:29 **19:6** *l* [1 Pet. 2:5, 9] *m* Deut. 7:6; 14:21; 26:19

These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

7So Moses came and called for the [n]elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8Then [o]all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. 9And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you [p]in the thick cloud, [q]that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever."

So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

10Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and [r]consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. 11And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. 12You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves *that* you do *not* go up to the mountain or touch its base. [s]Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. 13Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot *with an arrow;* whether man or beast, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain."

14So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. 15And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; [t]do not come near *your* wives."

16Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were [u]thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who *were* in the camp [v]trembled. 17And [w]Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18Now [x]Mount Sinai *was* completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon [y]it in fire. [z]Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the [a]whole mountain* quaked greatly. 19And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, [b]Moses spoke, and [c]God answered him by voice. 20Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

21And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through [d]to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish. 22Also let the [e]priests who come near the LORD [f]consecrate themselves, lest the LORD [g]break out against them."

23But Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for You warned us, saying, [h]'Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it.'"

24Then the LORD said to him, "Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them." 25So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

The Ten Commandments

20 And God spoke [a]all these words, saying:

2 [b]"I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, [c]out of the house of bondage.

* **19:18** Septuagint reads *all the people.*

that those who believed God's promises given to Abraham in the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1–3) would know how they should live. The Mosaic covenant in its entirety governs three areas of their lives: (1) the commandments governed their personal lives (Ex. 20:1–26); (2) the law governed their social lives particularly as they related to one another (Ex. 21:1—24:11); and (3) the ordinances governed their religious lives so that the people would know how to approach God (Ex. 24:12—31:18). The Mosaic covenant did not replace the Abrahamic covenant. It was added alongside the Abrahamic covenant so that the people of Israel would know how to live until "the Seed," Christ, comes and makes the complete and perfect sacrifice. The Mosaic covenant was never given so that by keeping it people could be saved, but so that they might realize that they cannot do what God wants, even when God writes it down on stone tablets. The law was given that man might realize that he is helpless and that his only hope is to receive the righteousness of God by faith in Jesus (Gal. 3:17–24).

19:16 *the sound of the trumpet was very loud.* Amazingly, one of the heavenly visitors played the trumpet rather than someone in the camp of Israel (compare Is. 27:13; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16). No wonder they trembled (20:18–19).

19:18 *the LORD descended.* Even though we know God is everywhere, language such as this gives us a greater appreciation of His merciful grace.

20:1 *And God spoke.* The following words of God are known as the law of Moses, but this is only because they were delivered to the people from God through Moses, not because Moses invented them.

20:1–17 The Ten Commandments—The first four Commandments (20:1–11) lay out the basics of the relationship with God. God is not a mere abstraction or figment of imagination. He is the God who spoke dramatically to the patriarchs and continues to speak to us. Our responsibility is to have a relationship with

19:7 [n] Ex. 4:29, 30 **19:8** [o] Deut. 5:27; 26:17 **19:9** [p] Ex. 19:16; 20:21; 24:15 [q] Deut. 4:12, 36 **19:10** [r] Lev. 11:44, 45 **19:12** [s] Heb. 12:20 **19:15** [t] [1 Cor. 7:5] **19:16** [u] Heb. 12:18, 19 [v] Heb. 12:21 **19:17** [w] Deut. 4:10 **19:18** [x] Deut. 4:11 [y] Ex. 3:2; 24:17 [z] Gen. 15:17; 19:28 [a] Ps. 68:8 **19:19** [b] Heb. 12:21 [c] Ps. 81:7 **19:21** [d] 1 Sam. 6:19 **19:22** [e] Ex. 19:24; 24:5 [f] Lev. 10:3; 21:6–8 [g] 2 Sam. 6:7, 8 **19:23** [h] Ex. 19:12 **20:1** [a] Deut. 5:22 **20:2** [b] Hos. 13:4 [c] Ex. 13:3

3 [d]"You shall have no other gods before Me.
4 [e]"You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth;
5 [f]you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. [g]For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, [h]visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,
6 but [i]showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
7 [j]"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD [k]will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.
8 [l]"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 [m]Six days you shall labor and do all your work,
10 but the [n]seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, [o]nor your stranger who *is* within your gates.
11 For [p]*in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
12 [q]"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be [r]long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.
13 [s]"You shall not murder.
14 [t]"You shall not commit [u]adultery.
15 [v]"You shall not steal.
16 [w]"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
17 [x]"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; [y]you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's."

Him whereby we explicitly recognize Him, listen to what He says and then obey. What He wants isn't all that complicated. He is the Creator and Master of the world, as we know it. Any view of God that makes Him less, falls short of what is required to make the relationship between God and man work. For example if God is not the creator and sustainer of the world, then the perspective of Genesis 1:28 and our responsibility as stewards of His creation don't make much sense.

The last six Commandments (20:12–17) give us the basics for living—with our families, our neighbors and our communities. Disregarding and disobeying any of these commands leads to the breakdown and possible destruction of those relationships. The relationship between a parent and a child can only go downhill if the basic respect for the parent has not been created and maintained. Adultery clearly has enormous potential to destroy a marriage because it creates distrust where trust should be. Trust is one of the foundational blocks of the marriage relationship.

While many would like to say that these Commandments are limiting, confining and outdated, in reality, they provide the basis for a society to function harmoniously. Only when a culture places limits on itself, is it able to prosper. Followed correctly, these Commandments provide safety and freedom, the same way a fish functions best within the confines of water. In the water it lives and prospers. On land it dies.

20:3 ***no other gods.*** God is not to be viewed as one god among many, or even as the highest among many. He is the one and only.

20:4 ***not make . . . any likeness.*** This command has often been misunderstood as a prohibition against all kinds of art. In fact, God used many "likenesses" of created things to beautify His tabernacle, including carved images and woven pictures. The prohibition was not against art, but against attempting to "picture" God. Any statue, icon, painting, or image of any sort which is meant to be a representation of God can only detract from His glory. God does not want His people to worship a picture of "what He might look like," He wants all our worship for Himself alone.

20:5 ***a jealous God***. In other words, He has a zeal for the truth that He alone is God, and He is jealous of any rivals.

20:6 ***showing mercy to thousands.*** The contrasting of the phrases "third and fourth generations" (v. 5) with "thousands" demonstrates that God's mercy is greater than His wrath. The lingering effects of righteousness will last far longer than the lingering effects of wrath.

20:7 ***in vain.*** Using God's name in vain is trivializing His name by regarding it as insignificant, trying to advance evil purposes by coaxing God to violate His character and purposes, or even simply using it thoughtlessly, without any attempt to realize of whom we are speaking.

20:8–11 ***Remember the Sabbath day.*** The word Sabbath means "rest." The command to rest and remember the Lord on the seventh day goes back to the pattern set at the time of creation (Gen. 2:2–3).

20:12 ***Honor your father and your mother.*** The term "honor" means "to treat with significance." Many times we equate "honor" with "obey," but in fact the two are not synonyms. Adult children or children of ungodly parents can find ways to honor when they cannot in good conscience obey.

20:14 ***adultery.*** God regards the sanctity of marriage as a sacred trust similar to the sanctity of life (v. 13). The marriage relationship is a symbol of God's faithfulness to us.

20:16 ***false witness.*** This command is an essential foundation for a just and effective judicial system.

20:3 [d] Jer. 25:6; 35:15 **20:4** [e] Deut. 4:15–19; 27:15 **20:5** [f] Is. 44:15, 19 [g] Deut. 4:24 [h] Num. 14:18, 33 **20:6** [i] Deut. 7:9 **20:7** [j] Lev. 19:12 [k] Mic. 6:11 **20:8** [l] Lev. 26:2 **20:9** [m] Luke 13:14 **20:10** [n] Gen. 2:2, 3 [o] Neh. 13:16–19 **20:11** [p] Ex. 31:17 **20:12** [q] Lev. 19:3 [r] Deut. 5:16, 33; 6:2; 11:8, 9 **20:13** [s] Rom. 13:9 **20:14** [t] Matt. 5:27 [u] Deut. 5:18 **20:15** [v] Lev. 19:11, 13 **20:16** [w] Deut. 5:20 **20:17** [x] [Eph. 5:3, 5] [y] [Matt. 5:28]

The People Afraid of God's Presence

18 Now [z]all the people [a]witnessed the
thunderings, the lightning flashes, the
sound of the trumpet, and the mountain
[b]smoking; and when the people saw *it*,
they trembled and stood afar off. 19 Then
they said to Moses, [c]"You speak with us,
and we will hear; but [d]let not God speak
with us, lest we die."

20 And Moses said to the people, [e]"Do
not fear; [f]for God has come to test you, and
[g]that His fear may be before you, so that
you may not sin." 21 So the people stood afar
off, but Moses drew near [h]the thick dark-
ness where God *was*.

The Law of the Altar

22 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Thus
you shall say to the children of Israel: 'You
have seen that I have talked with you [i]from
heaven. 23 You shall not make *anything to
be* [j]with Me—gods of silver or gods of gold
you shall not make for yourselves. 24 An al-
tar of [k]earth you shall make for Me, and you
shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and
your peace offerings, [l]your sheep and your
oxen. In every [m]place where I record My
name I will come to you, and I will [n]bless
you. 25 And [o]if you make Me an altar of
stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone;
for if you [p]use your tool on it, you have pro-
faned it. 26 Nor shall you go up by steps to
My altar, that your [q]nakedness may not be
exposed on it.'

The Law Concerning Servants

21 "Now these *are* the judgments which
you shall [a]set before them: 2 [b]If you
buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six
years; and in the seventh he shall go out
free and pay nothing. 3 If he comes in by
himself, he shall go out by himself; if he
comes in married, then his wife shall go
out with him. 4 If his master has given him a
wife, and she has borne him sons or daugh-
ters, the wife and her children shall be her
master's, and he shall go out by himself.
5 [c]But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my
master, my wife, and my children; I will not
go out free,' 6 then his master shall bring
him to the [d]judges. He shall also bring him
to the door, or to the doorpost, and his mas-
ter shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he
shall serve him forever.

7 "And if a man [e]sells his daughter to be
a female slave, she shall not go out as the
male slaves do. 8 If she does not please her
master, who has betrothed her to himself,
then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall
have no right to sell her to a foreign peo-
ple, since he has dealt deceitfully with her.
9 And if he has betrothed her to his son, he
shall deal with her according to the custom
of daughters. 10 If he takes another *wife*, he
shall not diminish her food, her clothing,
[f]and her marriage rights. 11 And if he does
not do these three for her, then she shall go
out free, without *paying* money.

The Law Concerning Violence

12 [g]"He who strikes a man so that he dies
shall surely be put to death. 13 However, [h]if
he did not lie in wait, but God [i]delivered
him into his hand, then [j]I will appoint for
you a place where he may flee.

14 "But if a man acts with [k]premeditation
against his neighbor, to kill him by treach-
ery, [l]you shall take him from My altar, that
he may die.

15 "And he who strikes his father or his
mother shall surely be put to death.

16 [m]"He who kidnaps a man and [n]sells
him, or if he is [o]found in his hand, shall
surely be put to death.

17 "And [p]he who curses his father or his
mother shall surely be put to death.

18 "If men contend with each other, and
one strikes the other with a stone or with
his fist, and he does not die but is confined
to *his* bed, 19 if he rises again and walks
about outside [q]with his staff, then he who
struck *him* shall be acquitted. He shall only
pay *for* the loss of his time, and shall pro-
vide *for him* to be thoroughly healed.

20 "And if a man beats his male or female
servant with a rod, so that he dies under his
hand, he shall surely be punished. 21 Not-
withstanding, if he remains alive a day or

20:20 ***His fear.*** God did not want His people to live in terror of Him, as though He were an irrational, uncontrolled, violent force, ready to be unleashed on innocent people without provocation. Rather, God wanted His people to respect the obvious hazards of wanton sin. Appropriate fear of God in this sense would make them circumspect, reverent, obedient, and worshipful, so that they might not sin.

20:26 ***your nakedness.*** The pagan worship of the Canaanites involved sexually perverse acts. Nothing obscene or unseemly was permitted in the pure worship of the living God.

21:1 ***the judgments.*** Also translated "ordinances," this word describes God's response to a specific action, something like an umpire's call. The judgments of God set forth here are responses to specific situations; the Ten Commandments are more general laws, a code for living rather than a response to a certain problem.

20:18 [z] Heb. 12:18, 19 [a] Rev. 1:10, 12 [b] Ex. 19:16, 18 **20:19** [c] Heb. 12:19 [d] Deut. 5:5, 23–27 **20:20** [e] [Is. 41:10, 13] [f] [Deut. 13:3] [g] Is. 8:13 **20:21** [h] Ex. 19:16 **20:22** [i] Deut. 4:36; 5:24, 26 **20:23** [j] Ex. 32:1, 2, 4 **20:24** [k] Ex. 20:25; 27:1–8 [l] Ex. 24:5 [m] 2 Chr. 6:6 [n] Gen. 12:2 **20:25** [o] Deut. 27:5 [p] Josh. 8:30, 31 **20:26** [q] Ex. 28:42, 43 **21:1** [a] Deut. 4:14; 6:1 **21:2** [b] Jer. 34:14 **21:5** [c] Deut. 15:16, 17 **21:6** [d] Ex. 12:12; 22:8, 9 **21:7** [e] Neh. 5:5 **21:10** [f] [1 Cor. 7:3, 5] **21:12** [g] [Matt. 26:52] **21:13** [h] Deut. 19:4, 5 [i] 1 Sam. 24:4, 10, 18 [j] Num. 35:11 **21:14** [k] Deut. 19:11, 12 [l] 1 Kin. 2:28–34 **21:16** [m] Deut. 24:7 [n] Gen. 37:28 [o] Ex. 22:4 **21:17** [p] Mark 7:10 **21:19** [q] 2 Sam. 3:29

two, he shall not be punished; for he *is* his [r]property.

22"If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall [s]pay as the judges *determine*. 23But if *any* harm follows, then you shall give life for life, 24[t]eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

26"If a man strikes the eye of his male or female servant, and destroys it, he shall let him go free for the sake of his eye. 27And if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he shall let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

Animal Control Laws

28"If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then [u]the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* acquitted. 29But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death. 30If there is imposed on him a sum of money, then he shall pay [v]to redeem his life, whatever is imposed on him. 31Whether it has gored a son or gored a daughter, according to this judgment it shall be done to him. 32If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master [w]thirty shekels of silver, and the [x]ox shall be stoned.

33"And if a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls in it, 34the owner of the pit shall make *it* good; he shall give money to their owner, but the dead *animal* shall be his.

35"If one man's ox hurts another's, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the money from it; and the dead *ox* they shall also divide. 36Or if it was known that the ox tended to thrust in time past, and its owner has not kept it confined, he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall be his own.

Responsibility for Property

22 "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall [a]restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep. 2If the thief is found [b]breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, *there shall be* [c]no guilt for his bloodshed. 3If the sun has risen on him, *there shall be* guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be [d]sold for his theft. 4If the theft is certainly [e]found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall [f]restore double.

5"If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard.

6"If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

7"If a man [g]delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, [h]if the thief is found, he shall pay double. 8If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the [i]judges *to see* whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods.

9"For any kind of trespass, *whether it concerns* an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, *or* for any kind of lost thing which *another* claims to be his, the [j]cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor. 10If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing *it,* 11*then* an [k]oath of the LORD shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods; and the owner of it shall accept *that,* and he shall not make *it* good. 12But [l]if, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. 13If it is [m]torn to pieces *by a beast, then* he shall bring it as evidence, *and* he shall not make good what was torn.

14"And if a man borrows *anything* from his neighbor, and it becomes injured or dies, the owner of it not *being* with it, he shall surely make *it* good. 15If its owner *was* with it, he shall not make *it* good; if it *was* hired, it came for its hire.

Moral and Ceremonial Principles

16[n]"If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely

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21:24 ***eye for eye, tooth for tooth.*** Here we encounter the best known statement of the "law of retaliation." The idea here is not to foster revenge, but to curtail it. The natural, sinful human response is "a head for an eye, a jaw for a tooth, an arm for a hand." This law says "*no more than* eye for eye, tooth for tooth."

22:1–4 ***the sun has risen on him.*** There is a difference between struggling with an intruder at the moment when he is caught red-handed, and hunting him up in order to kill him later on. The law made a distinction between self-defense and murder as retaliation.

21:21 [r] Lev. 25:44–46 **21:22** [s] Ex. 18:21, 22; 21:30 **21:24** [t] Lev. 24:20 **21:28** [u] Gen. 9:5 **21:30** [v] Num. 35:31 **21:32** [w] Zech. 11:12, 13 [x] Ex. 21:28 **22:1** [a] 2 Sam. 12:6 **22:2** [b] Matt. 6:19; 24:43 [c] Num. 35:27 **22:3** [d] Ex. 21:2 **22:4** [e] Ex. 21:16 [f] Prov. 6:31 **22:7** [g] Lev. 6:1–7 [h] Ex. 22:4 **22:8** [i] Ex. 21:6, 22; 22:28 **22:9** [j] Deut. 25:1 **22:11** [k] Heb. 6:16 **22:12** [l] Gen. 31:39 **22:13** [m] Gen. 31:39 **22:16** [n] Deut. 22:28, 29

pay the bride-price for her *to be* his wife.
17If her father utterly refuses to give her to
him, he shall pay money according to the
[o]bride-price of virgins.
18[p]"You shall not permit a sorceress to
live.
19[q]"Whoever lies with an animal shall
surely be put to death.
20[r]"He who sacrifices to *any* god, except
to the LORD only, he shall be utterly de-
stroyed.
21[s]"You shall neither mistreat a stranger
nor oppress him, for you were strangers in
the land of Egypt.
22[t]"You shall not afflict any widow or fa-
therless child. 23If you afflict them in any
way, *and* they [u]cry at all to Me, I will sure-
ly [v]hear their cry; 24and My [w]wrath will
become hot, and I will kill you with the
sword; [x]your wives shall be widows, and
your children fatherless.
25[y]"If you lend money to *any of* My peo-
ple *who are* poor among you, you shall not
be like a moneylender to him; you shall not
charge him [z]interest. 26[a]If you ever take
your neighbor's garment as a pledge, you
shall return it to him before the sun goes
down. 27For that *is* his only covering, it *is*
his garment for his skin. What will he sleep
in? And it will be that when he cries to Me,
I will hear, for I *am* [b]gracious.
28[c]"You shall not revile God, nor curse a
[d]ruler of your people.
29"You shall not delay *to offer* [e]the first
of your ripe produce and your juices. [f]The
firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me.
30[g]Likewise you shall do with your oxen
and your sheep. It shall be with its mother
[h]seven days; on the eighth day you shall
give it to Me.
31"And you shall be [i]holy men to Me: [j]you
shall not eat meat torn *by beasts* in the
field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

Justice for All

23 "You [a]shall not circulate a false report.
Do not put your hand with the wicked
to be an [b]unrighteous witness. 2[c]You shall
not follow a crowd to do evil; [d]nor shall you
testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after
many to pervert *justice.* 3You shall not show
partiality to a [e]poor man in his dispute.
4[f]"If you meet your enemy's ox or his
donkey going astray, you shall surely bring
it back to him again. 5[g]If you see the don-
key of one who hates you lying under its
burden, and you would refrain from help-
ing it, you shall surely help him with it.
6[h]"You shall not pervert the judgment of
your poor in his dispute. 7[i]Keep yourself far
from a false matter; [j]do not kill the inno-
cent and righteous. For [k]I will not justify
the wicked. 8And [l]you [m]shall take no bribe,
for a bribe blinds the discerning and per-
verts the words of the righteous.
9"Also you shall not oppress a stranger,
for you know the heart of a stranger, be-
cause you were strangers in the land of
Egypt.

The Law of Sabbaths

10[n]"Six years you shall sow your land
and gather in its produce, 11but the seventh
year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that
the poor of your people may eat; and what
they leave, the beasts of the field may eat.
In like manner you shall do with your vine-
yard *and* your olive grove. 12[o]Six days you
shall do your work, and on the seventh day
you shall rest, that your ox and your don-
key may rest, and the son of your female
servant and the stranger may be refreshed.
13"And in all that I have said to you, [p]be
circumspect and [q]make no mention of the
name of other gods, nor let it be heard from
your mouth.

Three Annual Feasts

14[r]"Three times you shall keep a feast to
Me in the year: 15[s]You shall keep the Feast
of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleav-
ened bread seven days, as I commanded
you, at the time appointed in the month of
Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; [t]none
shall appear before Me empty); 16[u]and [v]the
Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your la-
bors which you have sown in the field; and
the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the
year, when you have gathered in *the fruit
of* your labors from the field.

22:18 ***You shall not permit a sorceress to live.*** The Bible does not record any executions of sorcerers or sorceresses, but it does recount the deadly consequences of false worship (ch. 32; Num. 25).

23:1 ***false report.*** Malicious talk is everywhere condemned in Scripture (see James 3:1–12).

23:3 ***show partiality to a poor man.*** God's support of the poor did not overrule His justice. Here God anticipated that some would use poverty as an excuse for greedy, even criminal activity.

23:11 ***rest and lie fallow.*** Letting the land rest allowed the poor to glean any produce that might grow during the fallow year. It also gave the land time to rejuvenate for greater productivity in subsequent years. The year of rest was an act of faith, for the Israelites would have to trust God to meet their needs.

22:17 [o] Gen. 34:12 **22:18** [p] 1 Sam. 28:3–10 **22:19** [q] Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16 **22:20** [r] Ex. 32:8; 34:15 **22:21** [s] Deut. 10:19 **22:22** [t] [James 1:27] **22:23** [u] [Luke 18:7] [v] Ps. 18:6 **22:24** [w] Ps. 69:24 [x] Ps. 109:9 **22:25** [y] Lev. 25:35–37 [z] Ps. 15:5 **22:26** [a] Deut. 24:6, 10–13 **22:27** [b] Ex. 34:6, 7 **22:28** [c] Eccl. 10:20 [d] Acts 23:5 **22:29** [e] Ex. 23:16, 19 [f] Ex. 13:2, 12, 15 **22:30** [g] Deut. 15:19 [h] Lev. 22:27 **22:31** [i] Lev. 11:44; 19:2 [j] Ezek. 4:14 **23:1** [a] Ps. 101:5 [b] Deut. 19:16–21 **23:2** [c] Gen. 7:1 [d] Lev. 19:15 **23:3** [e] Deut. 1:17; 16:19 **23:4** [f] [Rom. 12:20] **23:5** [g] Deut. 22:4 **23:6** [h] Eccl. 5:8 **23:7** [i] Eph. 4:25 [j] Matt. 27:4 [k] Rom. 1:18 **23:8** [l] Prov. 15:27; 17:8, 23 [m] Ex. 22:21 **23:10** [n] Lev. 25:1–7 **23:12** [o] Luke 13:14 **23:13** [p] 1 Tim. 4:16 [q] Josh. 23:7 **23:14** [r] Ex. 23:17; 34:22–24 **23:15** [s] Ex. 12:14–20 [t] Ex. 22:29; 34:20 **23:16** [u] Ex. 34:22 [v] Deut. 16:13

17 [w]"Three times in the year all your
males shall appear before the Lord GOD.*
18 [x]"You shall not offer the blood of My
sacrifice with [y]leavened bread; nor shall
the fat of My sacrifice remain until morning. 19 [z]The first of the firstfruits of your
land you shall bring into the house of the
LORD your God. [a]You shall not boil a young
goat in its mother's milk.

The Angel and the Promises

20 [b]"Behold, I send an Angel before you
to keep you in the way and to bring you
into the place which I have prepared. 21 Be-
ware of Him and obey His voice; [c]do not
provoke Him, for He will [d]not pardon your
transgressions; for [e]My name *is* in Him.
22 But if you indeed obey His voice and do
all that I speak, then [f]I will be an enemy
to your enemies and an adversary to your
adversaries. 23 [g]For My Angel will go before
you and [h]bring you in to the Amorites and
the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Ca-
naanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites;
and I will cut them off. 24 You shall not [i]bow
down to their gods, nor serve them, [j]nor do
according to their works; [k]but you shall ut-
terly overthrow them and completely break
down their *sacred* pillars.
25 "So you shall [l]serve the LORD your
God, and [m]He will bless your bread and
your water. And [n]I will take sickness away
from the midst of you. 26 [o]No one shall suf-
fer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I
will [p]fulfill the number of your days.
27 "I will send [q]My fear before you, I will
[r]cause confusion among all the people to
whom you come, and will make all your
enemies turn *their* backs to you. 28 And [s]I
will send hornets before you, which shall
drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the
Hittite from before you. 29 [t]I will not drive
them out from before you in one year, lest
the land become desolate and the beasts
of the field become too numerous for you.
30 Little by little I will drive them out from
before you, until you have increased, and
you inherit the land. 31 And [u]I will set your
bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Phi-
listia, and from the desert to the River.*
For I will [v]deliver the inhabitants of the
land into your hand, and you shall drive
them out before you. 32 [w]You shall make no
covenant with them, nor with their gods.
33 They shall not dwell in your land, lest
they make you sin against Me. For *if* you
serve their gods, [x]it will surely be a snare
to you."

Israel Affirms the Covenant

24 Now He said to Moses, "Come up to
the LORD, you and Aaron, [a]Nadab
and Abihu, [b]and seventy of the elders of Is-
rael, and worship from afar. 2 And Moses
alone shall come near the LORD, but they
shall not come near; nor shall the people
go up with him."
3 So Moses came and told the people all
the words of the LORD and all the judg-
ments. And all the people answered with
one voice and said, [c]"All the words which
the LORD has said we will do." 4 And Moses
[d]wrote all the words of the LORD. And he
rose early in the morning, and built an al-
tar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve
[e]pillars according to the twelve tribes of Is-
rael. 5 Then he sent young men of the chil-
dren of Israel, who offered [f]burnt offerings
and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to
the LORD. 6 And Moses [g]took half the blood
and put *it* in basins, and half the blood he
sprinkled on the altar. 7 Then he [h]took the
Book of the Covenant and read in the hear-
ing of the people. And they said, "All that
the LORD has said we will do, and be obedi-
ent." 8 And Moses took the blood, sprinkled
it on the people, and said, "This is [i]the blood
of the covenant which the LORD has made
with you according to all these words."

* **23:17** Hebrew *YHWH*, usually translated *LORD*
* **23:31** Hebrew *Nahar*, the Euphrates

23:17 ***Lord God.*** Here two names for God, Adonai (translated as Lord), and Yahweh (translated as GOD), are used together. This expression emphasizes God's sovereignty.

23:20 ***Angel.*** The statement "My name is in Him" (v. 21) shows that this messenger is the Angel of the Lord, who is none other than God Himself; with the promise of His presence and protection comes the warning "obey His voice," for the Lord is a holy God who cannot dwell in the presence of sin. Obedience is the evidence of reality of the covenant relationship. The Angel of the Lord "encamps all around those who fear Him" (Ps. 34:7).

23:26 ***suffer miscarriage or be barren.*** God reminded His people that He was the one who controlled reproduction—not the fertility cults of the pagan Canaanites.

24:6 ***blood.*** This blood anticipated the death of the coming Messiah, Jesus. His blood could do what the blood of bulls and goats could never accomplish; His death opened the way for direct communication with God (12:7; Rom. 3:23–26; Heb. 10:4,10).

24:8 ***the blood of the covenant.*** Just as their houses were protected from the Passover by the sign of blood (ch. 12), now the people were brought into a covenant relationship with the Lord with a sign of blood. This is a picture of our own relationship with God, brought about by the blood of Jesus (1 Pet. 1:2).

23:17 [w] Deut. 16:16 **23:18** [x] Ex. 34:25 [y] Deut. 16:4 **23:19** [z] Deut. 26:2, 10 [a] Deut. 14:21 **23:20** [b] Ex. 3:2; 13:15; 14:19 **23:21** [c] Ps. 78:40, 56 [d] Deut. 18:19 [e] Is. 9:6 **23:22** [f] Deut. 30:7 **23:23** [g] Ex. 23:20 [h] Josh. 24:8, 11 **23:24** [i] Ex. 20:5; 23:13, 33 [j] Deut. 12:30, 31 [k] Num. 33:52 **23:25** [l] Deut. 6:13 [m] Deut. 28:5 [n] Ex. 15:26 **23:26** [o] Deut. 7:14; 28:4 [p] 1 Chr. 23:1 **23:27** [q] Ex. 15:16 [r] Deut. 7:23 **23:28** [s] Josh. 24:12 **23:29** [t] Deut. 7:22 **23:31** [u] Gen. 15:18 [v] Josh. 21:44 **23:32** [w] Ex. 34:12, 15 **23:33** [x] Ps. 106:36 **24:1** [a] Lev. 10:1, 2 [b] Num. 11:16 **24:3** [c] Ex. 19:8; 24:7 **24:4** [d] Deut. 31:9 [e] Gen. 28:18 **24:5** [f] Ex. 18:12; 20:24 **24:6** [g] Heb. 9:18 **24:7** [h] Heb. 9:19 **24:8** [i] [Luke 22:20]

On the Mountain with God

9 Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders
of Israel, 10 and they [j]saw the God of Israel.
And *there was* under His feet as it were a
paved work of [k]sapphire stone, and it was
like the [l]very heavens in *its* clarity. 11 But on
the nobles of the children of Israel He [m]did
not lay His hand. So [n]they saw God, and
they [o]ate and drank.

12 Then the LORD said to Moses, [p]"Come
up to Me on the mountain and be there; and
I will give you [q]tablets of stone, and the law
and commandments which I have written,
that you may teach them."

13 So Moses arose with [r]his assistant
Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain
of God. 14 And he said to the elders, "Wait
here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and [s]Hur *are* with you. If any
man has a difficulty, let him go to them."
15 Then Moses went up into the mountain,
and [t]a cloud covered the mountain.

16 Now [u]the glory of the LORD rested on
Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six
days. And on the seventh day He called to
Moses out of the midst of the cloud. 17 The
sight of the glory of the LORD *was* like [v]a
consuming fire on the top of the mountain
in the eyes of the children of Israel. 18 So
Moses went into the midst of the cloud and
went up into the mountain. And [w]Moses
was on the mountain forty days and forty
nights.

Offerings for the Sanctuary

25 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. [a]From
everyone who gives it willingly with his
heart you shall take My offering. 3 And
this *is* the offering which you shall take
from them: gold, silver, and bronze; 4 blue,
purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and
goats' *hair;* 5 ram skins dyed red, badger
skins, and acacia wood; 6 [b]oil for the light,
and [c]spices for the anointing oil and for the
sweet incense; 7 onyx stones, and stones to
be set in the [d]ephod and in the breastplate.
8 And let them make Me a [e]sanctuary, that
[f]I may dwell among them. 9 According to
all that I show you, *that is,* the pattern of
the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make *it*.

The Ark of the Testimony

10 [g]"And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits *shall be* its
length, a cubit and a half its width, and a
cubit and a half its height. 11 And you shall
overlay it with pure gold, inside and out
you shall overlay it, and shall make on it
a molding of [h]gold all around. 12 You shall
cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them*
in its four corners; two rings *shall be* on
one side, and two rings on the other side.
13 And you shall make poles *of* acacia wood,
and overlay them with gold. 14 You shall put
the poles into the rings on the sides of the
ark, that the ark may be carried by them.
15 [i]The poles shall be in the rings of the ark;
they shall not be taken from it. 16 And you
shall put into the ark [j]the Testimony which
I will give you.

17 [k]"You shall make a mercy seat of
pure gold; two and a half cubits *shall be*
its length and a cubit and a half its width.
18 And you shall make two cherubim of
gold; of hammered work you shall make
them at the two ends of the mercy seat.
19 Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make
the cherubim at the two ends of it *of one
piece* with the mercy seat. 20 And [l]the cherubim shall stretch out *their* wings above,
covering the mercy seat with their wings,
and they shall face one another; the faces
of the cherubim *shall be* toward the mercy seat. 21 [m]You shall put the mercy seat on
top of the ark, and [n]in the ark you shall put

24:9–17 ***God of Israel.*** This vision of God was a great privilege. The elders of the people saw God standing on a structure resembling a transparent sapphire platform, which emphasized His grandeur. Blue was one of the colors favored by some members of ancient Near Eastern royalty. God's glory is the manifestation of all His divine characteristics, including power and holiness, which for Israel were represented by the billowing consuming fire (Heb. 12:29).

24:12 ***Come up to Me.*** Only Moses could draw near to God at that time. Today, we are all called to draw near to God through Jesus (see Heb. 4:14–16).

25:2 ***everyone who gives it willingly.*** God does not need the gifts of His people, but He desires us to give to Him as an expression of true worship.

25:9 ***the pattern.*** The language of these verses suggests that there is a heavenly pattern that the earthly tabernacle was designed to resemble (see v. 40; 26:30; 27:8; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5).

25:10 ***ark.*** In contrast to the idolatry of Israel's neighbors, the shrine of the living God had no likeness or idol of any sort (20:2–6). ***cubit.*** This measurement was represented by the length of a man's arm from elbow to extended middle finger. The commonly accepted estimate for the cubit is eighteen inches. Therefore, the ark was about four feet long and two and one quarter feet wide and high.

25:17 ***mercy seat.*** This English phrase translates a Hebrew noun derived from the verb meaning "atone for," "to cover over," or "to make propitiation." The mercy seat was the lid of the ark, the place where God's spirit rested.

24:10 *j* [John 1:18; 6:46] *k* Ezek. 1:26 *l* Matt. 17:2
24:11 *m* Ex. 19:21 *n* Gen. 32:30 *o* 1 Cor. 10:18 **24:12** *p* Ex. 24:2, 15 *q* Ex. 31:18; 32:15 **24:13** *r* Ex. 32:17 **24:14** *s* Ex. 17:10, 12 **24:15** *t* Ex. 19:9 **24:16** *u* Ex. 16:10; 33:18 **24:17** *v* Deut. 4:26, 36; 9:3 **24:18** *w* Ex. 34:28
25:2 *a* Ex. 35:4–9, 21 **25:6** *b* Ex. 27:20 *c* Ex. 30:23
25:7 *d* Ex. 28:4, 6–14 **25:8** *e* Heb. 9:1, 2 *f* [2 Cor. 6:16]
25:10 *g* Ex. 37:1–9 **25:11** *h* Ex. 37:2 **25:15** *i* 1 Kin. 8:8
25:16 *j* Heb. 9:4 **25:17** *k* Ex. 37:6 **25:20** *l* 1 Kin. 8:7
25:21 *m* Ex. 26:34; 40:20 *n* Ex. 25:16

the Testimony that I will give you. 22And [o]there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from [p]between the two cherubim which *are* on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

The Table for the Showbread

23[q]"You shall also make a table of acacia wood; two cubits *shall be* its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height. 24And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold all around. 25You shall make for it a frame of a handbreadth all around, and you shall make a gold molding for the frame all around. 26And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings on the four corners that *are* at its four legs. 27The rings shall be close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table. 28And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be carried with them. 29You shall make [r]its dishes, its pans, its pitchers, and its bowls for pouring. You shall make them of pure gold. 30And you shall set the [s]showbread on the table before Me always.

The Gold Lampstand

31[t]"You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be of hammered work. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its *ornamental* knobs, and flowers shall be *of one piece.* 32And six branches shall come out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side. 33[u]Three bowls *shall be* made like almond *blossoms* on one branch, *with* an *ornamental* knob and a flower, and three bowls made like almond *blossoms* on the other branch, *with* an *ornamental* knob and a flower—and so for the six branches that come out of the lampstand. 34[v]On the lampstand itself four bowls *shall be* made like almond *blossoms*, *each with* its *ornamental* knob and flower. 35And *there shall be* a knob under the *first* two branches of the same, a knob under the *second* two branches of the same, and a knob under the *third* two branches of the same, according to the six branches that extend from the lampstand. 36Their knobs and their branches *shall be of one piece;* all of it *shall be* one hammered piece of pure gold. 37You shall make seven lamps for it, and [w]they shall arrange its lamps so that they [x]give light in front of it. 38And its wick-trimmers and their trays *shall be* of pure gold. 39It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. 40And [y]see to it that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

The Tabernacle

26 "Moreover [a]you shall make the tabernacle *with* ten curtains *of* fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet *thread;* with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them. 2The length of each curtain *shall be* twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits. And every one of the curtains shall have the same measurements. 3Five curtains shall be coupled to one another, and *the other* five curtains *shall be* coupled to one another. 4And you shall make loops of blue *yarn* on the edge of the curtain on the selvedge of *one* set, and likewise you shall do on the outer edge of *the other* curtain of the second set. 5Fifty loops you shall make in the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that *is* on the end of the second set, that the loops may be clasped to one another. 6And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains together with the clasps, so that it may be one tabernacle.

7[b]"You shall also make curtains of goats' *hair,* to be a tent over the tabernacle. You shall make eleven curtains. 8The length of each curtain *shall be* thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; and the eleven curtains shall all have the same measurements. 9And you shall couple five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves, and you shall double over the sixth curtain at the forefront of the tent. 10You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in *one* set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain of

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25:22 ***I will meet with you.*** God dwells with His people in the space-time reality in which He created them, and communicates with them in the language with which He endowed them. He is not aloof and He is not silent. His words are an extension of Himself and reflect His nature. They are altogether pure and without blemish, and they are fully authoritative. At the same time, His words reach out to man and are rooted in love, issued from the mercy seat. He speaks them Himself or has them spoken by His authority. He preserves them. He writes them or has them written under His superintendence. God is the ultimate Author of His own Word. This Word is and remains His living and abiding Voice.

25:29 ***pure gold.*** All of the implements for making bread were also to be costly and wonderfully designed to physically represent their holiness. They were "set apart" to God.

25:30 ***the showbread.*** Twelve loaves representing the twelve tribes of Israel were placed in two rows with six loaves in each row (Lev. 24:5–9). It was called showbread because it was placed symbolically before the face of God.

25:39 ***talent.*** A talent weighed about 75 pounds.

26:1 ***tabernacle.*** The word tabernacle simply means "tent."

25:22 [o] Ex. 29:42, 43; 30:6, 36 [p] Num. 7:89 **25:23** [q] Ex. 37:10–16 **25:29** [r] Ex. 37:16 **25:30** [s] Lev. 24:5–9 **25:31** [t] Zech. 4:2 **25:33** [u] Ex. 37:19 **25:34** [v] Ex. 37:20–22 **25:37** [w] Lev. 24:3, 4 [x] Num. 8:2 **25:40** [y] [Heb. 8:5] **26:1** [a] Ex. 36:8–19 **26:7** [b] Ex. 36:14

the second set. 11And you shall make fifty bronze clasps, put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. 12The remnant that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. 13And a cubit on one side and a cubit on the other side, of what remains of the length of the curtains of the tent, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and on that side, to cover it.

14[c]"You shall also make a covering of ram skins dyed red for the tent, and a covering of badger skins above that.

15"And for the tabernacle you shall [d]make the boards of acacia wood, standing upright. 16Ten cubits *shall be* the length of a board, and a cubit and a half *shall be* the width of each board. 17Two tenons *shall be* in each board for binding one to another. Thus you shall make for all the boards of the tabernacle. 18And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards for the south side. 19You shall make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards: two sockets under each of the boards for its two tenons. 20And for the second side of the tabernacle, the north side, *there shall be* twenty boards 21and their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under each of the boards. 22For the far side of the tabernacle, westward, you shall make six boards. 23And you shall also make two boards for the two back corners of the tabernacle. 24They shall be coupled together at the bottom and they shall be coupled together at the top by one ring. Thus it shall be for both of them. They shall be for the two corners. 25So there shall be eight boards with their sockets of silver—sixteen sockets—two sockets under each of the boards.

26"And you shall make bars of acacia wood: five for the boards on one side of the tabernacle, 27five bars for the boards on the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the far side westward. 28The [e]middle bar shall pass through the midst of the boards from end to end. 29You shall overlay the boards with gold, make their rings of gold *as* holders for the bars, and overlay the bars with gold. 30And you shall raise up the tabernacle [f]according to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain.

31[g]"You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread,* and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. 32You shall hang it upon the four pillars of acacia *wood* overlaid with gold. Their hooks *shall be* gold, upon four sockets of silver. 33And you shall hang the veil from the clasps. Then you shall bring [h]the ark of the Testimony in there, behind the veil. The veil shall be a divider for you between [i]the holy *place* and the Most Holy. 34[j]You shall put the mercy seat upon the ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy. 35[k]You shall set the table outside the veil, and [l]the lampstand across from the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side.

36[m]"You shall make a screen for the door of the tabernacle, *woven of* blue, purple, and scarlet *thread,* and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. 37And you shall make for the screen [n]five pillars of acacia *wood,* and overlay them with gold; their hooks *shall be* gold, and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

The Altar of Burnt Offering

27 "You shall make [a]an altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—the altar shall be square—and its height *shall be* three cubits. 2You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it. And you shall overlay it with bronze. 3Also you shall make its pans to receive its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. 4You shall make a grate for it, a network of bronze; and on the network you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. 5You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar. 6And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. 7The poles shall be put in the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar to bear it. 8You shall make it hollow with boards; [b]as it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make *it*.

The Court of the Tabernacle

9[c]"You shall also make the court of the tabernacle. For the south side *there shall be* hangings for the court *made of* fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long for one side. 10And its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets *shall be* bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their bands *shall be* silver. 11Likewise along the length of the north side *there shall be* hangings one hundred *cubits* long, with its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of bronze, and the hooks of the pillars and their bands of silver.

27:9–18 ***court of the tabernacle.*** The courtyard separated the ceremonies of worship from common areas. It was arranged to keep people and stray animals from wandering into the tabernacle. Entering the tent could only be a deliberate act.

26:14 [c] Ex. 35:7, 23; 36:19 **26:15** [d] Ex. 36:20–34 **26:28** [e] Ex. 36:33 **26:30** [f] Acts 7:44 **26:31** [g] Matt. 27:51 **26:33** [h] Ex. 25:10–16; 40:21 [i] Heb. 9:2, 3 **26:34** [j] Ex. 25:17–22; 40:20 **26:35** [k] Ex. 40:22 [l] Ex. 40:24 **26:36** [m] Ex. 36:37 **26:37** [n] Ex. 36:38 **27:1** [a] Ex. 38:1 **27:8** [b] Ex. 25:40; 26:30 **27:9** [c] Ex. 38:9–20

12"And along the width of the court on
the west side *shall be* hangings of fifty
cubits, with their ten pillars and their ten
sockets. 13The width of the court on the
east side *shall be* fifty cubits. 14The hang-
ings on *one* side *of the gate shall be* fifteen
cubits, *with* their three pillars and their
three sockets. 15And on the other side *shall
be* hangings of fifteen *cubits, with* their
three pillars and their three sockets.
16"For the gate of the court *there shall be*
a screen twenty cubits long, *woven of* blue,
purple, and scarlet *thread,* and fine woven
linen, made by a weaver. It *shall have* four
pillars and four sockets. 17All the pillars
around the court shall have bands of sil-
ver; their [d]hooks *shall be* of silver and their
sockets of bronze. 18The length of the court
shall be one hundred cubits, the width fif-
ty throughout, and the height five cubits,
made of fine woven linen, and its sockets of
bronze. 19All the utensils of the tabernacle
for all its service, all its pegs, and all the
pegs of the court, *shall be* of bronze.

The Care of the Lampstand

20"And [e]you shall command the chil-
dren of Israel that they bring you pure oil
of pressed olives for the light, to cause the
lamp to burn continually. 21In the taberna-
cle of meeting, [f]outside the veil which *is*
before the Testimony, [g]Aaron and his sons
shall tend it from evening until morning
before the LORD. [h]*It shall be* a statute for-
ever to their generations on behalf of the
children of Israel.

Garments for the Priesthood

28 "Now take [a]Aaron your brother, and
his sons with him, from among the
children of Israel, that he may minister to
Me as [b]priest, Aaron *and* Aaron's sons:
[c]Nadab, Abihu, [d]Eleazar, and Ithamar.
2And [e]you shall make holy garments for
Aaron your brother, for glory and for beau-
ty. 3So [f]you shall speak to all *who are* gifted
artisans, [g]whom I have filled with the spir-
it of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's
garments, to consecrate him, that he may
minister to Me as priest. 4And these *are* the
garments which they shall make: [h]a breast-
plate, [i]an ephod,* [j]a robe, [k]a skillfully wo-
ven tunic, a turban, and [l]a sash. So they
shall make holy garments for Aaron your
brother and his sons, that he may minister
to Me as priest.

The Ephod

5"They shall take the gold, blue, pur-
ple, and scarlet *thread,* and the fine linen,
6[m]and they shall make the ephod of gold,
blue, purple, *and* scarlet *thread,* and fine
woven linen, artistically worked. 7It shall
have two shoulder straps joined at its two
edges, and *so* it shall be joined together.
8And the intricately woven band of the
ephod, which *is* on it, shall be of the same
workmanship, *made of* gold, blue, purple,
and scarlet *thread,* and fine woven linen.
9"Then you shall take two onyx [n]stones
and engrave on them the names of the
sons of Israel: 10six of their names on one
stone and six names on the other stone, in
order of their [o]birth. 11With the work of an
[p]engraver in stone, *like* the engravings of
a signet, you shall engrave the two stones
with the names of the sons of Israel. You
shall set them in settings of gold. 12And you
shall put the two stones on the shoulders of
the ephod *as* memorial stones for the sons
of Israel. So [q]Aaron shall bear their names
before the LORD on his two shoulders [r]as a
memorial. 13You shall also make settings
of gold, 14and you shall make two chains of
pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the
braided chains to the settings.

The Breastplate

15[s]"You shall make the breastplate of
judgment. Artistically woven according to
the workmanship of the ephod you shall
make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet
thread, and fine woven linen, you shall
make it. 16It shall be doubled into a square:
a span *shall be* its length, and a span *shall
be* its width. 17[t]And you shall put settings of
stones in it, four rows of stones: *The first* row
shall be a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald;

* **28:4** That is, an ornamented vest

27:20 ***pure oil of pressed olives.*** All that was used in the tabernacle and sacrifices must be pure and without blemish in order to honor God's holiness. ***the lamp to burn continually.*** The oil for the lampstand was the gift of the children of Israel. It had to be pure oil, as a symbol of our need to call upon the Lord from a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:22). The lamps were to burn continuously, a reminder of the perpetual need of the sinner for the light of God's word, "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105).

28:3 ***all who are gifted artisans.*** This expression literally means "those who are wise at heart." The same expression is used of the skillful women who did the weaving (35:25).

28:5–14 ***ephod.*** The ephod has been described as a cape or vest made of fine linen with brilliant colors. Its two main sections covered the chest and back, with seams at the shoulders and a band at the waist.

28:16 ***span.*** The span was determined as the length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the small finger on an outstretched hand. It is generally estimated as nine inches, or half a cubit.

27:17 [d] Ex. 38:19 **27:20** [e] Lev. 24:1–4 **27:21** [f] Ex. 26:31, 33 [g] Ex. 30:8 [h] Lev. 3:17; 16:34 **28:1** [a] Num. 3:10; 18:7 [b] Heb. 5:4 [c] Lev. 10:1 [d] Ex. 6:23 **28:2** [e] Ex. 29:5, 29; 31:10; 39:1–31 **28:3** [f] Ex. 31:6; 36:1 [g] Ex. 31:3; 35:30, 31 **28:4** [h] Ex. 28:15 [i] Ex. 28:6 [j] Ex. 28:31 [k] Ex. 28:39 [l] Lev. 8:7 **28:6** [m] Ex. 39:2–7 **28:9** [n] Ex. 35:27 **28:10** [o] Gen. 29:31—30:24; 35:16–18 **28:11** [p] Ex. 35:35 **28:12** [q] Ex. 28:29, 30; 39:6, 7 [r] Josh. 4:7 **28:15** [s] Ex. 39:8–21 **28:17** [t] Ex. 39:10

this shall be the first row; 18the second row *shall be* a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; 19the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; 20and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. 21And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.

22"You shall make chains for the breastplate at the end, like braided cords of pure gold. 23And you shall make two rings of gold for the breastplate, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. 24Then you shall put the two braided *chains* of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate; 25and the *other* two ends of the two braided *chains* you shall fasten to the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front.

26"You shall make two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which is on the inner side of the ephod. 27And two *other* rings of gold you shall make, and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod. 28They shall bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod, using a blue cord, so that it is above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate does not come loose from the ephod.

29"So Aaron shall [u]bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy *place*, as a memorial before the LORD continually. 30And [v]you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim,* and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

Other Priestly Garments

31[w]"You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 32There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear. 33And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: 34a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around. 35And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy *place* before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die.

36[x]"You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, *like* the engraving of a signet:

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37And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. 38So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may [y]bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be [z]accepted before the LORD.

39"You shall [a]skillfully weave the tunic of fine linen *thread*, you shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the sash of woven work.

40[b]"For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make hats for them, for glory and [c]beauty. 41So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall [d]anoint them, [e]consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests. 42And you shall make [f]for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs. 43They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near [g]the altar to minister in the holy *place*, that they [h]do not incur iniquity and die. [i]*It shall be* a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.

Aaron and His Sons Consecrated

29 "And this is what you shall do to them to hallow them for ministering to Me as priests: [a]Take one young bull and two

* **28:30** Literally *the Lights and the Perfections* (compare Leviticus 8:8)

28:30 ***the Urim and the Thummim.*** These translated Hebrew words mean "Lights" and "Perfections." Together their names may mean "perfect knowledge" or a similar idea. It is not known exactly what the Urim and Thummim were, or how they were used. Some have suggested that they were two stones used for the casting of lots.

28:42 ***trousers.*** The command to wear trousers protected the modesty of the priests. Given the sexually preoccupied worship of Israel's neighbors, this provision was decidedly countercultural.

29:1–9 ***hallow them.*** The outward purification process was used to symbolize the inward purity which was demanded of the priests of Israel, the intermediaries between the people and their holy God. Obviously the priests were not perfectly pure; it was only God's gracious act of accepting blood sacrifices that allowed the priests to stand in His presence on behalf of the people. The outward washings of the priests showed that they were doing everything possible to live their lives in the way they

28:29 [u] Ex. 28:12 **28:30** [v] Lev. 8:8 **28:31** [w] Ex. 39:22–26 **28:36** [x] Ex. 39:30, 31 **28:38** [y] [1 Pet. 2:24] [z] Lev. 1:4; 22:27; 23:11 **28:39** [a] Ex. 35:35; 39:27–29 **28:40** [b] Ezek. 44:17, 18 [c] Ex. 28:2 **28:41** [d] Lev. 10:7 [e] Lev. 8 **28:42** [f] Ex. 39:28 **28:43** [g] Ex. 20:26 [h] Num. 9:13; 18:22 [i] Ex. 27:21 **29:1** [a] [Heb. 7:26–28]

rams without blemish, 2and [b]unleavened
bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil,
and unleavened wafers anointed with oil
(you shall make them of wheat flour). 3You
shall put them in one basket and bring
them in the basket, with the bull and the
two rams.

4"And Aaron and his sons you shall
bring to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, [c]and you shall wash them with water.
5[d]Then you shall take the garments, put
the tunic on Aaron, and the robe of the
ephod, the ephod, and the breastplate, and
gird him with the [e]intricately woven band
of the ephod. 6[f]You shall put the turban on
his head, and put the holy crown on the turban. 7And you shall take the anointing [g]oil,
pour *it* on his head, and anoint him. 8Then
[h]you shall bring his sons and put tunics on
them. 9And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and put the hats on
them. [i]The priesthood shall be theirs for a
perpetual statute. So you shall [j]consecrate
Aaron and his sons.

10"You shall also have the bull brought
before the tabernacle of meeting, and [k]Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on
the head of the bull. 11Then you shall kill
the bull before the LORD, *by* the door of
the tabernacle of meeting. 12You shall take
some of the blood of the bull and put *it* on
[l]the horns of the altar with your finger, and
[m]pour all the blood beside the base of the
altar. 13And [n]you shall take all the fat that
covers the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached*
to the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat
that *is* on them, and burn *them* on the altar.
14But [o]the flesh of the bull, with its skin and
its offal, you shall burn with fire outside
the camp. It *is* a sin offering.

15[p]"You shall also take one ram, and
Aaron and his sons shall [q]put their hands
on the head of the ram; 16and you shall kill
the ram, and you shall take its blood and
[r]sprinkle *it* all around on the altar. 17Then
you shall cut the ram in pieces, wash its
entrails and its legs, and put *them* with its
pieces and with its head. 18And you shall
burn the whole ram on the altar. It *is* a
[s]burnt offering to the LORD; it *is* a sweet
aroma, an offering made by fire to the
LORD.

19[t]"You shall also take the other ram, and
Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on
the head of the ram. 20Then you shall kill
the ram, and take some of its blood and put
it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and
on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on
the thumb of their right hand and on the
big toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the
blood all around on the altar. 21And you
shall take some of the blood that is on the
altar, and some of [u]the anointing oil, and
sprinkle *it* on Aaron and on his garments,
on his sons and on the garments of his sons
with him; and [v]he and his garments shall
be hallowed, and his sons and his sons'
garments with him.

22"Also you shall take the fat of the ram,
the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails,
the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, the two
kidneys and the fat on them, the right thigh
(for it *is* a ram of consecration), 23[w]one loaf
of bread, one cake *made with* oil, and one
wafer from the basket of the unleavened
bread that *is* before the LORD; 24and you
shall put all these in the hands of Aaron
and in the hands of his sons, and you shall
[x]wave them *as* a wave offering before the
LORD. 25[y]You shall receive them back from
their hands and burn *them* on the altar as
a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma before
the LORD. It *is* an offering made by fire to
the LORD.

26"Then you shall take [z]the breast of the
ram of Aaron's consecration and wave it
as a wave offering before the LORD; and it
shall be your portion. 27And from the ram
of the consecration you shall consecrate
[a]the breast of the wave offering which is
waved, and the thigh of the heave offering
which is raised, of *that* which *is* for Aaron
and of *that* which is for his sons. 28It shall
be from the children of Israel *for* Aaron
and his sons [b]by a statute forever. For it is a
heave offering; [c]it shall be a heave offering
from the children of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, *that is*, their
heave offering to the LORD.

29"And the [d]holy garments of Aaron
[e]shall be his sons' after him, [f]to be anointed in them and to be consecrated in them.
30[g]That son who becomes priest in his
place shall put them on for [h]seven days,

had been commanded by God. Likewise, in the New Testament era, the only reason that Christians can stand before God as believer-priests is because God graciously accepts Christ's sacrifice on behalf of our sins.

29:9 *consecrate.* The verb translated *consecrate* in this verse literally means "to fill one's hand." A king was handed a rod as the symbol of his political power; so the hand of the priest was filled with spiritual power.

29:18 *burnt offering.* Aaron and his sons needed to offer sacrifices for themselves as much as for their fellow Israelites (Heb. 5:1–4).

29:24 *wave offering.* This offering made it clear that everything was owed to God, but some was received back as God's gift (Lev. 7:30; 10:14).

29:2 [b] Lev. 2:4; 6:19–23 **29:4** [c] Ex. 40:12 **29:5** [d] Ex. 28:2 [e] Ex. 28:8 **29:6** [f] Lev. 8:9 **29:7** [g] Ex. 25:6; 30:25–31 **29:8** [h] Ex. 28:39, 40 **29:9** [i] Num. 3:10; 18:7; 25:13 [j] Ex. 28:41 **29:10** [k] Lev. 1:4; 8:14 **29:12** [l] Lev. 8:15 [m] Ex. 27:2; 30:2 **29:13** [n] Lev. 1:8; 3:3, 4 **29:14** [o] Lev. 4:11, 12, 21 **29:15** [p] Lev. 8:18 [q] Lev. 1:4–9 **29:16** [r] Ex. 24:6 **29:18** [s] Ex. 20:24 **29:19** [t] Lev. 8:22 **29:21** [u] Ex. 30:25, 31 [v] [Heb. 9:22] **29:23** [w] Lev. 8:26 **29:24** [x] Lev. 7:30; 10:14 **29:25** [y] Lev. 8:28 **29:26** [z] Lev. 7:31, 34; 8:29 **29:27** [a] Num. 18:11, 18 **29:28** [b] Lev. 10:15 [c] Lev. 3:1; 7:34 **29:29** [d] Ex. 28:2 [e] Num. 20:26, 28 [f] Num. 18:8 **29:30** [g] Num. 20:28 [h] Lev. 8:35

when he enters the tabernacle of meeting
to minister in the holy *place.*
31"And you shall take the ram of the
consecration and [i]boil its flesh in the holy
place. 32Then Aaron and his sons shall eat
the flesh of the ram, and the [j]bread that *is*
in the basket, *by* the door of the tabernacle
of meeting. 33[k]They shall eat those things
with which the atonement was made, to
consecrate *and* to sanctify them; [l]but an
outsider shall not eat *them,* because they
are holy. 34And if any of the flesh of the
consecration offerings, or of the bread, re-
mains until the morning, then [m]you shall
burn the remainder with fire. It shall not
be eaten, because it *is* holy.
35"Thus you shall do to Aaron and his
sons, according to all that I have command-
ed you. [n]Seven days you shall consecrate
them. 36And you [o]shall offer a bull every
day *as* a sin offering for atonement. [p]You
shall cleanse the altar when you make
atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to
sanctify it. 37Seven days you shall make
atonement for the altar and sanctify it.
And the altar shall be most holy. [q]Whatev-
er touches the altar must be holy.*

The Daily Offerings

38"Now this *is* what you shall offer on the
altar: [r]two lambs of the first year, [s]day by
day continually. 39One lamb you shall of-
fer [t]in the morning, and the other lamb you
shall offer at twilight. 40With the one lamb
shall be one-tenth *of an ephah* of flour
mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed
oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine *as* a
drink offering. 41And the other lamb you
shall [u]offer at twilight; and you shall offer
with it the grain offering and the drink of-
fering, as in the morning, for a sweet aro-
ma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.
42*This shall be* [v]a continual burnt offering
throughout your generations *at* the door of
the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD,
[w]where I will meet you to speak with you.
43And there I will meet with the children of
Israel, and *the tabernacle* [x]shall be sancti-
fied by My glory. 44So I will consecrate the
tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will
also [y]consecrate both Aaron and his sons
to minister to Me as priests. 45[z]I will dwell
among the children of Israel and will [a]be
their God. 46And they shall know that [b]I *am*
the LORD their God, who [c]brought them up
out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell
among them. I *am* the LORD their God.

The Altar of Incense

30 "You shall make [a]an altar to burn in-
cense on; you shall make it of acacia
wood. 2A cubit *shall be* its length and a cu-
bit its width—it shall be square—and two
cubits *shall be* its height. Its horns *shall be*
of one piece with it. 3And you shall overlay
its top, its sides all around, and its horns
with pure gold; and you shall make for it a
molding of gold all around. 4Two gold rings
you shall make for it, under the molding
on both its sides. You shall place *them* on
its two sides, and they will be holders for
the poles with which to bear it. 5You shall
make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay
them with gold. 6And you shall put it before
the [b]veil that *is* before the ark of the Testi-
mony, before the [c]mercy seat that *is* over
the Testimony, where I will meet with you.
7"Aaron shall burn on it [d]sweet incense
every morning; when [e]he tends the lamps,
he shall burn incense on it. 8And when
Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall
burn incense on it, a perpetual incense be-
fore the LORD throughout your generations.
9You shall not offer [f]strange incense on it,
or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; nor
shall you pour a drink offering on it. 10And
[g]Aaron shall make atonement upon its
horns once a year with the blood of the sin
offering of atonement; once a year he shall

* **29:37** Compare Numbers 4:15 and Haggai 2:11–13

29:40 ***ephah . . . hin.*** One-tenth of an ephah was about two quarts; one-fourth of a hin was about one quart.
29:45 ***dwell among the children.*** Man is God's special creation, created in His image and likeness. A part of that image and likeness is the uniqueness of personality that allows communion with God. He did not create a race of robots but rather endowed man with a will so that he might choose fellowship with God. In Israel, fellowship with God centered in the tabernacle and especially in the mercy seat which symbolized His presence. Today, believers have fellowship with God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In eternity He will dwell in the midst of His people more fully than ever before.
30:7 ***sweet incense.*** Burning incense was a privilege restricted to those who were allowed to approach God.
30:9 ***strange incense.*** The incense offered to God was to be made from a special recipe consecrated to be used only in the worship at the tabernacle. No other incense was acceptable.
30:10 ***atonement.*** The sacrificial blood of the sin offering (Lev. 16:18) was applied to the incense altar to indicate that even this article needed cleansing to preserve its ideal holiness because of man's willful or accidental sin. The Hebrew word for "atonement" involves the covering or canceling of sin, resulting in the offender being reconciled to God. Without blood being shed there can be no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22). The atonement made annually for this small altar is a reminder that everything in God's service must be holy to the Lord (Zech. 14:20).

29:31 [i] Lev. 8:31 **29:32** [j] Matt. 12:4 **29:33** [k] Lev. 10:14, 15, 17 [l] Lev. 22:10 **29:34** [m] Lev. 7:18; 8:32 **29:35** [n] Lev. 8:33–35 **29:36** [o] Heb. 10:11 [p] Ex. 30:26–29; 40:10, 11 **29:37** [q] Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11–13; Matt. 23:19 **29:38** [r] Num. 28:3–31; 29:6–38 [s] Dan. 12:11 **29:39** [t] Ezek. 46:13–15 **29:41** [u] 2 Kin. 16:15 **29:42** [v] Ex. 30:8 [w] Ex. 25:22; 33:7, 9 **29:43** [x] 1 Kin. 8:11 **29:44** [y] Lev. 21:15 **29:45** [z] [Rev. 21:3] [a] Gen. 17:8 **29:46** [b] Ex. 16:12; 20:2 [c] Lev. 11:45 **30:1** [a] Ex. 37:25–29 **30:6** [b] Ex. 26:31–35 [c] Ex. 25:21, 22 **30:7** [d] 1 Sam. 2:28 [e] Ex. 27:20, 21 **30:9** [f] Lev. 10:1 **30:10** [g] Lev. 16:3–34

make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It *is* most holy to the LORD."

The Ransom Money

11 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 12[h]"When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give [i]a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no [j]plague among them when *you* number them. 13[k]This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary [l](a shekel *is* twenty gerahs). [m]The half-shekel *shall be* an offering to the LORD. 14Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the LORD. 15The [n]rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *you* give an offering to the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves. 16And you shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and [o]shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting, that it may be [p]a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves."

The Bronze Laver

17 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 18[q]"You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall [r]put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, 19for Aaron and his sons [s]shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. 20When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die. 21So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And [t]it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations."

The Holy Anointing Oil

22 Moreover the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 23"Also take for yourself [u]quality spices—five hundred *shekels* of liquid [v]myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty *shekels*), two hundred and fifty *shekels* of sweet-smelling [w]cane, 24five hundred *shekels* of [x]cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a [y]hin of olive oil. 25And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be [z]a holy anointing oil. 26[a]With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; 27the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense; 28the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. 29You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; [b]whatever touches them must be holy.* 30[c]And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister to Me as priests.

31 "And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations. 32It shall not be poured on man's flesh; nor shall you make *any other* like it, according to its composition. [d]It *is* holy, *and* it shall be holy to you. 33[e]Whoever compounds *any* like it, or whoever puts *any* of it on an outsider, [f]shall be cut off from his people.'"

The Incense

34 And the LORD said to Moses: [g]"Take sweet spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, and pure frankincense with *these* sweet spices; there shall be equal amounts of each. 35You shall make of these an incense, a compound [h]according to the art of the perfumer, salted, pure, *and* holy. 36And you shall beat *some* of it very fine, and put some of it before the Testimony in the tabernacle of meeting [i]where I will meet with you. [j]It shall be most holy to you. 37But *as for* the incense which you shall make, [k]you shall not make any for yourselves, according to its composition. It shall be to you holy for the LORD. 38[l]Whoever makes *any* like it, to smell it, he shall be cut off from his people."

Artisans for Building the Tabernacle

31 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2[a]"See, I have called by name Bezalel the [b]son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3And I have [c]filled him

* **30:29** Compare Numbers 4:15 and Haggai 2:11–13

30:12 ***ransom.*** The idea is to pay a price for one's life. The Israelites had to acknowledge that their lives were from God and governed by Him by giving Him an offering of money.

30:19 ***wash their hands and their feet.*** The continual washing was symbolic of the need to be cleansed from sin regularly.

31:3 ***filled him with the Spirit of God.*** We often think of the "filling of the Spirit" only in connection with Acts 2, but passages such as this one help us to see the continuity of God's work among His people through the ages. In this case, the Spirit empowered uniquely gifted people to design and build a tabernacle befitting a holy and magnificent God.

30:12 *h* Num. 1:2; 26:2 *i* [1 Pet. 1:18, 19] *j* 2 Sam. 24:15 **30:13** *k* Matt. 17:24 *l* Num. 3:47 *m* Ex. 38:26 **30:15** *n* [Eph. 6:9] **30:16** *o* Ex. 38:25–31 *p* Num. 16:40 **30:18** *q* Ex. 38:8 *r* Ex. 40:30 **30:19** *s* Ex. 40:31, 32 **30:21** *t* Ex. 28:43 **30:23** *u* Ezek. 27:22 *v* Prov. 7:17 *w* Song 4:14 **30:24** *x* Ps. 45:8 *y* Ex. 29:40 **30:25** *z* Ex. 37:29; 40:9 **30:26** *a* Lev. 8:10 **30:29** *b* Ex. 29:37; Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11–13 **30:30** *c* Lev. 8:12 **30:32** *d* Ex. 30:25, 37 **30:33** *e* Ex. 30:38 *f* Gen. 17:14 **30:34** *g* Ex. 25:6; 37:29 **30:35** *h* Ex. 30:25 **30:36** *i* Ex. 29:42 *j* Lev. 2:3 **30:37** *k* Ex. 30:32 **30:38** *l* Ex. 30:33 **31:2** *a* Ex. 35:30—36:1 *b* 1 Chr. 2:20 **31:3** *c* 1 Kin. 7:14

with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *manner of* workmanship, 4to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, 5in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all *manner of* workmanship.

6"And I, indeed I, have appointed with him [d]Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the [e]gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you: 7[f]the tabernacle of meeting, [g]the ark of the Testimony and [h]the mercy seat that *is* on it, and all the furniture of the tabernacle— 8[i]the table and its utensils, [j]the pure *gold* lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, 9[k]the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and [l]the laver and its base— 10[m]the garments of ministry,* the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests, 11[n]and the anointing oil and [o]sweet incense for the holy *place*. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do."

The Sabbath Law

12And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 13"Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: [p]'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it *is* a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that *you* may know that I *am* the LORD who [q]sanctifies you. 14[r]You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for *it is* holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for [s]whoever does *any* work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15Work shall be done for [t]six days, but the [u]seventh *is* the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant. 17It *is* [v]a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for [w]*in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'"

18And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses [x]two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

The Gold Calf

32 Now when the people saw that Moses [a]delayed coming down from the mountain, the people [b]gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, [c]"Come, make us gods that shall [d]go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man who [e]brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

2And Aaron said to them, "Break off the [f]golden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring *them* to me." 3So all the people broke off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. 4[g]And he received *the gold* from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf.

Then they said, "This *is* your god, O Israel, that [h]brought you out of the land of Egypt!"

5So when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a [i]proclamation and said, "Tomorrow *is* a feast to the LORD." 6Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people [j]sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

7And the LORD said to Moses, [k]"Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt [l]have corrupted *themselves*. 8They have turned aside quickly out of the way which [m]I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, [n]'This *is* your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!'" 9And the LORD said to Moses, [o]"I

* **31:10** Or *woven garments*

31:18 ***the finger of God.*** This verse underscores the divine origin of the law. Scholars of religion have long spoken of Israel's religious ideas as its unique contribution to civilization, much as the Greeks developed philosophy and the Romans displayed a genius for organization and empire-building. Yet such a comparison misses the point of Scripture. The Bible speaks not of the genius of Israel, but of the finger of God. The Ten Commandments were not the product of man, but the revelation of the Lord.

32:1–35 The Gold Calf—The story of the Israelites' worship of the golden calf reveals both the unfaithfulness of the Israelites and God's great mercy. Even though the people had so quickly broken their promise to obey Him, God forgave their sin and began again with them.

32:2–3 ***golden earrings.*** These were part of the treasure from Egypt that should have been used for building the tabernacle (35:20–29).

32:4 ***a molded calf.*** This was an ominous worship symbol. Not only were the cow and the bull worshiped in Egypt, but the bull was a familiar embodiment of Baal seen in Canaan. It appears that the worship of the Lord had been blended with the symbols of Baal and other fertility gods. In this one scene, the people broke the first three of God's commandments.

31:6 [d] Ex. 35:34 [e] Ex. 28:3; 35:10, 35; 36:1 **31:7** [f] Ex. 36:8 [g] Ex. 37:1–5 [h] Ex. 37:6–9 **31:8** [i] Ex. 37:10–16 [j] Ex. 37:17–24 **31:9** [k] Ex. 38:1–7 [l] Ex. 38:8 **31:10** [m] Ex. 39:1, 41 **31:11** [n] Ex. 30:23–33 [o] Ex. 30:34–38 **31:13** [p] Ezek. 20:12, 20 [q] Lev. 20:8 **31:14** [r] Ex. 20:8 [s] Num. 15:32–36 **31:15** [t] Ex. 20:9–11 [u] Gen. 2:2 **31:17** [v] Ex. 31:13 [w] Gen. 1:31; 2:2, 3 **31:18** [x] [Ex. 24:12; 32:15, 16] **32:1** [a] Ex. 24:18; Deut. 9:9–12 [b] Ex. 17:1–3 [c] Acts 7:40 [d] Ex. 13:21 [e] Ex. 32:8 **32:2** [f] Ex. 11:2; 35:22 **32:4** [g] Ex. 20:3, 4, 23 [h] Ex. 29:45, 46 **32:5** [i] 2 Kin. 10:20 **32:6** [j] Num. 25:2 **32:7** [k] Deut. 9:8–21 [l] Gen. 6:11, 12 **32:8** [m] Ex. 20:3, 4, 23 [n] 1 Kin. 12:28 **32:9** [o] [Acts 7:51]

have seen this people, and indeed it *is* a stiff-necked people! 10Now therefore, [p]let Me alone, that [q]My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And [r]I will make of you a great nation."

11[s]Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12[t]Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and [u]relent from this harm to Your people. 13Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You [v]swore by Your own self, and said to them, [w]'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit *it* forever.'"* 14So the LORD [x]relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

15And [y]Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony *were* in his hand. The tablets *were* written on both sides; on the one *side* and on the other they were written. 16Now the [z]tablets *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

17And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "*There is* a noise of war in the camp."

18But he said:

"*It is* not the noise of the shout of victory,
Nor the noise of the cry of defeat,
But the sound of singing I hear."

19So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that [a]he saw the calf *and* the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. 20[b]Then he took the calf which they had made, burned *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder; and he scattered *it* on the water and made the children of Israel drink *it*. 21And Moses said to Aaron, [c]"What did this people do to you that you have brought *so* great a sin upon them?"

22So Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. [d]You know the people, that they *are set* on evil. 23For they said to me, 'Make us gods that shall go before us; *as for* this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' 24And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break *it* off.' So they gave *it* to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out."

25Now when Moses saw that the people *were* [e]unrestrained (for Aaron [f]had not restrained them, to *their* shame among their enemies), 26then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever *is* on the LORD's side—*come* to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. 27And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and [g]let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" 28So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. 29[h]Then Moses said, "Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother."

30Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, [i]"You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; [j]perhaps I can [k]make atonement for your sin." 31Then Moses [l]returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have [m]made for themselves a god of gold! 32Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, [n]blot me [o]out of Your book which You have written."

* **32:13** Genesis 13:15 and 22:17

32:14 *the LORD relented.* Here is a wonderful example of the interaction of faithful intercessory prayer and the purpose of the Lord. He uses our prayer combined with His own determination to make His will come to pass.

32:25–26 *were unrestrained.* Obedience to God is many times just the opposite of "what everybody else is doing." Humans are very prone to giving in to peer pressure at the crucial moment. We often care more about what those around us think than about what God thinks. Aaron and the other Levites fell into this trap initially, but when Moses gave them another chance to say where their loyalties really lay, they chose the path of obedience. Even though almost "everybody was doing it," they were willing to say, "No, this is wrong. We were wrong." The Levites were not innocent, but God blessed them for their repentance and their obedience.

32:27–28 *his brother . . . his companion . . . his neighbor.* This terrible massacre is hard for us to reconcile with our feelings, but we must realize that sin is loathsome, and deserving of death. The Levites were used by God to execute His judgment in this instance, but they were not given general authority to kill sinners.

32:32–33 *blot me out of Your book.* Like Paul many centuries later, Moses could almost wish himself to be cursed, if by being so he could secure the salvation of his people (Rom. 9:3).

32:10 [p] Deut. 9:14, 19 [q] Ex. 22:24 [r] Num. 14:12
32:11 [s] Deut. 9:18, 26–29 **32:12** [t] Num. 14:13–19
[u] Ex. 32:14 **32:13** [v] [Heb. 6:13] [w] Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:7, 18; 22:17; 26:4; 35:11, 12 **32:14** [x] 2 Sam. 24:16
32:15 [y] Deut. 9:15 **32:16** [z] Ex. 31:18 **32:19** [a] Deut. 9:16, 17 **32:20** [b] Deut. 9:21 **32:21** [c] Gen. 26:10
32:22 [d] Deut. 9:24 **32:25** [e] Ex. 33:4, 5 [f] 2 Chr. 28:19
32:27 [g] Num. 25:5–13 **32:29** [h] Ex. 28:41 **32:30** [i] 1 Sam. 12:20, 23 [j] 2 Sam. 16:12 [k] Num. 25:13 **32:31** [l] Deut. 9:18
[m] Ex. 20:23 **32:32** [n] Ps. 69:28 [o] Dan. 12:1

33 And the LORD said to Moses, [p]"Whoever has sinned against Me, I will [q]blot him out of My book. 34 Now therefore, go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have [r]spoken to you. [s]Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, [t]in the day when I visit for punishment, I will [u]visit punishment upon them for their sin."

35 So the LORD plagued the people because of [v]what they did with the calf which Aaron made.

The Command to Leave Sinai

33 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Depart *and* go up from here, you [a]and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, [b]'To your descendants I will give it.' 2 [c]And I will send *My* Angel before you, [d]and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. 3 *Go up* [e]to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest [f]I consume you on the way, for you *are* [g]a stiff-necked people."

4 And when the people heard this bad news, [h]they mourned, [i]and no one put on his ornaments. 5 For the LORD had said to Moses, "Say to the children of Israel, 'You *are* a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may [j]know what to do to you.'" 6 So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.

Moses Meets with the LORD

7 Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and [k]called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass *that* everyone who [l]sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which *was* outside the camp. 8 So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, *that* all the people rose, and each man stood [m]*at* his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. 9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood *at* the door of the tabernacle, and *the* LORD [n]talked with Moses. 10 All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing *at* the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and [o]worshiped, each man *in* his tent door. 11 So [p]the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but [q]his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

The Promise of God's Presence

12 Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, [r]You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, [s]'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' 13 Now therefore, I pray, [t]if I have found grace in Your sight, [u]show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation *is* [v]Your people."

14 And He said, [w]"My Presence will go *with you,* and I will give you [x]rest."

15 Then he said to Him, [y]"If Your Presence does not go *with us,* do not bring us up from here. 16 For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, [z]except You go with us? So we [a]shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who *are* upon the face of the earth."

17 So the LORD said to Moses, [b]"I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name."

18 And he said, "Please, show me [c]Your glory."

19 Then He said, "I will make all My

32:34 ***in the day.*** This may refer to the day of the Lord, proclaimed by later prophets (Joel 2; Zeph. 1).

33:5 ***stiff-necked.*** Contrary to popular belief, God did not choose the Hebrew people because of their righteousness or willingness to serve Him (Deut. 9:7). In fact, one of Israel's besetting sins was obstinacy (vv. 3,5), and God saw them as a rebellious and stiff-necked people. The opposite of being obstinate is to have a "circumcised heart" (Deut. 10:16). Such a heart is inclined to obey the Word of God. God's presence with His people was in response to His covenantal promise: if they obeyed Him they would be His "special treasure" (Ex. 19:5).

33:6 ***stripped themselves of their ornaments.*** These ornaments were probably associated with the idolatrous worship of the golden calf. Their removal was a mark of genuine repentance and renewal.

33:8 ***all the people rose, and . . . stood.*** In contrast to their former wickedness, the people now responded reverently to the living God.

33:11 ***his servant Joshua.*** The word translated *servant* here does not mean slave, but rather a minister, one who does spiritual service.

33:17 ***I know you by name.*** God's grace was accompanied by His intimate knowledge of and care for Moses.

32:33 [p] [Ezek. 18:4; 33:2, 14, 15] [q] Ex. 17:14 **32:34** [r] Ex. 3:17 [s] Ex. 23:20 [t] Deut. 32:35 [u] Ps. 89:32 **32:35** [v] Neh. 9:18 **33:1** [a] Ex. 32:1, 7, 13 [b] Gen. 12:7 **33:2** [c] Ex. 32:34 [d] Josh. 24:11 **33:3** [e] Ex. 3:8 [f] Num. 16:21, 45 [g] Ex. 32:9; 33:5 **33:4** [h] Num. 14:1, 39 [i] Ezra 9:3 **33:5** [j] [Ps. 139:23] **33:7** [k] Ex. 29:42, 43 [l] Deut. 4:29 **33:8** [m] Num. 16:27 **33:9** [n] Ps. 99:7 **33:10** [o] Ex. 4:31 **33:11** [p] Num. 12:8 [q] Ex. 24:13 **33:12** [r] Ex. 3:10; 32:34 [s] Ex. 33:17 **33:13** [t] Ex. 34:9 [u] Ps. 25:4; 27:11; 86:11; 119:33 [v] Deut. 9:26, 29 **33:14** [w] Is. 63:9 [x] Josh. 21:44; 22:4 **33:15** [y] Ex. 33:3 **33:16** [z] Num. 14:14 [a] Ex. 34:10 **33:17** [b] [James 5:16] **33:18** [c] [1 Tim. 6:16]

[d]goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. [e]I will be gracious to whom I will be [f]gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." 20But He said, "You cannot see My face; for [g]no man shall see Me, and live." 21And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. 22So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you [h]in the cleft of the rock, and will [i]cover you with My hand while I pass by. 23Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall [j]not be seen."

Moses Makes New Tablets

34 And the LORD said to Moses, [a]"Cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones,* and [b]I will write on *these* tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. 2So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there [c]on the top of the mountain. 3And no man shall [d]come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain."

4So he cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones.* Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone.

5Now the LORD descended in the [e]cloud and stood with him there, and [f]proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD [g]God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in [h]goodness and [i]truth, 7[j]keeping mercy for thousands, [k]forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, [l]by no means clearing *the guilty,* visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

8So Moses made haste and [m]bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. 9Then he said, "If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, [n]let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we *are* a [o]stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as [p]Your inheritance."

The Covenant Renewed

10And He said: "Behold, [q]I make a covenant. Before all your people I will [r]do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you *are* shall see the work of the LORD. For it *is* [s]an awesome thing that I will do with you. 11[t]Observe what I command you this day. Behold, [u]I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. 12[v]Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. 13But you shall [w]destroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and [x]cut down their wooden images 14(for you shall worship [y]no other god, for the LORD, whose [z]name *is* Jealous, *is* a [a]jealous God), 15lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they [b]play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and *one of them* [c]invites you and you [d]eat of his sacrifice, 16and you take of [e]his daughters for your sons, and his daughters [f]play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.

17[g]"You shall make no molded gods for yourselves.

18"The Feast of [h]Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the [i]month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.

19[j]"All that open the womb *are* Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock,

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33:22–23 ***My hand.*** The use of words such as hand, back, and face is a way of describing God, who is Spirit, in terms familiar to humans.

34:6 ***merciful and gracious . . . abounding in goodness and truth.*** God is overwhelmingly gracious. John's description of the coming of Jesus echoes this passage, describing the Messiah as "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14,17). To see Jesus is to see the Father (John 1:18).

34:7 ***forgiving iniquity.*** God is a God of unlimited grace, mercy, and forgiveness. But man is not automatically forgiven—He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. We receive forgiveness from God only when we repent and seek reconciliation with Him. The second covenant with Israel (34:10) included relief from the judgment of the people's sins to allow them to be taught their need and seek forgiveness.

34:15 ***play the harlot.*** This is probably more than a figure of speech. Unfaithfulness to the Lord was often manifested in sexual rites with temple prostitutes (male and female), acts of supposed union with Baal, Asherah, and other pagan deities.

34:16 ***take of his daughters for your sons.*** The quickest way for the Israelites to become corrupted with the false worship of the Canaanites would have been to marry into it.

33:19 [d] Ex. 34:6, 7 [e] [Rom. 9:15, 16, 18] [f] [Rom. 4:4, 16] **33:20** [g] [Gen. 32:30] **33:22** [h] Is. 2:21 [i] Ps. 91:1, 4 **33:23** [j] [John 1:18] **34:1** [a] [Ex. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15, 16, 19] [b] Deut. 10:2, 4 **34:2** [c] Ex. 19:11, 18, 20 **34:3** [d] Ex. 19:12, 13; 24:9–11 **34:5** [e] Ex. 19:9 [f] Ex. 33:19 **34:6** [g] Neh. 9:17 [h] Rom. 2:4 [i] Ps. 108:4 **34:7** [j] Ex. 20:6 [k] Ps. 103:3, 4 [l] Job 10:14 **34:8** [m] Ex. 4:31 **34:9** [n] Ex. 33:12–16 [o] Ex. 33:3 [p] Ps. 33:12; 94:14 **34:10** [q] Deut. 5:2 [r] Ps. 77:14 [s] Ps. 145:6 **34:11** [t] Deut. 6:25 [u] Ex. 23:20–33; 33:2 **34:12** [v] Ex. 23:32, 33 **34:13** [w] Deut. 12:3 [x] 2 Kin. 18:4 **34:14** [y] [Ex. 20:3–5] [z] [Is. 9:6; 57:15] [a] [Deut. 4:24] **34:15** [b] Judg. 2:17 [c] Num. 25:1, 2 [d] 1 Cor. 8:4, 7, 10 **34:16** [e] Gen. 28:1 [f] Num. 25:1, 2 **34:17** [g] Ex. 20:4, 23; 32:8 **34:18** [h] Ex. 12:15, 16 [i] Ex. 12:2; 13:4 **34:19** [j] Ex. 13:2; 22:29

whether ox or sheep. 20But [k]the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem *him,* then you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem.

"And none shall appear before Me [l]empty-handed.

21[m]"Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

22"And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end.

23[n]"Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the LORD God of Israel. 24For I will [o]cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year.

25"You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven, [p]nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning.

26[q]"The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk."

27Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write [r]these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." 28[s]So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And [t]He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.*

The Shining Face of Moses

29Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the [u]two tablets of the Testimony *were* in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. 30So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, [v]the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. 31Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. 32Afterward all the children of Israel came near, [w]and he gave them as commandments all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. 33And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put [x]a veil on his face. 34But [y]whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. 35And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

Sabbath Regulations

35 Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, [a]"These *are* the words which the LORD has commanded *you* to do: 2Work shall be done for [b]six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to [c]death. 3[d]You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

Offerings for the Tabernacle

4And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, [e]"This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded, saying: 5'Take from among you an offering to the LORD. [f]Whoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the LORD: [g]gold, silver, and bronze; 6[h]blue, purple, and scarlet *thread,* fine linen, and [i]goats' *hair;* 7ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; 8oil for the light, [j]and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; 9onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

Articles of the Tabernacle

10[k]'All *who are* gifted artisans among you shall come and make all that the LORD has commanded: 11[l]the tabernacle, its tent, its covering, its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; 12[m]the ark and its poles, *with* the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering; 13the [n]table and its poles, all its utensils, [o]and the showbread; 14also [p]the lampstand for the light, its utensils, its lamps, and the oil for the light; 15[q]the incense altar, its poles, [r]the anointing oil, [s]the sweet incense, and the screen for the door at the entrance of the tabernacle;

* **34:28** Literally *Ten Words*

34:28 ***forty days and forty nights.*** A person can survive without food for weeks, but no one can go entirely without water for more than three or four days. This fact has been used to cast doubt on the truth of this passage, but we must recall that there is no reason to think that God could not keep His servant hydrated in any way He chose.

34:33 ***a veil on his face.*** Paul taught that Moses wore the veil because the glow faded, a sign of imperfect glory (2 Cor. 3:7,13).

34:20 [k] Ex. 13:13 [l] Ex. 22:29; 23:15 **34:21** [m] Ex. 20:9; 23:12; 31:15; 35:2 **34:23** [n] Ex. 23:14–17 **34:24** [o] [Ex. 33:2] **34:25** [p] Ex. 12:10 **34:26** [q] Ex. 23:19 **34:27** [r] Deut. 31:9 **34:28** [s] Ex. 24:18 [t] Ex. 34:1, 4 **34:29** [u] Ex. 32:15 **34:30** [v] 2 Cor. 3:7 **34:32** [w] Ex. 24:3 **34:33** [x] [2 Cor. 3:13, 14] **34:34** [y] [2 Cor. 3:13–16] **35:1** [a] Ex. 34:32 **35:2** [b] Lev. 23:3 [c] Num. 15:32–36 **35:3** [d] Ex. 12:16; 16:23 **35:4** [e] Ex. 25:1, 2 **35:5** [f] Ex. 25:2 [g] Ex. 38:24 **35:6** [h] Ex. 36:8 [i] Ex. 36:14 **35:8** [j] Ex. 25:6; 30:23–25 **35:10** [k] Ex. 31:2–6; 36:1, 2 **35:11** [l] Ex. 26:1, 2; 36:14 **35:12** [m] Ex. 25:10–22 **35:13** [n] Ex. 25:23 [o] Ex. 25:30 **35:14** [p] Ex. 25:31 **35:15** [q] Ex. 30:1 [r] Ex. 30:25 [s] Ex. 30:34–38

16 [t]the altar of burnt offering with its bronze
grating, its poles, all its utensils, *and*
the laver and its base; 17 [u]the hangings of the
court, its pillars, their sockets, and the
screen for the gate of the court; 18 the pegs
of the tabernacle, the pegs of the court, and
their cords; 19 [v]the garments of ministry,*
for ministering in the holy *place*—the holy
garments for Aaron the priest and the gar-
ments of his sons, to minister as priests.'"

The Tabernacle Offerings Presented

20 And all the congregation of the chil-
dren of Israel departed from the presence
of Moses. 21 Then everyone came [w]whose
heart was stirred, and everyone whose
spirit was willing, *and* they [x]brought the
LORD's offering for the work of the taber-
nacle of meeting, for all its service, and
for the holy garments. 22 They came, both
men and women, as many as had a will-
ing heart, *and* brought [y]earrings and nose
rings, rings and necklaces, all [z]jewelry
of gold, that is, every man who *made* an
offering of gold to the LORD. 23 And [a]every
man, with whom was found blue, purple,
and scarlet *thread,* fine linen, and goats'
hair, red skins of rams, and badger skins,
brought *them.* 24 Everyone who offered an
offering of silver or bronze brought the
LORD's offering. And everyone with whom
was found acacia wood for any work of
the service, brought *it.* 25 All the women
who were [b]gifted artisans spun yarn with
their hands, and brought what they had
spun, of blue, purple, *and* scarlet, and fine
linen. 26 And all the women whose hearts
stirred with wisdom spun yarn of goats'
hair. 27 [c]The rulers brought onyx stones,
and the stones to be set in the ephod and
in the breastplate, 28 and [d]spices and oil
for the light, for the anointing oil, and for
the sweet incense. 29 The children of Israel
brought a [e]freewill offering to the LORD,
all the men and women whose hearts were
willing to bring *material* for all kinds of
work which the LORD, by the hand of Mo-
ses, had commanded to be done.

The Artisans Called by God

30 And Moses said to the children of Is-
rael, "See, [f]the LORD has called by name
Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of
the tribe of Judah; 31 and He has filled
him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom
and understanding, in knowledge and all
manner of workmanship, 32 to design artis-
tic works, to work in gold and silver and
bronze, 33 in cutting jewels for setting, in
carving wood, and to work in all manner
of artistic workmanship.
34 "And He has put in his heart the abili-
ty to teach, *in* him and [g]Aholiab the son of
Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. 35 He has
[h]filled them with skill to do all manner
of work of the engraver and the designer
and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple,
and scarlet *thread,* and fine linen, and of
the weaver—those who do every work and
those who design artistic works.

36 "And Bezalel and Aholiab, and every
[a]gifted artisan in whom the LORD
has put wisdom and understanding, to
know how to do all manner of work for the
service of the [b]sanctuary, shall do accord-
ing to all that the LORD has commanded."

The People Give More than Enough

2 Then Moses called Bezalel and Aho-
liab, and every gifted artisan in [c]whose
heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone
whose heart was stirred, to come and do
the work. 3 And they received from Mo-
ses all the [d]offering which the children
of Israel [e]had brought for the work of the
service of making the sanctuary. So they
continued bringing to him freewill offer-
ings every morning. 4 Then all the crafts-
men who were doing all the work of the
sanctuary came, each from the work he
was doing, 5 and they spoke to Moses, say-
ing, [f]"The people bring much more than
enough for the service of the work which
the LORD commanded *us* to do."
6 So Moses gave a commandment, and
they caused it to be proclaimed through-
out the camp, saying, "Let neither man nor
woman do any more work for the offering
of the sanctuary." And the people were re-
strained from bringing, 7 for the material
they had was sufficient for all the work to
be done—indeed too [g]much.

Building the Tabernacle

8 [h]Then all the gifted artisans among
them who worked on the tabernacle made
ten curtains woven of fine linen, and of

* **35:19** Or *woven garments*

35:31–35 ***Spirit of God.*** The work of the Holy Spirit is often thought to have begun at Pentecost (Acts 2), but in fact the Holy Spirit of God was at work long before that time. The Old Testament shows that He was active in creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4). The Spirit came upon men for prophetic utterance (1 Sam. 10:10) and for all divine revelation (2 Sam. 23:2). Men were endowed for special functions by the power of the Holy Spirit (Ex. 31:3; Judg. 11:29; 13:25; 14:6). Bezalel is a good example of a man indwelt by the Spirit of God in the Old Testament (37:1–9).

36:8—37:29 Servant—Not only ability was required for service in building the tabernacle. God also wanted willing hearts (36:2). Even if we do not feel

35:16 [t] Ex. 27:1–8 **35:17** [u] Ex. 27:9–18 **35:19** [v] Ex. 31:10; 39:1, 41 **35:21** [w] Ex. 25:2; 35:5, 22, 26, 29; 36:2 [x] Ex. 35:24 **35:22** [y] Ex. 32:2, 3 [z] Ex. 11:2 **35:23** [a] 1 Chr. 29:8 **35:25** [b] Ex. 28:3; 31:6; 36:1 **35:27** [c] Ezra 2:68 **35:28** [d] Ex. 30:23 **35:29** [e] 1 Chr. 29:9 **35:30** [f] Ex. 31:1–6 **35:34** [g] Ex. 31:6 **35:35** [h] 1 Kin. 7:14 **36:1** [a] Ex. 28:3; 31:6; 35:10, 35 [b] Ex. 25:8 **36:2** [c] 1 Chr. 29:5, 9, 17 **36:3** [d] Ex. 35:5 [e] Ex. 35:27 **36:5** [f] [2 Cor. 8:2, 3] **36:7** [g] 1 Kin. 8:64 **36:8** [h] Ex. 26:1–14

blue, purple, and scarlet *thread; with* artistic designs of cherubim they made them. 9The length of each curtain *was* twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the curtains *were* all the same size. 10And he coupled five curtains to one another, and *the other* five curtains he coupled to one another. 11He made loops of blue *yarn* on the edge of the curtain on the selvedge of one set; likewise he did on the outer edge of *the other* curtain of the second set. 12[i]Fifty loops he made on one curtain, and fifty loops he made on the edge of the curtain on the end of the second set; the loops held one *curtain* to another. 13And he made fifty clasps of gold, and coupled the curtains to one another with the clasps, that it might be one tabernacle.

14[j]He made curtains of goats' *hair* for the tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven curtains. 15The length of each curtain *was* thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains *were* the same size. 16He coupled five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves. 17And he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops he made on the edge of the curtain of the second set. 18He also made fifty bronze clasps to couple the tent together, that it might be one. 19[k]Then he made a covering for the tent of ram skins dyed red, and a covering of badger skins above *that*.

20For the tabernacle [l]he made boards of acacia wood, standing upright. 21The length of each board *was* ten cubits, and the width of each board a cubit and a half. 22Each board had two tenons [m]for binding one to another. Thus he made for all the boards of the tabernacle. 23And he made boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards for the south side. 24Forty sockets of silver he made to go under the twenty boards: two sockets under each of the boards for its two tenons. 25And for the other side of the tabernacle, the north side, he made twenty boards 26and their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under each of the boards. 27For the west side of the tabernacle he made six boards. 28He also made two boards for the two back corners of the tabernacle. 29And they were coupled at the bottom and coupled together at the top by one ring. Thus he made both of them for the two corners. 30So there were eight boards and their sockets—sixteen sockets of silver—two sockets under each of the boards.

31And he made [n]bars of acacia wood: five for the boards on one side of the tabernacle, 32five bars for the boards on the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle on the far side westward. 33And he made the middle bar to pass through the boards from one end to the other. 34He overlaid the boards with gold, made their rings of gold *to be* holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

35And he made [o]a veil of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen; it was worked *with* an artistic design of cherubim. 36He made for it four pillars of acacia *wood*, and overlaid them with gold, with their hooks of gold; and he cast four sockets of silver for them.

37He also made a [p]screen for the tabernacle door, of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver, 38and its five pillars with their hooks. And he overlaid their capitals and their rings with gold, but their five sockets *were* bronze.

Making the Ark of the Testimony

37 Then [a]Bezalel made [b]the ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits *was* its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. 2He overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a molding of gold all around it. 3And he cast for it four rings of gold *to be set* in its four corners: two rings on one side, and two rings on the other side of it. 4He made poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold. 5And he put the poles into the rings at the sides of the ark, to bear the ark. 6He also made the [c]mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits *was* its length and a cubit and a half its width. 7He made two cherubim of beaten gold; he made them of one piece at the two ends of the mercy seat: 8one cherub at one end on this side, and the other cherub at the *other* end on that side. He made the cherubim at the two ends *of one piece* with the mercy seat. 9The cherubim spread out *their* wings above, *and* covered the [d]mercy seat with their wings. They faced one another; the faces of the cherubim were toward the mercy seat.

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that we are particularly good at anything, we must remember that every talent we possess, no matter how small, is a gift from God. He gives us these gifts so that we will have something to give back to Him. We should look at ourselves, not saying, "I don't have any great skill, I'll just sit and watch," but rather, "Here's what I have—where shall I start?"

37:1–9 *Bezalel.* Bezalel carefully reproduced the pattern given to Moses (25:10–22). Obviously this pattern wasn't just a "design suggestion" from God. Each detail had to be just like the plan because each part was a symbol or reminder of their relationship with God, His character, and His holiness.

36:12 [i] Ex. 26:5 **36:14** [j] Ex. 26:7 **36:19** [k] Ex. 26:14 **36:20** [l] Ex. 26:15–29 **36:22** [m] Ex. 26:17 **36:31** [n] Ex. 26:26–29 **36:35** [o] Ex. 26:31–37 **36:37** [p] Ex. 26:36 **37:1** [a] Ex. 35:30; 36:1 [b] Ex. 25:10–20 **37:6** [c] Ex. 25:17 **37:9** [d] Ex. 25:20

Making the Table for the Showbread

10 He made [e]the table of acacia wood; two
cubits *was* its length, a cubit its width, and
a cubit and a half its height. 11 And he over-
laid it with pure gold, and made a mold-
ing of gold all around it. 12 Also he made a
frame of a handbreadth all around it, and
made a molding of gold for the frame all
around it. 13 And he cast for it four rings
of gold, and put the rings on the four cor-
ners that *were* at its four legs. 14 The rings
were close to the frame, as holders for the
poles to bear the table. 15 And he made the
poles of acacia wood to bear the table, and
overlaid them with gold. 16 He made of pure
gold the utensils which were on the table:
its [f]dishes, its cups, its bowls, and its pitch-
ers for pouring.

Making the Gold Lampstand

17 He also made the [g]lampstand of pure
gold; of hammered work he made the lamp-
stand. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its
ornamental knobs, and its flowers were of
the same piece. 18 And six branches came
out of its sides: three branches of the lamp-
stand out of one side, and three branches of
the lampstand out of the other side. 19 There
were three bowls made like almond *blos-
soms* on one branch, with an *ornamental*
knob and a flower, and three bowls made
like almond *blossoms* on the other branch,
with an *ornamental* knob and a flower—
and so for the six branches coming out of
the lampstand. 20 And on the lampstand
itself *were* four bowls made like almond
blossoms, each with its *ornamental* knob
and flower. 21 *There was* a knob under the
first two branches of the same, a knob un-
der the *second* two branches of the same,
and a knob under the *third* two branches
of the same, according to the six branches
extending from it. 22 Their knobs and their
branches were of one piece; all of it *was*
one hammered piece of pure gold. 23 And he
made its seven lamps, its [h]wick-trimmers,
and its trays of pure gold. 24 Of a talent of
pure gold he made it, with all its utensils.

Making the Altar of Incense

25 [i]He made the incense altar of acacia
wood. Its length *was* a cubit and its width
a cubit—*it was* square—and two cubits
was its height. Its horns were *of one piece*
with it. 26 And he overlaid it with pure gold:
its top, its sides all around, and its horns.
He also made for it a molding of gold all
around it. 27 He made two rings of gold for
it under its molding, by its two corners on
both sides, as holders for the poles with
which to bear it. 28 And he [j]made the poles of
acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold.

Making the Anointing Oil and the Incense

29 He also made [k]the holy anointing oil
and the pure incense of sweet spices, ac-
cording to the work of the perfumer.

Making the Altar of Burnt Offering

38 He made [a]the altar of burnt offering
of acacia wood; five cubits *was* its
length and five cubits its width—*it was*
square—and its height *was* three cubits.
2 He made its horns on its four corners; the
horns were *of one piece* with it. And he
overlaid it with bronze. 3 He made all the
utensils for the altar: the pans, the shov-
els, the basins, the forks, and the firepans;
all its utensils he made of bronze. 4 And he
made a grate of bronze network for the al-
tar, under its rim, midway from the bottom.
5 He cast four rings for the four corners of
the bronze grating, *as* holders for the poles.
6 And he made the poles of acacia wood,
and overlaid them with bronze. 7 Then he
put the poles into the rings on the sides of
the altar, with which to bear it. He made the
altar hollow with boards.

Making the Bronze Laver

8 He made [b]the laver of bronze and its
base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of
the serving women who assembled at the
door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Making the Court of the Tabernacle

9 Then he made [c]the court on the south
side; the hangings of the court *were of*
fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long.
10 There *were* twenty pillars for them, with
twenty bronze sockets. The hooks of the
pillars and their bands *were* silver. 11 On the
north side *the hangings were* one hundred
cubits *long,* with twenty pillars and their
twenty bronze sockets. The hooks of the
pillars and their bands *were* silver. 12 And on
the west side *there were* hangings of fifty
cubits, with ten pillars and their ten sock-
ets. The hooks of the pillars and their bands
were silver. 13 For the east side *the hangings
were* fifty cubits. 14 The hangings of one side
of the gate were fifteen cubits *long, with*
their three pillars and their three sockets,
15 and the same for the other side of the court
gate; on this side and that *were* hangings
of fifteen cubits, *with* their three pillars and
their three sockets. 16 All the hangings of the
court all around *were of* fine woven linen.
17 The sockets for the pillars *were* bronze,
the hooks of the pillars and their bands
were silver, and the overlay of their capitals
was silver; and all the pillars of the court
had bands of silver. 18 The screen for the gate
of the court *was* woven of blue, purple, and
scarlet *thread,* and of fine woven linen. The

37:10 [e] Ex. 25:23–29 **37:16** [f] Ex. 25:29 **37:17** [g] Ex. 25:31–39 **37:23** [h] Num. 4:9 **37:25** [i] Ex. 30:1–5

37:28 [j] Ex. 30:5 **37:29** [k] Ex. 30:23–25 **38:1** [a] Ex. 27:1–8 **38:8** [b] Ex. 30:18 **38:9** [c] Ex. 27:9–19

length *was* twenty cubits, and the height along its width *was* five cubits, corresponding to the hangings of the court. 19And *there were* four pillars *with* their four sockets of bronze; their hooks *were* silver, and the overlay of their capitals and their bands *was* silver. 20All the [d]pegs of the tabernacle, and of the court all around, *were* bronze.

Materials of the Tabernacle

21This is the inventory of the tabernacle, [e]the tabernacle of the Testimony, which was counted according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, [f]by the hand of [g]Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest.

22[h]Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD had commanded Moses. 23And with him *was* [i]Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and designer, a weaver of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and of fine linen.

24All the gold that was used in all the work of the holy *place*, that is, the gold of the [j]offering, was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred and thirty shekels, according to [k]the shekel of the sanctuary. 25And the silver from those who were [l]numbered of the congregation *was* one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary: 26[m]a bekah for each man (*that is*, half a shekel, according to the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone included in the numbering from twenty years old and above, for [n]six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty *men*. 27And from the hundred talents of silver were cast [o]the sockets of the sanctuary and the bases of the veil: one hundred sockets from the hundred talents, one talent for each socket. 28Then from the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five *shekels* he made hooks for the pillars, overlaid their capitals, and [p]made bands for them.

29The offering of bronze *was* seventy talents and two thousand four hundred shekels. 30And with it he made the sockets for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, the bronze altar, the bronze grating for it, and all the utensils for the altar, 31the sockets for the court all around, the bases for the court gate, all the pegs for the tabernacle, and all the pegs for the court all around.

Making the Garments of the Priesthood

39 Of the [a]blue, purple, and scarlet *thread* they made [b]garments of ministry,* for ministering in the holy *place*, and made the holy garments for Aaron, [c]as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Making the Ephod

2[d]He made the [e]ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and of fine woven linen. 3And they beat the gold into thin sheets and cut *it into* threads, to work *it* in *with* the blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and the fine linen, *into* artistic designs. 4They made shoulder straps for it to couple *it* together; it was coupled together at its two edges. 5And the intricately woven band of his ephod that *was* on it *was* of the same workmanship, *woven of* gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and *of* fine woven linen, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

6[f]And they set onyx stones, enclosed in settings of gold; they were engraved, as signets are engraved, with the names of the sons of Israel. 7He put them on the shoulders of the ephod *as* [g]memorial stones for the sons of Israel, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Making the Breastplate

8[h]And he made the breastplate, artistically woven like the workmanship of the ephod, of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and of fine woven linen. 9They made the breastplate square by doubling it; a span *was* its length and a span its width when doubled. 10[i]And they set in it four rows of stones: a row with a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald was the first row; 11the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire,

* **39:1** Or *woven garments*

38:22–23 Responsibility—No higher tribute can be paid than "Well done—you've finished." Bezalel and his assistant, Aholiab, were called, Spirit-endowed, and commissioned for one work and one work alone. Neither of these individuals ever became celebrities, but God does not measure our effectiveness in His kingdom work by how many times we make the headlines in the local media. God cares about whether we obey Him faithfully, not whether other people approve of us. It is easy to make verbal commitments that sound really good, but God isn't looking for fine words. He complimented Bezalel and Aholiab on finishing their assignment, not on their fine start or their good intentions (39:43).

38:24 *All the gold.* The weight of all the gold used in the work may have been about a ton. The talent weighed about 75 pounds, and equaled 3,000 shekels.

38:25 *the silver.* The quantity of silver was enormous, about 7,000 pounds.

38:26 *a bekah for each man.* The census of Numbers 14:6 puts the number of men over the age of 20 at 603,550.

38:27–28 *the sanctuary.* Although the tabernacle was a tent, it was not a makeshift dwelling. It was a glorious shrine that symbolized the presence of the living God in the midst of the people.

38:29 *bronze.* About 5,000 pounds of bronze were used.

38:20 [d] Ex. 27:19 **38:21** [e] Acts 7:44 [f] Num. 4:28, 33 [g] Lev. 10:6, 16 **38:22** [h] Ex. 31:2, 6 **38:23** [i] Ex. 31:6; 36:1 **38:24** [j] Ex. 35:5, 22 [k] Ex. 30:13, 24 **38:25** [l] Ex. 30:11–16 **38:26** [m] Ex. 30:13, 15 [n] Num. 1:46; 26:51 **38:27** [o] Ex. 26:19, 21, 25, 32 **38:28** [p] Ex. 27:17 **39:1** [a] Ex. 25:4; 35:23 [b] Ex. 31:10; 35:19 [c] Ex. 28:4 **39:2** [d] Ex. 28:6–14 [e] Lev. 8:7 **39:6** [f] Ex. 28:9–11 **39:7** [g] Ex. 28:12, 29 **39:8** [h] Ex. 28:15–30 **39:10** [i] Ex. 28:17

and a diamond; 12the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; 13the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. *They were* enclosed in settings of gold in their mountings. 14*There were* [i]twelve stones according to the names of the sons of Israel: according to their names, *engraved like* a signet, each one with its own name according to the twelve tribes. 15And they made chains for the breastplate at the ends, like braided cords of pure gold. 16They also made two settings of gold and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. 17And they put the two braided *chains* of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate. 18The two ends of the two braided *chains* they fastened in the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front. 19And they made two rings of gold and put *them* on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which *was* on the inward side of the ephod. 20They made two *other* gold rings and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod. 21And they bound the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it would be above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and that the breastplate would not come loose from the ephod, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Making the Other Priestly Garments

22[k]He made the [l]robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue. 23And *there was* an opening in the middle of the robe, like the opening in a coat of mail, *with* a woven binding all around the opening, so that it would not tear. 24They made on the hem of the robe pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, and of fine woven *linen*. 25And they made [m]bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the hem of the robe all around between the pomegranates: 26a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, all around the hem of the robe to minister in, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

27[n]They made tunics, artistically woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, 28[o]a turban of fine linen, exquisite hats of fine linen, [p]short trousers of fine woven linen, 29[q]and a sash of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet *thread,* made by a weaver, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

30[r]Then they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription *like* the engraving of a signet:

[s]HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

31And they tied to it a blue cord, to fasten *it* above on the turban, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Work Completed

32Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was [t]finished. And the children of Israel did [u]according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did. 33And they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings: its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; 34the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of badger skins, and the veil of the covering; 35the ark of the Testimony with its poles, and the mercy seat; 36the table, all its utensils, and the [v]showbread; 37the pure *gold* lampstand with its lamps (the lamps set in order), all its utensils, and the oil for light; 38the gold altar, the anointing oil, and the sweet incense; the screen for the tabernacle door; 39the bronze altar, its grate of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the laver with its base; 40the hangings of the court, its pillars and its sockets, the screen for the court gate, its cords, and its pegs; all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; 41and the garments of ministry,* to minister in the holy *place:* the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments, to minister as priests.

42According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel [w]did all the work. 43Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses [x]blessed them.

The Tabernacle Erected and Arranged

40 Then the LORD [a]spoke to Moses, saying: 2"On the first day of the [b]first month you shall set up [c]the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. 3[d]You shall put in it the

* **39:41** Or *woven garments*

39:32–43 ***so they did.*** Because it was so important in God's plan for His people, both in the wilderness and today, the tabernacle had to be constructed in exact accordance with the divine pattern. It was the place where His glory would actually dwell and where they could meet Him. Because they had done just as the Lord had commanded, "Moses blessed them." A mood of celebration pervades these verses. One can sense the pride of accomplishment coupled with the reverence for all of these holy objects.

40:2 ***first month.*** This was the month of Abib, also called Nisan (12:2; 13:4). The tabernacle was completed nine months after the arrival of the people at Mount Sinai (19:1) and two weeks before the second celebration of the Passover (v. 17).

39:14 *j* Rev. 21:12 **39:22** *k* Ex. 28:31–35 *l* Ex. 29:5 **39:25** *m* Ex. 28:33 **39:27** *n* Ex. 28:39, 40 **39:28** *o* Ex. 28:4, 39 *p* Ex. 28:42 **39:29** *q* Ex. 28:39 **39:30** *r* Ex. 28:36, 37 *s* Zech. 14:20 **39:32** *t* Ex. 40:17 *u* Ex. 25:40; 39:42, 43 **39:36** *v* Ex. 23–30 **39:42** *w* Ex. 35:10 **39:43** *x* Lev. 9:22, 23 **40:1** *a* Ex. 25:1—31:18 **40:2** *b* Ex. 12:2; 13:4 *c* Ex. 26:1, 30; 40:17 **40:3** *d* Num. 4:5

ark of the Testimony, and partition off the ark with the veil. 4[e]You shall bring in the table and [f]arrange the things that are to be set in order on it; [g]and you shall bring in the lampstand and light its lamps. 5[h]You shall also set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the Testimony, and put up the screen for the door of the tabernacle. 6Then you shall set the [i]altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. 7And [j]you shall set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. 8You shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen at the court gate.

9"And you shall take the anointing oil, and [k]anoint the tabernacle and all that *is* in it; and you shall hallow it and all its utensils, and it shall be holy. 10You shall [l]anoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar. [m]The altar shall be most holy. 11And you shall anoint the laver and its base, and consecrate it.

12[n]"Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of meeting and wash them with water. 13You shall put the holy [o]garments on Aaron, [p]and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. 14And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. 15You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be [q]an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations."

16Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

17And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the [r]tabernacle was raised up. 18So Moses raised up the tabernacle, fastened its sockets, set up its boards, put in its bars, and raised up its pillars. 19And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. 20He took [s]the Testimony and put *it* into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. 21And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, [t]hung up the veil of the covering, and partitioned off the ark of the Testimony, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

22[u]He put the table in the tabernacle of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil; 23[v]and he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. 24[w]He put the lampstand in the tabernacle of meeting, across from the table, on the south side of the tabernacle; 25and [x]he lit the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. 26[y]He put the gold altar in the tabernacle of meeting in front of the veil; 27[z]and he burned sweet incense on it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. 28[a]He hung up the screen *at* the door of the tabernacle. 29[b]And he put the altar of burnt offering *before* the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and [c]offered upon it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the LORD had commanded Moses. 30[d]He set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water there for washing; 31and Moses, Aaron, and his sons would [e]wash their hands and their feet *with water* from it. 32Whenever they went into the tabernacle of meeting, and when they came near the altar, they washed, [f]as the LORD had commanded Moses. 33[g]And he raised up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the screen of the court gate. So Moses [h]finished the work.

The Cloud and the Glory

34[i]Then the [j]cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the [k]glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35And Moses [l]was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 36[m]Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. 37But [n]if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day that it was taken up. 38For [o]the cloud of the LORD *was* above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

40:20–21 ***the Testimony . . . the mercy seat.*** The Testimony was the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments (25:16). The mercy seat was the cover of the ark (25:17–22).

40:34 ***cloud . . . glory.*** When the Lord came near in 19:20, the people were terrified, but this time they were overjoyed. The glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle demonstrated His presence with the Israelites, His significance to them, and His awe-inspiring wonder.

40:35 ***the cloud rested above it.*** God is not "far away in heaven," occasionally looking at the earth. He lives among His people, and He desires to communicate with them (John 1:14).

40:38 ***the cloud of the LORD.*** The Book of Exodus ends with the picture of the gracious God hovering protectively over His people. He allowed His presence to be felt and seen.

40:4 [e] Ex. 26:35; 40:22 [f] Ex. 25:30; 40:23 [g] Ex. 40:24, 25 **40:5** [h] Ex. 40:26 **40:6** [i] Ex. 39:39 **40:7** [j] Ex. 30:18; 40:30 **40:9** [k] Ex. 30:26 **40:10** [l] Ex. 30:26–30 [m] Ex. 29:36, 37 **40:12** [n] Lev. 8:1–13 **40:13** [o] Ex. 29:5; 39:1, 41 [p] [Ex. 28:41] **40:15** [q] Num. 25:13 **40:17** [r] Ex. 40:2 **40:20** [s] Ex. 25:16 **40:21** [t] Ex. 26:33 **40:22** [u] Ex. 26:35 **40:23** [v] Ex. 40:4 **40:24** [w] Ex. 26:35 **40:25** [x] Ex. 25:37; 30:7, 8; 40:4 **40:26** [y] Ex. 30:1, 6; 40:5 **40:27** [z] Ex. 30:7 **40:28** [a] Ex. 26:36; 40:5 **40:29** [b] Ex. 40:6 [c] Ex. 29:38–42 **40:30** [d] Ex. 30:18; 40:7 **40:31** [e] Ex. 30:19, 20 **40:32** [f] Ex. 30:19 **40:33** [g] Ex. 27:9–18; 40:8 [h] [Heb. 3:2–5] **40:34** [i] Num. 9:15 [j] 1 Kin. 8:10, 11 [k] Lev. 9:6, 23 **40:35** [l] 1 Kin. 8:11 **40:36** [m] Num. 9:17 **40:37** [n] Num. 9:19–22 **40:38** [o] Ex. 13:21

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
LEVITICUS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Moses is declared to be the author of Leviticus fifty-six times within the book. External evidence supporting the authorship of Moses includes (1) a uniform ancient testimony, (2) parallels found in the Ras Shamra Tablets dating from 1400 B.C., and (3) the testimony of Christ (Matt. 8:2–4 and Lev. 14:1–4; Matt. 12:4 and Lev. 24:9; Luke 2:22).

▶ **TIME:** c. 1405 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Lev. 20:7–8

▶ **THEME:** Leviticus is God's guidebook for His newly redeemed people. It shows them how to worship and live holy lives. The instructions for the sacrificial system point to a holy God and what He requires from people who would serve Him. The laws of holiness and sanctification provide basic instructions for living in a community. Together the two groups of laws are a framework for relationship between God and man. Blessings result from obedience to these laws and discipline is the result of disobedience.

The Burnt Offering

1 Now the LORD [a]called to Moses, and spoke to him [b]from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, **2**"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [c]'When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock.

3'If his offering *is* a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male [d]without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD. **4**[e]Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be [f]accepted on his behalf [g]to make atonement for him. **5**He shall kill the [h]bull before the LORD; [i]and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood [i]and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar that *is by* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. **6**And he shall [k]skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces. **7**The sons of Aaron the priest shall put [l]fire on the altar, and [m]lay the wood in order on the fire. **8**Then the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar; **9**but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a [n]sweet aroma to the LORD.

10'If his offering *is* of the flocks—of the sheep or of the goats—as a burnt sacrifice, he shall bring a male [o]without

1:1–17 *offering to the LORD.* Leviticus continues the Exodus narrative of the dedication of the tabernacle by indicating how the liberated Israelites are to worship their God. This book deals with the voluntary sacrifices for thanksgiving, communion, or cleansing from sin. These offerings from the herd or flock represented the labor and financial investment of the owner, and were a continual reminder that a price always has to be paid for sin.

1:3 *burnt sacrifice.* The "burnt sacrifice" was the only offering that was entirely consumed on the altar. It foreshadows the total sacrifice of Christ on the cross, as well as representing wholehearted, unreserved worship where nothing is withheld or left over. It reminds us that nothing must be held back for ourselves; it all belongs to Him. ***male without blemish.*** Offering a perfect animal was a real sacrifice, not just "something they didn't really need or want." These perfect animals were valuable for breeding or for sale. The principle still holds. God's people are to offer their best, of their own free will, and with joy.

1:4 *he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering.* Each worshiper brought his or her own offering and laid his own hand on the animal's head. No one could send another to act on his behalf. In the same way, no one today can send someone else to accept Christ's atonement for him; we must each come to Christ ourselves, acknowledging our own sin before Him.

1:9 *sweet aroma.* Never does Scripture represent God as eating the offerings brought to Him, as the pagan gods were thought to do. When a sacrifice was done in faith with a free will, it was accepted by the Lord as desirable, or sweet.

1:1 [a] Ex. 19:3; 25:22 [b] Ex. 40:34 **1:2** [c] Lev. 22:18, 19 **1:3** [d] Eph. 5:27 **1:4** [e] Lev. 3:2, 8, 13; 4:15 [f] [Rom. 12:1] [g] 2 Chr. 29:23, 24 **1:5** [h] Mic. 6:6 [i] 2 Chr. 35:11 [j] [Heb. 12:24] **1:6** [k] Lev. 7:8 **1:7** [l] Mal. 1:10 [m] Gen. 22:9 **1:9** [n] Gen. 8:21 **1:10** [o] Lev. 1:3

blemish. 11 [p]He shall kill it on the north
side of the altar before the LORD; and the
priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle its
blood all around on the altar. 12 And he
shall cut it into its pieces, with its head
and its fat; and the priest shall lay them
in order on the wood that *is* on the fire
upon the altar; 13 but he shall wash the
entrails and the legs with water. Then
the priest shall bring *it* all and burn *it* on
the altar; it *is* a burnt sacrifice, an [q]offer-
ing made by fire, a sweet aroma to the
LORD.

14 'And if the burnt sacrifice of his offer-
ing to the LORD *is* of birds, then he shall
bring his offering of [r]turtledoves or young
pigeons. 15 The priest shall bring it to the
altar, wring off its head, and burn *it* on the
altar; its blood shall be drained out at the
side of the altar. 16 And he shall remove its
crop with its feathers and cast it [s]beside
the altar on the east side, into the place for
ashes. 17 Then he shall split it at its wings,
but [t]shall not divide *it* completely; and the
priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood
that *is* on the fire. [u]It *is* a burnt sacrifice,
an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to
the LORD.

The Grain Offering

2 'When anyone offers [a]a grain offering
to the LORD, his offering shall be *of*
fine flour. And he shall pour oil on it, and
put [b]frankincense on it. 2 He shall bring it
to Aaron's sons, the priests, one of whom
shall take from it his handful of fine flour
and oil with all the frankincense. And the
priest shall burn [c]*it as* a memorial on the
altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet
aroma to the LORD. 3 [d]The rest of the grain
offering *shall be* Aaron's and his [e]sons'. [f]*It*
is most holy of the offerings to the LORD
made by fire.

4 'And if you bring as an offering a grain
offering baked in the oven, *it shall be*
unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with
oil, or unleavened wafers [g]anointed with
oil. 5 But if your offering *is* a grain offering
baked in a pan, *it shall be of* fine flour, un-
leavened, mixed with oil. 6 You shall break
it in pieces and pour oil on it; it *is* a grain
offering.

7 'If your offering *is* a grain offering
baked in a [h]covered pan, it shall be made
of fine flour with oil. 8 You shall bring
the grain offering that is made of these
things to the LORD. And when it is pre-
sented to the priest, he shall bring it to
the altar. 9 Then the priest shall take from
the grain offering [i]a memorial portion,
and burn *it* on the altar. *It is* an [j]offering
made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.
10 And [k]what is left of the grain offering
shall be Aaron's and his sons'. *It is* most
holy of the offerings to the LORD made
by fire.

11 'No grain offering which you bring to
the LORD shall be made with [l]leaven, for
you shall burn no leaven nor any honey
in any offering to the LORD made by fire.
12 [m]As for the offering of the firstfruits,
you shall offer them to the LORD, but they
shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet
aroma. 13 And every offering of your grain
offering [n]you shall season with salt; you
shall not allow [o]the salt of the covenant
of your God to be lacking from your grain
offering. [p]With all your offerings you shall
offer salt.

14 'If you offer a grain offering of your
firstfruits to the LORD, [q]you shall offer
for the grain offering of your firstfruits
green heads of grain roasted on the fire,
grain beaten from [r]full heads. 15 And [s]you
shall put oil on it, and lay frankincense on
it. It *is* a grain offering. 16 Then the priest
shall burn [t]the memorial portion: *part* of
its beaten grain and *part* of its oil, with all
the frankincense, as an offering made by
fire to the LORD.

2:1 *oil . . . frankincense.* Olive oil was a primary part of the diet and a prominent symbol of blessing and prosperity. Frankincense was a costly incense from South Arabia and East Africa, an imported luxury that would have to be bought with money. By including frankincense, as well as the animals and grain they could raise on their land, every aspect of Israel's wealth was made a part of the offerings to God.

2:3 *shall be Aaron's and his sons'.* A significant portion of the priest's daily food came from this part of the grain offering. Only the consecrated priests were allowed to eat it, and only within the tabernacle.

2:8–9 *priest.* There were always two individuals involved when the ancient Hebrew brought his sacrifice to God. One was the offerer himself and the other was the officiating priest, who was the "bridge builder" between men and God. Jesus, as a better priest and a better sacrifice, once for all time bridged the gap between God and man, and through Him we can have direct access to God, to confess our sins and receive forgiveness.

2:11 *leaven.* Leaven and honey were prohibited because both cause fermentation, which represents corruption.

2:13 *salt of the covenant of your God.* Salt was to be used in every grain offering. This was a reminder of the covenant that God had made with Israel at Sinai, and was a symbol of faithfulness to God and His covenant. There is an old saying, "he has eaten my salt," which means that you have taken someone into your home, given them shelter, food, and hospitality. The idea of the "salt" of God's covenant was well understood.

1:11 [p] Lev. 1:5 **1:13** [q] Num. 15:4–7; 28:12–14 **1:14** [r] Lev. 5:7, 11; 12:8 **1:16** [s] Lev. 6:10 **1:17** [t] Gen. 15:10 [u] Lev. 1:9, 13 **2:1** [a] Num. 15:4 [b] Lev. 5:11 **2:2** [c] Lev. 2:9; 5:12; 6:15; 24:7 **2:3** [d] Lev. 7:9 [e] Lev. 6:6; 10:12, 13 [f] Num. 18:9 **2:4** [g] Ex. 29:2 **2:7** [h] Lev. 7:9 **2:9** [i] Lev. 2:2, 16; 5:12; 6:15 [j] Ex. 29:18 **2:10** [k] Lev. 2:3; 6:16 **2:11** [l] Lev. 6:16, 17 **2:12** [m] Lev. 23:10, 11, 17, 18 **2:13** [n] [Col. 4:6] [o] Num. 18:19 [p] Ezek. 43:24 **2:14** [q] Lev. 23:10, 14 [r] 2 Kin. 4:42 **2:15** [s] Lev. 2:1 **2:16** [t] Lev. 2:2

The Peace Offering

3 ‘When his offering *is* a [a]sacrifice of a peace offering, if he offers *it* of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it [b]without blemish before the LORD. **2**And [c]he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall [d]sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. **3**Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire to the LORD. [e]The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, **4**the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; **5**and Aaron’s sons [f]shall burn it on the altar upon the [g]burnt sacrifice, which *is* on the wood that *is* on the fire, *as* an [h]offering made by fire, a [i]sweet aroma to the LORD.

6‘If his offering as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD *is* of the flock, *whether* male or female, [j]he shall offer it without blemish. **7**If he offers a [k]lamb as his offering, then he shall [l]offer it [m]before the LORD. **8**And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron’s sons shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar.

9‘Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as an offering made by fire to the LORD, its fat *and* the whole fat tail which he shall remove close to the backbone. And the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, **10**the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; **11**and the priest shall burn *them* on the altar *as* [n]food, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

12‘And if his [o]offering *is* a goat, then [p]he shall offer it before the LORD. **13**He shall lay his hand on its head and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. **14**Then he shall offer from it his offering, as an offering made by fire to the LORD. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, **15**the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; **16**and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as* food, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma; [q]all the fat *is* the LORD’s.

17‘*This shall be* a [r]perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor [s]blood.’”

The Sin Offering

4 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2**“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: [a]‘If a person sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which ought not to be done, and does any of them, **3**[b]if the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD for his sin which he has sinned [c]a young bull without blemish as a [d]sin offering. **4**He shall bring the bull [e]to the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, lay his hand on the bull’s head, and kill the bull before the LORD. **5**Then the anointed priest shall [f]take some of the bull’s blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. **6**The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the [g]veil of the sanctuary. **7**And the priest shall [h]put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour [i]the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. **8**He shall take from it all the fat of the bull as the sin offering. The fat that covers the entrails and

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3:1 ***peace offering.*** The Hebrew word for “peace” means “wholeness, completeness, soundness, health.” When a person possesses all of these attributes, he is at peace. The peace offerings were a time of celebrating and enjoying the gift of peace with God. Yet it was only after Christ’s death and resurrection, when He became our perfect peace offering (Col. 1:20) that we could really have perfect peace with God. The sacrifices had to be made over and over, but Christ’s death was once, for all time.

3:3–4 ***two kidneys, and the fat that is on them . . . the fatty lobe.*** The fat was one of the most prized portions of the meat, and the kidneys were considered the seat of the emotions. The liver was an essential organ for telling the future in the pagan cultures surrounding Israel. Giving all of these things to God symbolized giving Him the best, giving Him the hopes, dreams, and desires of life; recognizing that He alone has control of the future, and that He will reveal it in His own way, at His own time.

3:5 ***upon the burnt sacrifice.*** The peace offering normally followed the burnt offering, which was entirely consumed on the altar. Being reconciled to God through the burnt offering, the worshiper was in a position to fellowship with God. Repentance and reconciliation must always come before genuine fellowship.

3:9 ***the whole fat tail.*** The tail of the Palestinian broad-tailed sheep is almost entirely fat and can weigh more than 16 pounds. This explains its special mention in the regulations for offering the fat of the sheep.

3:1 [a] Lev. 7:11, 29 [b] Lev. 1:3; 22:20–24 **3:2** [c] Lev. 1:4, 5; 16:21 [d] Lev. 1:5 **3:3** [e] Lev. 1:8; 3:16; 4:8, 9 **3:5** [f] Ex. 29:13 [g] 2 Chr. 35:14 [h] Num. 28:3–10 [i] Num. 15:8–10 **3:6** [j] Lev. 3:1; 22:20–24 **3:7** [k] Num. 15:4, 5 [l] 1 Kin. 8:62 [m] Lev. 17:8, 9 **3:11** [n] Num. 28:2 **3:12** [o] Num. 15:6–11 [p] Lev. 3:1, 7 **3:16** [q] Lev. 7:23–25 **3:17** [r] Lev. 6:18; 7:36; 17:7; 23:14 [s] Lev. 7:23, 26; 17:10, 14 **4:2** [a] Lev. 5:15–18 **4:3** [b] Lev. 8:12 [c] Lev. 3:1; 9:2 [d] Lev. 9:7 **4:4** [e] Lev. 1:3, 4; 4:15 **4:5** [f] Lev. 16:14 **4:6** [g] Ex. 40:21, 26 **4:7** [h] Lev. 4:18, 25, 30, 34; 8:15; 9:9; 16:18 [i] Ex. 40:5, 6; Lev. 5:9

all the fat which *is* on the entrails, 9the two
kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the
flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the
liver above the kidneys, he shall remove,
10[j]as it was taken from the bull of the sac-
rifice of the peace offering; and the priest
shall burn them on the altar of the burnt
offering. 11[k]But the bull's hide and all its
flesh, with its head and legs, its entrails
and offal— 12the whole bull he shall carry
outside the camp to a clean place, [l]where
the ashes are poured out, and [m]burn it on
wood with fire; where the ashes are poured
out it shall be burned.

13'Now [n]if the whole congregation of Is-
rael sins unintentionally, [o]and the thing
is hidden from the eyes of the assembly,
and they have done *something against*
any of the commandments of the LORD *in*
anything which should not be done, and
are guilty; 14when the sin which they have
committed becomes known, then the as-
sembly shall offer a young bull for the sin,
and bring it before the tabernacle of meet-
ing. 15And the elders of the congregation
[p]shall lay their hands on the head of the
bull before the LORD. Then the bull shall
be killed before the LORD. 16[q]The anointed
priest shall bring some of the bull's blood
to the tabernacle of meeting. 17Then the
priest shall dip his finger in the blood and
sprinkle *it* seven times before the LORD, in
front of the veil. 18And he shall put *some*
of the blood on the horns of the altar which *is*
before the LORD, which *is* in the tabernacle
of meeting; and he shall pour the remain-
ing blood at the base of the altar of burnt
offering, which is at the door of the taber-
nacle of meeting. 19He shall take all the fat
from it and burn *it* on the altar. 20And he
shall do [r]with the bull as he did with the
bull as a sin offering; thus he shall do with
it. [s]So the priest shall make atonement for
them, and it shall be forgiven them. 21Then
he shall carry the bull outside the camp,
and burn it as he burned the first bull. It *is*
a sin offering for the assembly.

22'When a ruler has sinned, and [t]done
something unintentionally *against* any of
the commandments of the LORD his God
in anything which should not be done, and
is guilty, 23or [u]if his sin which he has com-
mitted comes to his knowledge, he shall
bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a
male without blemish. 24And [v]he shall lay
his hand on the head of the goat, and kill
it at the place where they kill the burnt of-
fering before the LORD. It *is* a sin offering.
25[w]The priest shall take some of the blood
of the sin offering with his finger, put *it*
on the horns of the altar of burnt offering,
and pour its blood at the base of the altar
of burnt offering. 26And he shall burn all its
fat on the altar, like [x]the fat of the sacrifice
of the peace offering. [y]So the priest shall
make atonement for him concerning his
sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

27[z]'If anyone of the common people
sins unintentionally by doing *something*
against any of the commandments of the
LORD *in anything* which ought not to be
done, and is guilty, 28or [a]if his sin which
he has committed comes to his knowledge,
then he shall bring as his offering a kid of
the goats, a female without blemish, for
his sin which he has committed. 29[b]And he
shall lay his hand on the head of the sin of-
fering, and kill the sin offering at the place
of the burnt offering. 30Then the priest
shall take *some* of its blood with his finger,
put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt of-
fering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at
the base of the altar. 31[c]He shall remove all
its fat, [d]as fat is removed from the sacrifice
of the peace offering; and the priest shall
burn it on the altar for a [e]sweet aroma to
the LORD. [f]So the priest shall make atone-
ment for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

32'If he brings a lamb as his sin offering,
[g]he shall bring a female without blemish.
33Then he shall [h]lay his hand on the head
of the sin offering, and kill it as a sin offer-
ing at the place where they kill the burnt
offering. 34The priest shall take *some* of the
blood of the sin offering with his finger, put
it on the horns of the altar of burnt offer-
ing, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the
base of the altar. 35He shall remove all its
fat, as the fat of the lamb is removed from
the sacrifice of the peace offering. Then the
priest shall burn it on the altar, [i]according
to the offerings made by fire to the LORD.
[j]So the priest shall make atonement for his
sin that he has committed, and it shall be
forgiven him.

4:11–12 ***the whole bull.*** Burning the whole bull ensured that the priest did not profit in any way from his own sin or the atonement for his sin. Carrying it outside the camp was another way of symbolizing the seriousness and pollution of sin.

4:13–21 ***the whole congregation.*** Interestingly, not only individuals bring a sin offering to God, but the whole congregation as well. We are used to thinking of individuals coming under conviction and repenting, but how can a whole community come to this way of thinking? A congregation or community can begin to realize that they have misrepresented God, or fallen short of their God-given responsibilities, and together repent and ask for forgiveness, even though the members repenting may not have been the actual people who made the bad decisions that created the problem. Groups need to turn around and redirect their actions, just as much as individuals do,

4:10 *j* Lev. 3:3–5 **4:11** *k* Ex. 29:14 **4:12** *l* Lev. 4:21; 6:10, 11; 16:27 *m* [Heb. 13:11, 12] **4:13** *n* Num. 15:24–26 *o* Lev. 5:2–4, 17 **4:15** *p* Lev. 1:3, 4 **4:16** *q* Lev. 4:5 **4:20** *r* Lev. 4:3 *s* Num. 15:25 **4:22** *t* Lev. 4:2, 13, 27 **4:23** *u* Lev. 4:14; 5:4 **4:24** *v* [Is. 53:6] **4:25** *w* Lev. 4:7, 18, 30, 34 **4:26** *x* Lev. 3:3–5 *y* Lev. 4:20 **4:27** *z* Num. 15:27 **4:28** *a* Lev. 4:23 **4:29** *b* Lev. 1:4; 4:4, 24 **4:31** *c* Lev. 3:14 *d* Lev. 3:3, 4 *e* Ex. 29:18 *f* Lev. 4:26 **4:32** *g* Lev. 4:28 **4:33** *h* Num. 8:12 **4:35** *i* Lev. 3:5 *j* Lev. 4:26, 31

The Trespass Offering

5 ‘If a person sins in [a]hearing the utterance of an oath, and *is* a witness, whether he has seen or known *of the matter*—if he does not tell *it*, he [b]bears guilt.

2‘Or [c]if a person touches any unclean thing, whether *it is* the carcass of an unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean livestock, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and he is unaware of it, he also shall be unclean and [d]guilty. **3**Or if he touches [e]human uncleanness—whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty.

4‘Or if a person swears, speaking thoughtlessly with *his* lips [f]to do evil or [g]to do good, whatever *it is* that a man may pronounce by an oath, and he is unaware of it—when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty in any of these *matters*.

5‘And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these *matters*, that he shall [h]confess that he has sinned in that *thing;* **6**and he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin.

7[i]‘If he is not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD, for his trespass which he has committed, two [j]turtledoves or two young pigeons: one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. **8**And he shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer *that* which *is* for the sin offering first, and [k]wring off its head from its neck, but shall not divide *it* completely. **9**Then he shall sprinkle *some* of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, and the [l]rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar. It *is* a sin offering. **10**And he shall offer the second *as* a burnt offering according to the [m]prescribed manner. So [n]the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

11‘But if he is [o]not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering. [p]He shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it *is* a sin offering. **12**Then he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it [q]as a memorial portion, and burn *it* on the altar [r]according to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a sin offering. **13**[s]The priest shall make atonement for him, for his sin that he has committed in any of these matters; and it shall be forgiven him. [t]*The rest* shall be the priest’s as a grain offering.’”

Offerings with Restitution

14Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: **15**[u]“If a person commits a trespass, and sins unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the LORD, then [v]he shall bring to the LORD as his trespass offering a ram without blemish from the flocks, with your valuation in shekels of silver according to [w]the shekel of the sanctuary, as a trespass offering. **16**And he shall make restitution for the harm that he has done in regard to the holy thing, [x]and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. [y]So the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of

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and this is one of the ways that God changes whole societies.

5:3 *human uncleanness.* Body fluids, a person’s waste, and contact with a corpse were all causes of uncleanness. The ancient Israelites knew nothing about microbiology, but God, who knows everything, gave them laws that prevented disease and made them distinct from their neighbors.

5:4 *swears . . . and he is unaware of it.* Certainly a person would know when he makes a vow, but he might not be immediately aware of how rash his vow is, or that the long term consequences are undesirable. Whether the vow was made with good intentions, but not carried out, or made with wicked intentions, but not carried out, the person who made the vow is still responsible to repent of his foolishness when he becomes aware of it.

5:7 *two turtledoves.* Part of the purification offering was burned on the altar, and part was not burned. When offering birds, the worshiper brought two in order to accomplish this.

5:11 *one-tenth of an ephah.* This was approximately two quarts.

5:13 *The rest shall be the priest’s.* Part of the offering was burned on the altar, as was part of the animal sacrifices. The rest belonged to the priests, as did the remainder of the animal sacrifices brought by ordinary citizens, except for their burnt offerings.

5:15 *commits a trespass, and sins unintentionally . . . trespass offering.* This refers both to the objective responsibility of a sinner for his or her actions and the subjective feeling of guilt experienced by the sinner. The offering righted the wrong of the offense and cleared the conscience of the sinner.

5:15—6:7 *person commits a trespass.* The trespass offering covers both offenses against God (5:15–19) and against people (6:1–7). The offense may be unintentional, or quite deliberate, but regardless of the motive, such actions make the perpetrator guilty. The quickest way to mend relationships with God and with fellow human beings is to honestly admit our guilt and wrongdoing, pay back or repair where we can, and ask forgiveness of those we have sinned against. This responsibility cannot be sidestepped.

5:1 [a] Prov. 29:24 [b] Num. 9:13 **5:2** [c] Num. 19:11–16 [d] Lev. 5:17 **5:3** [e] Lev. 5:12, 13, 15 **5:4** [f] Acts 23:12 [g] [James 5:12] **5:5** [h] Prov. 28:13 **5:7** [i] Lev. 12:6, 8; 14:21 [j] Lev. 1:14 **5:8** [k] Lev. 1:15–17 **5:9** [l] Lev. 4:7, 18, 30, 34 **5:10** [m] Lev. 1:14–17 [n] Lev. 4:20, 26; 5:13, 16 **5:11** [o] Lev. 14:21–32 [p] Num. 5:15 **5:12** [q] Lev. 2:2 [r] Lev. 4:35 **5:13** [s] Lev. 4:26 [t] Lev. 2:3; 6:17, 26 **5:15** [u] Lev. 4:2; 22:14 [v] Ezra 10:19 [w] Ex. 30:13 **5:16** [x] Num. 5:7 [y] Lev. 4:26

the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

17"If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD, [z]though he does not know *it*, yet he is [a]guilty and shall bear his iniquity. 18[b]And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know *it*, and it shall be forgiven him. 19It is a trespass offering; [c]he has certainly trespassed against the LORD."

6 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2"If a person sins and [a]commits a trespass against the LORD by [b]lying to his neighbor about [c]what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or about a pledge, or about a robbery, or if he has [d]extorted from his neighbor, 3or if he [e]has found what was lost and lies concerning it, and [f]swears falsely—in any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins: 4then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore [g]what he has stolen, or the thing which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found, 5or all that about which he has sworn falsely. He shall [h]restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, *and* give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering. 6And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, [i]a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering, to the priest. 7[j]So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD, and he shall be forgiven for any one of these things that he may have done in which he trespasses."

The Law of the Burnt Offering

8Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 9"Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This *is* the [k]law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering *shall be* on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. 10[l]And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them [m]beside the altar. 11Then [n]he shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp [o]to a clean place. 12And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the [p]fat of the peace offerings. 13A fire shall always be burning on the [q]altar; it shall never go out.

The Law of the Grain Offering

14'This *is* the law of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the LORD. 15He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil, and all the frankincense which *is* on the grain offering, and shall burn *it* on the altar *for* a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the LORD. 16And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; with unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it. 17It shall not be

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5:17 ***though he does not know it, yet is he guilty.*** Ignorance does not make an offense harmless. The offender was still guilty and bore responsibility for his sin. He might also be troubled in conscience, though he might never learn the exact nature of his offense. This raises the concept that a person can be aware of a break in his fellowship with God, without being sure what caused this break.

5:18 ***erred and did not know it.*** This was not a sin of rebellion, but one for which the offender earnestly desired to atone, though he did not know what it was.

5:19 ***he has certainly trespassed against the LORD.*** The fact that the priest declared him forgiven, and the peace of conscience that the worshiper had, declares that he was indeed guilty of some trespass; it was not his imagination. It is possible for a Christian to have an overactive conscience that keeps the believer in a constant state of anxiety about unknown sins. It is good to remember that God knows all about this, and if we confess our feelings of guilt, He will either show us our true guilt and grant us forgiveness and a clear conscience, or show us the error in our thinking regarding what He expects from us.

6:5–6 ***restore.*** Restitution and a one-fifth fine were evidence of genuine repentance. Then the offender could bring the ram for the trespass offering and be forgiven for the sin of swearing falsely in God's name. Jesus preserved this order for the person who remembered at the altar that he had offended his brother (Matt. 5:23).

6:10 ***trousers.*** The breeches were linen trousers that prevented immodest exposure as the priest ascended and descended the altar ramp. This modesty communicated to the Israelites that human sexuality could not influence God. That idea was a central feature of Baal worship, which continually tempted the Israelites. The priests of Baal would use obscene gestures and actions in the pagan worship of their depraved god.

6:13 ***fire shall always be burning.*** There are at least three reasons the priests are instructed to keep the fire burning. The original fire on the altar came from God, perpetual fire symbolized perpetual worship, and perpetual fire was a reminder of the continual need for atonement and reconciliation with God.

5:17 [z] Lev. 4:2, 13, 22, 27 [a] Lev. 5:1, 2 **5:18** [b] Lev. 5:15 **5:19** [c] Ezra 10:2 **6:2** [a] Num. 5:6 [b] Lev. 19:11 [c] Ex. 22:7, 10 [d] Prov. 24:28 **6:3** [e] Deut. 22:1–4 [f] Ex. 22:11 **6:4** [g] Lev. 24:18, 21 **6:5** [h] Lev. 5:16 **6:6** [i] Lev. 1:3; 5:15 **6:7** [j] Lev. 4:26 **6:9** [k] Ex. 29:38–42 **6:10** [l] Ex. 28:39–43 [m] Lev. 1:16 **6:11** [n] Ezek. 44:19 [o] Lev. 4:12 **6:12** [p] Lev. 3:3, 5, 9, 14 **6:13** [q] Lev. 1:7

baked with leaven. I have given it *as* their portion of My offerings made by fire; it *is* most holy, like the sin offering and the [r]trespass offering. 18[s]All the males among the children of Aaron may eat it. [t]*It shall be* a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings made by fire to the LORD. [u]Everyone who touches them must be holy.'"*

19And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 20[v]"This *is* the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they shall offer to the LORD, *beginning* on the day when he is anointed: one-tenth of an [w]ephah of fine flour as a daily grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it at night. 21It shall be made in a [x]pan with oil. *When it is* mixed, you shall bring it in. The baked pieces of the grain offering you shall offer *for* a sweet aroma to the LORD. 22The priest from among his sons, [y]who is anointed in his place, shall offer it. *It is* a statute forever to the LORD. [z]It shall be wholly burned. 23For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned. It shall not be eaten."

The Law of the Sin Offering

24Also the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 25"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This *is* the law of the sin offering: [a]In the place where the burnt offering is killed, the sin offering shall be killed before the LORD. It *is* most holy. 26[b]The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of meeting. 27[c]Everyone who touches its flesh must be holy.* And when its blood is sprinkled on any garment, you shall wash that on which it was sprinkled, in a holy place. 28But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled [d]shall be broken. And if it is boiled in a bronze pot, it shall be both scoured and rinsed in water. 29All the males among the priests may eat it. It *is* most holy. 30[e]But no sin offering from which *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy [f]*place*,* shall be [g]eaten. It shall be [h]burned in the fire.

The Law of the Trespass Offering

7 'Likewise [a]this *is* the law of the trespass offering (it *is* most holy): 2In the place where they kill the burnt offering they shall kill the trespass offering. And its blood he shall sprinkle all around on the altar. 3And he shall offer from it all its fat. The fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails, 4the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; 5and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as* an offering made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a trespass offering. 6[b]Every male among the priests may eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. [c]It *is* most holy. 7[d]The trespass offering *is* like the sin offering; *there is* one law for them both: the priest who makes atonement with it shall have *it*. 8And the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered. 9Also [e]every grain offering that is baked in the oven and all that is prepared in the covered pan, or in a pan, shall be the priest's who offers it. 10Every grain offering, *whether* mixed with oil or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron, to one *as much* as the other.

The Law of Peace Offerings

11[f]'This *is* the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the LORD: 12If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers [g]anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil. 13Besides the cakes, *as* his offering he shall offer [h]leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering. 14And from it he shall offer one cake from each offering *as* a heave offering to the LORD. [i]It shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering.

* **6:18** Compare Numbers 4:15 and Haggai 2:11–13
* **6:27** Compare Numbers 4:15 and Haggai 2:11–13
* **6:30** The Most Holy Place when capitalized

6:20 ***half of it in the morning . . . half of it at night.*** The idea of a morning and evening appointment with God is ancient. It is a precious privilege, open to every believer because Jesus opened the door into the presence of God when He died on the cross for our sins.

6:22 ***a statute forever.*** This grain offering and the burnt offering were sacrificed daily—with some interruptions, most notably during the exile—until the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70. Even in the periods of Judah's worst apostasy, the evidence suggests that the daily offerings continued, though often for incorrect or inadequate reasons (Is. 1:10–17; Jer. 7:8–15; Mic. 6:6–8).

7:1–7 ***trespass offering.*** The guilt or trespass offering was "most holy," showing how seriously and carefully God considers the acts of reparation made by His people. The priest was to eat it in a holy place. It was his to eat, as part of God's provision for him, but he was to remember where it came from. The price of atonement has never been cheap in God's eyes, even when it was as incomplete as the offering of a goat or lamb.

6:17 [r] Lev. 7:7 **6:18** [s] Lev. 6:29; 7:6 [t] Lev. 3:17 [u] Ex. 29:37; Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11–13 **6:20** [v] Ex. 29:2 [w] Ex. 16:36 **6:21** [x] Lev. 2:5; 7:9 **6:22** [y] Lev. 4:3 [z] Ex. 29:25 **6:25** [a] Lev. 1:1, 3, 5, 11 **6:26** [b] [Ezek. 44:28, 29] **6:27** [c] Ex. 29:37; Num. 4:15; Hag. 2:11–13 **6:28** [d] Lev. 11:33; 15:12 **6:30** [e] Lev. 4:7, 11, 12, 18, 21; 10:18; 16:27 [f] Ex. 26:33 [g] Lev. 6:16, 23, 26 [h] Lev. 16:27 **7:1** [a] Lev. 5:14—6:7 **7:6** [b] Lev. 6:16–18, 29 [c] Lev. 2:3 **7:7** [d] Lev. 6:24–30; 14:13 **7:9** [e] Lev. 2:3, 10 **7:11** [f] Lev. 3:1; 22:18, 21 **7:12** [g] Num. 6:15 **7:13** [h] Amos 4:5 **7:14** [i] Num. 18:8, 11, 19

15 [j]"The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace
offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten
the same day it is offered. He shall not
leave any of it until morning. 16But [k]if the
sacrifice of his offering *is* a vow or a vol-
untary offering, it shall be eaten the same
day that he offers his sacrifice; but on the
next day the remainder of it also may be
eaten; 17the remainder of the flesh of the
sacrifice on the third day must be burned
with fire. 18And if *any* of the flesh of the
sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at
all on the third day, it shall not be accepted,
nor shall it be [l]imputed to him; it shall be an
[m]abomination *to* him who offers it, and the
person who eats of it shall bear guilt.

19 [n]"The flesh that touches any unclean
thing shall not be eaten. It shall be burned
with fire. And as for the *clean* flesh, all who
are clean may eat of it. 20But the person who
eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace
offering that *belongs* to the [n]LORD, [o]while
he is unclean, that person [p]shall be cut off
from his people. 21Moreover the person who
touches any unclean thing, *such as* [q]human
uncleanness, *an* [r]unclean animal, or any
[s]abominable unclean thing,* and who eats
the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offer-
ing that *belongs* to the LORD, that person
[t]shall be cut off from his people.'"

Fat and Blood May Not Be Eaten

22 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
23 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying:
[u]"You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep
or goat. 24And the fat of an animal that
dies *naturally*, and the fat of what is torn
by wild beasts, may be used in any other
way; but you shall by no means eat it. 25For
whoever eats the fat of the animal of which
men offer an offering made by fire to the
LORD, the person who eats *it* shall be cut
off from his people. 26[v]Moreover you shall
not eat any blood in any of your dwellings,
whether of bird or beast. 27Whoever eats
any blood, that person shall be cut off from
his people.'"

The Portion of Aaron and His Sons

28 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, say-
ing, 29 "Speak to the children of Israel,
saying: [w]"He who offers the sacrifice of
his peace offering to the LORD shall bring
his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice
of his peace offering. 30[x]His own hands
shall bring the offerings made by fire to
the LORD. The fat with the breast he shall
bring, that the [y]breast may be waved *as* a
wave offering before the LORD. 31[z]And the
priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but
the [a]breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'.
32[b]Also the right thigh you shall give to the
priest *as* a heave offering from the sacrific-
es of your peace offerings. 33He among the
sons of Aaron, who offers the blood of the
peace offering and the fat, shall have the
right thigh for *his* part. 34For [c]the breast
of the wave offering and the thigh of the
heave offering I have taken from the chil-
dren of Israel, from the sacrifices of their
peace offerings, and I have given them to
Aaron the priest and to his sons from the
children of Israel by a statute forever.'"

35 This *is* the consecrated portion for Aar-
on and his sons, from the offerings made
by fire to the LORD, on the day when *Moses*
presented them to minister to the LORD as
priests. 36The LORD commanded this to be
given to them by the children of Israel, [d]on
the day that He anointed them, *by* a statute
forever throughout their generations.

37 This *is* the law [e]of the burnt offering,
[f]the grain offering, [g]the sin offering, [h]the
trespass offering, [i]the consecrations, and
[j]the sacrifice of the peace offering, 38which
the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Si-
nai, on the day when He commanded the
children of Israel [k]to offer their offerings to
the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai.

Aaron and His Sons Consecrated

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
2 [a]"Take Aaron and his sons with him,
and [b]the garments, [c]the anointing oil, a
[d]bull as the sin offering, two [e]rams, and a
basket of unleavened bread; 3and gather all
the congregation together at the door of the
tabernacle of meeting."

4 So Moses did as the LORD commanded
him. And the congregation was gathered
together at the door of the tabernacle of
meeting. 5And Moses said to the congre-
gation, "This *is* what the LORD commanded
to be done."

6 Then Moses brought Aaron and his
sons and [f]washed them with water. 7And

* **7:21** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac, and Targum read *swarming thing* (compare 5:2).

7:34 the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering. This present was a contribution to the officiating priest as his portion of the peace offerings for thanksgiving. The offering was waved before the Lord as an acknowledgment that He is the giver of all gifts.

8:6–13 Purification—Moses carried out the Lord's command (Ex. 29:4) by purifying Aaron and his sons for the priesthood. The purification process began with an outward washing of water which symbolized an inward purity. The believer today also shows

7:15 *j* Lev. 22:29, 30 **7:16** *k* Lev. 19:5–8 **7:18** *l* Num. 18:27 *m* Lev. 11:10, 11, 41; 19:7 **7:20** *n* [Heb. 2:17] *o* Num. 19:13 *p* Gen. 17:14 **7:21** *q* Lev. 5:2, 3, 5 *r* Lev. 11:24, 28 *s* Ezek. 4:14 *t* Lev. 7:20 **7:23** *u* Lev. 3:17; 17:10–15 **7:26** *v* Acts 15:20, 29 **7:29** *w* Lev. 3:1; 22:21 **7:30** *x* Lev. 3:3, 4, 9, 14 *y* Ex. 29:24, 27 **7:31** *z* Lev. 3:5, 11, 16 *a* Deut. 18:3 **7:32** *b* Num. 6:20 **7:34** *c* Lev. 10:14, 15 **7:36** *d* Lev. 8:12, 30 **7:37** *e* Lev. 6:9 *f* Lev. 6:14 *g* Lev. 6:25 *h* Lev. 7:1 *i* Lev. 29:1 *j* Lev. 7:11 **7:38** *k* Lev. 1:1, 2 **8:2** *a* Ex. 29:1–3 *b* Ex. 28:2, 4 *c* Ex. 30:24, 25 *d* Ex. 29:10 *e* Ex. 29:15, 19 **8:6** *f* Heb. 10:22

he [g]put the tunic on him, girded him with the sash, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him; and he girded him with the intricately woven band of the ephod, and with it tied *the ephod* on him. 8Then he put the breastplate on him, and he [h]put the Urim and the Thummim* in the breastplate. 9[i]And he put the turban on his head. Also on the turban, on its front, he put the golden plate, the holy crown, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

10[j]Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* in it, and consecrated them. 11He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the laver and its base, to consecrate them. 12And he [k]poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him.

13[l]Then Moses brought Aaron's sons and put tunics on them, girded them with sashes, and put hats on them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

14[m]And he brought the bull for the sin offering. Then Aaron and his sons [n]laid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin offering, 15and Moses killed *it*. [o]Then he took the blood, and put *some* on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and purified the altar. And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, and consecrated it, to make atonement for it. 16[p]Then he took all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned *them* on the altar. 17But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal, he burned with fire outside the camp, as the LORD [q]had commanded Moses.

18[r]Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering. And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, 19and Moses killed *it*. Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. 20And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses [s]burned the head, the pieces, and the fat. 21Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water. And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It *was* a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD, [t]as the LORD had commanded Moses.

22And [u]he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, 23and Moses killed *it*. Also he took *some* of [v]its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. 24Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put *some* of the [w]blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. 25[x]Then he took the fat and the fat tail, all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh; 26[y]and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread *anointed with* oil, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat and on the right thigh; 27and he put all *these* [z]in Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them *as* a wave offering before the LORD. 28[a]Then Moses took them from their hands and burned *them* on the altar, on the burnt offering. They *were* consecration offerings for a sweet aroma. That *was* an offering made by fire to the LORD. 29And [b]Moses took the [c]breast and waved it *as* a wave offering before the LORD. It was Moses' [d]part of the ram of consecration, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

30Then [e]Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which *was* on the altar, and sprinkled *it* on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

31And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, [f]"Boil the flesh *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that *is* in the basket of consecration offerings, as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it.' 32[g]What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire. 33And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting *for* seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended. For [h]seven days he shall consecrate you.

* **8:8** Literally *the Lights and the Perfections* (compare Exodus 28:30)

his inward reality (his acceptance of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit) with his outward actions. These acts of obedience do not create the inward reality, but they confirm it.

8:8 ***the Urim and the Thummim.*** These were the sacred lots used to determine the will of God. What they looked like and how they were used is not known. Apparently, the high priest phrased questions so the answers would be yes, or no, depending on how the lots came up.

8:12 ***anointed him.*** The high priests of Israel, beginning here with Aaron, were anointed, as were the kings of Israel (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13) and at least one of the prophets (1 Kin. 19:16). Jesus combines in His person the offices of High Priest, King, and Prophet, so He is *the* Anointed One, which is the meaning of the names Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek).

8:7 *g* Ex. 39:1–31 **8:8** *h* Ex. 28:30 **8:9** *i* Ex. 28:36, 37; 29:6 **8:10** *j* Ex. 30:26–29; 40:10, 11 **8:12** *k* Ps. 133:2 **8:13** *l* Ex. 29:8, 9 **8:14** *m* Ezek. 43:19 *n* Lev. 4:4 **8:15** *o* Lev. 4:7 **8:16** *p* Ex. 29:13 **8:17** *q* Lev. 4:11, 12 **8:18** *r* Ex. 29:15 **8:20** *s* Lev. 1:8 **8:21** *t* Ex. 29:18 **8:22** *u* Ex. 29:19, 31 **8:23** *v* Lev. 14:14 **8:24** *w* [Heb. 9:13, 14, 18–23] **8:25** *x* Ex. 29:22 **8:26** *y* Ex. 29:23 **8:27** *z* Ex. 29:24 **8:28** *a* Ex. 29:25 **8:29** *b* Ps. 99:6 *c* Ex. 29:27 *d* Ex. 29:26 **8:30** *e* Ex. 29:21; 30:30 **8:31** *f* Ex. 29:31, 32 **8:32** *g* Ex. 29:34 **8:33** *h* Ex. 29:30, 35

34 [i]As he has done this day, *so* the LORD has
commanded to do, to make atonement for
you. 35 Therefore you shall stay *at* the door
of the tabernacle of meeting day and night
for seven days, and [j]keep the charge of the
LORD, so that you may not die; for so I have
been commanded." 36 So Aaron and his
sons did all the things that the LORD had
commanded by the hand of Moses.

The Priestly Ministry Begins

9 It came to pass on the [a]eighth day that
Moses called Aaron and his sons and
the elders of Israel. 2 And he said to Aar-
on, "Take for yourself a young [b]bull as a
sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering,
without blemish, and offer *them* before
the LORD. 3 And to the children of Israel
you shall speak, saying, [c]'Take a kid of
the goats as a sin offering, and a calf and a
lamb, *both* of the first year, without blem-
ish, as a burnt offering, 4 also a bull and a
ram as peace offerings, to sacrifice before
the LORD, and [d]a grain offering mixed with
oil; for [e]today the LORD will appear to you.'"

5 So they brought what Moses command-
ed before the tabernacle of meeting. And
all the congregation drew near and stood
before the LORD. 6 Then Moses said, "This
is the thing which the LORD commanded
you to do, and the glory of the LORD will
appear to you." 7 And Moses said to Aaron,
"Go to the altar, [f]offer your sin offering and
your burnt offering, and make atonement
for yourself and for the people. [g]Offer the
offering of the people, and make atone-
ment for them, as the LORD commanded."

8 Aaron therefore went to the altar and
killed the calf of the sin offering, which
was for himself. 9 Then the sons of Aaron
brought the blood to him. And he dipped
his finger in the blood, put *it* on the horns of
the altar, and poured the blood at the base
of the altar. 10 [h]But the fat, the kidneys, and
the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offer-
ing he burned on the altar, as the LORD had
commanded Moses. 11 [i]The flesh and the
hide he burned with fire outside the camp.

12 And he killed the burnt offering; and
Aaron's sons presented to him the blood,
[j]which he sprinkled all around on the altar.
13 [k]Then they presented the burnt offering
to him, with its pieces and head, and he
burned *them* on the altar. 14 [l]And he washed
the entrails and the legs, and burned *them*
with the burnt offering on the altar.

15 [m]Then he brought the people's offer-
ing, and took the goat, which *was* the sin
offering for the people, and killed it and
offered it for sin, like the first one. 16 And
he brought the burnt offering and offered
it [n]according to the prescribed manner.
17 Then he brought the grain offering, took
a handful of it, and burned *it* on the altar,
[o]besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning.

18 He also killed the bull and the ram *as*
[p]sacrifices of peace offerings, which *were*
for the people. And Aaron's sons present-
ed to him the blood, which he sprinkled all
around on the altar, 19 and the fat from the
bull and the ram—the fatty tail, what covers
the entrails and the kidneys, and the fatty
lobe *attached to* the liver; 20 and they put the
fat on the breasts. [q]Then he burned the fat
on the altar; 21 but the breasts and the right
thigh Aaron waved [r]*as* a wave offering be-
fore the LORD, as Moses had commanded.

22 Then Aaron lifted his hand toward
the people, [s]blessed them, and came down
from offering the sin offering, the burnt
offering, and peace offerings. 23 And Mo-
ses and Aaron went into the tabernacle
of meeting, and came out and blessed the
people. Then the glory of the LORD ap-
peared to all the people, 24 and [t]fire came
out from before the LORD and consumed
the burnt offering and the fat on the altar.
When all the people saw *it*, they [u]shouted
and fell on their [v]faces.

The Profane Fire of Nadab and Abihu

10 Then [a]Nadab and Abihu, the sons
of Aaron, [b]each took his censer and
put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered
[c]profane fire before the LORD, which He

8:35 ***so that you may not die.*** This statement was a reminder that it is dangerous to approach God carelessly, without reverence, or ignore His instructions. Two of Aaron's sons failed to heed this warning and died (ch. 10).

9:4 ***the LORD will appear to you.*** The purpose of all worship is to fellowship with God. The sacrifices were not an end in themselves; they allowed the worshiper to meet with God without being destroyed. The Israelites looked forward and we look back to Christ's atonement, which made the way for us to come freely into God's presence.

9:15 ***the goat, which was the sin offering.*** This goat was offered for atonement of the people as a general acknowledgment that they would always need to make things right with God before they could worship Him, and is referred to again in ch. 16. The bull for the sin offering (4:14) was for a specific sin, rather than dealing with sin nature (that is, our ability to sin).

9:22 ***Aaron . . . blessed them.*** The ultimate function of the priests was to bless the people. The purpose of the priest's sacrifices was to cleanse the priests so they could bless the people, and the purpose of the people's sacrifices was to cleanse the people to receive this blessing from God.

10:1–2 ***profane fire.*** Aaron and his sons served the Lord as high priests in the worship of the tabernacle. They had been properly appointed, purified, clothed,

8:34 [i] [Heb. 7:16] **8:35** [j] Deut. 11:1 **9:1** [a] Ezek. 43:27 **9:2** [b] Lev. 4:1–12 **9:3** [c] Lev. 4:23, 28 **9:4** [d] Lev. 2:4 [e] Ex. 29:43 **9:7** [f] [Heb. 5:3–5; 7:27] [g] Lev. 4:16, 20 **9:10** [h] Lev. 8:16 **9:11** [i] Lev. 4:11, 12; 8:17 **9:12** [j] Lev. 1:5; 8:19 **9:13** [k] Lev. 8:20 **9:14** [l] Lev. 8:21 **9:15** [m] [Is. 53:10] **9:16** [n] Lev. 1:1–13 **9:17** [o] Ex. 29:38, 39 **9:18** [p] Lev. 3:1–11 **9:20** [q] Lev. 3:5, 16 **9:21** [r] Lev. 7:30–34 **9:22** [s] Luke 24:50 **9:24** [t] Judg. 6:21 [u] Ezra 3:11 [v] 1 Kin. 18:38, 39 **10:1** [a] Num. 3:2–4 [b] Lev. 16:12 [c] Ex. 30:9

had not commanded them. 2So [d]fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. 3And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying:

'By those [e]who come near Me
I must be regarded as holy;
And before all the people
I must be glorified.'"

So Aaron held his peace.

4Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, "Come near, [f]carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp." 5So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had said.

6And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, "Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and [g]wrath come upon all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD has kindled. 7[h]You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die, [i]for the anointing oil of the LORD *is* upon you." And they did according to the word of Moses.

Conduct Prescribed for Priests

8Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, saying: 9[j]"Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. *It shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations, 10that you may [k]distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, 11[l]and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them by the hand of Moses."

12And Moses spoke to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons who were left: [m]"Take the grain offering that remains of the offerings made by fire to the LORD, and eat it without leaven beside the altar; [n]for it *is* most holy. 13You shall eat it in a [o]holy place, because it *is* your due and your sons' due, of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD; for [p]so I have been commanded. 14[q]The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place, you, your sons, and your [r]daughters with you; for *they are* your due and your sons' [s]due, *which* are given from the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel. 15[t]The thigh of the heave offering and the breast of the wave offering they shall bring with the offerings of fat made by fire, to offer *as* a wave offering before the LORD. And it shall be yours and your sons' with you, by a statute forever, as the LORD has commanded."

16Then Moses made careful inquiry about [u]the goat of the sin offering, and there it was—burned up. And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron *who were* left, saying, 17[v]"Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place, since it *is* most holy, and *God* has given it to you to bear [w]the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD? 18See! [x]Its blood was not brought inside the holy *place;** indeed you should have eaten it in a holy *place*, [y]as I commanded."

19And Aaron said to Moses, "Look, [z]this day they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and such things have befallen me! *If* I had eaten the sin offering today, [a]would it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?" 20So when Moses heard *that*, he was content.

Foods Permitted and Forbidden

11 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, saying, [a]'These *are* the animals which you may eat among all the animals that *are* on the earth: 3Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves *and* chewing the cud—that you may eat. 4Nevertheless these you shall [b]not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; 5the rock hyrax, because it chews

* **10:18** The Most Holy Place when capitalized

anointed, and ordained. Initially they did everything that the Lord commanded through Moses. But when Nadab and Abihu disobeyed God in the very performance of their duties, the Lord swiftly punished them with a consuming fire. Being blessed with a thriving ministry is no excuse to go off and do things our own way. God doesn't take such actions lightly, and neither should we.

10:3 ***By those who come near Me . . . I must be glorified.*** Although this passage refers specifically to the priests of Israel, it is still a good concept for all believers. We are close to God, we remember that He is holy, that He paid a great price to redeem us, and it is our purpose to glorify Him.

11:3 ***chewing the cud.*** Ruminants, like cows, sheep, goats, deer, and antelope, eat only plants, mainly grasses and grains. No meat-eating animal chews the cud.

11:4 ***the camel.*** Some of Israel's neighbors considered the camel a great delicacy.

11:5–6 ***rock hyrax . . . hare.*** The rock hyrax, or coney, lives in colonies among the rocks. It is about the size

10:2 [d] Num. 11:1; 16:35 **10:3** [e] Ex. 19:22 **10:4** [f] Acts 5:6, 10 **10:6** [g] 2 Sam. 24:1 **10:7** [h] Lev. 8:33; 21:12 [i] Lev. 8:30 **10:9** [j] Ezek. 44:21 **10:10** [k] Ezek. 22:26; 44:23 **10:11** [l] Deut. 24:8 **10:12** [m] Num. 18:9 [n] Lev. 21:22 **10:13** [o] Num. 18:10 [p] Lev. 2:3; 6:16 **10:14** [q] Num. 18:11 [r] Lev. 22:13 [s] Num. 18:10 **10:15** [t] Lev. 7:29, 30, 34 **10:16** [u] Lev. 9:3, 15 **10:17** [v] Lev. 6:24–30 [w] Ex. 28:38 **10:18** [x] Lev. 6:30 [y] Lev. 6:26, 30 **10:19** [z] Lev. 9:8, 12 [a] [Is. 1:11–15] **11:2** [a] Deut. 14:4 **11:4** [b] Acts 10:14

the cud but does not have cloven hooves, *is* unclean to you; 6the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, *is* unclean to you; 7and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, [c]*is* unclean to you. 8Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. [d]They *are* unclean to you.

9[e]'These you may eat of all that *are* in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers—that you may eat. 10But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales, all that move in the water or any living thing which *is* in the water, they *are* an [f]abomination to you. 11They shall be an abomination to you; you shall not eat their flesh, but you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination. 12Whatever in the water does not have fins or scales—that *shall be* an abomination to you.

13[g]'And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, 14the kite, and the falcon after its kind; 15every raven after its kind, 16the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; 17the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl; 18the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture; 19the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.

20'All flying insects that creep on *all* fours *shall be* an abomination to you. 21Yet these you may eat of every flying insect that creeps on *all* fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth. 22These you may eat: [h]the locust after its kind, the destroying locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind. 23But all *other* flying insects which have four feet *shall be* an abomination to you.

Unclean Animals

24'By these you shall become unclean; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until evening; 25whoever carries part of the carcass of any of them [i]shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening: 26*The carcass* of any animal which divides the foot, but is not cloven-hoofed or does not chew the cud, *is* unclean to you. Everyone who touches it shall be unclean. 27And whatever goes on its paws, among all kinds of animals that go on *all* fours, those *are* unclean to you. Whoever touches any such carcass shall be unclean until evening. 28Whoever carries *any such* carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. It *is* unclean to you.

29'These also *shall be* unclean to you among the creeping things that creep on the earth: the mole, [j]the mouse, and the large lizard after its kind; 30the gecko, the monitor lizard, the sand reptile, the sand lizard, and the chameleon. 31These *are* unclean to you among all that creep. Whoever [k]touches them when they are dead shall be unclean until evening. 32Anything on which *any* of them falls, when they are dead shall be unclean, whether *it is* any item of wood or clothing or skin or sack, whatever item *it is*, in which *any* work is done, [l]it must be put in water. And it shall be unclean until evening; then it shall be clean. 33Any [m]earthen vessel into which *any* of them falls [n]you shall break; and whatever *is* in it shall be unclean: 34in such a vessel, any edible food upon which water falls becomes unclean, and any drink that may be drunk from it becomes unclean. 35And everything on which *a part* of *any such* carcass falls shall be unclean; *whether it is* an oven or cooking stove, it shall be broken down; *for* they *are* unclean, and shall be unclean to you. 36Nevertheless a spring or a cistern, *in which there is* plenty of water, shall be clean, but whatever touches any such carcass becomes unclean. 37And if a part of *any such* carcass falls on any planting seed which is to be sown, it *remains* clean. 38But if water is put on the seed, and if *a part* of *any such* carcass falls on it, it *becomes* unclean to you.

39'And if any animal which you may eat dies, he who touches its carcass shall be

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of the rabbit, and like the rabbit, appears to chew constantly, but it is not a true ruminant, nor does it have a hoof.

11:7 *the swine.* The swine is the best known of the unclean animals. We know now that pigs can pass some diseases to humans, and that inadequately cooked meat is one way these diseases are transferred. Pigs were sacrificed to pagan deities, and God was carefully steering His people away from these corrupted cultures.

11:8 *their carcasses you shall not touch.* In the case of these unclean animals, eating their meat or touching their dead bodies caused an Israelite to be unclean, or ritually impure. However, touching a live animal did not make the Israelites unclean, and they were allowed to use camels and donkeys as beasts of burden.

11:11–12 *abomination.* The phrasing is careful, deliberate, and repetitive to remove any possibility of finding any exception anywhere. *Abomination* is a stronger word than *unclean,* and implies not just avoidance, but repulsion.

11:20 *creep on all fours.* This phrase is an idiom for crawling on the ground, as insects do on their six legs. Many insects move about in filth and eat refuse.

11:21 *jointed legs above their feet.* The joints are the enlarged third legs of locusts and grasshoppers that enable them to leap. Locusts and grasshoppers do not live in filth or eat dung; they eat only plants.

11:7 [c] Is. 65:4; 66:3, 17 **11:8** [d] Is. 52:11 **11:9** [e] Deut. 14:9 **11:10** [f] Lev. 7:18, 21 **11:13** [g] Is. 66:17 **11:22** [h] Matt. 3:4 **11:25** [i] Num. 19:10, 21, 22; 31:24 **11:29** [j] Is. 66:17 **11:31** [k] Hag. 2:13 **11:32** [l] Lev. 15:12 **11:33** [m] Lev. 6:28 [n] Lev. 15:12

[o]unclean until evening. 40[p]He who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. He also who carries its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

41'And every creeping thing that creeps on the earth *shall be* an abomination. It shall not be eaten. 42Whatever crawls on its belly, whatever goes on *all* fours, or whatever has many feet among all creeping things that creep on the earth—these you shall not eat, for they *are* an abomination. 43[q]You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them. 44For I *am* the LORD your [r]God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and [s]you shall be holy; for I *am* holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 45[t]For I *am* the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. [u]You shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

46'This *is* the law of the animals and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth, 47[v]to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten.'"

The Ritual After Childbirth

12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a [a]woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then [b]she shall be unclean seven days; [c]as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. 3And on the [d]eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. 4She shall then continue in the blood of *her* purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled.

5'But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of *her* purification sixty-six days.

6[e]'When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a [f]lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a [g]sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 7Then he shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This *is* the law for her who has borne a male or a female.

8[h]'And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. [i]So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.'"

The Law Concerning Leprosy

13 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2"When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling, [a]a scab, or a bright spot, and it becomes on the skin of his body *like* a leprous* sore, [b]then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. 3The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears *to be* deeper than the skin of his body, it *is* a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce

* **13:2** Hebrew *saraath*, disfiguring skin diseases, including leprosy, and so in verses 2–46 and 14:2–32

11:44–45 *be holy.* Our Lord calls us to personal holiness, and holy living can only come from a life which spends time with the Lord, meditating on who He is, seeking His power to be like Him. We will make mistakes and sin all of our lives, which God never does; when He asks us to be holy because He is holy, it is a goal that we grow toward. Even though we never finish, we still overcome many, many areas of sin, and this growth shows others that we serve a holy God, because they see His characteristics in us.

12:2 *conceived, and borne a male child . . . unclean.* The child did not cause the mother to be unclean. God had ordained and blessed childbirth from the beginning, even before the sin in the garden (Gen. 1:28). It was the blood and other fluids in childbirth that made the mother ritually unclean for a period of time, just as other bodily fluids caused people to be unclean.

12:4 *blood of her purification thirty-three days.* There is a practical as well as a ceremonial aspect to these instructions. The eighth day marked the end of the mother's uncleanness with regard to everyday objects and activities; she would no longer make them unclean by touching them. But her personal uncleanness continued. This corresponds with the medical characteristics of childbirth, and the need for special care and rest for the mother. (There is no reason given why this period is double with the birth of a female child.)

12:8 *if she is not able to bring a lamb.* Mary, following the birth of Jesus and the days of her purification, went to the temple in Jerusalem and offered a pair of doves because she was poor. ***be clean.*** The law of purification after childbirth demonstrates that all aspects of human existence are touched by sin. Childbirth itself is not sinful, and having children was one of the good commands that the Lord gave Adam and Eve in the garden. Yet pain in childbirth was one of the curses of the fall, and this time of purification can be viewed as a reminder that humans are still dealing with a sin nature that needs God's mercy and purification.

13:2 *a man.* The Hebrew word for "a man" means "human being," that is, anyone.

11:39 [o] Hag. 2:11–13 **11:40** [p] Lev. 17:15; 22:8
11:43 [q] Lev. 20:25 **11:44** [r] Ex. 6:7 [s] 1 Pet. 1:15, 16
11:45 [t] Ex. 6:7; 20:2 [u] Lev. 11:44 **11:47** [v] Ezek. 44:23
12:2 [a] Lev. 15:19 [b] Luke 2:22 [c] Lev. 18:19 **12:3** [d] Gen. 17:12 **12:6** [e] Luke 2:22 [f] [John 1:29] [g] Lev. 5:7
12:8 [h] Lev. 5:7 [i] Lev. 4:26 **13:2** [a] Is. 3:17 [b] Mal. 2:7

him unclean. 4But if the bright spot *is* white on the skin of his body, and does not appear *to be* deeper than the skin, and its hair has not turned white, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the sore [c]seven days. 5And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore appears to be as it was, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall isolate him another seven days. 6Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore has faded, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it *is only* a scab, and he [d]shall wash his clothes and be clean. 7But if the scab should at all spread over the skin, after he has been seen by the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen by the priest again. 8And *if* the priest sees that the scab has indeed spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* leprosy.

9"When the leprous sore is on a person, then he shall be brought to the priest. 10[e]And the priest shall examine *him;* and indeed *if* the swelling on the skin *is* white, and it has turned the hair white, and *there is* a spot of raw flesh in the swelling, 11it *is* an old leprosy on the skin of his body. The priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not isolate him, for he *is* unclean.

12"And if leprosy breaks out all over the skin, and the leprosy covers all the skin of *the one who has* the sore, from his head to his foot, wherever the priest looks, 13then the priest shall consider; and indeed *if* the leprosy has covered all his body, he shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. It has all turned [f]white. He *is* clean. 14But when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be unclean. 15And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean; *for* the raw flesh *is* unclean. It *is* leprosy. 16Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest. 17And the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the sore has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. He *is* clean.

18"If the body develops a [g]boil in the skin, and it is healed, 19and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white, then it shall be shown to the priest; 20and *if,* when the priest sees it, it indeed appears deeper than the skin, and its hair has turned white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore which has broken out of the boil. 21But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in it, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days; 22and if it should at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. 23But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread, it *is* the scar of the boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

24"Or if the body receives a [h]burn on its skin by fire, and the raw *flesh* of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white or white, 25then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the hair of the bright spot has turned white, and it appears deeper than the skin, it *is* leprosy broken out in the burn. Therefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. 26But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in the bright spot, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days. 27And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day. If it has at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. 28But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread on the skin, but has faded, it *is* a swelling from the burn. The priest shall pronounce him clean, for it *is* the scar from the burn.

29"If a man or woman has a sore on the head or the beard, 30then the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed if it appears deeper than the skin, *and there is* in it thin yellow hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a scaly leprosy of the head or beard. 31But if the priest examines the scaly sore, and indeed it does not appear deeper than the skin, and *there is* no black hair in it, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale seven days. 32And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the scale does not appear deeper than the skin, 33he shall shave himself, but the scale he shall not shave. And the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale another seven days. 34On the seventh day the priest shall examine the scale; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread over the skin, and does not appear deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean. 35But if the scale should at all spread over the skin after his cleansing, 36then the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the scale has spread over the skin, the priest need not seek for yellow hair. He *is* unclean. 37But if the scale appears to be at a standstill, and there is black hair grown up in it, the scale has healed. He *is* clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

13:11 ***shall not isolate him.*** Isolation, or quarantine, was for the purpose of protecting the community until a diagnosis was reached. In this case, the patient was already diagnosed as "unclean," which meant he had to live outside the camp (v. 46).

13:4 [c] Lev. 14:8 **13:6** [d] Lev. 11:25; 14:8 **13:10** [e] Num. 12:10, 12 **13:13** [f] Ex. 4:6 **13:18** [g] Ex. 9:9; 15:26 **13:24** [h] Is. 3:24

38 "If a man or a woman has bright spots
on the skin of the body, *specifically* white
bright spots, 39 then the priest shall look;
and indeed *if* the bright spots on the skin
of the body *are* dull white, it *is* a white spot
that grows on the skin. He *is* clean.
40 "As for the man whose hair has fallen
from his head, he *is* bald, *but* he *is* clean.
41 He whose hair has fallen from his fore-
head, he *is* bald on the forehead, *but* he *is*
clean. 42 And if there is on the bald head or
bald [i]forehead a reddish-white sore, it *is*
leprosy breaking out on his bald head or
his bald forehead. 43 Then the priest shall
examine it; and indeed *if* the swelling of
the sore *is* reddish-white on his bald head
or on his bald forehead, as the appearance
of leprosy on the skin of the body, 44 he is
a leprous man. He *is* unclean. The priest
shall surely pronounce him unclean; his
sore *is* on his [j]head.
45 "Now the leper on whom the sore *is*, his
clothes shall be torn and his head [k]bare; and
he shall [l]cover his mustache, and cry, [m]'Un-
clean! Unclean!' 46 He shall be unclean. All
the days he has the sore he shall be unclean.
He *is* unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his
dwelling *shall be* [n]outside the camp.

The Law Concerning Leprous Garments

47 "Also, if a garment has a leprous
plague* in it, *whether it is* a woolen gar-
ment or a linen garment, 48 whether *it is* in
the warp or woof of linen or wool, whether
in leather or in anything made of leather,
49 and if the plague is greenish or reddish
in the garment or in the leather, whether
in the warp or in the woof, or in anything
made of leather, it *is* a leprous plague and
shall be shown to the priest. 50 The priest
shall examine the plague and isolate *that*
which has the plague seven days. 51 And he
shall examine the plague on the seventh
day. If the plague has spread in the gar-
ment, either in the warp or in the woof, in
the leather *or* in anything made of leath-
er, the plague *is* an [o]active leprosy. It *is*
unclean. 52 He shall therefore burn that gar-
ment in which is the plague, whether warp
or woof, in wool or in linen, or anything of
leather, for it *is* an active leprosy; *the gar-*
ment shall be burned in the fire.
53 "But if the priest examines *it*, and
indeed the plague has not spread in the
garment, either in the warp or in the woof,
or in anything made of leather, 54 then the
priest shall command that they wash *the*
thing in which *is* the plague; and he shall
isolate it another seven days. 55 Then the
priest shall examine the plague after it has
been washed; and indeed *if* the plague has
not changed its color, though the plague
has not spread, it *is* unclean, and you shall
burn it in the fire; it continues eating away,
whether the damage *is* outside or inside.
56 If the priest examines *it*, and indeed the
plague has faded after washing it, then he
shall tear it out of the garment, whether
out of the warp or out of the woof, or out
of the leather. 57 But if it appears again in
the garment, either in the warp or in the
woof, or in anything made of leather, it *is* a
spreading *plague;* you shall burn with fire
that in which is the plague. 58 And if you
wash the garment, either warp or woof, or
whatever is made of leather, if the plague
has disappeared from it, then it shall be
washed a second time, and shall be clean.
59 "This *is* the law of the leprous plague
in a garment of wool or linen, either in the
warp or woof, or in anything made of leath-
er, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it
unclean."

The Ritual for Cleansing Healed Lepers

14 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, say-
ing, 2 "This shall be the law of the lep-
er for the day of his cleansing: He [a]shall be
brought to the priest. 3 And the priest shall
go out of the camp, and the priest shall
examine *him;* and indeed, *if* the leprosy is

* **13:47** A mold, fungus, or similar infestation, and so in verses 47–59

13:45–46 ***clothes shall be torn . . . mustache.*** These actions were signs of mourning, for chronic skin diseases isolated the patients from life and family as if they had died. It is easy to see how leprosy became a metaphor for sin. Like serious skin diseases, sin is dangerous and ultimately fatal, often difficult to diagnose, and incurable without God's intervention.
13:47 ***leprous plague.*** This would include any mold, mildew, or other fungus growths on clothing.
13:50–58 ***priest shall examine the plague.*** The procedures for diagnosing a problem with a garment were similar to those for diagnosing human skin ailments. The fact that a garment was considered worth saving after a piece had been torn out of it was an economic consideration, reflecting the value of cloth.
14:1–9 ***cleansing.*** It is likely that the sprigs of hyssop were tied to the cedar with the scarlet thread. With that in one hand and the living bird in the other, the priest would dip them all in the blood and water mixture in the pottery bowl and shake them over the head of the person to be cleansed. It may seem like a rather messy procedure, but being purified from sin has never been a tidy process. In the end, it took Christ's death on the cross to cleanse His followers. The bird which was released is a reminder of the real freedom and joy that any forgiven sinner experiences.
14:2 ***He shall be brought to the priest.*** The priest was responsible for the diagnosis, and he was the one who administered the sacrifices and rituals that celebrated the return of the person to the community

13:42 [i] 2 Chr. 26:19 **13:44** [j] Is. 1:5 **13:45** [k] Lev. 10:6; 21:10 [l] Ezek. 24:17, 22 [m] Lam. 4:15 **13:46** [n] Num. 5:1–4; 12:14 **13:51** [o] Lev. 14:44 **14:2** [a] Matt. 8:2, 4

healed in the leper, 4then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living *and* clean birds, [b]cedar wood, [c]scarlet, and [d]hyssop. 5And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. 6As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water. 7And he shall [e]sprinkle it [f]seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field. 8He who is to be cleansed [g]shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and [h]wash himself in water, that he may be clean. After that he shall come into the camp, and [i]shall stay outside his tent seven days. 9But on the [j]seventh day he shall shave all the hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows—all his hair he shall shave off. He shall wash his clothes and wash his body in water, and he shall be clean.

10"And on the eighth day [k]he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as [l]a grain offering, and one log of oil. 11Then the priest who makes *him* clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 12And the priest shall take one male lamb and [m]offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and [n]wave them *as* a wave offering before the LORD. 13Then he shall kill the lamb [o]in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for [p]as the sin offering *is* the priest's, so *is* the trespass offering. [q]It *is* most holy. 14The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put *it* [r]on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. 15And the priest shall take *some* of the log of oil, and pour *it* into the palm of his own left hand. 16Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that *is* in his left hand, and shall [s]sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. 17And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put *some* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering. 18The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. [t]So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD.

19"Then the priest shall offer [u]the sin offering, and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. 20And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be [v]clean.

21"But [w]if he *is* poor and cannot afford it, then he shall take one male lamb *as* a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, one-tenth *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, a log of oil, 22[x]and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford: one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. 23[y]He shall bring them to the priest on the eighth day for his cleansing, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, before the LORD. 24[z]And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them *as* a wave offering before the LORD. 25Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, [a]and the priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering and put *it* on the tip

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of Israel. Jesus was aware of these laws when He touched the leper and healed him, and then directed the leper to show himself to the priest (Matt. 8:4).

14:4 ***cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop.*** Cedar is both durable and resistant to decay, scarlet is a reminder of blood, and hyssop is an aromatic herb used for flavor, fragrance, and medicine. Each of these items would have been a reminder of the blood that cleansed, the decay that was stopped, and the sweetness of good health.

14:5 ***running water.*** This is literally "living water," water from a spring or stream rather than water from a cistern, vessel, or pool. Living water symbolizes life. Jesus told the woman at the well to ask for living water (John 4:7–14).

14:9–32 ***shave . . . wash.*** What is termed leprosy was apparently a number of skin diseases which were infectious, and thus were an apt picture of sin, which also corrupts the flesh, and is spread through social contact. The picture of isolating, analyzing, and finally cleansing these skin diseases is similar to the process of recognizing, repenting, and being forgiven for sin. Blood is necessary in both cases, and in both cases the touch of the Holy Spirit, symbolized by oil, is present.

14:10 ***the eighth day.*** The eighth day was the day of circumcision for a newborn male, and the cleansed person was starting again, almost like being born again into the community.

14:21–32 ***if he is poor.*** God's legislation for Israel showed special concern for the poor. In these sacrifices the poor Israelite still had to bring a lamb for the trespass offering, but for the sin offering or burnt offering he was allowed to bring turtledoves or pigeons. The grain offering was reduced from three-tenths to one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour.

14:4 [b] Num. 19:6 [c] Ex. 25:4 [d] Ps. 51:7 **14:7** [e] Num. 19:18, 19 [f] Ps. 51:2 **14:8** [g] Num. 8:7 [h] [Heb. 10:22] [i] Num. 5:2, 3; 12:14, 15 **14:9** [j] Num. 19:19 **14:10** [k] Matt. 8:4 [l] Lev. 2:1 **14:12** [m] Lev. 5:6, 18; 6:6; 14:19 [n] Ex. 29:22–24, 26 **14:13** [o] Ex. 29:11 [p] Lev. 6:24–30; 7:7 [q] Lev. 2:3; 7:6; 21:22 **14:14** [r] Lev. 8:23, 24 **14:16** [s] Lev. 4:6 **14:18** [t] Lev. 4:26; 5:6 **14:19** [u] Lev. 5:1, 6; 12:7 **14:20** [v] Lev. 14:8, 9 **14:21** [w] Lev. 5:7, 11; 12:8; 27:8 **14:22** [x] Lev. 12:8; 15:14, 15 **14:23** [y] Lev. 14:10, 11 **14:24** [z] Lev. 14:12 **14:25** [a] Lev. 14:14, 17

of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. 26And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand. 27Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger *some* of the oil that *is* in his left hand seven times before the LORD. 28And the priest shall put *some* of the oil that *is* in his hand on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the trespass offering. 29The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before the LORD. 30And he shall offer one of [b]the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford— 31such as he is able to afford, the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering, with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him who is to be cleansed before the LORD. 32This *is* the law *for one* who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford [c]the usual cleansing."

The Law Concerning Leprous Houses

33And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 34[d]"When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession, and [e]I put the leprous plague* in a house in the land of your possession, 35and he who owns the house comes and tells the priest, saying, 'It seems to me that *there is* [f]some plague in the house,' 36then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest goes *into it* to examine the plague, that all that *is* in the house may not be made unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house. 37And he shall examine the plague; and indeed *if* the plague *is* on the walls of the house with ingrained streaks, greenish or reddish, which appear to be deep in the wall, 38then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days. 39And the priest shall come again on the seventh day and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread on the walls of the house, 40then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which *is* the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city. 41And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside, all around, and the dust that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place outside the city. 42Then they shall take other stones and put *them* in the place of *those* stones, and he shall take other mortar and plaster the house.

43"Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house, after he has taken away the stones, after he has scraped the house, and after it is plastered, 44then the priest shall come and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread in the house, it *is* [g]an active leprosy in the house. It *is* unclean. 45And he shall break down the house, its stones, its timber, and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry *them* outside the city to an unclean place. 46Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be unclean until [h]evening. 47And he who lies down in the house shall [i]wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes.

48"But if the priest comes in and examines *it,* and indeed the plague has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed. 49And [j]he shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. 50Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water; 51and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times. 52And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and the running water and the living bird, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet. 53Then he shall let the living bird loose outside the city in the open field, and [k]make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

54"This *is* the law for any [l]leprous sore and scale, 55for the [m]leprosy of a garment [n]and of a house, 56[o]for a swelling and a scab and a bright spot, 57to [p]teach when *it is* unclean and when *it is* clean. This *is* the law of leprosy."

The Law Concerning Bodily Discharges

15 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [a]'When

* **14:34** Decomposition by mildew, mold, dry rot, etc., and so in verses 34–53

14:34 ***leprous plague in a house.*** This is the same term used of serious skin diseases in chapter 13. All of these conditions were harmful, whether on human skin, clothing, or the wall of a house.

14:54–57 ***the law for any leprous sore.*** The uncleanness of leprosy required action. If it could not be removed, the thing that carried the uncleanness had to be removed from among God's people. In the same way, the uncleanness of sin requires action, but God has provided an infinitely stronger remedy through the blood of Christ.

14:30 [b] Lev. 14:22; 15:14, 15 **14:32** [c] Lev. 14:10 **14:34** [d] Deut. 7:1; 32:49 [e] [Prov. 3:33] **14:35** [f] [Ps. 91:9, 10] **14:44** [g] Lev. 13:51 **14:46** [h] Lev. 11:24; 15:5 **14:47** [i] Lev. 14:8 **14:49** [j] Lev. 14:4 **14:53** [k] Lev. 14:20 **14:54** [l] Lev. 13:30; 26:21 **14:55** [m] Lev. 13:47–52 [n] Lev. 14:34 **14:56** [o] Lev. 13:2 **14:57** [p] Deut. 24:8 **15:2** [a] Num. 5:2

any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge *is* unclean. 3And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge—whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it *is* his uncleanness. 4Every bed is unclean on which he who has the discharge lies, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean. 5And whoever [b]touches his bed shall [c]wash his clothes and [d]bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 6He who sits on anything on which he who has the [e]discharge sat shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 7And he who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 8If he who has the discharge [f]spits on him who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 9Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean. 10Whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until evening. He who carries *any of* those things shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 11And whomever the one who has the discharge touches, and has not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 12The [g]vessel of earth that he who has the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

13'And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then [h]he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes, and bathe his body in running water; then he shall be clean. 14On the eighth day he shall take for himself [i]two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and give them to the priest. 15Then the priest shall offer them, [j]the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering. [k]So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD because of his discharge.

16[l]'If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening. 17And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening. 18Also, when a woman lies with a man, and *there is* an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and [m]be unclean until evening.

19[n]'If a woman has a discharge, *and* the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. 20Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also everything that she sits on shall be unclean. 21Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 22And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 23If *anything* is on *her* bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. 24And [o]if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

25'If [p]a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her *customary* impurity, or if it runs beyond her *usual time of* impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her *customary* impurity. She *shall be* unclean. 26Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. 27Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

28'But [q]if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. 29And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 30Then the priest shall offer the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a [r]burnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the discharge of her uncleanness.

31'Thus you shall [s]separate the children

15:18 ***bathe in water . . . unclean.*** God's plan from the beginning includes sexual intercourse between a man and his wife; this is not sinful in God's eyes. The uncleanness and requirements of washing were a ritual cleansing, a reminder of the holiness of God, not a prohibition of intimate relationships.

15:19 ***woman . . . discharge.*** There are rules for cleansing, but no sacrifice was required. Menstruation was not regarded as sinful.

15:25–27 ***blood for many days.*** If a woman had a flow of blood at any time other than her normal monthly period, or if this was unusually long, her uncleanness continued the whole time and passed to all she touched. The woman with a hemorrhage who touched Jesus secretly (Luke 8:43–48) was in this situation.

15:28–30 ***cleansed of her discharge.*** The woman was to bring the smallest allowable sacrifice for the atonement of sins she may have committed during the period of her uncleanness.

15:31–33 ***separate . . . from their uncleanness.*** Hygiene and health were important by-products, but the focus of these regulations concerning

15:5 [b] Lev. 5:2; 14:46 [c] Lev. 14:8, 47 [d] Lev. 11:25; 17:15 **15:6** [e] Deut. 23:10 **15:8** [f] Num. 12:14 **15:12** [g] Lev. 6:28; 11:32, 33 **15:13** [h] Lev. 14:8; 15:28 **15:14** [i] Lev. 14:22, 23, 30, 31 **15:15** [j] Lev. 14:30, 31 [k] Lev. 14:19, 31 **15:16** [l] Lev. 22:4 **15:18** [m] [1 Sam. 21:4] **15:19** [n] Lev. 12:2 **15:24** [o] Lev. 18:19; 20:18 **15:25** [p] Matt. 9:20 **15:28** [q] Lev. 15:13–15 **15:30** [r] Lev. 5:7 **15:31** [s] Deut. 24:8

of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they [t]defile My tabernacle that *is* among them. 32[u]This *is* the law for one who has a discharge, [v]and *for him* who emits semen and is unclean thereby, 33[w]and for her who is indisposed because of her *customary* impurity, and for one who has a discharge, either man [x]or woman, [y]and for him who lies with her who is unclean.'"

The Day of Atonement

16 Now the LORD spoke to Moses after [a]the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered *profane fire* before the LORD, and died; 2and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother [b]not to come at *just* any time into the Holy *Place* inside the veil, before the mercy seat which *is* on the ark, lest he die; for [c]I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

3"Thus Aaron shall [d]come into the Holy *Place:* [e]with *the blood of* a young bull as a sin offering, and *of* a ram as a burnt offering. 4He shall put the [f]holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; [g]he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These *are* holy garments. Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and put them on. 5And he shall take from [h]the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering.

6"Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which *is* for himself, and [i]make atonement for himself and for his house. 7He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 8Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD's lot fell, and offer it *as* a sin offering. 10But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make [j]atonement upon it, *and* to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

11"And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for [k]himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which *is* for himself. 12Then he shall take [l]a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of [m]sweet incense beaten fine, and bring *it* inside the veil. 13[n]And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the [o]mercy seat that *is* on the Testimony, lest he [p]die. 14[q]He shall take some of the blood of the bull and [r]sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side;* and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

15[s]"Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which *is* for the people, bring its blood [t]inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. 16So he shall [u]make atonement for the Holy *Place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17There shall be [v]no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel. 18And he shall go out to the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make atonement for [w]it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. 19Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and [x]consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

20"And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy *Place*, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the

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uncleanness was on keeping God's tabernacle undefiled. Ceremonial laws in regard to natural impurity seem strange to us, because these ceremonies were made obsolete by the perfect sacrifice of Christ. But in the Old Testament one form of blasphemy was the defilement of sanctuary worship by certain forms of ceremonial impurity.

16:2 *come at just any time.* This refers to the arrogant attitude in which Aaron's sons had approached to offer unauthorized sacrifice. God is holy, and must not be approached carelessly. After Christ opened the way for all believers to approach God at any time, it is perhaps easy to forget that we still approach with reverence and awe. It was because of the terrible price of the cross that we have this privilege, not because God has suddenly become casual.

16:6 *for himself.* After atoning for himself the high priest could offer the sacrifice to atone for the people. The author of Hebrews places great emphasis on this point in discussing the superior priesthood of Jesus, who did not have to offer a sacrifice for Himself before He could be the sacrifice of atonement, one time for all people (Heb. 7:26; 9:11–28; 10:19–22).

16:15–19 *the goat . . . for the people.* Aaron offered the goat for the people, and the other actions involved in this sacrifice made it clear that the sins of the people had a defiling effect on the tabernacle. If not removed, the sins would have caused the ministry to be ineffective in atoning for the people.

15:31 [t] Num. 5:3; 19:13, 20 **15:32** [u] Lev. 15:2 [v] Lev. 15:16 **15:33** [w] Lev. 15:19 [x] Lev. 15:25 [y] Lev. 15:24
16:1 [a] Lev. 10:1, 2 **16:2** [b] Ex. 30:10 [c] Ex. 25:21, 22; 40:34
16:3 [d] [Heb. 9:7, 12, 24, 25] [e] Lev. 4:3 **16:4** [f] Ex. 28:39, 42, 43 [g] Ex. 30:20 **16:5** [h] Lev. 4:14 **16:6** [i] [Heb. 5:3; 7:27, 28; 9:7] **16:10** [j] [1 John 2:2] **16:11** [k] [Heb. 7:27; 9:7] **16:12** [l] Lev. 10:1 [m] Ex. 30:34–38 **16:13** [n] Ex. 30:7, 8 [o] Ex. 25:21 [p] Ex. 28:43 **16:14** [q] [Heb. 9:25; 10:4] [r] Lev. 4:6, 17 **16:15** [s] [Heb. 2:17] [t] [Heb. 6:19; 7:27; 9:3, 7, 12] **16:16** [u] Ex. 29:36; 30:10 **16:17** [v] Luke 1:10 **16:18** [w] Ex. 29:36 **16:19** [x] Ezek. 43:20

live goat. 21Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, [y]confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, [z]putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. 22The goat shall [a]bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall [b]release the goat in the wilderness.

23"Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting, [c]shall take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the Holy *Place*, and shall leave them there. 24And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place, put on his garments, come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people. 25[d]The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. 26And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes [e]and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. 27[f]The bull *for* the sin offering and the goat *for* the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal. 28Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

29"*This* shall be a statute forever for you: [g]In the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether* a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. 30For on that day *the priest* shall make atonement for you, to [h]cleanse you, *that* you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31[i]It *is* a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. *It is* a statute forever. 32[j]And the priest, who is anointed and [k]consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; 33then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary,* and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34[l]This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, [m]once a year." And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Sanctity of Blood

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to Aaron, to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, 'This *is* the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying: 3"Whatever man of the house of Israel who [a]kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or who kills *it* outside the camp, 4and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, the guilt of bloodshed shall be [b]imputed to that man. He has shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people, 5to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices [c]which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to the priest, and offer them

* **16:33** That is, the Most Holy Place

16:21 ***Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat.*** Sending the goat into the wilderness was a public ceremony. Everyone could see Aaron symbolically placing the sins of the people on the goat's head. All of the ways that people could offend God were placed on the head of the goat, which took them away from the camp, away from the people, away from God.

16:22 ***goat shall bear on itself.*** This is the origin of the common expression "scapegoat." The goat was not guilty of the sins, but he bore them anyway, allowing the guilty to escape the consequences of their sins. In Jesus' bearing the sins of the human race, and in His death outside the city (outside the camp), He fulfilled this annual ritual of the Day of Atonement. Not only was Jesus the perfect High Priest, He was the perfect Sacrifice.

16:29 ***In the seventh month.*** The Day of Atonement fell between mid-September and mid-October.

16:29–34 The Day of Atonement—This whole process of animal sacrifice seems foreign to us. There is no enjoyment in seeing an animal killed. Special underwear and extra washings do not fit our religious experience. It is easy for us to wonder why this was necessary. What is the big deal anyway? The primary reason we have trouble with this is that we have such a superficial understanding of sin and God's attitude toward it. We tend to think of sin as a kind of correctable mistake, easily taken care of. Why be so upset about it?

The Day of Atonement pointed the Israelites to the seriousness of sin. They were able to see that sin was an affront to God that had to be dealt with. It is like cancer. If it is not treated, death is the ultimate consequence. At its core, sin is rebellion against God. This ceremony stood as a permanent reminder of these truths. It pointed to God's holiness, to the drastic measures needed to deal with sin. Our souls are to be cleansed thoroughly and the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement accomplished this cleansing for the Israelite community. As such it was the most important day in the Jewish religious calendar.

17:5 ***sacrifices . . . in the open field.*** Such sacrifices were strictly forbidden. All sacrifices were to be clearly and unequivocally made to God alone, and in His way.

16:21 [y] Lev. 5:5; 26:40 [z] [Is. 53:6] **16:22** [a] [Is. 53:6, 11, 12] [b] Lev. 14:7 **16:23** [c] Ezek. 42:14; 44:19 **16:25** [d] Lev. 1:8; 4:10 **16:26** [e] Lev. 15:5 **16:27** [f] Heb. 13:11 **16:29** [g] Lev. 23:27–32 **16:30** [h] Jer. 33:8 **16:31** [i] Lev. 23:27, 32 **16:32** [j] Lev. 4:3, 5, 16; 21:10 [k] Ex. 29:29, 30 **16:34** [l] Lev. 23:31 [m] [Heb. 9:7, 25, 28] **17:3** [a] Deut. 12:5, 15, 21 **17:4** [b] Rom. 5:13 **17:5** [c] Deut. 12:1–27

as peace offerings to the LORD. 6And the priest [d]shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and [e]burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the LORD. 7They shall no more offer their sacrifices [f]to demons, after whom they [g]have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations."'

8"Also you shall say to them: 'Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, [h]who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, 9and does not [i]bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the LORD, that man shall be cut off from among his people.

10[j]'And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, [k]I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11For the [l]life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar [m]to make atonement for your souls; for [n]it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.' 12Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.'

13"Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who [o]hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall [p]pour out its blood and [q]cover it with dust; 14[r]for *it is* the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.'

15[s]"And every person who eats what died *naturally* or what was torn *by beasts*, *whether he is* a native of your own country or a stranger, [t]he shall both wash his clothes and [u]bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean. 16But if he does not wash *them* or bathe his body, then [v]he shall bear his guilt."

Laws of Sexual Morality

18 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [a]'I am the LORD your God. 3[b]According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and [c]according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances. 4[d]You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I *am* the LORD your God. 5You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD.

6'None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the LORD. 7The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. 8The nakedness of your [e]father's wife you shall not uncover; it *is* your father's nakedness. 9[f]The nakedness of your sister,

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17:7 ***to demons . . . played the harlot.*** Pagan deities in the form of goats, like satyrs, were a part of the cultures surrounding the Israelites. Israel's worship of other gods, and God's attitude toward it was likened to the way a husband would feel if his wife became a prostitute. This was a picture of betrayal that the Israelites could understand. ***statute forever.*** Because this was a permanent rule, it becomes clear that it was not an injunction against slaughtering animals for meat, but referred to sacrifices. When Israel's worship was centered in Jerusalem, some families lived more than a hundred miles from the temple. They could not have traveled so far to kill animals for meat, although they did make the journey for sacrifices.

17:10 ***any blood.*** Eating blood was forbidden in the strongest possible terms.

17:13 ***cover it with dust.*** Blood was to be treated respectfully, and covering it with earth was a token of burial.

18:2 ***the LORD.*** This is the translation of the name for God, sometimes called Yahweh, the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses (Ex. 6:2–8). In using this name, God was basing His claim to the Israelites' devotion on His willingness to reveal Himself to them, to redeem them and to be their God.

18:4 ***My judgments . . . My ordinances.*** "Judgments" refers to judicial decisions involving situations that might not be addressed in the statutes. "Ordinances" are decrees, laws, and acts of a permanent nature.

18:5 ***if a man does, he shall live.*** God gave the law as a means of life on all levels—physical, moral, spiritual, and relational.

18:6 ***None . . . anyone who is near of kin . . . uncover his nakedness.*** This term covers cases such as incest between father and daughter and between brother and full sister, even though they are absent from the following list. To uncover someone's nakedness is to have sexual intercourse with that person.

18:7 ***The nakedness of your father . . . you shall not uncover.*** The point of this passage is that committing incest with the wife of one's father is symbolically to uncover the father's nakedness too, because the two are one flesh through marriage.

18:8 ***father's wife.*** Even if your father's wife is not your mother, it is still wrong to have sexual relations with her. In Israel at that time multiple wives or concubines were still part of society, as well as a second wife coming into the family through death or divorce of the first wife.

18:9 ***your sister.*** Though this may seem redundant, God wanted to make it abundantly clear that a sister who did not share the same pair of parents as her

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17:6 [d] Lev. 3:2 [e] Num. 18:17 **17:7** [f] Deut. 32:17 [g] Ezek. 23:8 **17:8** [h] Lev. 1:2, 3; 18:26 **17:9** [i] Lev. 14:23 **17:10** [j] Gen. 9:4 [k] Lev. 20:3, 5, 6 **17:11** [l] Gen. 9:4 [m] [Matt. 26:28] [n] [Heb. 9:22] **17:13** [o] Lev. 7:26 [p] Deut. 12:16, 24 [q] Ezek. 24:7 **17:14** [r] Gen. 9:4 **17:15** [s] Ex. 22:31 [t] Lev. 11:25 [u] Lev. 15:5 **17:16** [v] Lev. 5:1 **18:2** [a] Ex. 6:7 **18:3** [b] Ezek. 20:7, 8 [c] Lev. 18:24–30; 20:23 **18:4** [d] Ezek. 20:19 **18:8** [e] Gen. 35:22 **18:9** [f] Deut. 27:22

the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, *whether* born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover. 10The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs *is* your own nakedness. 11The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she *is* your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness. 12[g]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she *is* near of kin to your father. 13You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she *is* near of kin to your mother. 14[h]You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she *is* your aunt. 15You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she *is* your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness. 16You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it *is* your brother's nakedness. 17You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her [i]daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They *are* near of kin to her. It *is* wickedness. 18Nor shall you take a woman [j]as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.

19[k]Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as [k]long as she is in her [l]*customary* impurity. 20[m]Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your [n]neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her. 21And you shall not let any of your descendants [o]pass through [p]*the fire* to [q]Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD. 22You shall not lie with [r]a male as with a woman. It *is* an abomination. 23Nor shall you mate with any [s]animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It *is* perversion.

24[t]'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; [u]for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. 25For [v]the land is defiled; therefore I [w]visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land [x]vomits out its inhabitants. 26[y]You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you 27(for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled), 28lest [z]the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you. 29For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people.

30'Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so [a]that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: [b]I *am* the LORD your God.'"

Moral and Ceremonial Laws

19 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: [a]'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God *am* holy.

3[b]'Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and [c]keep My Sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.

4[d]'Do not turn to idols, [e]nor make for yourselves molded gods: I *am* the LORD your God.

5'And [f]if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, you shall offer it of your own free will. 6It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire. 7And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it *is* an abomination. It shall not be accepted. 8Therefore

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brother was still off limits. This would cover husbands of multiple wives and illegitimate children. Sexual sin is serious with long reaching consequences, and it is clearly forbidden within the family.

18:20 ***with your neighbor's wife.*** Adultery is forbidden in Exodus 20:14 and its penalty is given in Leviticus 20:10.

18:21 ***your descendants . . . to Molech.*** God forbids child sacrifice right along with incest. This is destructive behavior with far-reaching consequences, and all followers of the Lord will abhor it as God does.

18:22 ***lie with a male.*** Homosexuality here is labeled an abomination, something detestable to God both ritually (as a part of the Canaanite religion) and morally. To abominate something is to be repulsed by it, and when God is repulsed, it is a clear message that homosexuality is not part of His plan for human relationships.

18:23 ***any animal.*** Bestiality is labeled a perversion, something out of the natural order and a defilement. It, too, was a feature of some of the religions of Israel's neighbors.

18:24–30 ***defile.*** The land had become so defiled by the perverted practices of the Canaanites that it was vomiting them out. For that reason, the land would be available to Israel to settle. The Israelites, however, needed to be careful to live as God's holy people, or the land would vomit them out as well.

19:3 ***keep My Sabbaths.*** The weekly Sabbath was an acknowledgment that not everything depended on the Israelites' efforts. It was an acknowledgment of God's lordship and His grace.

19:5 ***peace offering.*** The peace offering was a free-will offering.

18:12 *g* Lev. 20:19 **18:14** *h* Lev. 20:20 **18:17** *i* Lev. 20:14 **18:18** *j* 1 Sam. 1:6, 8 **18:19** *k* Ezek. 18:6 *l* Lev. 15:24; 20:18 **18:20** *m* [Prov. 6:25–33] *n* Lev. 20:10 **18:21** *o* Lev. 20:2–5 *p* 2 Kin. 16:3 *q* 1 Kin. 11:7, 33 **18:22** *r* Lev. 20:13 **18:23** *s* Ex. 22:19 **18:24** *t* Matt. 15:18–20 *u* Deut. 18:12 **18:25** *v* Num. 35:33, 34 *w* Jer. 5:9 *x* Lev. 18:28; 20:22 **18:26** *y* Lev. 18:5, 30 **18:28** *z* Jer. 9:19 **18:30** *a* Lev. 18:3; 22:9 *b* Lev. 18:2 **19:2** *a* Lev. 11:44; 20:7, 26 **19:3** *b* Ex. 20:12 *c* Ex. 16:23; 20:8; 31:13 **19:4** *d* Ex. 20:4 *e* Ex. 34:17 **19:5** *f* Lev. 7:16

everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed *offering* of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

9 [g]"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. 10 And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather *every* grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

11 [h]"You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, [i]nor lie to one another. 12 And you shall not [j]swear by My name falsely, [k]nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD.

13 [l]"You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. [m]The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. 14 You shall not curse the deaf, [n]nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the LORD.

15 "You shall do no injustice in [o]judgment. You shall not [p]be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. 16 You shall not go about *as* a [q]talebearer among your people; nor shall you [r]take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the LORD.

17 [s]"You shall not hate your brother in your heart. [t]You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. 18 [u]You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, [v]but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.

19 "You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

20 "Whoever lies carnally with a woman who *is* [w]betrothed to a man as a concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be scourging; *but* they shall not be put to death, because she was not free. 21 And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering. 22 The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he has committed. And the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him.

23 "When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten. 24 But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD. 25 And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I *am* the LORD your God.

26 "You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. 27 You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. 28 You shall not [x]make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the LORD.

29 [y]"Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.

19:10 ***for the poor and the stranger.*** Providing for the poor and the alien who could not own land was a priority in ancient Israel. The generosity of God's people was rooted in God's generosity toward the Israelites.

19:16 ***talebearer.*** A talebearer is one who is not only a gossip, but one who is actively seeking to destroy another's reputation.

19:17 ***hate . . . in your heart.*** Jesus addressed this principle in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:21–24).

19:18 ***take vengeance.*** Vengeance belongs to God (Deut. 32:35); His vengeance is entirely just. It is easy for human vengeance to be carried out too zealously, leaving the by-products of bitterness and hatred. Instead, we are to do good to those who hate us and pray for those who persecute us (Matt. 5:44). ***love.*** The word "love" is first found in Genesis 22:2, where God told Abraham to offer up his son whom he loved as a burnt sacrifice upon Mount Moriah, and the first mention of love in the New Testament is God proclaiming that Jesus is His beloved Son (Matt. 3:17). Family love is something people find easy to understand. Even if it is not very strong in one's nuclear family, the longing for love shows us that we understand what it is to be. To take this love one step further, that a parent would allow a child to die for the good of others, stretches the concept of love. And yet it is that very love that caused God to send His Son to die for the whole world.

19:20 ***a woman . . . a concubine.*** The slave woman had a low social standing and few rights, and may not have had the freedom to cry out when approached sexually. Therefore, she remained guiltless. Because she was a slave, the man escaped death, but remained guilty before God. Atonement was necessary for him to receive forgiveness.

19:26 ***divination.*** God, and not a demon or impersonal force, is all powerful and directs the future. Practicing divination reveals a lack of trust in God to bring the best in the future in His timing.

19:27–28 ***beard . . . cuttings in your flesh . . . nor tattoo any marks.*** The human body was designed by God to be beautiful. Disfiguring the body for the dead, or as a sign of mourning, is dishonoring to God. Some disfiguring was a part of pagan religions, and was forbidden to God's people for any reason.

19:29 ***cause her to be a harlot.*** Sexual relations are sacred. Forcing a daughter to violate that sanctity defiled her against her will.

19:9 *g* Deut. 24:19–22 **19:11** *h* Ex. 20:15, 16 *i* Eph. 4:25 **19:12** *j* Deut. 5:11 *k* Lev. 18:21 **19:13** *l* Ex. 22:7–15, 21–27 *m* Deut. 24:15 **19:14** *n* Deut. 27:18 **19:15** *o* Deut. 16:19 *p* Ex. 23:3, 6 **19:16** *q* Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19 *r* 1 Kin. 21:7–19 **19:17** *s* [1 John 2:9, 11; 3:15] *t* Matt. 18:15 **19:18** *u* [Deut. 32:35] *v* Mark 12:31 **19:20** *w* Deut. 22:23–27 **19:28** *x* Jer. 16:6 **19:29** *y* Deut. 22:21; 23:17, 18

30 ‘You shall keep My Sabbaths and [z]reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the LORD.
31 ‘Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after [a]them, to be defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God.
32 [b]‘You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and [c]fear your God: I *am* the LORD.
33 ‘And [d]if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him.
34 [e]The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and [f]you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.
35 ‘You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume. 36 You shall have [g]honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.
37 [h]‘Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I *am* the LORD.’”

Penalties for Breaking the Law

20 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 [a]“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: [b]‘Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall [c]stone him with stones. 3 [d]I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. 4 And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, 5 then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.
6 ‘And [e]the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.
7 [f]Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the LORD your God. 8 And you shall keep [g]My statutes, and perform them: [h]I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you.
9 ‘For [i]everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. [j]His blood *shall be* upon him.
10 [k]‘The man who commits adultery with *another* man’s wife, *he* who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death. 11 The man who lies with his [l]father’s wife has uncovered his father’s nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.
12 If a man lies with his [m]daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them. 13 [n]If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them. 14 If a man marries a woman and her [o]mother, it *is* wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you. 15 If a man mates with an [p]animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. 16 If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them.
17 ‘If a man takes his [q]sister, his father’s daughter or his mother’s daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it *is* a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister’s nakedness. He shall bear his guilt. 18 [r]If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.
19 ‘You shall not uncover the nakedness of your [s]mother’s sister nor of your [t]father’s sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt. 20 If a man lies with his [u]uncle’s wife, he has

19:31 *mediums . . . familiar spirits.* In principle this is no different than divination. Its practice involves consulting the spirits of the dead, or other spirits, both of which are strictly forbidden. It demonstrates lack of faith and rebellion against God and His ways.
19:35–36 *injustice in judgment, in measurement.* Injustice in legal transactions or in business are equally wrong. God is just and generous, and His people are to be the same.
20:2–5 *gives any of his descendants to Molech . . . put to death . . . stone him.* The penalty for child sacrifice, whether carried out by an alien or a citizen of Israel, was death, either carried out by the justice system or by God Himself. Children are a trust and blessing from God, and killing them in a pagan ritual is a wickedness that God will not overlook.
20:8 *who sanctifies you.* To be sanctified is to be “set apart.” The worshiper was set apart to God, from all other allegiances.
20:9 *His blood shall be upon him.* This statement assured the executioners that they were not guilty of shedding the offender’s blood.

19:30 [z] Lev. 26:2 **19:31** [a] Lev. 20:6, 27 **19:32** [b] 1 Tim. 5:1 [c] Lev. 19:14 **19:33** [d] Ex. 22:21 **19:34** [e] Ex. 12:48 [f] Deut. 10:19 **19:36** [g] Deut. 25:13–15 **19:37** [h] Lev. 18:4, 5 **20:2** [a] Lev. 18:2 [b] Lev. 18:21 [c] Deut. 17:2–5 **20:3** [d] Lev. 17:10 **20:6** [e] Lev. 19:31 **20:7** [f] Lev. 19:2 **20:8** [g] Lev. 19:19, 37 [h] Ex. 31:13 **20:9** [i] Ex. 21:17 [j] 2 Sam. 1:16 **20:10** [k] Ex. 20:14 **20:11** [l] Lev. 18:7, 8 **20:12** [m] Lev. 18:15 **20:13** [n] Lev. 18:22 **20:14** [o] Lev. 18:17 **20:15** [p] Lev. 18:23 **20:17** [q] Lev. 18:9 **20:18** [r] Lev. 15:24; 18:19 **20:19** [s] Lev. 18:13 [t] Lev. 18:12 **20:20** [u] Lev. 18:14

uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.
21 If a man takes his [v]brother's wife, it *is* an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

22 "'You shall therefore keep all My [w]statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell [x]may not vomit you out.
23 [y]And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and [z]therefore I abhor them. 24 But [a]I have said to you, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I *am* the LORD your God, [b]who has separated you from the peoples. 25 [c]You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, [d]and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. 26 And you shall be holy to Me, [e]for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

27 [f]'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them.'"

Regulations for Conduct of Priests

21 And the LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: [a]'None shall defile himself for the dead among his people, 2 except for his relatives who are nearest to him: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, and his brother; 3 also his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself. 4 *Otherwise* he shall not defile himself, *being* a chief man among his people, to profane himself.

5 [b]'They shall not make any bald *place* on their heads, nor shall they shave the edges of their beards nor make any cuttings in their flesh. 6 They shall be [c]holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* the [d]bread of their God; [e]therefore they shall be holy.
7 [f]They shall not take a wife *who is* a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman [g]divorced from her husband; for *the priest** is holy to his God. 8 Therefore you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for [h]I the LORD, who [i]sanctify you, *am* holy.
9 The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be [j]burned with fire.

10 "'*He who is* the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was [k]poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not [l]uncover his head nor tear his clothes; 11 nor shall he go [m]near any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother; 12 [n]nor shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the [o]consecration of the anointing oil of his God *is* upon him: I *am* the LORD. 13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity. 14 A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman *or* a harlot—these he shall not marry; but he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife. 15 Nor shall he profane his posterity among his people, for I the LORD sanctify him.'"

16 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 17 "Speak to Aaron, saying: 'No man of your descendants in *succeeding* generations, who has *any* defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God. 18 For any man who has a [p]defect shall not approach: a man blind or lame, who has a marred *face* or any *limb* [q]too long, 19 a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, 20 or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or *a man* who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch. 21 No man of the descendants of Aaron the priest, who has a defect, shall come near to offer the offerings made by fire to the LORD. He has a defect; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. 22 He may eat the bread of his God, *both* the most holy and the holy; 23 only he shall not go near the [r]veil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest [s]he profane My sanctuaries; for I the LORD sanctify them.'"

* **21:7** Literally *he*

20:21 ***takes his brother's wife.*** It may be assumed that this passage refers to taking his brother's wife while his brother is still living. Deuteronomy 25:5–10 gives a fairly detailed directive for a brother marrying his brother's childless widow and giving the firstborn the name of the dead brother, so that his family line will be maintained.

21:5 ***not make any bald place . . . cuttings in their flesh.*** These were pagan customs, and all Israel was forbidden to observe them (19:27).

21:9 ***profanes herself by playing the harlot.*** Prostitution, the ultimate promiscuity, was the opposite of holiness, the ultimate faithfulness. The daughter was to reflect her father's holiness to God.

21:22 ***He may eat.*** Physical defect did not imply a moral defect. The person afflicted was to receive his food as the other priests did, from the sacrifices.

20:21 [v] Lev. 18:16 **20:22** [w] Lev. 18:26; 19:37 [x] Lev. 18:25, 28 **20:23** [y] Lev. 18:3, 24 [z] Deut. 9:5 **20:24** [a] Ex. 3:17; 6:8; 13:5; 33:1–3 [b] Ex. 19:5; 33:16 **20:25** [c] Lev. 10:10; 11:1–47 [d] Lev. 11:43 **20:26** [e] Lev. 19:2 **20:27** [f] Lev. 19:31 **21:1** [a] Ezek. 44:25 **21:5** [b] Deut. 14:1 **21:6** [c] Ex. 22:31 [d] Lev. 3:11 [e] Is. 52:11 **21:7** [f] Ezek. 44:22 [g] Deut. 24:1, 2 **21:8** [h] Lev. 11:44, 45 [i] Lev. 8:12, 30 **21:9** [j] Deut. 22:21 **21:10** [k] Lev. 8:12 [l] Lev. 10:6, 7 **21:11** [m] Num. 19:14 **21:12** [n] Lev. 10:7 [o] Ex. 29:6, 7 **21:18** [p] Lev. 22:19–25 [q] Lev. 22:23 **21:23** [r] Lev. 16:2 [s] Lev. 21:12

24And Moses told *it* to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel.

22 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to Aaron and his sons, that they [a]separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they [b]do not profane My holy name *by* what they [c]dedicate to Me: I *am* the LORD. 3Say to them: 'Whoever of all your descendants throughout your generations, who goes near the holy things which the children of Israel dedicate to the LORD, [d]while he has uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off from My presence: I *am* the LORD.

4'Whatever man of the descendants of Aaron, who *is* a [e]leper or has [f]a discharge, shall not eat the holy offerings [g]until he is clean. And [h]whoever touches anything made unclean *by* a corpse, or [i]a man who has had an emission of semen, 5or [j]whoever touches any creeping thing by which he would be made unclean, or [k]any person by whom he would become unclean, whatever his uncleanness may be— 6the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat the holy *offerings* unless he [l]washes his body with water. 7And when the sun goes down he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat the holy *offerings*, because [m]it *is* his food. 8[n]Whatever dies *naturally* or is torn *by beasts* he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I *am* the LORD.

9'They shall therefore keep [o]My ordinance, [p]lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the LORD sanctify them.

10[q]'No outsider shall eat the holy *offering;* one who dwells with the priest, or a hired servant, shall not eat the holy thing. 11But if the priest [r]buys a person with his money, he may eat it; and one who is born in his house may eat his food. 12If the priest's daughter is married to an outsider, she may not eat of the holy offerings. 13But if the priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child, and has returned to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat her father's food; but no outsider shall eat it.

14'And if a man eats the [s]holy *offering* unintentionally, then he shall restore a holy *offering* to the priest, and add one-fifth to it. 15They shall not profane the holy *offerings* of the children of Israel, which they offer to the LORD, 16or allow them to bear the guilt of trespass when they eat their holy *offerings;* for I the LORD sanctify them.'"

Offerings Accepted and Not Accepted

17And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 18"Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them: [t]'Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, who offers his sacrifice for any of his vows or for any of his freewill offerings, which they offer to the LORD as a burnt offering— 19[u]*you shall offer* of your own free will a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats. 20[v]Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf. 21And [w]whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, [x]to fulfill *his* vow, or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. 22[y]Those *that are* blind or broken or maimed, or have an ulcer or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make [z]an offering by fire of them on the altar to the LORD. 23Either a bull or a lamb that has any limb [a]too long or too short you may offer *as* a freewill offering, but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

24'You shall not offer to the LORD what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make *any offering of them* in your land. 25Nor [b]from a foreigner's hand shall you offer any of these as [c]the bread of your God, because their [d]corruption *is* in them, *and* defects *are* in them. They shall not be accepted on your behalf.'"

26And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

22:3 ***all your descendants throughout your generations.*** This statement made the restriction as broad as possible in any one generation, and as broad as possible through all time. ***cut off from My presence.*** The individual was not executed or banished from the community, but was permanently barred from ministering as a priest.

22:7 ***it is his food.*** The sacrifices brought by the Israelites were a major part of the daily provisions of the priests.

22:8 ***dies naturally or is torn by beasts.*** An ordinary Israelite was unclean until evening if he ate such animals (17:15–16), but a priest was not to eat them at all.

22:11 ***buys a person . . . he may eat.*** Strangers, guests, and hired servants were forbidden to eat of the holy gifts, but slaves and their children were considered as a part of the priest's family, and could eat of the consecrated food.

22:18 ***strangers in Israel.*** Resident aliens in Israel were permitted to worship God with the Israelites, and were subject to the same regulations about sacrifices.

22:21 ***it must be perfect to be accepted.*** This is a very clear directive, yet the prophet Malachi addressed the problem of defective sacrifices in his day (Mal. 1:7–14). God called that "despising" His name.

22:2 [a] Num. 6:3 [b] Lev. 18:21 [c] Ex. 28:38 **22:3** [d] Lev. 7:20, 21 **22:4** [e] Num. 5:2 [f] Lev. 15:2 [g] Lev. 14:2; 15:13 [h] Num. 19:11 [i] Lev. 15:16, 17 **22:5** [j] Lev. 11:23–28 [k] Lev. 15:7, 19 **22:6** [l] Lev. 15:5 **22:7** [m] Num. 18:11, 13 **22:8** [n] Lev. 7:24; 11:39, 40; 17:15 **22:9** [o] Lev. 18:30 [p] Ex. 28:43 **22:10** [q] Ex. 29:33 **22:11** [r] Ex. 12:44 **22:14** [s] Num. 18:32 **22:18** [t] Lev. 1:2, 3, 10 **22:19** [u] Lev. 1:3 **22:20** [v] Deut. 15:21; 17:1 **22:21** [w] Lev. 3:1, 6 [x] Num. 15:3, 8 **22:22** [y] Mal. 1:8 [z] Lev. 1:9, 13; 3:3, 5 **22:23** [a] Lev. 21:18 **22:25** [b] Num. 15:15, 16 [c] Lev. 21:6, 17 [d] Mal. 1:14

27[e]"When a bull or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day and thereafter it shall be accepted as an offering made by fire to the LORD. 28 *Whether it is* a cow or ewe, do not kill both her [f]and her young on the same day. 29And when you [g]offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer *it* of your own free will. 30On the same day it shall be eaten; you shall leave [h]none of it until morning: I *am* the LORD.

31[i]"Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: I *am* the LORD. 32[j]You shall not profane My holy name, but [k]I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I *am* the LORD who [l]sanctifies you, 33[m]who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD."

Feasts of the LORD

23 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim *to be* [a]holy convocations, these *are* My feasts.

The Sabbath

3[b]'Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day *is* a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work *on it;* it *is* the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

The Passover and Unleavened Bread

4[c]'These *are* the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. 5[d]On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight *is* the LORD's Passover. 6And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. 7[e]On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. 8But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work *on it.*'"

The Feast of Firstfruits

9And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [f]'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of [g]the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11He shall [h]wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. 13Its grain offering *shall be* two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering *shall be* of wine, one-fourth of a hin. 14You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

The Feast of Weeks

15'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16Count [i]fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer [j]a new grain offering to the LORD. 17You shall bring from your dwellings two wave *loaves* of two-tenths *of an ephah.* They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. *They are* [k]the firstfruits to the LORD. 18And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one

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22:31 *commandments.* As Christians, it is important to understand the relationship between grace and law. A focus on the law without grace leads to rule oriented life, where our actions may be decent enough, but our heart is hard toward God. But if the focus is only on grace, we may be without the guidelines necessary to keep us from just doing what is right in our own eyes. Certain directives are given to us because even when we are born again, we are not all wise. The best way to balance all of this is to consider the whole counsel of God by reading and seeking to understand the whole Bible.

23:3 *Six days shall work be done.* Work was given to the human race in the garden of Eden. It is one of the ways humans bear the image of God, and is not a curse on the race. Even after the fall it remains God's good gift. ***a Sabbath of solemn rest . . . in all your dwellings.*** The regular seventh day of rest is for our refreshment, and a day of solemn, joyful worship. It was not to be observed only in the sanctuary, it was to be celebrated in every household. The writer of Hebrews (ch. 4) calls belief in the saving work of Jesus, "entering His rest," and compares that to the Sabbath rest.

23:5 *fourteenth day of the first month.* This month would fall between mid-March and mid-April. The Passover celebrated Israel's exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12:1–28).

23:6–8 *Feast of Unleavened Bread.* This festival immediately followed Passover, and later in Israel's history, it involved pilgrimages to the central sanctuary; first in Shiloh, and later in Jerusalem.

23:10 *sheaf of the firstfruits.* This bundle of the first harvested barley belonged to God as a special offering, acknowledging God's provision for the harvest.

22:27 [e] Ex. 22:30 **22:28** [f] Deut. 22:6, 7 **22:29** [g] Lev. 7:12 **22:30** [h] Lev. 7:15 **22:31** [i] Deut. 4:40 **22:32** [j] Lev. 18:21 [k] Lev. 10:3 [l] Lev. 20:8 **22:33** [m] Lev. 19:36, 37 **23:2** [a] Ex. 12:16 **23:3** [b] Luke 13:14 **23:4** [c] Ex. 23:14–16 **23:5** [d] Ex. 12:1–28 **23:7** [e] Ex. 12:16 **23:10** [f] Ex. 23:19; 34:26 [g] [Rom. 11:16] **23:11** [h] Ex. 29:24 **23:16** [i] Acts 2:1 [j] Num. 28:26 **23:17** [k] Num. 15:17–21

young bull, and two rams. They shall be *as* a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD. 19Then you shall sacrifice [l]one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a [m]peace offering. 20The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits *as* a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. [n]They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. 21And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work *on it*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

22[o]"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.'"

The Feast of Trumpets

23Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 24"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the [p]seventh month, on the first *day* of the month, you shall have a sabbath-*rest*, [q]a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. 25You shall do no customary work *on it;* and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'"

The Day of Atonement

26And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 27[r]"Also the tenth *day* of this seventh month *shall be* the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. 28And you shall do no work on that same day, for it *is* the Day of Atonement, [s]to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29For any person who is not [t]afflicted *in soul* on that same day [u]shall be cut off from his people. 30And any person who does any work on that same day, [v]that person I will destroy from among his people. 31You shall do no manner of work; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32It *shall be* to you a sabbath of *solemn* rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth *day* of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."

The Feast of Tabernacles

33Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 34"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: [w]'The fifteenth day of this seventh month *shall be* the Feast of Tabernacles *for* seven days to the LORD. 35On the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work *on it*. 36*For* seven days you shall offer an [x]offering made by fire to the LORD. [y]On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a [z]sacred assembly, *and* you shall do no customary work *on it*.

37[a]'These *are* the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day— 38[b]besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD.

39'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have [c]gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD *for* seven days; on the first day *there shall be* a sabbath-*rest*, and on the eighth day a sabbath-*rest*. 40And [d]you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; [e]and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 41[f]You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. *It shall be* a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42[g]You shall dwell in booths for seven days. [h]All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 43[i]that your generations may [j]know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when [k]I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.'"

44So Moses [l]declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

23:24 ***In the seventh month.*** This holiday falls in mid-September. It was a reminder of God's goodness, which was expressed in the covenant, and asked God to continue to remember that covenant.

23:26–32 Atonement—The Day of Atonement was a time to set aside all the thoughts and actions that typically fill the day and consider one's relationship with God. This was to be a time of humbleness, which would preclude any self-righteousness or merely comparing oneself with others. It was a time to remember that even people who want to follow God need to have their lives realigned with Him. Christians regularly take time to think of these things as they remember the Lord's death until He comes again, with the bread and the cup of communion.

23:27 ***Day of Atonement.*** The day was not given this name in chapter 16, but this was the day of all days, when complete atonement was made for all Israel.

23:40 ***boughs of leafy trees.*** The leafy tree is thought to be the myrtle.

23:19 *l* Num. 28:30 *m* Lev. 3:1 **23:20** *n* Deut. 18:4 **23:22** *o* Lev. 19:9, 10 **23:24** *p* Num. 29:1 *q* Lev. 25:9 **23:27** *r* Num. 29:7 **23:28** *s* Lev. 16:34 **23:29** *t* Jer. 31:9 *u* Num. 5:2 **23:30** *v* Lev. 20:3–6 **23:34** *w* Num. 29:12 **23:36** *x* Num. 29:12–34 *y* Num. 29:35–38 *z* Deut. 16:8 **23:37** *a* Lev. 23:2, 4 **23:38** *b* Num. 29:39 **23:39** *c* Ex. 23:16 **23:40** *d* Neh. 8:15 *e* Deut. 12:7; 16:14, 15 **23:41** *f* Num. 29:12 **23:42** *g* [Is. 4:6] *h* Neh. 8:14–16 **23:43** *i* Deut. 31:13 *j* Ex. 10:2 *k* Lev. 22:33 **23:44** *l* Lev. 23:2

Care of the Tabernacle Lamps

24 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: **2**[a]"Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. **3**Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting, Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning before the LORD continually; *it shall be* a statute forever in your generations. **4**He shall be in charge of the lamps on [b]the pure *gold* lampstand before the LORD continually.

The Bread of the Tabernacle

5"And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve [c]cakes with it. Two-tenths *of an ephah* shall be in each cake. **6**You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, [d]on the pure *gold* table before the LORD. **7**And you shall put pure frankincense on *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a [e]memorial, an offering made by fire to the LORD. **8**[f]Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. **9**And [g]it shall be for Aaron and his sons, [h]and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it *is* most holy to him from the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute."

The Penalty for Blasphemy

10Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite *woman's* son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp. **11**And the Israelite woman's son [i]blasphemed the name *of the* LORD and [j]cursed; and so they [k]brought him to Moses. (His mother's name *was* Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) **12**Then they [l]put him in custody, [m]that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them.

13And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **14**"Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard *him* [n]lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him.

15"Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God [o]shall bear his sin. **16**And whoever [p]blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name *of the* LORD, he shall be put to death.

17[q]'Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death. **18**[r]Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, animal for animal.

19'If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as [s]he has done, so shall it be done to him— **20**fracture for [t]fracture, [u]eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him. **21**And whoever kills an animal shall restore it; but whoever kills a man shall be put to death. **22**You shall have [v]the same law for the stranger and for one from your own country; for I *am* the LORD your God.'"

23Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel; and they took outside the camp him who had cursed, and stoned him with stones. So the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Sabbath of the Seventh Year

25 And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount [a]Sinai, saying, **2**"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall [b]keep a sabbath to the LORD. **3**Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; **4**but in the [c]seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn [d]rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. **5**[e]What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, *for* it is a year of rest for the land. **6**And the sabbath *produce* of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, **7**for your livestock and the beasts that *are* in your land—all its produce shall be for food.

The Year of Jubilee

8'And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years.

24:19–20 *eye for eye.* This law is also found in Exodus 21:23–25. Its purpose is not to require the injured party to inflict equal bodily harm on the one who had injured him, but to restrict him from inflicting greater harm than he received.

24:22 *the same law.* These laws are repeated here in order to answer the question of whether these laws apply to non-Israelites. The answer is yes, they also apply to the stranger in the land.

25:5 *shall not reap.* Reaping and gathering for storage and selling were not permitted. However, harvesting for daily needs was allowed.

24:2 [a] Ex. 27:20, 21 **24:4** [b] Ex. 25:31; 31:8; 37:17 **24:5** [c] Ex. 25:30; 39:36; 40:23 **24:6** [d] 1 Kin. 7:48 **24:7** [e] Lev. 2:2, 9, 16 **24:8** [f] 1 Chr. 9:32 **24:9** [g] Matt. 12:4 [h] Ex. 29:33 **24:11** [i] Ex. 22:28 [j] Is. 8:21 [k] Ex. 18:22, 26 **24:12** [l] Num. 15:34 [m] Num. 27:5 **24:14** [n] Deut. 13:9; 17:7 **24:15** [o] Lev. 20:17 **24:16** [p] [Mark 3:28, 29] **24:17** [q] Ex. 21:12 **24:18** [r] Lev. 24:21 **24:19** [s] Ex. 21:24 **24:20** [t] Ex. 21:23 [u] [Matt. 5:38, 39] **24:22** [v] Ex. 12:49 **25:1** [a] Lev. 26:46 **25:2** [b] Lev. 26:34, 35 **25:4** [c] Deut. 15:1 [d] [Heb. 4:9] **25:5** [e] 2 Kin. 19:29

9Then you shall cause the trumpet of the
Jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the
seventh month; [f]on the Day of Atonement
you shall make the trumpet to sound
throughout all your land. 10And you shall
consecrate the fiftieth year, and [g]proclaim
liberty throughout *all* the land to all its in-
habitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and
each of you shall return to his possession,
[h]and each of you shall return to his fami-
ly. 11That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to
you; in it [i]you shall neither sow nor reap
what grows of its own accord, nor gather
the grapes of your untended vine. 12For it
is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; [j]you
shall eat its produce from the field.

13[k]'In this Year of Jubilee, each of you
shall return to his possession. 14And if
you sell anything to your neighbor or buy
from your neighbor's hand, you shall not
[l]oppress one another. 15[m]According to the
number of years after the Jubilee you shall
buy from your neighbor, and according to
the number of years of crops he shall sell
to you. 16According to the multitude of
years you shall increase its price, and ac-
cording to the fewer number of years you
shall diminish its price; for he sells to you
according to the number *of the years* of the
crops. 17Therefore [n]you shall not oppress
one another, [o]but you shall fear your God;
for I *am* the LORD your God.

Provisions for the Seventh Year

18[p]'So you shall observe My statutes and
keep My judgments, and perform them;
[q]and you will dwell in the land in safety.
19Then the land will yield its fruit, and [r]you
will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety.

20'And if you say, [s]"What shall we eat
in the seventh year, since [t]we shall not
sow nor gather in our produce?" 21Then I
will [u]command My blessing on you in the
[v]sixth year, and it will bring forth produce
enough for three years. 22[w]And you shall
sow in the eighth year, and eat [x]old pro-
duce until the ninth year; until its produce
comes in, you shall eat *of* the old *harvest*.

Redemption of Property

23'The land shall not be sold permanent-
ly, for [y]the land *is* Mine; for you *are* [z]strang-
ers and sojourners with Me. 24And in all
the land of your possession you shall grant
redemption of the land.

25[a]'If one of your brethren becomes poor,
and has sold *some* of his possession, and if
[b]his redeeming relative comes to redeem
it, then he may redeem what his brother
sold. 26Or if the man has no one to redeem
it, but he himself becomes able to redeem
it, 27then [c]let him count the years since its
sale, and restore the remainder to the man
to whom he sold it, that he may return to
his possession. 28But if he is not able to
have *it* restored to himself, then what was
sold shall remain in the hand of him who
bought it until the Year of Jubilee; [d]and in
the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall
return to his possession.

29'If a man sells a house in a walled city,
then he may redeem it within a whole year
after it is sold; *within* a full year he may re-
deem it. 30But if it is not redeemed within
the space of a full year, then the house in
the walled city shall belong permanently to
him who bought it, throughout his genera-
tions. It shall not be released in the Jubilee.
31However the houses of villages which
have no wall around them shall be count-
ed as the fields of the country. They may
be redeemed, and they shall be released
in the Jubilee. 32Nevertheless [e]the cities of
the Levites, *and* the houses in the cities of
their possession, the Levites may redeem
at any time. 33And if a man purchases a
house from the Levites, then the house that
was sold in the city of his possession shall
be released in the Jubilee; for the houses in
the cities of the Levites *are* their possession
among the children of Israel. 34But [f]the field
of the common-land of their cities may not
be [g]sold, for it *is* their perpetual possession.

Lending to the Poor

35'If one of your brethren becomes poor,
and falls into poverty among you, then

25:10 ***return.*** This word could also be translated "liberty." It meant specifically that all debts were canceled, all Israelites who had sold themselves into slavery were freed, and all the land reverted to its original owners, from the time the land was divided by Joshua. The same phrase occurs in Isaiah 61:1, the passage Jesus read in the synagogue in Nazareth at the beginning of His earthly ministry. Jesus declares liberty to all who have lost their inheritance and become slaves to sin.

25:11 ***Jubilee.*** The fiftieth, or jubilee year, followed a Sabbath year of rest, so this meant that there were two years of rest in a row for the land.

25:17 ***fear your God.*** Fear of God includes respect of man, who is God's highest creation. A deep respect of the life of man, who is created in God's image and likeness, is stressed in Scriptures. This text prohibits taking advantage of or oppressing others, and for the Christian there is the added reminder that we are not to injure those "for whose sake Christ died" (1 Cor. 8:11).

25:23 ***sojourners with Me.*** The principle governing all of these laws was that the land did not belong to Israel; it belonged to God.

25:9 [f] Lev. 23:24, 27 **25:10** [g] Jer. 34:8, 15, 17 [h] Num. 36:4 **25:11** [i] Lev. 25:5 **25:12** [j] Lev. 25:6, 7 **25:13** [k] Lev. 25:10; 27:24 **25:14** [l] Lev. 19:13 **25:15** [m] Lev. 27:18, 23 **25:17** [n] Lev. 25:14 [o] Lev. 19:14, 32; 25:43 **25:18** [p] Lev. 19:37 [q] Deut. 12:10 **25:19** [r] Lev. 26:5 **25:20** [s] Matt. 6:25, 31 [t] Lev. 25:4, 5 **25:21** [u] Deut. 28:8 [v] Ex. 16:29 **25:22** [w] 2 Kin. 19:29 [x] Josh. 5:11 **25:23** [y] Ex. 19:5 [z] Ps. 39:12 **25:25** [a] Ruth 2:20; 4:4, 6 [b] Ruth 3:2, 9, 12 **25:27** [c] Lev. 25:50–52 **25:28** [d] Lev. 25:10, 13 **25:32** [e] Num. 35:1–8 **25:34** [f] Num. 35:2–5 [g] Acts 4:36, 37

you shall [h]help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you. 36[i]Take no usury or interest from him; but [j]fear your God, that your brother may live with you. 37You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him your food at a profit. 38[k]I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan *and* to be your God.

The Law Concerning Slavery

39'And if *one of* your brethren *who dwells* by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. 40As a hired servant *and* a sojourner he shall be with you, *and* shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. 41And *then* he shall depart from you—he and his children [l]with him—and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers. 42For they *are* [m]My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. 43[n]You shall not rule over him [o]with rigor, but you [p]shall fear your God. 44And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have—from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves. 45Moreover you may buy [q]the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. 46And [r]you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them as* a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor.

47'Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and *one of* your brethren *who dwells* by him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger *or* sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger's family, 48after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him; 49or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him; or *anyone* who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself. 50Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; *it shall be* [s]according to the time of a hired servant for him. 51If *there are* still many years *remaining*, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought. 52And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, *and* according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption. 53He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight. 54And if he is not redeemed in these *years*, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee—he and his children with him. 55For the children of Israel *are* servants to Me; they *are* My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

Promise of Blessing and Retribution

26 'You shall [a]not make idols for yourselves;
neither a carved image nor a *sacred* pillar shall you rear up for yourselves;
nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it;
for I *am* the LORD your God.
2 [b]You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary:
I *am* the LORD.
3 [c]'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them,
4 [d]then I will give you rain in its season,
[e]the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.
5 [f]Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing;
you shall eat your bread to the full, and [g]dwell in your land safely.
6 [h]I will give peace in the land, and [i]you shall lie down, and none will make *you* afraid;

25:44–46 *permanent slaves.* The fact that God made laws to govern the current practices of slavery does not mean that He approved of slavery. He made laws about divorce, too, but He also said that He hates divorce.

26:1 *engraved stone.* A sacred pillar was a stone or wooden column erected to represent a pagan god or goddess. It was not a likeness, but a symbol. Together, the four terms used in this verse cover all the possibilities for pagan images.

26:4–5 *rain in its season . . . threshing . . . time of vintage . . . sowing.* Not only will God provide the rain when needed, He would provide abundant harvests. The grain harvest was finished by early to mid-June, and the grape harvest began about two months later. Having two months to thresh the grain indicated a large harvest. Likewise sowing could not occur until after the first rains softened the ground, usually in mid-October. A two-month grape harvest would be a bumper crop. This is the first of the three blessings from God.

26:6–10 *peace in the land.* Neither animal nor human adversaries would be successful against

25:35 [h] Deut. 15:7–11; 24:14, 15 **25:36** [i] Ex. 22:25 [j] Neh. 5:9 **25:38** [k] Lev. 11:45; 22:32, 33 **25:41** [l] Ex. 21:3 **25:42** [m] [Rom. 6:22] **25:43** [n] Eph. 6:9 [o] Ex. 1:13, 14 [p] Mal. 3:5 **25:45** [q] [Is. 56:3, 6, 7] **25:46** [r] Is. 14:2 **25:50** [s] Job 7:1 **26:1** [a] Ex. 20:4, 5 **26:2** [b] Lev. 19:30 **26:3** [c] Deut. 28:1–14 **26:4** [d] Is. 30:23 [e] Ps. 67:6 **26:5** [f] Amos 9:13 [g] Lev. 25:18, 19 **26:6** [h] Is. 45:7 [i] Job 11:19

I will rid the land of [i]evil beasts,
and [k]the sword will not go through your land.
7 You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you.
8 [l]Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight;
your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.
9 'For I will [m]look on you favorably and [n]make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My [o]covenant with you.
10 You shall eat the [p]old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new.
11 [q]I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.
12 [r]I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.
13 I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that *you* should not be their slaves;
I have broken the bands of your [s]yoke and made you walk upright.
14 'But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments,
15 and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, *but* break My covenant,
16 I also will do this to you:
I will even appoint terror over you, [t]wasting disease and fever which shall [u]consume the eyes and [v]cause sorrow of heart.
And [w]you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.
17 I will set [x]My face against you, and [y]you shall be defeated by your enemies.
[z]Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall [a]flee when no one pursues you.
18 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you [b]seven times more for your sins.
19 I will [c]break the pride of your power;
I [d]will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.
20 And your [e]strength shall be spent in vain;
for your [f]land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.
21 'Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins.
22 [g]I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number;
and [h]your highways shall be desolate.
23 'And if [i]by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me,
24 [j]then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins.
25 And [k]I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant;

Israel. This is the second of the three blessings from God.

26:11–13 ***I will walk among you.*** The third blessing was the promise of His presence within Israel, actively walking among them and looking out for their welfare.

26:12–13 ***be your God.*** The image in these verses is a dramatic one, reminding the Israelites that God would be their intimate associate continually. He would walk with them, support them in times of difficulty and danger, and abundantly provide for both their physical and spiritual needs. To be God's people meant that the Israelites had to obey God's laws scrupulously, to be holy as God is holy, and to be a witness of God among the pagan nations.

26:14–15 ***not observe all these commandments.*** As with the blessings, the curses are presented in an "if-then" format.

26:16–17 ***terror . . . wasting disease and fever.*** Fear, illness, poor harvest, and enemies in the land would be God's first attempts to draw Israel back to Himself.

26:18–20 ***heavens like iron.*** The second series of curses were characterized as "seven times more." Rain was essential to the whole nation, both the fall and spring rains.

26:19 ***pride of your power.*** The pride of power will often cause a person or nation to trust in its own strength and accomplishments rather than to submit to God and give Him the honor and glory. The punishment for this pride was drought—skies like iron, with not even a hint of rain. This can be true on a personal level as well as a national level if one forgets that it is God who has given the position of significance. Then the iron heavens make it seem as if prayers are not heard, and the parched spirit cries out for God's touch again.

26:21–22 ***seven times more plagues.*** The third series of curses are again increased "seven times," so that the land is plagued with wild beasts that attack both their children and their domestic animals.

26:23–26 ***a sword . . . pestilence . . . hand of the enemy . . . eat and not be satisfied.*** The fourth series of curses are also increased "seven times." When enemies invaded the land, the people living in unwalled villages fled to walled cities, and if the city was besieged, the overcrowding created prime conditions for epidemics and famine.

26:6 [i] 2 Kin. 17:25 [k] Ezek. 14:17 **26:8** [l] Deut. 32:30 **26:9** [m] Ex. 2:25 [n] Gen. 17:6, 7 [o] Gen. 17:1–7 **26:10** [p] Lev. 25:22 **26:11** [q] Ex. 25:8; 29:45, 46 **26:12** [r] [2 Cor. 6:16] **26:13** [s] Gen. 27:40 **26:16** [t] Deut. 28:22 [u] 1 Sam. 2:33 [v] Ezek. 24:23; 33:10 [w] Judg. 6:3–6 **26:17** [x] Ps. 34:16 [y] Deut. 28:25 [z] Ps. 106:41 [a] Prov. 28:1 **26:18** [b] 1 Sam. 2:5 **26:19** [c] Is. 25:11 [d] Deut. 28:23 **26:20** [e] Ps. 127:1 [f] Gen. 4:12 **26:22** [g] Deut. 32:24 [h] Judg. 5:6 **26:23** [i] Amos 4:6–12 **26:24** [j] Lev. 26:28, 41 **26:25** [k] Ezek. 5:17

when you are gathered together within your cities [l]I will send pestilence among you;
and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.
26 [m]When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, [n]and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

27 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me,
28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury;
and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.
29 [o]You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.
30 [p]I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols;
and My soul shall abhor you.
31 I will lay your [q]cities waste and [r]bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not [s]smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas.
32 [t]I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.
33 [u]I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you;
your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.
34 [v]Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you *are* in your enemies' land;
then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths.
35 As long as *it* lies desolate it shall rest—
for the time it did not rest on your [w]sabbaths when you dwelt in it.

36 'And as for those of you who are left, I will send [x]faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies;
the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee;
they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues.
37 [y]They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues;
and [z]you shall have no *power* to stand before your enemies.
38 You shall [a]perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.
39 And those of you who are left [b]shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands;
also in their [c]fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.

40 'But [d]if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me,
41 and *that* I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies;
if their [e]uncircumcised hearts are [f]humbled, and they [g]accept their guilt—
42 then I will [h]remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember;
I will [i]remember the land.
43 [j]The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them;
they will accept their guilt, because they [k]despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.
44 Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, [l]I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them;
for I *am* the LORD their God.
45 But [m]for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, [n]whom I

26:29 ***eat the flesh of your sons . . . daughters.*** The fifth and final curse, "seven times for your sins," was cannibalism. This actually happened centuries later during a siege of Samaria, and later still in Jerusalem (2 Kin. 6:28–29; Lam. 2:20; 4:10).

26:30 ***high places . . . idols.*** The high places and images or incense altars were dedicated to the worship of pagan gods.

26:33 ***scatter.*** This threat was fulfilled in the Babylonian exile of 587–536 B.C.

26:36–37 ***faintness into their hearts.*** Survivors would not enjoy relief or peace of mind after escaping the disasters. They would still be timid, even when no one pursued them.

26:38–39 ***perish among the nations.*** Having been exiled to foreign lands, the people were not to think they were beyond God's punitive reach.

26:42 ***My covenant.*** God's covenant with the patriarchs took precedence over the covenant at Sinai (Gal. 3:15–18). Even when Israel violated the Sinai covenant, God honored the patriarchal covenant.

26:44–45 ***I will not cast them away . . . remember the covenant.*** Ultimately, God's character is grace, mercy, love and redemption. On that basis, God would remember the covenant and redeem them because He is God.

26:25 [l] Deut. 28:21 **26:26** [m] Ps. 105:16 [n] Mic. 6:14 **26:29** [o] 2 Kin. 6:28, 29 **26:30** [p] 2 Chr. 34:3 **26:31** [q] 2 Kin. 25:4, 10 [r] Ps. 74:7 [s] Is. 1:11–15 **26:32** [t] Jer. 9:11; 18:16 **26:33** [u] Deut. 4:27 **26:34** [v] 2 Chr. 36:21 **26:35** [w] Lev. 25:2 **26:36** [x] Ezek. 21:7, 12, 15 **26:37** [y] 1 Sam. 14:15, 16 [z] Josh. 7:12, 13 **26:38** [a] Deut. 4:26 **26:39** [b] Ezek. 4:17; 33:10 [c] Ex. 34:7 **26:40** [d] Neh. 9:2 **26:41** [e] Acts 7:51 [f] 2 Chr. 12:6, 7, 12 [g] Dan. 9:7 **26:42** [h] Ex. 2:24; 6:5 [i] Ps. 136:23 **26:43** [j] Lev. 26:34, 35 [k] Lev. 26:15 **26:44** [l] Deut. 4:31 **26:45** [m] [Rom. 11:28] [n] Lev. 22:33; 25:38

brought out of the land of Egypt [o]in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God:
I *am* the LORD.'"

46 [p]These *are* the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel [q]on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

Redeeming Persons and Property Dedicated to God

27 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [a]'When a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD, according to your valuation, 3 if your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, [b]according to the shekel of the sanctuary. 4 If it *is* a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels; 5 and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels; 6 and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver; 7 and if from sixty years old and above, if *it is* a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

8 'But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for [c]him; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.

9 'If *it is* an animal that men may bring as an offering to the LORD, all that *anyone* gives to the LORD shall be holy. 10 He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good; and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be [d]holy. 11 If *it is* an unclean animal which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the LORD, then he shall present the animal before the priest; 12 and the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be. 13 [e]But if he *wants* at all *to* redeem it, then he must add one-fifth to your valuation.

14 'And when a man dedicates his house *to be* holy to the LORD, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. 15 If he who dedicated it *wants to* redeem his house, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his.

16 'If a man dedicates to the LORD *part* of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. A homer of barley seed *shall be valued* at fifty shekels of silver. 17 If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand. 18 But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall [f]reckon to him the money due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation. 19 And if he who dedicates the field ever wishes to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall belong to him. 20 But if he does not want to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore; 21 but the field, [g]when it is released in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the LORD, as a [h]devoted field; it shall be [i]the possession of the priest.

22 'And if a man dedicates to the LORD a field which he has bought, which is not the field of [j]his possession, 23 then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day *as* a holy *offering* to the LORD. 24 [k]In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who *owned* the land as a possession. 25 And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: [l]twenty gerahs to the shekel.

26 'But the [m]firstborn of the animals, which should be the LORD's firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether *it is* an ox or sheep, it *is* the LORD's. 27 And if *it is* an unclean animal, then he shall redeem *it* according to your valuation, and [n]shall add

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27:2–8 *by a vow . . . shall value.* While people could dedicate themselves or their children to the Lord (1 Sam. 1:11,22) only the Levites were allowed to serve God as priests. Therefore, those others vowed in service to the Lord had to be redeemed, and the value of his service was given to the sanctuary.

27:8 *too poor.* Fifty shekels might have represented about four years' earnings. If a person was too poor to pay this price, the priest set a price that the person could pay.

27:14–24 *dedicates.* Consecrating or dedicating property to the Lord, and then buying it back with cash if one wants to use it for oneself is a curious idea to modern people. We tend to consider dedication of something to God as using it in a way that pleases Him, and the line between "God's" and "mine" may be very fuzzy. We are familiar with offering praises or tithes to God as worship, but think of the way we handle property as "good" or "poor" stewardship. A passage like this reminds us that we are not to be casual in worship. Are we offering it to God or not? Is it His, or do we want it back at no cost to ourselves?

27:16 *homer of barley.* A homer was a donkey load.

26:45 [o] Ps. 98:2 **26:46** [p] [John 1:17] [q] Lev. 25:1
27:2 [a] Num. 6:2 **27:3** [b] Ex. 30:13 **27:8** [c] Lev. 5:11; 14:21–24 **27:10** [d] Lev. 27:33 **27:13** [e] Lev. 6:5; 22:14; 27:15, 19 **27:18** [f] Lev. 25:15, 16, 28 **27:21** [g] Lev. 25:10, 28, 31 [h] Lev. 27:28 [i] Num. 18:14 **27:22** [j] Lev. 25:10, 25 **27:24** [k] Lev. 25:10–13, 28 **27:25** [l] Ex. 30:13
27:26 [m] Ex. 13:2, 12; 22:30 **27:27** [n] Lev. 27:11, 12

one-fifth to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

28 [o]Nevertheless no devoted *offering* that a man may devote to the LORD of all that he has, *both* man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted *offering is* most holy to the LORD. 29 [p]No person under the ban, who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, *but* shall surely be put to death. 30 And [q]all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD's. It *is* holy to the LORD. 31 [r]If a man wants at all to redeem *any* of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. 32 And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever [s]passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. 33 He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad, [t]nor shall he exchange it; and if he exchanges it at all, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.'"

34 [u]These *are* the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount [v]Sinai.

27:28 *devoted offering.* Devoting a possession was a stronger act than dedication. Nothing devoted could be redeemed; persons devoted (under the ban) were to be put to death. No private citizen would have had the power to put himself or anyone else "under the ban."

27:31 *redeem any of his tithes.* For a person living a distance from the sanctuary, it may have been more practical to redeem the tithe than to bring the crops to the sanctuary.

27:32 *under the rod.* Sheep and goats were inspected when they passed under the rod that the shepherd placed across the entrance to the fold. This was a time to determine if the animals were under any distress from disease or injury, and was also the time that some of them were set aside for the Lord.

27:28 *o* Josh. 6:17–19 **27:29** *p* Num. 21:2 **27:30** *q* Gen. 28:22 **27:31** *r* Lev. 27:13 **27:32** *s* Jer. 33:13 **27:33** *t* Lev. 27:10 **27:34** *u* Lev. 26:46 *v* [Heb. 12:18–29]

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
NUMBERS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The Jews, Samaritans, and the early church testify to Moses' authorship. Several New Testament passages attribute events cited from Numbers to Moses (John 3:14; Acts 7; 13; 1 Cor. 10:1–11; Heb. 3–4), and there are more than eighty claims within Numbers that state that the Lord spoke to Moses (1:1). Numbers 33:2 says that Moses recorded their journeys at the Lord's command. As an eyewitness who kept detailed records, and the central character of the events in the book, no one was better qualified to write this book than Moses.

▶ **TIME:** c. 1444–1405 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Num. 14:22–23

▶ **THEME:** At Sinai, this newly resurrected nation of Israel receives its laws, its system of sacrifices, and its national charter. The people then should be ready to take the next step into the Promised Land, but they aren't. Numbers largely has Israel in a holding pattern. While the book records further steps taken in organizing the nation, its central narrative is that of the refusal of the people to go into Canaan. But God still doesn't give up on His people. He continues to discipline them in an effort to have a new generation ready to fulfill His plan. In this context Numbers points to God's sovereignty, His patience, and His desire to bless His people.

The First Census of Israel

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses [a]in the Wilderness of Sinai, [b]in the tabernacle of meeting, on the [c]first *day* of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:
2 [d]"Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male [e]individually,
3 from [f]twenty years old and above—all who *are able to* go to war in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. **4** And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father's house.
5 "These are the names of the men who shall stand with you: from Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; **6** from Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; **7** from Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; **8** from Issachar, Nethanel the son of Zuar; **9** from Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; **10** from the sons of Joseph: from Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud; from Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; **11** from Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideoni; **12** from Dan, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai;
13 from Asher, Pagiel the son of Ocran;
14 from Gad, Eliasaph the son of [g]Deuel;*
15 from Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan."
16 [h]These *were* [i]chosen from the congregation, leaders of their fathers' tribes, [j]heads of the divisions in Israel.
17 Then Moses and Aaron took these men who had been mentioned [k]by name, **18** and they assembled all the congregation together on the first *day* of the second month; and they recited their [l]ancestry by families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and above, each one individually. **19** As the LORD commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the Wilderness of Sinai.
20 Now the [m]children of Reuben, Israel's oldest son, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above, all who *were able to* go to war: **21** those who were numbered of the tribe of Reuben *were* forty-six thousand five hundred.
22 From the [n]children of Simeon, their genealogies by their families, by their fathers' house, of those who were

* **1:14** Spelled *Reuel* in 2:14

1:1 ***Wilderness of Sinai.*** The setting of the Book of Numbers is the wilderness. Not only did the Israelites live in the wilderness, but they as a nation were traveling through a time of spiritual emptiness. They were starting all over in their relationship with God after a time of slavery. The empty wilderness kept them dependent, and kept them from being

1:1 [a] Ex. 19:1 [b] Ex. 25:22 [c] Num. 9:1; 10:11 **1:2** [d] Num. 26:2, 63, 64 [e] Ex. 30:12, 13; 38:26 **1:3** [f] Ex. 30:14; 38:26 **1:14** [g] Num. 7:42 **1:16** [h] Num. 7:2 [i] Num. 16:2 [j] Ex. 18:21, 25 **1:17** [k] Is. 43:1 **1:18** [l] Ezra 2:59 **1:20** [m] Num. 2:10, 11; 26:5–11; 32:6, 15, 21, 29 **1:22** [n] Num. 2:12, 13; 26:12–14

numbered, according to the number of
names, every male individually, from
twenty years old and above, all who
were able to go to war: 23those who
were numbered of the tribe of Simeon
were fifty-nine thousand three hundred.
24From the [o]children of Gad, their gene-
alogies by their families, by their fathers'
house, according to the number of names,
from twenty years old and above, all who
were able to go to war: 25those who were
numbered of the tribe of Gad *were* forty-
five thousand six hundred and fifty.
26From the [p]children of Judah, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 27those who
were numbered of the tribe of Judah *were*
[q]seventy-four thousand six hundred.
28From the [r]children of Issachar, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 29those who
were numbered of the tribe of Issachar
were fifty-four thousand four hundred.
30From the [s]children of Zebulun, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 31those who
were numbered of the tribe of Zebulun
were fifty-seven thousand four hundred.
32From the sons of Joseph, the [t]children
of Ephraim, their genealogies by their fam-
ilies, by their fathers' house, according to
the number of names, from twenty years
old and above, all who *were able to* go to
war: 33those who were numbered of the
tribe of Ephraim *were* forty thousand five
hundred.
34From the [u]children of Manasseh, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 35those who
were numbered of the tribe of Manasseh
were thirty-two thousand two hundred.
36From the [v]children of Benjamin, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 37those who
were numbered of the tribe of Benjamin
were thirty-five thousand four hundred.
38From the [w]children of Dan, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 39those who
were numbered of the tribe of Dan *were*
sixty-two thousand seven hundred.
40From the [x]children of Asher, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 41those who
were numbered of the tribe of Asher *were*
forty-one thousand five hundred.
42From the children of Naphtali, their
genealogies by their families, by their fa-
thers' house, according to the number of
names, from twenty years old and above,
all who *were able to* go to war: 43those who
were numbered of the tribe of Naphtali
were fifty-three thousand four hundred.
44[y]These are the ones who were num-
bered, whom Moses and Aaron numbered,
with the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each
one representing his father's house. 45So
all who were numbered of the children of
Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twen-
ty years old and above, all who *were able*
to go to war in Israel— 46all who were num-
bered were [z]six hundred and three thou-
sand five hundred and fifty.
47But [a]the Levites were not numbered
among them by their fathers' tribe; 48for
the LORD had spoken to Moses, saying:
49[b]"Only the tribe of Levi you shall not
number, nor take a census of them among
the children of Israel; 50[c]but you shall ap-
point the Levites over the tabernacle of the
Testimony, over all its furnishings, and
over all things that belong to it; they shall
carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings;
they shall attend to it [d]and camp around the
tabernacle. 51[e]And when the tabernacle is to
go forward, the Levites shall take it down;
and when the tabernacle is to be set up, the
Levites shall set it [f]up. [g]The outsider who
comes near shall be put to death. 52The chil-
dren of Israel shall pitch their tents, every-
one by his own camp, [h]everyone by his own
standard, according to their armies; 53[i]but
the Levites shall camp around the taberna-
cle of the Testimony, that there may be no
[j]wrath on the congregation of the children
of Israel; and the Levites shall [k]keep charge
of the tabernacle of the Testimony."
54Thus the children of Israel did; accord-
ing to all that the LORD commanded Moses,
so they did.

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distracted with the normal affairs of caring for land and animals.

1:44–46 ***all who were numbered.*** The number of able-bodied men who were at least twenty years old would indicate a population of between two and five million, including the women, children, and older or infirm men who were not counted in this census.

1:50 ***the tabernacle.*** The term *tabernacle* points to the temporary and portable nature of the tent.

1:24 *o* Num. 26:15–18 **1:26** *p* 2 Sam. 24:9 **1:27** *q* 2 Chr. 17:14 **1:28** *r* Num. 2:5, 6 **1:30** *s* Num. 2:7, 8; 26:26, 27 **1:32** *t* Num. 26:28–37 **1:34** *u* Num. 2:20, 21; 26:28–34 **1:36** *v* Num. 26:38–41 **1:38** *w* Gen. 30:6; 46:23 **1:40** *x* Num. 2:27, 28; 26:44–47 **1:44** *y* Num. 26:64 **1:46** *z* Ex. 12:37; 38:26 **1:47** *a* Num. 2:33; 3:14–22; 26:57–62 **1:49** *b* Num. 2:33; 26:62 **1:50** *c* Ex. 38:21 *d* Num. 3:23, 29, 35, 38 **1:51** *e* Num. 4:5–15; 10:17, 21 *f* Num. 10:21 *g* Num. 3:10, 38; 4:15, 19, 20; 18:22 **1:52** *h* Num. 2:2, 34; 24:2 **1:53** *i* Num. 1:50 *j* Lev. 10:6 *k* 1 Chr. 23:32

The Tribes and Leaders by Armies

2 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2[a]"Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp [b]some distance from the tabernacle of meeting. 3On the [c]east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies; and [d]Nahshon the son of Amminadab *shall be* the leader of the children of Judah." 4And his army was numbered at seventy-four thousand six hundred.

5"Those who camp next to him *shall be* the tribe of Issachar, and Nethanel the son of Zuar *shall be* the leader of the children of Issachar." 6And his army was numbered at fifty-four thousand four hundred.

7"Then *comes* the tribe of Zebulun, and Eliab the son of Helon *shall be* the leader of the children of Zebulun." 8And his army was numbered at fifty-seven thousand four hundred. 9"All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Judah, one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred—[e]these shall break camp first.

10"On the [f]south side *shall be* the standard of the forces with Reuben according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Reuben *shall be* Elizur the son of Shedeur." 11And his army was numbered at forty-six thousand five hundred.

12"Those who camp next to him *shall be* the tribe of Simeon, and the leader of the children of Simeon *shall be* Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai." 13And his army was numbered at fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

14"Then *comes* the tribe of Gad, and the leader of the children of Gad *shall be* Eliasaph the son of Reuel."* 15And his army was numbered at forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty. 16"All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Reuben, one hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty—[g]they shall be the second to break camp.

17[h]"And the tabernacle of meeting shall move out with the camp of the Levites [i]in the middle of the camps; as they camp, so they shall move out, everyone in his place, by their standards.

18"On the west side *shall be* the standard of the forces with Ephraim according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Ephraim *shall be* Elishama the son of Ammihud." 19And his army was numbered at forty thousand five hundred.

20"Next to him *comes* the tribe of Manasseh, and the leader of the children of Manasseh *shall be* Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur." 21And his army was numbered at thirty-two thousand two hundred.

22"Then *comes* the tribe of Benjamin, and the leader of the children of Benjamin *shall be* Abidan the son of Gideoni." 23And his army was numbered at thirty-five thousand four hundred. 24"All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces with Ephraim, one hundred and eight thousand one hundred—[j]they shall be the third to break camp.

25"The standard of the forces with Dan *shall be* on the north side according to their armies, and the leader of the children of Dan *shall be* Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai." 26And his army was numbered at sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

27"Those who camp next to him *shall be* the tribe of Asher, and the leader of the children of Asher *shall be* Pagiel the son of Ocran." 28And his army was numbered at forty-one thousand five hundred.

29"Then *comes* the tribe of Naphtali, and the leader of the children of Naphtali *shall be* Ahira the son of Enan." 30And his army was numbered at fifty-three thousand four hundred. 31"All who were numbered of the forces with Dan, one hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred—[k]they shall break camp last, with their standards."

32These *are* the ones who were numbered of the children of Israel by their fathers' houses. [l]All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces *were* six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. 33But [m]the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

34Thus the children of Israel [n]did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses; [o]so they camped by their standards and so they broke camp, each one by his family, according to their fathers' houses.

* **2:14** Spelled *Deuel* in 1:14 and 7:42

2:1–2 *by his own standard.* A person's identity was not only derived from his or her tribe, but also from his or her place in relation to the tabernacle. This is a chapter on design and order; it speaks to the importance of knowing one's duties in relation to the holy and living God.

2:3–9 *On the east side, toward the rising of the sun.* The east side was the favored side, facing the rising sun. The Israelites were not a seafaring people; in effect they turned their backs to the sea, so the word for "back" could mean "west" or "the sea."

2:17 *tabernacle . . . the Levites in the middle.* In the line of march the tabernacle was in a central position—a symbol not only of Israel's protection of the holy objects, but also of the presence of God among His people.

2:2 [a] Num. 1:52; 24:2 [b] Josh. 3:4 **2:3** [c] Num. 10:5 [d] 1 Chr. 2:10 **2:9** [e] Num. 10:14 **2:10** [f] Num. 10:6 **2:16** [g] Num. 10:18 **2:17** [h] Num. 10:17, 21 [i] Num. 1:53 **2:24** [j] Num. 10:22 **2:31** [k] Num. 10:25 **2:32** [l] Ex. 38:26 **2:33** [m] Num. 1:47; 26:57–62 **2:34** [n] Num. 1:54 [o] Num. 24:2, 5, 6

The Sons of Aaron

3 Now these *are* the [a]records of Aaron
and Moses when the LORD spoke with
Moses on Mount Sinai. **2**And these *are*
the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab,
the [b]firstborn, and [c]Abihu, Eleazar, and
Ithamar. **3**These *are* the names of the sons
of Aaron, [d]the anointed priests, whom he
consecrated to minister as priests. **4**[e]Nadab
and Abihu had died before the LORD when
they offered profane fire before the LORD
in the Wilderness of Sinai; and they had
no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar min-
istered as priests in the presence of Aaron
their father.

The Levites Serve in the Tabernacle

5And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
6[f]"Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present
them before Aaron the priest, that they
may serve him. **7**And they shall attend to
his needs and the needs of the whole con-
gregation before the tabernacle of meeting,
to do [g]the work of the tabernacle. **8**Also
they shall attend to all the furnishings of
the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs
of the children of Israel, to do the work of
the tabernacle. **9**And [h]you shall give the Le-
vites to Aaron and his sons; they *are* given
entirely to him* from among the children
of Israel. **10**So you shall appoint Aaron and
his sons, [i]and they shall attend to their
priesthood; [j]but the outsider who comes
near shall be put to death."

11Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
12"Now behold, [k]I Myself have taken the
Levites from among the children of Israel
instead of every firstborn who opens the
womb among the children of Israel. There-
fore the Levites shall be [l]Mine, **13**because
[m]all the firstborn *are* Mine. [n]On the day
that I struck all the firstborn in the land of
Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the first-
born in Israel, both man and beast. They
shall be Mine: I *am* the LORD."

Census of the Levites Commanded

14Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the
Wilderness of Sinai, saying: **15**"Number the
children of Levi by their fathers' houses,
by their families; you shall number [o]every
male from a month old and above."

16So Moses numbered them according
to the word of the LORD, as he was com-
manded. **17**[p]These were the sons of Levi
by their names: Gershon, Kohath, and
Merari. **18**And these *are* the names of the
sons of [q]Gershon by their families: [r]Libni
and Shimei. **19**And the sons of [s]Kohath by
their families: [t]Amram, Izehar, Hebron,
and Uzziel. **20**[u]And the sons of Merari by
their families: Mahli and Mushi. These *are*
the families of the Levites by their fathers'
houses.

21From Gershon *came* the family of the
Libnites and the family of the Shimites;
these *were* the families of the Gershonites.
22Those who were numbered, according to
the number of all the males from a month
old and above—of those who were num-
bered *there were* seven thousand five hun-
dred. **23**[v]The families of the Gershonites
were to camp behind the tabernacle west-
ward. **24**And the leader of the father's house
of the Gershonites *was* Eliasaph the son of
Lael. **25**[w]The duties of the children of Ger-
shon in the tabernacle of meeting *included*
[x]the tabernacle, [y]the tent with [z]its covering,
the [a]screen for the door of the tabernacle of
meeting, **26**[b]the screen for the door of the
court, [c]the hangings of the court which
are around the tabernacle and the altar,
and [d]their cords, according to all the work
relating to them.

27[e]From Kohath *came* the family of the
Amramites, the family of the Izharites, the
family of the Hebronites, and the family of
the Uzzielites; these *were* the families of the
Kohathites. **28**According to the number of
all the males, from a month old and above,
there were eight thousand six* hundred
keeping charge of the sanctuary. **29**[f]The
families of the children of Kohath were to
camp on the south side of the tabernacle.
30And the leader of the fathers' house of the
families of the Kohathites *was* Elizaphan
the son of [g]Uzziel. **31**[h]Their duty *included*
[i]the ark, [j]the table, [k]the lampstand, [l]the
altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with
which they ministered, [m]the screen, and all
the work relating to them.

32And Eleazar the son of Aaron the
priest *was to be* chief over the leaders of

* **3:9** Samaritan Pentateuch and Septuagint read *Me.* * **3:28** Some manuscripts of the Septuagint read *three.*

3:1–10 *sons of Aaron.* The priests had privileged access to God. In the New Covenant this is no longer confined only to a particular group of God's people. All Christians comprise God's new temple and constitute "a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5).

3:5–10 *Aaron and his sons.* The Levites could care for the holy things, but only the priests, who minis-tered in the tabernacle, drew near to God. Only the high priest entered the Most Holy Place.

3:11–13 *I sanctified to Myself.* God is directly involved in redemption. When God redeemed and saved His people, it was by His own person.

3:1 [a] Ex. 6:16–27 **3:2** [b] Ex. 6:23 [c] Num. 26:60, 61 **3:3** [d] Ex. 28:41 **3:4** [e] 1 Chr. 24:2 **3:6** [f] Num. 8:6–22; 18:1–7 **3:7** [g] Num. 1:50; 8:11, 15, 24, 26 **3:9** [h] Num. 8:19; 18:6, 7 **3:10** [i] Ex. 29:9 [j] Num. 1:51; 3:38; 16:40 **3:12** [k] Num. 3:41; 8:16; 18:6 [l] Num. 3:45; 8:14 **3:13** [m] Ex. 13:2 [n] Num. 8:17 **3:15** [o] Num. 3:39; 26:62 **3:17** [p] Ex. 6:16–22 **3:18** [q] Num. 4:38–41 [r] Ex. 6:17 **3:19** [s] Num. 4:34–37 [t] Ex. 6:18 **3:20** [u] Ex. 6:19 **3:23** [v] Num. 1:53 **3:25** [w] Num. 4:24–26 [x] Ex. 25:9 [y] Ex. 26:1 [z] Ex. 26:7, 14 [a] Ex. 26:36 **3:26** [b] Ex. 27:9, 12, 14, 15 [c] Ex. 27:16 [d] Ex. 35:18 **3:27** [e] 1 Chr. 26:23 **3:29** [f] Num. 1:53 **3:30** [g] Lev. 10:4 **3:31** [h] Num. 4:15 [i] Ex. 25:10 [j] Ex. 25:23 [k] Ex. 25:31 [l] Ex. 27:1; 30:1 [m] Ex. 26:31–33

the Levites, *with* oversight of those who kept charge of the sanctuary.

33From Merari *came* the family of the Mahlites and the family of the Mushites; these *were* the families of Merari. 34And those who were numbered, according to the number of all the males from a month old and above, *were* six thousand two hundred. 35The leader of the fathers' house of the families of Merari *was* Zuriel the son of Abihail. [n]These *were* to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. 36And [o]the appointed duty of the children of Merari *included* the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, its utensils, all the work relating to them, 37and the pillars of the court all around, with their sockets, their pegs, and their cords.

38[p]Moreover those who were to camp before the tabernacle on the east, before the tabernacle of meeting, *were* Moses, Aaron, and his sons, [q]keeping charge of the sanctuary, [r]to meet the needs of the children of Israel; but [s]the outsider who came near was to be put to death. 39[t]All who were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, by their families, all the males from a month old and above, *were* twenty-two thousand.

Levites Dedicated Instead of the Firstborn

40Then the LORD said to Moses: [u]"Number all the firstborn males of the children of Israel from a month old and above, and take the number of their names. 41[v]And you shall take the Levites for Me—I *am* the LORD—instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the livestock of the children of Israel." 42So Moses numbered all the firstborn among the children of Israel, as the LORD commanded him. 43And all the firstborn males, according to the number of names from a month old and above, of those who were numbered of them, were twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three.

44Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 45[w]"Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of their livestock. The Levites shall be Mine: I *am* the LORD. 46And for [x]the redemption of the two hundred and seventy-three of the firstborn of the children of Israel, [y]who are more than the number of the Levites, 47you shall take [z]five shekels for each one [a]individually; you shall take *them* in the currency of the shekel of the sanctuary, [b]the shekel of twenty gerahs. 48And you shall give the money, with which the excess number of them is redeemed, to Aaron and his sons."

49So Moses took the redemption money from those who were over and above those who were redeemed by the Levites. 50From the firstborn of the children of Israel he took the money, [c]one thousand three hundred and sixty-five *shekels*, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. 51And Moses [d]gave their redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Duties of the Sons of Kohath

4 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2"Take a census of the sons of [a]Kohath from among the children of Levi, by their families, by their fathers' house, 3[b]from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting.

4[c]"This *is* the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of meeting, *relating to* [d]the most holy things: 5When the camp prepares to journey, Aaron and his sons shall come, and they shall take down [e]the covering veil and cover the [f]ark of the Testimony with it. 6Then they shall put on it a covering of badger skins, and spread over *that* a cloth entirely of [g]blue; and they shall insert [h]its poles.

7"On the [i]table of showbread they shall spread a blue cloth, and put on it the dishes, the pans, the bowls, and the pitchers for

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3:38 *keeping charge.* "Keeping charge of the sanctuary" was committed to a particular group of people, and no one else was to intrude on that task. Believers, as part of the body of Christ, also have certain duties. These roles are not rigid, but they are definite, planned, and created by God for the good of the whole church. The teamwork of the whole body creates a harmonious whole, and if one fails in his duty, the whole team suffers (1 Cor. 12).

3:40–42 *Number all the firstborn males.* When God passed over the homes of the Hebrew families who had obeyed His commands in the Passover (Ex. 12:23–51), He declared the surviving firstborn Hebrew children—and also the firstborn of animals—to be His. The animals were sacrificed, the firstborn were redeemed (paid for), at first by the Levites who took the place of all the other firstborn, and then by a set sum of money for those that numbered more than the Levites. It is a clear statement of fact that people belong to God.

4:3 *from thirty years old.* According to 8:24, the Levites were to be twenty-five years old, which seems like a contradiction to this passage. It is possible that the difference reflects a time of apprenticeship.

3:35 *n* Num. 1:53; 2:25 **3:36** *o* Num. 4:31, 32 **3:38** *p* Num. 1:53 *q* Num. 18:5 *r* Num. 3:7, 8 *s* Num. 3:10 **3:39** *t* Num. 3:43; 4:48; 26:62 **3:40** *u* Num. 3:15 **3:41** *v* Num. 3:12, 45 **3:45** *w* Num. 3:12, 41 **3:46** *x* Ex. 13:13, 15 *y* Num. 3:39, 43 **3:47** *z* Lev. 27:6 *a* Num. 1:2, 18, 20 *b* Ex. 30:13 **3:50** *c* Num. 3:46, 47 **3:51** *d* Num. 3:48 **4:2** *a* Num. 3:27–32 **4:3** *b* Num. 4:23, 30, 35; 8:24 **4:4** *c* Num. 4:15 *d* Num. 4:19 **4:5** *e* Ex. 26:31 *f* Ex. 25:10, 16 **4:6** *g* Ex. 39:1 *h* Ex. 25:13 **4:7** *i* Ex. 25:23, 29, 30

pouring; and the [i]showbread* shall be on it. 8They shall spread over them a scarlet cloth, and cover the same with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. 9And they shall take a blue cloth and cover the [k]lampstand of the light, [l]with its lamps, its wick-trimmers, its trays, and all its oil vessels, with which they service it. 10Then they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of badger skins, and put *it* on a carrying beam.

11"Over [m]the golden altar they shall spread a blue cloth, and cover it with a covering of badger skins; and they shall insert its poles. 12Then they shall take all the [n]utensils of service with which they minister in the sanctuary, put *them* in a blue cloth, cover them with a covering of badger skins, and put *them* on a carrying beam. 13Also they shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it. 14They shall put on it all its implements with which they minister there—the firepans, the forks, the shovels, the basins, and all the utensils of the altar—and they shall spread on it a covering of badger skins, and insert its poles. 15And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then [o]the sons of Kohath shall come to carry *them;* [p]but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die.

"[q]These *are* the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.

16"The appointed duty of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest *is* [r]the oil for the light, the [s]sweet incense, [t]the daily grain offering, the [u]anointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle, of all that *is* in it, with the sanctuary and its furnishings."

17Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 18"Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites; 19but do this in regard to them, that they may live and not die when they approach [v]the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint each of them to his service and his task. 20[w]But they shall not go in to watch while the holy things are being covered, lest they die."

Duties of the Sons of Gershon

21Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 22"Also take a census of the sons of Gershon, by their fathers' house, by their families. 23[x]From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, you shall number them, all who enter to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting. 24This *is* the [y]service of the families of the Gershonites, in serving and carrying: 25[z]They shall carry the [a]curtains of the tabernacle and the tabernacle of meeting *with* its covering, the covering of [b]badger skins that *is* on it, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, 26the screen for the door of the gate of the court, the hangings of the court which *are* around the tabernacle and altar, and their cords, all the furnishings for their service and all that is made for these things: so shall they serve.

27"Aaron and his sons shall assign all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, all their tasks and all their service. And you shall appoint to them all their tasks as their duty. 28This *is* the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of meeting. And their duties *shall be* [c]under the authority* of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

Duties of the Sons of Merari

29"*As for* the sons of [d]Merari, you shall number them by their families and by their fathers' house. 30[e]From thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, you shall number them, everyone who enters the service to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. 31And [f]this *is* [g]what they must carry as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting: [h]the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, 32and the pillars around the court with their sockets, pegs, and cords, with all their furnishings and all their service; and you shall [i]assign *to each man* by name the items he must carry. 33This *is* the service of the families of the sons of Merari, as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting, under the authority* of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest."

Census of the Levites

34[j]And Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the congregation numbered the sons of the Kohathites by their families and by their fathers' house, 35from thirty [k]years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting; 36and those who were numbered by their families were two

*4:7 Literally *the continual bread* *4:28 Literally *hand* *4:33 Literally *hand*

4:16 ***The appointed duty of Eleazar.*** God made arrangements for the priest to approach Him in the way He prescribed. If the priests did not do their job, no one else could do it for them. It was a big responsibility, and the well-being of the whole nation depended upon their faithfulness.

4:21–28 ***perform the service.*** There are various tasks given to us in the kingdom of God which appear to be of minor importance. Daily faithfulness in the

4:7 [j] Lev. 24:5–9 **4:9** [k] Ex. 25:31 [l] Ex. 25:37, 38 **4:11** [m] Ex. 30:1–5 **4:12** [n] Ex. 25:9 **4:15** [o] Deut. 31:9 [p] 2 Sam. 6:6, 7 [q] Num. 3:31 **4:16** [r] Lev. 24:2 [s] Ex. 30:34 [t] Ex. 29:38 [u] Ex. 30:23–25 **4:19** [v] Num. 4:4 **4:20** [w] Ex. 19:21 **4:23** [x] Num. 4:3 **4:24** [y] Num. 7:7 **4:25** [z] Num. 3:25, 26 [a] Ex. 36:8 [b] Ex. 26:14 **4:28** [c] Num. 4:33 **4:29** [d] Num. 3:33–37 **4:30** [e] Num. 4:3; 8:24–26 **4:31** [f] Num. 3:36, 37 [g] Num. 7:8 [h] Ex. 26:15 **4:32** [i] Ex. 25:9; 38:21 **4:34** [j] Num. 4:2 **4:35** [k] Num. 4:47

thousand seven hundred and fifty. 37These *were* the ones who were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all who might serve in the tabernacle of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

38And those who were numbered of the sons of Gershon, by their families and by their fathers' house, 39from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting— 40those who were numbered by their families, by their fathers' house, were two thousand six hundred and thirty. 41[l]These *are* the ones who were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all who might serve in the tabernacle of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the commandment of the LORD.

42Those of the families of the sons of Merari who were numbered, by their families, by their fathers' house, 43from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who entered the service for work in the tabernacle of meeting— 44those who were numbered by their families were three thousand two hundred. 45These *are* the ones who were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered [m]according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

46All who were [n]numbered of the Levites, whom Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of Israel numbered, by their families and by their fathers' houses, 47[o]from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, everyone who came to do the work of service and the work of bearing burdens in the tabernacle of meeting— 48those who were numbered were eight thousand five hundred and eighty.

49According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, [p]each according to his service and according to his task; thus were they numbered by him, [q]as the LORD commanded Moses.

Ceremonially Unclean Persons Isolated

5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2"Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every [a]leper, everyone who has a [b]discharge, and whoever becomes [c]defiled by a corpse. 3You shall put out both male and female; you shall put them outside the camp, that they may not defile their camps [d]in the midst of which I dwell." 4And the children of Israel did so, and put them outside the camp; as the LORD spoke to Moses, so the children of Israel did.

Confession and Restitution

5Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 6"Speak to the children of Israel: [e]'When a man or woman commits any sin that men commit in unfaithfulness against the LORD, and that person is guilty, 7[f]then he shall confess the sin which he has committed. He shall make restitution for his trespass [g]in full, plus one-fifth of it, and give *it* to the one he has wronged. 8But if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for the wrong *must go* to the LORD for the priest, in addition to [h]the ram of the atonement with which atonement is made for him. 9Every [i]offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring to the priest, shall be [j]his. 10And every man's holy things shall be [k]his; whatever any man gives the priest shall be his.'"

Concerning Unfaithful Wives

11And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 12"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him, 13and a man [l]lies with her carnally, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and it is concealed that she has defiled herself, and *there was* no witness against her, nor was she [m]caught— 14if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes [n]jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if

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little things is the best preparation for greater trusts. Mary, the mother of Jesus is an example of this. Her response to the angel when she was told that she would be the mother of Jesus was, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord . . ." (Luke 1:38). She had found favor in the way she conducted her daily life, and God chose her for a unique and blessed role.

5:3 *not defile their camps . . . I dwell.* Ritual purity was important because God wanted the Israelites to remember that He lived among them. They needed to think of Him walking around in the camp and live in such a way that there was not something offensive for God to discover.

5:6 *unfaithfulness against the LORD.* Not only did God deal with ritual impurity, He was also concerned about how the people treated each other. To label sin as "acting unfaithfully" kept the real issue right in front. When we mistreat our fellow citizens, God cares, and He takes it personally. He made us; He made them. We each belong to Him, and we are not to wrong other people.

5:12 *wife goes astray.* The wife belonged to her husband. If she was unfaithful, she could be stoned. If she was not guilty, and he acted on his unsubstantiated suspicions, he would be guilty of murder. The woman had a serious responsibility to her husband because the reliability of family lines depended upon

4:41 [l] Num. 4:22 **4:45** [m] Num. 4:29 **4:46** [n] 1 Chr. 23:3–23 **4:47** [o] Num. 4:3, 23, 30 **4:49** [p] Num. 4:15, 24, 31 [q] Num. 4:1, 21 **5:2** [a] Lev. 13:3, 8, 46 [b] Lev. 15:2 [c] Lev. 21:1 **5:3** [d] Lev. 26:11, 12 **5:6** [e] Lev. 5:14—6:7 **5:7** [f] Lev. 5:5; 26:40, 41 [g] Lev. 6:4, 5 **5:8** [h] Lev. 5:15; 6:6, 7; 7:7 **5:9** [i] Ex. 29:28 [j] Lev. 7:32–34; 10:14, 15 **5:10** [k] Lev. 10:13 **5:13** [l] Lev. 18:20; 20:10 [m] John 8:4 **5:14** [n] Prov. 6:34

the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and
he becomes jealous of his wife, although
she has not defiled herself— 15then the
man shall bring his wife to the priest. He
shall [o]bring the offering required for her,
one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he
shall pour no oil on it and put no frankin-
cense on it, because it *is* a grain offering of
jealousy, an offering for remembering, for
[p]bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16'And the priest shall bring her near,
and set her before the [q]LORD. 17The priest
shall take holy water in an earthen ves-
sel, and take some of the dust that is on
the floor of the tabernacle and put *it* into
the water. 18Then the priest shall stand
the woman before the LORD, uncover the
woman's head, and put the offering for
remembering in her hands, which *is* the
grain offering of jealousy. And the priest
shall have in his hand the bitter water that
brings a curse. 19And the priest shall put
her under oath, and say to the woman,
"If no man has lain with you, and if you
have not gone astray to uncleanness *while*
under your husband's *authority,* be free
from this bitter water that brings a curse.
20But if you have gone astray *while* under
your husband's *authority,* and if you have
defiled yourself and some man other than
your husband has lain with you"— 21then
the priest shall [r]put the woman under the
oath of the curse, and he shall say to the
woman—[s]"the LORD make you a curse
and an oath among your people, when the
LORD makes your thigh rot and your bel-
ly swell; 22and may this water that causes
the curse [t]go into your stomach, and make
y*our* belly swell and y*our* thigh rot."

'Then[u] the woman shall say, "Amen, so
be it."

23'Then the priest shall write these curses
in a book, and he shall scrape *them* off into
the bitter water. 24And he shall make the
woman drink the bitter water that brings a
curse, and the water that brings the curse
shall enter her *to become* bitter. 25[v]Then the
priest shall take the grain offering of jeal-
ousy from the woman's hand, shall [w]wave
the offering before the LORD, and bring it to
the altar; 26and the priest shall take a hand-
ful of the offering, [x]as its memorial portion,
burn *it* on the altar, and afterward make
the woman drink the water. 27When he
has made her drink the water, then it shall
be, if she has defiled herself and behaved
unfaithfully toward her husband, that the
water that brings a [y]curse will enter her
and become bitter, and her belly will swell,
her thigh will rot, and the woman [z]will be-
come a curse among her people. 28But if
the woman has not defiled herself, and is
clean, then she shall be free and may con-
ceive children.

29'This *is* the law of jealousy, when a
wife, *while* under her husband's *author-
ity,* [a]goes astray and defiles herself, 30or
when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a
man, and he becomes jealous of his wife;
then he shall stand the woman before the
LORD, and the priest shall execute all this
law upon her. 31Then the man shall be free
from iniquity, but that woman [b]shall bear
her guilt.'"

The Law of the Nazirite

6 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, say-
ing, 2"Speak to the children of Israel,
and say to them: 'When either a man or
woman consecrates an offering to take the
vow of a Nazirite, [a]to separate himself to
the LORD, 3[b]he shall separate himself from
wine and *similar* drink; he shall drink nei-
ther vinegar made from wine nor vinegar

her faithfulness. It is obvious if a woman is pregnant, but it is not obvious who the father is. By bringing the whole sorry problem to God, the Israelites could be sure of justice.

5:15 ***bring his wife to the priest.*** Determining if a woman had been unfaithful to her husband, when she had not been caught in wrongdoing, was more difficult than detecting skin diseases. But because God was in the camp, the issue could be resolved by the priest, in the presence of God. Again, it reminded the Israelites that nothing was hidden from God.

5:18 ***bitter water that brings a curse.*** This was not a magic potion, but dust from the floor of the tabernacle and holy water. The woman held in her own hands the grain offering for jealousy. These things reminded everyone that they were standing in the presence of God, and that it was He who would determine if the woman bore any guilt.

5:21 ***your thigh rot and your belly swell.*** These words speak symbolically of a miscarriage (of an illegitimate child) if the woman was pregnant, and the inability to conceive again. In the biblical world, a woman who was unable to bear children was regarded as being under a curse; in this case it would have been true.

5:31 ***woman shall bear her guilt.*** Throughout the Bible God compares idolatry with marital unfaithfulness, so it is clear that this is a subject that touches close to the heart of every man and woman. God is faithful to His people, and they are to be true to Him. In the same way, as a daily picture of this faithfulness, the husband and wife are to be true and faithful to each other. The law recognizes the volatility of unfaithfulness, provides a limit to unjust accusations, and underlines the seriousness of the moral lapse that comes with adultery. A guilty woman would indeed bear her guilt, but a faithful woman would be exonerated.

6:1–8 Self-Denial—To serve God by abstaining from legitimate things is the Christian's privilege today as well. It is not that God is looking for sacrifice, but He is looking for a willing heart that will lay aside the good to spend time on the best.

5:15 [o] Lev. 5:11 [p] 1 Kin. 17:18 **5:16** [q] Heb. 13:4 **5:21** [r] Josh. 6:26 [s] Jer. 29:22 **5:22** [t] Ps. 109:18 [u] Deut. 27:15–26 **5:25** [v] Lev. 8:27 [w] Lev. 2:2, 9 **5:26** [x] Lev. 2:2, 9 **5:27** [y] Jer. 24:9; 29:18, 22; 42:18 [z] Num. 5:21 **5:29** [a] Num. 5:19 **5:31** [b] Lev. 20:17, 19, 20 **6:2** [a] Judg. 13:5 **6:3** [b] Luke 1:15

made from *similar* drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. 4All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.

5'All the days of the vow of his separation no [c]razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. *Then* he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. 6All the days that he separates himself to the LORD [d]he shall not go near a dead body. 7[e]He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God *is* on his head. 8[f]All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the LORD.

9'And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles his consecrated head, then he shall [g]shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. 10Then [h]on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; 11and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and *the* other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned in regard to the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head that same day. 12He shall consecrate to the LORD the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year [i]as a trespass offering; but the former days shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.

13'Now this *is* the law of the Nazirite: [j]When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 14And he shall present his offering to the LORD: one male lamb in its first year without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish [k]as a sin offering, one ram without blemish [l]as a peace offering, 15a basket of unleavened bread, [m]cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers [n]anointed with oil, and their grain offering with their [o]drink offerings.

16'Then the priest shall bring *them* before the LORD and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering; 17and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. 18[p]Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put *it* on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering.

19'And the priest shall take the [q]boiled shoulder of the ram, one [r]unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and [s]put *them* upon the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated *hair*, 20and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD; [t]they *are* holy for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering. After that the Nazirite may drink wine.'

21"This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the LORD the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation."

The Priestly Blessing

22And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 23"Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them:

24 "The LORD [u]bless you and [v]keep you;
25 The LORD [w]make His face shine upon you,
And [x]be gracious to you;
26 [y]The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And [z]give you peace."'

27[a]"So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and [b]I will bless them."

Offerings of the Leaders

7 Now it came to pass, when Moses had finished [a]setting up the tabernacle, that

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6:21 ***the law of the Nazirite.*** Not to be confused with a Nazarene (one from Nazareth), the Nazirite vows were practiced both in the Old and New Testament. It is likely that John the Baptist was a Nazirite, probably all of his life.

6:23 ***bless the children of Israel.*** This special blessing shows the love and mercy of God toward His chosen people. God's keeping power, His shining personal presence, His eye contact, and His own peace would be a blessing that would mark the Israelites as belonging to God Himself, and they would be called with His name.

7:1 ***when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle.*** This phrasing places the events of this chapter before the taking of the census in chapters 1–4. The tabernacle was completed on the first day of the first month of the second year. The census began one month later.

7:1–11 ***brought their offering.*** The tabernacle from the beginning to the end was constructed and furnished by willing hearts and hands. God wants us to give to His work because we are eager to, not because we are required. Jesus directed, "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over" (Luke 6:38). We can never outgive God.

6:5 [c] 1 Sam. 1:11 **6:6** [d] Num. 19:11–22 **6:7** [e] Num. 9:6 **6:8** [f] [2 Cor. 6:17, 18] **6:9** [g] Lev. 14:8, 9 **6:10** [h] Lev. 5:7; 14:22; 15:14, 29 **6:12** [i] Lev. 5:6 **6:13** [j] Acts 21:26 **6:14** [k] Lev. 4:2, 27, 32 [l] Lev. 3:6 **6:15** [m] Lev. 2:4 [n] Ex. 29:2 [o] Num. 15:5, 7, 10 **6:18** [p] Acts 21:23, 24 **6:19** [q] 1 Sam. 2:15 [r] Ex. 29:23, 24 [s] Lev. 7:30 **6:20** [t] Ex. 29:27, 28 **6:24** [u] Deut. 28:3–6 [v] John 7:11 **6:25** [w] Dan. 9:17 [x] Mal. 1:9 **6:26** [y] Ps. 4:6; 89:15 [z] Lev. 26:6 **6:27** [a] Is. 43:7 [b] Num. 23:20 **7:1** [a] Ex. 40:17–33

he [b]anointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings, and the altar and all its utensils; so he anointed them and consecrated them. 2Then [c]the leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers' houses, who *were* the leaders of the tribes and over those who were numbered, made an offering. 3And they brought their offering before the LORD, six covered carts and twelve oxen, a cart for *every* two of the leaders, and for each one an ox; and they presented them before the tabernacle.

4Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 5"Accept *these* from them, that they may be used in doing the work of the tabernacle of meeting; and you shall give them to the Levites, *to* every man according to his service." 6So Moses took the carts and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites. 7Two carts and four oxen [d]he gave to the sons of Gershon, according to their service; 8[e]and four carts and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, according to their service, under the authority* of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. 9But to the sons of Kohath he gave none, because theirs *was* [f]the service of the holy things, [g]*which* they carried on their shoulders.

10Now the leaders offered [h]the dedication *offering* for the altar when it was anointed; so the leaders offered their offering before the altar. 11For the LORD said to Moses, "They shall offer their offering, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar."

12And the one who offered his offering on the first day *was* [i]Nahshon the son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah. 13His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to [j]the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a [k]grain offering; 14one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of [l]incense; 15[m]one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb [n]in its first year, as a burnt offering; 16one kid of the goats as a [o]sin offering; 17and for [p]the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

18On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, leader of Issachar, presented *an offering.* 19*For* his offering he offered one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 20one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 21one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 22one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 23and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Nethanel the son of Zuar.

24On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, leader of the children of Zebulun, *presented an offering.* 25His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 26one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 27one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 28one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 29and for the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Eliab the son of Helon.

30On the fourth day [q]Elizur the son of Shedeur, leader of the children of Reuben, *presented an offering.* 31His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 32one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 33one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 34one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 35and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur.

36On the fifth day [r]Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, leader of the children of Simeon, *presented an offering.* 37His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 38one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 39one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 40one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 41and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

42On the sixth day [s]Eliasaph the son of Deuel,* leader of the children of Gad, *presented an offering.* 43His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one

* **7:8** Literally *hand* * **7:42** Spelled *Reuel* in 2:14

7:1 [b] Lev. 8:10, 11 **7:2** [c] Num. 1:4 **7:7** [d] Num. 4:24–28
7:8 [e] Num. 4:29–33 **7:9** [f] Num. 4:15 [g] Num. 4:6–14
7:10 [h] 2 Chr. 7:5, 9 **7:12** [i] Num. 2:3 **7:13** [j] Ex. 30:13

[k] Lev. 2:1 **7:14** [l] Ex. 30:34, 35 **7:15** [m] Lev. 1:2 [n] Ex. 12:5
7:16 [o] Lev. 4:23 **7:17** [p] Lev. 3:1 **7:30** [q] Num. 1:5; 2:10
7:36 [r] Num. 1:6; 2:12; 7:41 **7:42** [s] Num. 1:14; 2:14; 10:20

hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 44one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 45one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as [t]a burnt offering; 46one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 47and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

48On the seventh day [u]Elishama the son of Ammihud, leader of the children of Ephraim, *presented an offering.* 49His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 50one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 51one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 52one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 53and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

54On the eighth day [v]Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, leader of the children of Manasseh, *presented an offering.* 55His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 56one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 57one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 58one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 59and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

60On the ninth day [w]Abidan the son of Gideoni, leader of the children of Benjamin, *presented an offering.* 61His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 62one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 63one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 64one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 65and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni.

66On the tenth day [x]Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, leader of the children of Dan, *presented an offering.* 67His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 68one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 69one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 70one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 71and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

72On the eleventh day [y]Pagiel the son of Ocran, leader of the children of Asher, *presented an offering.* 73His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 74one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 75one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 76one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 77and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran.

78On the twelfth day [z]Ahira the son of Enan, leader of the children of Naphtali, *presented an offering.* 79His offering *was* one silver platter, the weight of which *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels,* and one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering; 80one gold pan of ten *shekels,* full of incense; 81one young bull, one ram, and one male lamb in its first year, as a burnt offering; 82one kid of the goats as a sin offering; 83and as the sacrifice of peace offerings: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs in their first year. This *was* the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.

84This *was* [a]the dedication *offering* for the altar from the leaders of Israel, when it was anointed: twelve silver platters, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold pans. 85Each silver platter *weighed* one hundred and thirty *shekels* and each bowl seventy *shekels.* All the silver of the vessels *weighed* two thousand four hundred *shekels,* according to the shekel of the sanctuary. 86The twelve gold pans full of incense *weighed* ten *shekels* apiece, according to the shekel of the sanctuary; all the gold of the pans *weighed* one hundred and twenty *shekels.* 87All the oxen for the burnt offering *were* twelve

7:45 [t] Ps. 40:6 **7:48** [u] Num. 1:10; 2:18 **7:54** [v] Num. 1:10; 2:20 **7:60** [w] Num. 1:11; 2:22 **7:66** [x] Num. 1:12; 2:25 **7:72** [y] Num. 1:13; 2:27 **7:78** [z] Num. 1:15; 2:29 **7:84** [a] Num. 7:10

young bulls, the rams twelve, the male lambs in their first year twelve, with their grain offering, and the kids of the goats as a sin offering twelve. 88And all the oxen for the sacrifice of peace offerings were twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, and the lambs in their first year sixty. This *was* the dedication *offering* for the altar after it was [b]anointed.

89Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting [c]to speak with Him, he heard [d]the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that *was* on the ark of the Testimony, from [e]between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.

Arrangement of the Lamps

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2"Speak to Aaron, and say to him, 'When you [a]arrange the lamps, the seven [b]lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.'" 3And Aaron did so; he arranged the lamps to face toward the front of the lampstand, as the LORD commanded Moses. 4[c]Now this workmanship of the lampstand *was* hammered gold; from its shaft to its flowers it *was* [d]hammered work. [e]According to the pattern which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

Cleansing and Dedication of the Levites

5Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 6"Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them *ceremonially*. 7Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: [f]Sprinkle water of purification on them, and [g]let them shave all their body, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean. 8Then let them take a young bull with [h]its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another young bull as a sin offering. 9[i]And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of meeting, [j]and you shall gather together the whole congregation of the children of Israel. 10So you shall bring the Levites before the LORD, and the children of Israel [k]shall lay their hands on the Levites; 11and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD *like* a [l]wave offering from the children of Israel, that they may perform the work of the LORD. 12[m]Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls, and you shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites.

13"And you shall stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and then offer them *like* a wave offering to the LORD. 14Thus you shall [n]separate the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be [o]Mine. 15After that the Levites shall go in to service the tabernacle of meeting. So you shall cleanse them and [p]offer them *like* a wave offering. 16For they *are* [q]wholly given to Me from among the children of Israel; I have taken them for Myself [r]instead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the children of Israel. 17[s]For all the firstborn among the children of Israel *are* Mine, *both* man and beast; on the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them to Myself. 18I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel. 19And [t]I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, [u]that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary."

20Thus Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel did to the Levites; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the children of Israel did to them. 21[v]And the Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes; then Aaron presented them *like* a wave offering before the LORD, and Aaron made atonement for them

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7:89 *heard the voice.* The tabernacle is referred to as the "tabernacle of meeting," because it was here that the Lord communicated with His people. Moses knew that it was the Lord he was hearing, and he took that word very seriously. The Word of God is still something that God's people can hear, usually through the Bible, sometimes in creation (Rom. 1), and sometimes through the work of the Holy Spirit. This is usually a strong impression that God wants you to pay attention to something, wait, change a decision, or pray. The leading of the Holy Spirit will never contradict Scripture, so it is exceedingly important for believers to maintain a familiarity with the Bible, so they can know God and hear Him.

8:10–12 *shall lay their hands on.* The sons of Israel who laid their hands on the Levites in this ancient symbol of dedication were showing their support for and agreement with the special role that the Levites had been set aside for. This would be an event that everyone could look back on and remember as an important, solemn time of dedication and asking for God's blessing.

8:16 *wholly given to Me.* The Hebrew words for this phrase are an emphatic doubling: "given, given."

8:19 *no plague.* God's holiness would not bear an improper approach. But in His mercy He provided the protective hedge of the Levites, to keep the Israelites from coming near the sanctuary in an unauthorized way, and thus causing a plague.

7:88 [b] Num. 7:1, 10 **7:89** [c] [Ex. 33:9, 11] [d] Ex. 25:21, 22 [e] Ps. 80:1; 99:1 **8:2** [a] Lev. 24:2–4 [b] Ex. 25:37; 40:25 **8:4** [c] Ex. 25:31 [d] Ex. 25:18 [e] Ex. 25:40 **8:7** [f] Num. 19:9, 13, 17, 20 [g] Lev. 14:8, 9 **8:8** [h] Lev. 2:1 **8:9** [i] Ex. 29:4; 40:12 [j] Lev. 8:3 **8:10** [k] Lev. 1:4 **8:11** [l] Num. 18:6 **8:12** [m] Ex. 29:10 **8:14** [n] Num. 16:9 [o] Num. 3:12, 45; 16:9 **8:15** [p] Num. 8:11, 13 **8:16** [q] Num. 3:9 [r] Num. 3:12, 45 **8:17** [s] Ex. 12:2, 12, 13, 15 **8:19** [t] Num. 3:9 [u] Num. 1:53; 16:46; 18:5 **8:21** [v] Num. 8:7

to cleanse them. 22[w]After that the Levites went in to do their work in the tabernacle of meeting before Aaron and his sons; [x]as the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

23Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 24"This *is* what *pertains* to the Levites: [y]From twenty-five years old and above one may enter to perform service in the work of the tabernacle of meeting; 25and at the age of fifty years they must cease performing this work, and shall work no more. 26They may minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of meeting, [z]to attend to needs, but they *themselves* shall do no work. Thus you shall do to the Levites regarding their duties."

The Second Passover

9 Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: 2"Let the children of Israel keep [a]the Passover at its appointed [b]time. 3On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it." 4So Moses told the children of Israel that they should keep the Passover. 5And [c]they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.

6Now there were *certain* men who were [d]defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; [e]and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. 7And those men said to him, "We *became* defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the children of Israel?"

8And Moses said to them, "Stand still, that [f]I may hear what the LORD will command concerning you."

9Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or *is* far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD's Passover. 11On [g]the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall [h]eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 12[i]They shall leave none of it until morning, [j]nor break one of its bones. [k]According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. 13But the man who *is* clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person [l]shall be cut off from among his people, because he [m]did not bring the offering of the LORD at its appointed time; that man shall [n]bear his sin.

14'And if a stranger dwells among you, and would keep the LORD's Passover, he must do so according to the rite of the Passover and according to its ceremony; [o]you shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger and the native of the land.'"

The Cloud and the Fire

15Now [p]on the day that the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud [q]covered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; [r]from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire. 16So it was always: the cloud covered it *by day,* and the appearance of fire by night. 17Whenever the cloud [s]was taken up from above the tabernacle, after that the children of Israel would journey; and in the place where the cloud settled, there the children of Israel would pitch their tents. 18At the command of the LORD the children of Israel would journey, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; [t]as long as the cloud stayed above the tabernacle they remained encamped. 19Even when the cloud continued long, many days above the tabernacle, the children of Israel [u]kept the charge of the LORD and did not journey. 20So it was, when the cloud was

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8:24 ***From twenty-five years old.*** According to 4:3, the Levites were to be thirty years old, which seems like a contradiction to this passage. It is possible that the difference reflects a time of apprenticeship.

9:1 ***the first month of the second year.*** This phrasing places the events of this chapter before the taking of the census. (See note at 7:1.)

9:1–5 ***keep the Passover.*** When the first Passover was celebrated in Egypt, the command was given to commemorate it throughout Israel's generations (Ex. 12:14). This would be the second time that the Israelites had observed this special commemorative event. Passover had greater significance than any Israelite of that day could imagine, however wonderful the exodus events were. Redemption from Egypt was a picture of greater redemption yet to be, when the blood of Christ would speak of better things than the blood applied to the doors in Egypt. Christ is now our eternal Passover (1 Cor. 5:7).

9:12 ***nor break one of its bones.*** It is fitting to remember that when the Savior was crucified as our "Passover Lamb," none of His bones were broken (John 19:36).

9:15–23 ***the cloud.*** The cloud was a dramatic symbol of the active presence of God with His people, hovering over them in protection, moving ahead of them for direction, and coming near at night as fire for comfort in the darkness.

8:22 [w] Num. 8:15 [x] Num. 8:5 **8:24** [y] Num. 4:3 **8:26** [z] Num. 1:53 **9:2** [a] Lev. 23:5 [b] 2 Chr. 30:1–15 **9:5** [c] Josh. 5:10 **9:6** [d] Num. 5:2; 19:11–22 [e] Num. 27:2 **9:8** [f] Num. 27:5 **9:11** [g] 2 Chr. 30:2, 15 [h] Ex. 12:8 **9:12** [i] Ex. 12:10 [j] Ex. 12:46 [k] Ex. 12:43 **9:13** [l] Ex. 12:15, 47 [m] Num. 9:7 [n] Num. 5:31 **9:14** [o] Ex. 12:49 **9:15** [p] Ex. 40:33, 34 [q] Is. 4:5 [r] Ex. 13:21, 22; 40:38 **9:17** [s] Ex. 40:36–38 **9:18** [t] 1 Cor. 10:1 **9:19** [u] Num. 1:53; 3:8

above the tabernacle a few days: according to the command of the LORD they would remain encamped, and according to the command of the LORD they would journey. 21So it was, when the cloud remained only from evening until morning: when the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they would journey; whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud was taken up, they would journey. 22*Whether it was* two days, a month, or a year that the cloud remained above the tabernacle, the children of Israel [v]would remain encamped and not journey; but when it was taken up, they would journey. 23At the command of the LORD they remained encamped, and at the command of the LORD they journeyed; they [w]kept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

Two Silver Trumpets

10 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2"Make two silver trumpets for yourself; you shall make them of hammered work; you shall use them for [a]calling the congregation and for directing the movement of the camps. 3When [b]they blow both of them, all the congregation shall gather before you at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 4But if they blow *only* one, then the leaders, the [c]heads of the divisions of Israel, shall gather to you. 5When you sound the [d]advance, [e]the camps that lie on the east side shall then begin their journey. 6When you sound the advance the second time, then the camps that lie [f]on the south side shall begin their journey; they shall sound the call for them to begin their journeys. 7And when the assembly is to be gathered together, [g]you shall blow, but not [h]sound the advance. 8[i]The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; and these shall be to you as an ordinance forever throughout your generations.

9[j]"When you go to war in your land against the enemy who [k]oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be [l]remembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies. 10Also [m]in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be [n]a memorial for you before your God: I *am* the LORD your God."

Departure from Sinai

11Now it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud [o]was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. 12And the children of Israel set out from [p]the Wilderness of Sinai on [q]their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the [r]Wilderness of Paran. 13So they started out for the first time [s]according to the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

14The standard of the camp of the children of Judah [t]set out first according to their armies; over their army was [u]Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 15Over the army of the tribe of the children of Issachar *was* Nethanel the son of Zuar. 16And over the army of the tribe of the children of Zebulun *was* Eliab the son of Helon.

17Then [v]the tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set out, [w]carrying the tabernacle.

18And [x]the standard of the camp of Reuben set out according to their armies; over their army *was* Elizur the son of Shedeur. 19Over the army of the tribe of the children of Simeon *was* Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 20And over the army of the tribe of the children of Gad *was* Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

21Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the [y]holy things. (The tabernacle would be prepared for their arrival.)

22And [z]the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set out according to their armies; over their army *was* Elishama the son of Ammihud. 23Over the army of the tribe of the children of Manasseh *was* Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 24And over the army of the tribe of the children of Benjamin *was* Abidan the son of Gideoni.

25Then [a]the standard of the camp of the children of Dan (the rear guard of all the camps) set out according to their armies; over their army *was* Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 26Over the army of the tribe of the children of Asher *was* Pagiel the son of Ocran. 27And over the army of the tribe

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9:23 ***At the command.*** Like the children of Israel, our existence often seems to us like a wilderness. Most often we want to *move,* to *do,* to *know.* Without waiting and following God's directions, His Word, His plan, we miss His best, and lessons are lost or delayed. How blessed to wait for God's direction, to obey Him in both stops and starts in all of life! No words spoken, no money spent, no job taken, no engagement ring given or received, without knowing we will be keeping God's charge.

10:2 ***two silver trumpets.*** The two silver trumpets were different from the curved ram's horn trumpets (Lev. 25:9). Made of hammered silver, these instruments were straight with a flaring bell, like the post horns of medieval Europe. Since they did not have valves, they would have been played like a bugle.

9:22 [v] Ex. 40:36, 37 **9:23** [w] Num. 9:19 **10:2** [a] Is. 1:13 **10:3** [b] Jer. 4:5 **10:4** [c] Ex. 18:21 **10:5** [d] Joel 2:1 [e] Num. 2:3 **10:6** [f] Num. 2:10 **10:7** [g] Num. 10:3 [h] Joel 2:1 **10:8** [i] Num. 31:6 **10:9** [j] Josh. 6:5 [k] Judg. 2:18; 4:3; 6:9; 10:8, 12 [l] Gen. 8:1 **10:10** [m] Lev. 23:24 [n] Num. 10:9 **10:11** [o] Num. 9:17 **10:12** [p] Ex. 19:1 [q] Ex. 40:36 [r] Gen. 21:21 **10:13** [s] Num. 10:5, 6 **10:14** [t] Num. 2:3–9 [u] Num. 1:7 **10:17** [v] Num. 1:51 [w] Num. 4:21–32; 7:7–9 **10:18** [x] Num. 2:10–16 **10:21** [y] Num. 4:4–20; 7:9 **10:22** [z] Num. 2:18–24 **10:25** [a] Num. 2:25–31

of the children of Naphtali *was* Ahira the son of Enan.

28 [b]Thus *was* the order of march of the children of Israel, according to their armies, when they began their journey.

29 Now Moses said to [c]Hobab the son of [d]Reuel* the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, [e]'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and [f]we will treat you well; for [g]the LORD has promised good things to Israel."

30 And he said to him, "I will not go, but I will depart to my *own* land and to my relatives."

31 So *Moses* said, "Please do not leave, inasmuch as you know how we are to camp in the wilderness, and you can be our [h]eyes. 32 And it shall be, if you go with us—indeed it shall be—that [i]whatever good the LORD will do to us, the same we will do to you."

33 So they departed from [j]the mountain of the LORD on a journey of three days; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD [k]went before them for the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. 34 And [l]the cloud of the LORD *was* above them by day when they went out from the camp.

35 So it was, whenever the ark set out, that Moses said:

[m]"Rise up, O LORD!
Let Your enemies be scattered,
And let those who hate You flee before You."

36 And when it rested, he said:

"Return, O LORD,
To the many thousands of Israel."

The People Complain

11 Now [a]*when* the people complained, it displeased the LORD; [b]for the LORD heard *it*, and His anger was aroused. So the [c]fire of the LORD burned among them, and consumed *some* in the outskirts of the camp. 2 Then the people [d]cried out to Moses, and when Moses [e]prayed to the LORD, the fire was quenched. 3 So he called the name of the place Taberah,* because the fire of the LORD had burned among them.

4 Now the [f]mixed multitude who were among them yielded to [g]intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: [h]"Who will give us meat to eat? 5 [i]We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 but now [j]our whole being *is* dried up; *there is* nothing at all except this manna *before* our eyes!"

7 Now [k]the manna *was* like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium. 8 The people went about and gathered *it*, ground *it* on millstones or beat *it* in the mortar, cooked *it* in pans, and made cakes of it; and [l]its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil. 9 And [m]when the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna fell on it.

10 Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and [n]the anger of the LORD was greatly aroused; Moses also was displeased. 11 [o]So Moses said to the LORD, "Why have You afflicted Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all these people on me? 12 Did I conceive all these people? Did I beget them, that You should say to me, [p]'Carry them in your bosom, as a [q]guardian carries a nursing child,' to the land which You [r]swore to their fathers? 13 [s]Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' 14 [t]I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden *is* too heavy for me. 15 If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now—if I have found favor in Your sight—and [u]do not let me see my wretchedness!"

The Seventy Elders

16 So the LORD said to Moses: "Gather to Me [v]seventy men of the elders of Israel,

* **10:29** Septuagint reads *Raguel* (compare Exodus 2:18). * **11:3** Literally *Burning*

10:29 ***Reuel.*** Also called Jethro (Ex. 3:1), Reuel was the priest of Midian who befriended Moses and gave his daughter Zipporah to him as his wife.

11:1 ***complained.*** Murmuring and complaining demonstrated a lack of trust in God's plan, provision, and judgment. Such attitudes are no more pleasing to God now than they were then, although He does not discipline complainers with fire from heaven.

11:4 ***mixed multitude.*** The presence of a mixed multitude, or rabble, indicates that there were people in the camp who had escaped from slavery or poverty in Egypt, but were not Israelites. They seem to have been the instigators of dissatisfaction, who made discomfort an excuse to agitate rebellion against God. God's people have always had the responsibility to keep their ears tuned to God's voice instead of the voices of the unbelievers around them.

11:10 ***weeping.*** Instead of thankfulness, the Israelites complained against what they had been given and asked for more. This is a serious sin (Ps. 78:17), and in response God chastened them. We ought to learn from the example of the Israelites in the wilderness and make thankfulness our lifestyle (Phil. 4:4).

10:28 [b] Num. 2:34 **10:29** [c] Judg. 4:11 [d] Ex. 2:18; 3:1; 18:12 [e] Gen. 12:7 [f] Judg. 1:16 [g] Ex. 3:8 **10:31** [h] Job 29:15 **10:32** [i] Judg. 1:16 **10:33** [j] Ex. 3:1 [k] Deut. 1:33 **10:34** [l] Ex. 13:21 **10:35** [m] Ps. 68:1, 2; 132:8 **11:1** [a] Num. 14:2; 16:11; 17:5 [b] Ps. 78:21 [c] Lev. 10:2 **11:2** [d] Num. 12:11, 13; 21:7 [e] [James 5:16] **11:4** [f] Ex. 12:38 [g] 1 Cor. 10:6 [h] [Ps. 78:18] **11:5** [i] Ex. 16:3 **11:6** [j] Num. 21:5 **11:7** [k] Ex. 16:14, 31 **11:8** [l] Ex. 16:31 **11:9** [m] Ex. 16:13, 14 **11:10** [n] Ps. 78:21 **11:11** [o] Deut. 1:12 **11:12** [p] Is. 40:11 [q] Is. 49:23 [r] Gen. 26:3 **11:13** [s] Mark 8:4 **11:14** [t] Ex. 18:18 **11:15** [u] Rev. 3:17 **11:16** [v] Ex. 18:25; 24:1, 9

whom you know to be the elders of the people and [w]officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. 17Then I will come down and talk with you there. [x]I will take of the Spirit that *is* upon you and will put *the same* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear *it* yourself alone. 18Then you shall say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept [y]in the hearing of the LORD, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For *it was* well with us in Egypt." Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. 19You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, 20[z]but *for* a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have [a]despised the LORD who is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, [b]"Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?"'"

21And Moses said, [c]"The people whom I *am* among *are* six hundred thousand men on foot; yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat *for* a whole month.' 22[d]Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to provide enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to provide enough for them?"

23And the LORD said to Moses, [e]"Has the LORD's arm been shortened? Now you shall see whether [f]what I say will happen to you or not."

24So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD, and he [g]gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. 25Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that *was* upon him, and placed *the same* upon the seventy elders; and it happened, [h]when the Spirit rested upon them, that [i]they prophesied, although they never did *so* again.*

26But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one *was* Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they *were* among those listed, but who [j]had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp. 27And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

28So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, *one* of his choice men, answered and said, "Moses my lord, [k]forbid them!"

29Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? [l]Oh, that all the LORD's people were prophets *and* that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!" 30And Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

The LORD Sends Quail

31Now a [m]wind went out from the LORD, and it brought quail from the sea and left *them* fluttering near the camp, about a day's journey on this side and about a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the ground. 32And the people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten [n]homers); and they spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp. 33But while the [o]meat *was* still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was aroused against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. 34So he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah,* because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving.

35[p]From Kibroth Hattaavah the people moved to Hazeroth, and camped at Hazeroth.

Dissension of Aaron and Miriam

12 Then [a]Miriam and Aaron spoke [b]against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for [c]he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2So they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through [d]Moses? [e]Has He not spoken through us also?" And the LORD [f]heard *it*. 3(Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth.)

4[g]Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out. 5[h]Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood *in* the door of

* **11:25** Targum and Vulgate read *did not cease*.
* **11:34** Literally *Graves of Craving*

11:26 *Eldad . . . Medad.* These two men prophesied, even though they had not joined the other elders at the tabernacle. They were not obedient, but neither were they presumptuous, and the Lord showed that He still wanted them as leaders.

11:34 *Kibroth Hattaavah.* The place was called "Graves of Craving," for the greedy people buried there.

11:35 *Hazeroth*. This place of rest is called "Enclosures."

12:5 *the LORD came down.* The language of this verse is more directly physical than usual. God came down, stood, and then called Aaron and Miriam forward. God's presence had been in the camp, but this was apparently distinctly more direct.

11:16 [w] Deut. 16:18 **11:17** [x] 1 Sam. 10:6 **11:18** [y] Ex. 16:7 **11:20** [z] Ps. 78:29; 106:15 [a] 1 Sam. 10:19 [b] Num. 21:5 **11:21** [c] Gen. 12:2 **11:22** [d] 2 Kin. 7:2 **11:23** [e] Is. 50:2; 59:1 [f] Num. 23:19 **11:24** [g] Num. 11:16 **11:25** [h] 2 Kin. 2:15 [i] Joel 2:28 **11:26** [j] Jer. 36:5 **11:28** [k] [Mark 9:38–40] **11:29** [l] 1 Cor. 14:5 **11:31** [m] Ex. 16:13 **11:32** [n] Ezek. 45:11 **11:33** [o] Ps. 78:29–31; 106:15 **11:35** [p] Num. 33:17 **12:1** [a] Num. 20:1 [b] Num. 11:1 [c] Ex. 2:21 **12:2** [d] Num. 16:3 [e] Mic. 6:4 [f] Ezek. 35:12, 13 **12:4** [g] [Ps. 76:9] **12:5** [h] Ex. 19:9; 34:5

the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. 6Then He said,

"Hear now My words:
If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD, make Myself known to
him [i]in a vision;
I speak to him [j]in a dream.
7 Not so with [k]My servant Moses;
[l]He *is* faithful in all [m]My house.
8 I speak with him [n]face to face,
Even [o]plainly, and not in dark sayings;
And he sees [p]the form of the LORD.
Why then [q]were you not afraid
To speak against My servant Moses?"

9So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed. 10And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, [r]suddenly Miriam *became* [s]leprous, as *white as* snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. 11So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please [t]do not lay *this* sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. 12Please [u]do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"

13So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please [v]heal her, O God, I pray!"

14Then the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but [w]spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be [x]shut out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received *again*." 15[y]So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in *again*. 16And afterward the people moved from [z]Hazeroth and camped in the Wilderness of Paran.

Spies Sent into Canaan

13 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2[a]"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them."

3So Moses sent them [b]from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the LORD, all of them men who *were* heads of the children of Israel. 4Now these *were* their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur; 5from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori; 6[c]from the tribe of Judah, [d]Caleb the son of Jephunneh; 7from the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph; 8from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea* the son of Nun; 9from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu; 10from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; 11from the tribe of Joseph, *that is*, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi; 12from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; 13from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael; 14from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi; 15from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi.

16These *are* the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called [e]Hoshea* the son of Nun, Joshua.

17Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this *way* into the South, and go up to [f]the mountains, 18and see what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it *are* strong or weak, few or many; 19whether the land they dwell in *is* good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit *are* like camps or strongholds; 20whether the land *is* rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. [g]Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time *was* the season of the first ripe grapes.

21So they went up and spied out the land [h]from the Wilderness of Zin as far as [i]Rehob, near the entrance of [j]Hamath. 22And they went up through the South and came to [k]Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of [l]Anak, *were* there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23[m]Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. *They* also *brought* some of the pomegranates and figs. 24The place was called the Valley of Eshcol,* because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there. 25And they returned from spying out the land after forty days.

26Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness

* **13:8** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Oshea.*
* **13:16** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Oshea.*
* **13:24** Literally *Cluster*

12:8 ***face to face, even plainly.*** These verses speak of the completely intimate relationship that God had with Moses.

12:16 ***the Wilderness of Paran.*** Paran had been the destination of the people since they set out from Mount Sinai. The journey had been marred by discontent, complaining, and rebellion.

13:16 ***Joshua.*** Hoshea means "salvation." Joshua means "the Lord saves." Moses may have changed Joshua's name to emphasize that it was the Lord, not any particular leader, that they were dependent on. Jesus is another form of the name Joshua.

12:6 [i] Gen. 46:2 [j] Gen. 31:10 **12:7** [k] Josh. 1:1 [l] Heb. 3:2, 5 [m] 1 Tim. 1:12 **12:8** [n] Deut. 34:10 [o] [1 Cor. 13:12] [p] Ex. 33:19–23 [q] 2 Pet. 2:10 **12:10** [r] Deut. 24:9 [s] 2 Kin. 5:27; 15:5 **12:11** [t] 2 Sam. 19:19; 24:10 **12:12** [u] Ps. 88:4 **12:13** [v] Ps. 103:3 **12:14** [w] Deut. 25:9 [x] Lev. 13:46 **12:15** [y] Deut. 24:9 **12:16** [z] Num. 11:35; 33:17, 18 **13:2** [a] Deut. 1:22; 9:23 **13:3** [b] Num. 12:16; 32:8 **13:6** [c] Num. 34:19 [d] Josh. 14:6, 7 **13:16** [e] Ex. 17:9 **13:17** [f] Judg. 1:9 **13:20** [g] Deut. 31:6, 7, 23 **13:21** [h] Num. 20:1; 27:14; 33:36 [i] Josh. 19:28 [j] Josh. 13:5 **13:22** [k] Josh. 15:13, 14 [l] Josh. 11:21, 22 **13:23** [m] Deut. 1:24, 25

of Paran, at [n]Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with [o]milk and honey, [p]and this *is* its fruit. 28Nevertheless the [q]people who dwell in the land *are* strong; the cities *are* fortified *and* very large; moreover we saw the descendants of [r]Anak there. 29[s]The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan."

30Then [t]Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

31[u]But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they *are* stronger than we." 32[v]And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a land that devours its inhabitants, and [w]all the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature. 33There we saw the giants* ([x]the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were [y]like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were [z]in their sight."

Israel Refuses to Enter Canaan

14 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people [a]wept that night. 2[b]And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and [c]children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4So they said to one another, [d]"Let us select a leader and [e]return to Egypt."

5Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

6But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, *who were* among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: [f]"The land we passed through to spy out *is* an exceedingly good land. 8If the LORD [g]delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, [h]'a land which flows with milk and honey.'* 9Only [i]do not rebel against the LORD, [j]nor fear the people of the land, for [k]they *are* our bread; their protection has departed from them, [l]and the LORD *is* with us. Do not fear them."

10[m]And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now [n]the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Moses Intercedes for the People

11Then the LORD said to Moses: "How long will these people [o]reject Me? And how long will they not [p]believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? 12I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will [q]make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

13And [r]Moses said to the LORD: [s]"Then the Egyptians will hear *it*, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, 14and they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land. They have [t]heard that You, LORD, *are* among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. 15Now *if* You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, 16'Because the LORD was not [u]able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.' 17And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, 18[v]'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He

* **13:33** Hebrew *nephilim* * **14:8** Exodus 3:8

13:27 ***flows with milk and honey.*** This phrase brought visions of pleasure and plenty to the Israelites. Canaan was a good land, a land with pasture for sheep and goats, with orchards and vineyards. The orchards and beekeeping went hand in hand, and thriving orchards meant honey. This was a land that was already developed and prospering.

14:3 ***our wives and children should become victims.*** Not only did the Israelites complain against Moses and Aaron, they dishonored God, saying that He would heartlessly bring them to a place where they would die along with their wives and children.

14:11 ***How long.*** This chapter records perhaps the saddest and most far-reaching event in the history of Israel, surpassed only by the crucifixion of their own Messiah. The miracles performed in the Exodus did not convince the Israelites of God's trustworthiness, and the miracles of Christ did not convince the leaders of the day that He was the promised Messiah (Matt. 16:1–4).

13:26 [n] Deut. 1:19 **13:27** [o] Ex. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3 [p] Deut. 1:25 **13:28** [q] Deut. 1:28; 9:1, 2 [r] Josh. 11:21, 22 **13:29** [s] Judg. 6:3 **13:30** [t] Num. 14:6, 24 **13:31** [u] Deut. 1:28; 9:1–3 **13:32** [v] Num. 14:36, 37 [w] Amos 2:9 **13:33** [x] Deut. 1:28; 9:2 [y] Is. 40:22 [z] 1 Sam. 17:42 **14:1** [a] Deut. 1:45 **14:2** [b] Ex. 16:2; 17:3 **14:3** [c] Deut. 1:39 **14:4** [d] Neh. 9:17 [e] Acts 7:39 **14:7** [f] Num. 13:27 **14:8** [g] Deut. 10:15 [h] Num. 13:27 **14:9** [i] Deut. 1:26; 9:7, 23, 24 [j] Deut. 7:18 [k] Num. 24:8 [l] Deut. 20:1, 3, 4; 31:6–8 **14:10** [m] Ex. 17:4 [n] Ex. 16:10 **14:11** [o] Heb. 3:8 [p] Deut. 9:23 **14:12** [q] Ex. 32:10 **14:13** [r] Ps. 106:23 [s] Ex. 32:12 **14:14** [t] Deut. 2:25 **14:16** [u] Deut. 9:28 **14:18** [v] Ex. 34:6, 7

by no means clears *the guilty*, [w]visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generation*.'* 19[x]Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, [y]according to the greatness of Your mercy, just [z]as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

20Then the LORD said: "I have pardoned, [a]according to your word; 21but truly, as I live, [b]all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD— 22[c]because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now [d]these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, 23they certainly shall not [e]see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. 24But My servant [f]Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and [g]has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. 25Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and [h]move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea."

Death Sentence on the Rebels

26And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 27[i]"How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation who complain against Me? [j]I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. 28[k]Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, [l]all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. 30[m]Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. 31[n]But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which [o]you have despised. 32But *as for* you, [p]your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. 33And your sons shall [q]be shepherds in the wilderness [r]forty years, and [s]bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. 34[t]According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, [u]forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, *namely* forty years, [v]and you shall know My rejection. 35[w]I the LORD have spoken this. I will surely do so to all [x]this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.'"

36Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, 37those very men who brought the evil report about the land, [y]died by the plague before the LORD. 38[z]But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

A Futile Invasion Attempt

39Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, [a]and the people mourned greatly. 40And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, [b]"Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised, for we have sinned!"

41And Moses said, "Now why do you transgress the command of the LORD? For this will not succeed. 42[c]Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the LORD *is* not among you. 43For the Amalekites and the Canaanites *are* there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; [d]because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you."

44[e]But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp. 45Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as [f]Hormah.

* **14:18** Exodus 34:6, 7

14:19 ***Pardon . . . I pray.*** This passage records the divine testing of Moses. God was not speaking lightly when He offered to smite the Israelites and start over with another group, new descendants from Moses. But Moses needed to know his own heart about the Israelites. As frustrating as they had been, they were still a living history of the mighty hand of God, and Moses did not want the story of their rescue to end with annihilation in the wilderness. Moses' response was what God wanted to hear, and in passionately and humbly asking for their pardon, Moses had no room for bitterness toward the people who were so difficult to lead.

14:23 ***they certainly shall not see the land.*** God pardoned those who turned against Him, but there was a price to pay. They would not see the land that they had complained was impossible to possess. There is often a lifelong consequence to sin, even with forgiveness.

14:45 ***Hormah.*** The name of this place is very apt; it means "utter destruction."

14:18 [w] Ex. 20:5 **14:19** [x] Ex. 32:32; 34:9 [y] Ps. 51:1; 106:45 [z] Ps. 78:38 **14:20** [a] Mic. 7:18–20 **14:21** [b] Ps. 72:19 **14:22** [c] Deut. 1:35 [d] Gen. 31:7 **14:23** [e] Num. 26:65; 32:11 **14:24** [f] Josh. 14:6, 8, 9 [g] Num. 32:12 **14:25** [h] Deut. 1:40 **14:27** [i] Ex. 16:28 [j] Ex. 16:12 **14:28** [k] Heb. 3:16–19 **14:29** [l] Num. 1:45, 46; 26:64 **14:30** [m] Deut. 1:36–38 **14:31** [n] Deut. 1:39 [o] Ps. 106:24 **14:32** [p] Num. 26:64, 65; 32:13 **14:33** [q] Ps. 107:40 [r] Deut. 2:14 [s] Ezek. 23:35 **14:34** [t] Num. 13:25 [u] Ezek. 4:6 [v] [Heb. 4:1] **14:35** [w] Num. 23:19 [x] 1 Cor. 10:5 **14:37** [y] [1 Cor. 10:10] **14:38** [z] Josh. 14:6, 10 **14:39** [a] Ex. 33:4 **14:40** [b] Deut. 1:41–44 **14:42** [c] Deut. 1:42; 31:17 **14:43** [d] 2 Chr. 15:2 **14:44** [e] Deut. 1:43 **14:45** [f] Num. 21:3

Laws of Grain and Drink Offerings

15 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
2 [a]"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you have come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving to you, **3**and you [b]make an offering by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering or a sacrifice, [c]to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering or [d]in your appointed feasts, to make a [e]sweet aroma to the LORD, from the herd or the flock, **4**then [f]he who presents his offering to the LORD shall bring [g]a grain offering of one-tenth *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed [h]with one-fourth of a hin of oil; **5**[i]and one-fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering you shall prepare with the burnt offering or the sacrifice, for each [j]lamb. **6**[k]Or for a ram you shall prepare as a grain offering two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with one-third of a hin of oil; **7**and as a drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine as a sweet aroma to the LORD. **8**And when you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering, or as a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or as a [l]peace offering to the LORD, **9**then shall be offered [m]with the young bull a grain offering of three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil; **10**and you shall bring as the drink offering half a hin of wine as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.
11[n]'Thus it shall be done for each young bull, for each ram, or for each lamb or young goat. **12**According to the number that you prepare, so you shall do with everyone according to their number. **13**All who are native-born shall do these things in this manner, in presenting an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. **14**And if a stranger dwells with you, or whoever *is* among you throughout your generations, and would present an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD, just as you do, so shall he do. **15**[o]One ordinance *shall be* for you of the assembly and for the stranger who dwells *with you*, an ordinance forever throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. **16**One law and one custom shall be for you and for the stranger who dwells with you.'"*
17Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **18**[p]"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land to which I bring you, **19**then it will be, when you eat of [q]the bread of the land, that you shall offer up a heave offering to the LORD. **20**[r]You shall offer up a cake of the first of your ground meal *as* [s]a heave offering; as a heave offering of the threshing floor, so shall you offer it up. **21**Of the first of your ground meal you shall give to the LORD a heave offering throughout your generations.

Laws Concerning Unintentional Sin

22[t]'If you sin unintentionally, and do not observe all these commandments which the LORD has spoken to Moses— **23**all that the LORD has commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day the LORD gave commandment and onward throughout your generations— **24**then it will be, [u]if it is unintentionally committed, without the knowledge of the congregation, that the whole congregation shall offer one young bull as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma to the LORD, [v]with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and [w]one kid of the goats as a sin offering. **25**[x]So the priest shall make atonement for the whole congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, for it was unintentional; they shall bring their offering, an offering made by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their unintended sin. **26**It shall be forgiven the whole congregation of the children of Israel and the stranger who dwells among them, because all the people *did it* unintentionally.
27'And [y]if a person sins unintentionally, then he shall bring a female goat in its first year as a sin offering. **28**[z]So the priest shall make atonement for the person who sins unintentionally, when he sins unintentionally before the LORD, to make atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. **29**[a]You shall have one law for him who sins unintentionally, *for* him who is native-born among the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among them.

* **15:16** Compare Exodus 12:49

15:2 ***When you have come into the land.*** These words may seem inappropriate following God's punishment for disobedience. But His overall purpose had not changed, and the children would enter the land the parents had rejected.
15:5 ***wine.*** The wine was poured out on the altar in an accompaniment to the burnt offering. It was another way of giving freely back to God that which the worshiper valued. Paul refers to himself as being poured out like a drink offering (2 Tim. 4:6). There is a sense of being finished, emptied of himself, and physically spent, as he does his final work. In the same way, the wine was emptied for God; it was used up. It was not waved, nor was a portion saved for the priests.

15:19–21 ***offer up a heave offering.*** By holding up the very first produce from a harvest, or the first cake made from the first grain of the season, the worshiper thanked God as the giver of all good gifts.

15:2 [a] Lev. 23:10 **15:3** [b] Lev. 1:2, 3 [c] Lev. 7:16; 22:18, 21 [d] Lev. 23:2, 8, 12, 38 [e] Ex. 29:18 **15:4** [f] Lev. 2:1; 6:14 [g] Ex. 29:40 [h] Num. 28:5 **15:5** [i] Num. 28:7, 14 [j] Lev. 1:10; 3:6 **15:6** [k] Num. 28:12, 14 **15:8** [l] Lev. 7:11 **15:9** [m] Num. 28:12, 14 **15:11** [n] Num. 28 **15:15** [o] Num. 9:14; 15:29 **15:18** [p] Deut. 26:1 **15:19** [q] Josh. 5:11, 12 **15:20** [r] Lev. 23:10, 14, 17 [s] Lev. 2:14; 23:10, 16 **15:22** [t] Lev. 4:2 **15:24** [u] Lev. 4:13 [v] Num. 15:8–10 [w] Lev. 4:23 **15:25** [x] [Heb. 2:17] **15:27** [y] Lev. 4:27–31 **15:28** [z] Lev. 4:35 **15:29** [a] Num. 15:15

Law Concerning Presumptuous Sin

30 [b]'But the person who does *anything* presumptuously, *whether he is* native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the LORD, and he shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he has [c]despised the word of the LORD, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt *shall be* upon him.'"

Penalty for Violating the Sabbath

32 Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, [d]they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. 33 And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. 34 They put him [e]under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him.

35 Then the LORD said to Moses, [f]"The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall [g]stone him with stones outside the camp." 36 So, as the LORD commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.

Tassels on Garments

37 Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 38 "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell [h]them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. 39 And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and [i]remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you [j]may not [k]follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, 40 and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be [l]holy for your God. 41 I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD your God."

Rebellion Against Moses and Aaron

16 Now [a]Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with [b]Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *men;* 2 and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, [c]representatives of the congregation, men of renown. 3 [d]They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "*You take* too much upon yourselves, for [e]all the congregation *is* holy, every one of them, [f]and the LORD *is* among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

4 So when Moses heard *it,* he [g]fell on his face; 5 and he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, "Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who *is* [h]His and *who is* [i]holy, and will cause *him* to [j]come near to Him. That one whom He chooses He will cause to come near to Him. 6 Do this: Take censers, Korah and all your company; 7 put fire in them and put incense in them before the LORD tomorrow, and it shall be *that* the man whom the LORD chooses *is* the holy one. *You take* too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!"

8 Then Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you sons of Levi: 9 *Is it* [k]a small thing to you that the God of Israel has [l]separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the work of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to serve them; 10 and that He has brought you near *to Himself,* you and all your brethren, the sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking the priesthood also? 11 Therefore you and all your company *are* gathered together against the LORD. [m]And what *is* Aaron that you complain against him?"

12 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not come up! 13 *Is it* a small thing that you have brought us up out of [n]a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should [o]keep acting like a prince over us? 14 Moreover [p]you have not brought us into [q]a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you

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15:30–31 *presumptuously.* Moses spoke of unfaithfulness when he reminded the people of their presumption at Kadesh (Deut. 1:43). Their presumption was overstepping the limits of what God allowed, and doing it defiantly. If they had trusted God, they would have been happy to do things His way. Christians need to be on guard, lest they too be guilty of presumptuous sin. Consider the words of David, "Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins" (Ps. 19:13).

15:39 *follow the harlotry.* A harlot is a prostitute. Prostitution of the heart is unfaithfulness to God, in the same way that prostitution is unfaithfulness to the sanctity of marriage.

16:1 *Korah.* Korah was already set aside in a special position; he was a Levite. His sin was greater than jealousy of his cousins, the priests. He had set himself against God, and led others to do the same.

16:1–3 *they rose up.* Churches, organizations, marriages, and homes can all be affected by complaining, by rebelling against those whom God has appointed to lead. Great blessing and joy and guidance come from turning such feelings over to God and obeying Him and those whom He has designated.

15:30 [b] Deut. 1:43; 17:12 **15:31** [c] Prov. 13:13
15:32 [d] Ex. 31:14, 15; 35:2, 3 **15:34** [e] Lev. 24:12
15:35 [f] Ex. 31:14, 15 [g] Lev. 24:14 **15:38** [h] Matt. 23:5
15:39 [i] Ps. 103:18 [j] Deut. 29:19 [k] James 4:4 **15:40** [l] [Lev. 11:44, 45] **16:1** [a] Ex. 6:21 [b] Num. 26:9 **16:2** [c] Num. 1:16; 26:9 **16:3** [d] Ps. 106:16 [e] Ex. 19:6 [f] Ex. 29:45
16:4 [g] Num. 14:5; 20:6 **16:5** [h] [2 Tim. 2:19] [i] Lev. 21:6–8, 12 [j] Ezek. 40:46; 44:15, 16 **16:9** [k] Is. 7:13 [l] Deut. 10:8
16:11 [m] Ex. 16:7, 8 **16:13** [n] Num. 11:4–6 [o] Ex. 2:14
16:14 [p] Num. 14:1–4 [q] Ex. 3:8

put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!"

15Then Moses was very angry, and said to the LORD, [r]"Do not respect their offering. [s]I have not taken one donkey from them, nor have I hurt one of them."

16And Moses said to Korah, "Tomorrow, you and all your company be present [t]before the LORD—you and they, as well as Aaron. 17Let each take his censer and put incense in it, and each of you bring his censer before the LORD, two hundred and fifty censers; both you and Aaron, each *with* his censer." 18So every man took his censer, put fire in it, laid incense on it, and stood at the door of the tabernacle of meeting with Moses and Aaron. 19And Korah gathered all the congregation against them at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then [u]the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation.

20And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 21[v]"Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may [w]consume them in a moment."

22Then they [x]fell on their faces, and said, "O God, [y]the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and You be angry with all the [z]congregation?"

23So the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 24"Speak to the congregation, saying, 'Get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'"

25Then Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. 26And he spoke to the congregation, saying, [a]"Depart now from the tents of these wicked men! Touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins." 27So they got away from around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents, with their wives, their sons, and their little [b]children.

28And Moses said: [c]"By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for *I have* not *done them* [d]of my own will. 29If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are [e]visited by the common fate of all men, *then* the LORD has not sent me. 30But if the LORD creates [f]a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they [g]go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD."

31[h]Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, 32and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and [i]all the men with Korah, with all *their* goods. 33So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. 34Then all Israel who *were* around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up *also!*"

35And [j]a fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.

36Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 37"Tell Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to pick up the censers out of the blaze, for [k]they are holy, and scatter the fire some distance away. 38The censers of [l]these men who sinned against their own souls, let them be made into hammered plates as a covering for the altar. Because they presented them before the LORD, therefore they are holy; [m]and they shall be a sign to the children of Israel." 39So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers, which those who were burned up had presented, and they were hammered out as a covering on the altar, 40*to be* a memorial to the children of Israel [n]that no outsider, who *is* not a descendant of Aaron, should come near to offer incense before the LORD, that he might not become like Korah and his companions, just as the LORD had said to him through Moses.

Complaints of the People

41On the next day [o]all the congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD." 42Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they

16:24 ***Get away.*** The Lord was giving the people a chance to show to whom they really had allegiance: God, or Korah and his followers.

16:32 ***all the men with Korah.*** The whole families of Dathan and Abiram were swallowed up, but some of Korah's descendants did not follow him, and were not destroyed. Some of them contributed a considerable number of psalms (see Ps. 42). God is always merciful, even when dealing with the flagrant troublemakers.

16:37 ***pick up the censers.*** Just as He spared the relatives of Korah who were not in rebellion, so, also, did He save the censers. They were holy because they had been dedicated to God, but they would not be used as incense burners again.

16:41 ***complained against Moses and Aaron.*** Incredibly, even after watching the dramatic destruction of the rebels, the congregation blamed the very leaders who had pleaded for the Lord to spare the rest of the congregation (v. 20). Obviously the people still strongly identified with Korah and his followers, and did not comprehend what they had just witnessed. Witnessing the destructiveness of sin does not always make people wake up and change their ways.

16:15 [r] Gen. 4:4, 5 [s] 1 Sam. 12:3 **16:16** [t] 1 Sam. 12:3, 7
16:19 [u] Num. 14:10 **16:21** [v] Gen. 19:17 [w] Ex. 32:10; 33:5 **16:22** [x] Num. 14:5 [y] Num. 27:16 [z] Gen. 18:23–32; 20:4 **16:26** [a] Gen. 19:12, 14, 15, 17 **16:27** [b] Num. 26:11
16:28 [c] John 5:36 [d] John 5:30 **16:29** [e] Ex. 20:5
16:30 [f] Job 31:3 [g] [Ps. 55:15] **16:31** [h] Num. 26:10
16:32 [i] Num. 26:11 **16:35** [j] Num. 11:1–3; 26:10
16:37 [k] Lev. 27:28 **16:38** [l] Hab. 2:10 [m] Num. 17:10
16:40 [n] Num. 3:10 **16:41** [o] Num. 14:2

turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly [p]the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. 43Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting.

44And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 45"Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment."

And they fell on their faces.

46So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense *on it*, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; [q]for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun." 47Then Aaron took *it* as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48And he stood between the dead and the living; [r]so the plague was stopped. 49Now those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the Korah incident. 50So Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, for the plague had stopped.

The Budding of Aaron's Rod

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2"Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father's house, all their leaders according to their fathers' houses—twelve rods. Write each man's name on his rod. 3And you shall write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod for the head of *each* father's house. 4Then you shall place them in the tabernacle of meeting before [a]the Testimony, [b]where I meet with you. 5And it shall be *that* the rod of the man [c]whom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, [d]which they make against you."

6So Moses spoke to the children of Israel, and each of their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron *was* among their rods. 7And Moses placed the rods before the LORD in [e]the tabernacle of witness.

8Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the [f]rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds. 9Then Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD to all the children of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod.

10And the LORD said to Moses, "Bring [g]Aaron's rod back before the Testimony, to be kept [h]as a sign against the rebels, [i]that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die." 11Thus did Moses; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

12So the children of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, "Surely we die, we perish, we all perish! 13[j]Whoever even comes near the tabernacle of the LORD must die. Shall we all utterly die?"

Duties of Priests and Levites

18 Then the LORD said to Aaron: [a]"You and your sons and your father's house with you shall [b]bear the iniquity *related to* the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity *associated with* your priesthood. 2Also bring with you your brethren of the [c]tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may be [d]joined with you and serve you while you and your sons *are* with you before the tabernacle of witness. 3They shall attend to your needs and [e]all the needs of the tabernacle; [f]but they shall not come near the articles of the sanctuary and the altar, [g]lest they die—they and you also. 4They shall be joined with you and attend to the needs of the tabernacle of meeting, for all the work of the tabernacle; [h]but an outsider shall not come near you. 5And you shall attend to the duties of the sanctuary and [i]the duties of the altar, [j]that there *may* be no more wrath on the children of Israel. 6Behold, I Myself have [k]taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel;

16:48 ***he stood between the dead and the living.*** Aaron stood between the living and the dead to stop the plague—just like the Savior, who stands in the gap between life and death.

17:12 ***we perish.*** The Israelites were overshadowed by despondency. Aware of God's righteous judgments against their constant grumbling, they were gripped by fear. They knew they were guilty, they knew that God would punish them, and the warm light of peace had left their lives. When this happens, let us remember that there is still one way back into the sunshine. Repentance leads to the happy experience of the remission of sins and peace with God (Luke 24:47).

17:13 ***Shall we all utterly die?*** Finally the people realized that God had revealed His will through His miraculous actions among them. They suddenly saw their presumption and God's opinion of it.

18:1 ***bear the iniquity related to the sanctuary . . . priesthood.*** The priests stood as intermediaries between God and man. If the people had no advocate before the Lord, they would die in their offenses. The priests had a formidable responsibility, for if they did not do their job, the whole community suffered.

16:42 [p] Ex. 40:34 **16:46** [q] Num. 18:5 **16:48** [r] Num. 25:8 **17:4** [a] Ex. 25:16 [b] Ex. 25:22; 29:42, 43; 30:36 **17:5** [c] Num. 16:5 [d] Num. 16:11 **17:7** [e] Ex. 38:21 **17:8** [f] [Ezek. 17:24] **17:10** [g] Heb. 9:4 [h] Deut. 9:7, 24 [i] Num. 17:5 **17:13** [j] Num. 1:51, 53; 18:4, 7 **18:1** [a] Num. 17:13 [b] Ex. 28:38 **18:2** [c] Num. 1:47 [d] Num. 3:5–10 **18:3** [e] Num. 3:25, 31, 36 [f] Num. 16:40 [g] Num. 4:15 **18:4** [h] Num. 3:10 **18:5** [i] Lev. 24:3 [j] Num. 8:19; 16:46 **18:6** [k] Num. 3:12, 45

[l]*they are* a gift to you, given by the LORD, to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting. 7Therefore [m]you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything at the altar and [n]behind the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood *to you* as a [o]gift for service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death."

Offerings for Support of the Priests

8And the LORD spoke to Aaron: "Here, [p]I Myself have also given you charge of My heave offerings, all the holy gifts of the children of Israel; I have given them [q]as a portion to you and your sons, as an ordinance forever. 9This shall be yours of the most holy things *reserved* from the fire: every offering of theirs, every [r]grain offering and every [s]sin offering and every [t]trespass offering which they render to Me, *shall be* most holy for you and your sons. 10[u]In a most holy *place* you shall eat it; every male shall eat it. It shall be holy to you.

11"This also *is* yours: [v]the heave offering of their gift, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel; I have given them to you, and your sons and daughters with you, as an ordinance forever. [w]Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

12[x]"All the best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and the grain, [y]their firstfruits which they offer to the LORD, I have given them to you. 13Whatever first ripe fruit is in their land, [z]which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

14[a]"Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours.

15"Everything that first opens [b]the womb of all flesh, which they bring to the LORD, whether man or beast, shall be yours; nevertheless the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and [c]the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. 16And those redeemed of the devoted things you shall redeem when one month old, [d]according to your valuation, for five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which *is* [e]twenty gerahs. 17[f]But the firstborn of a cow, the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they *are* holy. [g]You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat *as* an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD. 18And their flesh shall be yours, just as the [h]wave breast and the right thigh are yours.

19"All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the LORD, I have given to you and your sons and daughters with you as an ordinance forever; [i]it *is* a covenant of salt forever before the LORD with you and your descendants with you."

20Then the LORD said to Aaron: "You shall have [j]no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; [k]I *am* your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.

Tithes for Support of the Levites

21"Behold, [l]I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, [m]the work of the tabernacle of meeting. 22[n]Hereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, [o]lest they bear sin and die. 23But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; *it shall be* a statute forever, throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. 24For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up *as* a heave offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites as an inheritance; therefore I have said to them, 'Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.'"

The Tithe of the Levites

25Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 26"Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: 'When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the LORD, [p]a tenth of the tithe. 27And your heave offering shall be reckoned to you as though *it were* the grain of the [q]threshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress. 28Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to the LORD from all your tithes which you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give the LORD's heave offering from it to Aaron the priest. 29Of all your gifts you shall offer up every heave offering due to the LORD, from all the best of them, the consecrated part of them.' 30Therefore you shall say to them: 'When you have lifted

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18:19 ***an ordinance forever.*** The priests lived off the produce of the land as God provided for them through the gifts of His people. Instead of inheriting land, God was their inheritance. They would be well supplied as long as the people were faithful, and this would be a good incentive to the priests to be responsible.

18:6 [l]Num. 3:9 **18:7** [m]Num. 3:10; 18:5 [n]Heb. 9:3, 6 [o]1 Pet. 5:2, 3 **18:8** [p]Lev. 6:16, 18; 7:28–34 [q]Ex. 29:29; 40:13, 15 **18:9** [r]Lev. 2:2, 3; 10:12, 13 [s]Lev. 6:25, 26 [t]Lev. 7:7 **18:10** [u]Lev. 6:16, 26 **18:11** [v]Deut. 18:3–5 [w]Lev. 22:1–16 **18:12** [x]Ex. 23:19 [y]Ex. 22:29 **18:13** [z]Ex. 22:29; 23:19; 34:26 **18:14** [a]Lev. 27:1–33 **18:15** [b]Ex. 13:2 [c]Ex. 13:12–15 **18:16** [d]Lev. 27:6 [e]Ex. 30:13 **18:17** [f]Deut. 15:19 [g]Lev. 3:2, 5 **18:18** [h]Ex. 29:26–28 **18:19** [i]2 Chr. 13:5 **18:20** [j]Josh. 13:14, 33 [k]Ezek. 44:28 **18:21** [l]Lev. 27:30–33 [m]Num. 3:7, 8 **18:22** [n]Num. 1:51 [o]Lev. 22:9 **18:26** [p]Neh. 10:38 **18:27** [q]Num. 15:20

up the best of it, then *the rest* shall be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress. 31You may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it *is* [r]your reward for your work in the tabernacle of meeting. 32And you shall [s]bear no sin because of it, when you have lifted up the best of it. But you shall not [t]profane the holy gifts of the children of Israel, lest you die.'"

Laws of Purification

19 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 2"This *is* the ordinance of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying: 'Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring you a red heifer without blemish, in which there *is* no [a]defect [b]*and* on which a yoke has never come. 3You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, that he may take it [c]outside the camp, and it shall be slaughtered before him; 4and Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and [d]sprinkle some of its blood seven times directly in front of the tabernacle of meeting. 5Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight: [e]its hide, its flesh, its blood, and its offal shall be burned. 6And the priest shall take [f]cedar wood and [g]hyssop and scarlet, and cast *them* into the midst of the fire burning the heifer. 7[h]Then the priest shall wash his clothes, he shall bathe in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp; the priest shall be unclean until evening. 8And the one who burns it shall wash his clothes in water, bathe in water, and shall be unclean until evening. 9Then a man *who is* clean shall gather up [i]the ashes of the heifer, and store *them* outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel [j]for the water of purification;* it *is* for purifying from sin. 10And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until evening. It shall be a statute forever to the children of Israel and to the stranger who dwells among them.

11[k]"He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. 12[l]He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; *then* he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. 13Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and [m]does not purify himself, [n]defiles the tabernacle of the LORD. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because [o]the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; [p]his uncleanness *is* still on him.

14"This *is* the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who *are* in the tent shall be unclean seven days; 15and every [q]open vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, *is* unclean. 16[r]Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

17"And for an unclean *person* they shall take some of the [s]ashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and running water shall be put on them in a vessel. 18A clean person shall take [t]hyssop and dip *it* in the water, sprinkle *it* on the tent, on all the vessels, on the persons who were there, or on the one who touched a bone, the slain, the dead, or a grave. 19The clean *person* shall sprinkle the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; [u]and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, wash his clothes, and bathe in water; and at evening he shall be clean.

20"But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person shall be cut off from among the assembly, because he has [v]defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. The water of purification has not been sprinkled on him; he *is* unclean. 21It shall be a perpetual statute for them. He who sprinkles the water of purification shall wash his clothes; and he who touches the

* **19:9** Literally *impurity*

19:2 *red heifer.* The animal sacrificed for making the waters of purification was different than sacrifices for sins or thanksgivings. It was a female, not a male, its color was specified, it was killed outside the camp, and cedar and hyssop, used in purification ceremonies, were added to the burning heifer.

19:9 *the water of purification.* It is not that this water was "magic," but it was prepared in obedience to God's commands, and was an outward symbol of the inner work that God does to remove impurity. It is important to recognize that the rituals and celebrations were designed by God to create an awareness in His people of their spiritual needs, and ultimately to prepare them for Christ. All of the washings and sacrifices were still powerless to change hearts. That is a spiritual work done by God alone.

19:20 *does not purify himself.* The issues of uncleanness were so serious that the one who applied the waters of purification became unclean also. Refusing to accept the need for cleansing was not just the act of an uncouth person who didn't care about germs. Every time someone dies, it is a reminder that death came into the world through sin (Rom. 5:12–14). The ritual for cleansing was a way of addressing the fact that it was sin that made this happen: the world is not the way God created it to be, and humans are in continual need of being reconciled to their Creator.

18:31 [r] [Luke 10:7] **18:32** [s] Lev. 19:8; 22:16 [t] Lev. 22:2, 15 **19:2** [a] Lev. 22:20–25 [b] Deut. 21:3 **19:3** [c] Lev. 4:12, 21 **19:4** [d] Lev. 4:6 **19:5** [e] Ex. 29:14 **19:6** [f] Lev. 14:4, 6, 49 [g] Ex. 12:22 **19:7** [h] Lev. 11:25; 15:5; 16:26, 28 **19:9** [i] [Heb. 9:13, 14] [j] Num. 19:13, 20, 21 **19:11** [k] Lev. 21:1, 11 **19:12** [l] Num. 19:19; 31:19 **19:13** [m] Lev. 22:3–7 [n] Lev. 15:31 [o] Num. 8:7; 19:9 [p] Lev. 7:20; 22:3 **19:15** [q] Num. 31:20 **19:16** [r] Num. 19:11; 31:19 **19:17** [s] Num. 19:9 **19:18** [t] Ps. 51:7 **19:19** [u] Lev. 14:9 **19:20** [v] Num. 19:13

water of purification shall be unclean until evening. 22[w]Whatever the unclean *person* touches shall be unclean; and [x]the person who touches *it* shall be unclean until evening.'"

Moses' Error at Kadesh

20 Then[a] the children of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the Wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in [b]Kadesh; and [c]Miriam died there and was buried there.

2[d]Now there was no water for the congregation; [e]so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. 3And the people [f]contended with Moses and spoke, saying: "If only we had died [g]when our brethren died before the LORD! 4[h]Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? 5And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It *is* not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor *is* there any water to drink." 6So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and [i]they fell on their faces. And [j]the glory of the LORD appeared to them.

7Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 8[k]"Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus [l]you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." 9So Moses took the rod [m]from before the LORD as He commanded him.

10And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, [n]"Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; [o]and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.

12Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because [p]you did not believe Me, to [q]hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

13[r]This *was* the water of Meribah,* because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was hallowed among them.

Passage Through Edom Refused

14[s]Now Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of [t]Edom. [u]"Thus says your brother Israel: 'You know all the hardship that has befallen us, 15[v]how our fathers went down to Egypt, [w]and we dwelt in Egypt a long time, [x]and the Egyptians afflicted us and our fathers. 16[y]When we cried out to the LORD, He heard our voice and [z]sent the Angel and brought us up out of Egypt; now here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your border. 17Please [a]let us pass through your country. We will not pass through fields or vineyards, nor will we drink water from wells; we will go along the King's Highway; we will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory.'"

18Then [b]Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through my *land*, lest I come out against you with the sword."

19So the children of Israel said to him, "We will go by the Highway, and if I or my livestock drink any of your water, [c]then I will pay for it; let me only pass through on foot, nothing *more*."

20Then he said, [d]"You shall not pass through." So Edom came out against them with many men and with a strong hand.

* **20:13** Literally *Contention*

20:1 ***in the first month.*** No year is associated with this month; most likely it is the fortieth year, the end of the sojourn in the wilderness.

20:2 ***no water.*** Having no water was the subject of the first crisis that the Israelites had on their journey out of Egypt (Ex. 17). The same problem, forty years later, provokes the same ingratitude and anger from the people.

20:11 ***struck the rock twice.*** The first time God brought water from the rock, He asked Moses to strike it. This time He asked Moses to speak to it. In his anger at the Israelites' attitude, Moses spoke roughly to the Israelites and struck the rock. Even Moses could mess things up by responding in anger.

20:11,23–24 ***because you rebelled.*** Up to this point, Moses' obedience had been impeccable. It may seem that his anger was so understandable that God was overly harsh in His discipline of Moses. But Moses was the only representative of God to the people. It was only with Moses that God had spoken face to face, and Moses had a grave responsibility to only communicate what God actually said. Moses' attitude was displeasing to God, and his actions went beyond what God had directed. Anger and presumption are still two quick ways to break our fellowship with God.

20:13 ***Meribah.*** This is the same name that was given 40 years earlier to the location of the first water crisis (Ex. 17:7). The word means "contention."

20:14 ***your brother Israel.*** The Edomites were descendants of Jacob's brother Esau. Because of this relationship, Moses had a special basis of appeal, and for the same reason, the Israelites were not to fight the Edomites.

19:22 [w] Hag. 2:11–13 [x] Lev. 15:5 **20:1** [a] Num. 13:21; 33:36 [b] Num. 13:26 [c] Ex. 15:20 **20:2** [d] Ex. 17:1 [e] Num. 16:19, 42 **20:3** [f] Ex. 17:2 [g] Num. 11:1, 33; 14:37; 16:31–35, 49 **20:4** [h] Ex. 17:3 **20:6** [i] Num. 14:5; 16:4, 22, 45 [j] Num. 14:10 **20:8** [k] Ex. 4:17, 20; 17:5, 6 [l] Neh. 9:15 **20:9** [m] Num. 17:10 **20:10** [n] Ps. 106:33 **20:11** [o] [1 Cor. 10:4] **20:12** [p] Deut. 1:37; 3:26, 27; 34:5 [q] Lev. 10:3 **20:13** [r] Deut. 33:8 **20:14** [s] Judg. 11:16, 17 [t] Gen. 36:31–39 [u] Deut. 2:4 **20:15** [v] Gen. 46:6 [w] Ex. 12:40 [x] Deut. 26:6 **20:16** [y] Ex. 2:23; 3:7 [z] Ex. 3:2; 14:19 **20:17** [a] Num. 21:22 **20:18** [b] Num. 24:18 **20:19** [c] Deut. 2:6, 28 **20:20** [d] Judg. 11:17

21 Thus Edom [e]refused to give Israel passage through his territory; so Israel [f]turned away from him.

Death of Aaron

22 Now the children of Israel, the whole congregation, journeyed from [g]Kadesh [h]and came to Mount Hor. 23 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying: 24 "Aaron shall be [i]gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah. 25 [j]Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up to Mount Hor; 26 and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; for Aaron shall be gathered *to his people* and die there." 27 So Moses did just as the LORD commanded, and they went up to Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. 28 [k]Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; and [l]Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. 29 Now when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron [m]thirty days.

Canaanites Defeated at Hormah

21 The [q]king of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South, heard that Israel was coming on the road to Atharim. Then he fought against Israel and took *some* of them prisoners. 2 [b]So Israel made a vow to the LORD, and said, "If You will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then [c]I will utterly destroy their cities." 3 And the LORD listened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities. So the name of that place was called Hormah.*

The Bronze Serpent

4 Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to [d]go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people [e]spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there is* no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So [f]the LORD sent [g]fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

7 [h]Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have [i]sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; [j]pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

8 Then the LORD said to Moses, [k]"Make a [l]fiery *serpent,* and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." 9 So [m]Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

From Mount Hor to Moab

10 Now the children of Israel moved on and [n]camped in Oboth. 11 And they journeyed from Oboth and camped at Ije Abarim, in the wilderness which *is* east of Moab, toward the sunrise. 12 [o]From there they moved and camped in the Valley of Zered. 13 From there they moved and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which *is* in the wilderness that extends from the border of the Amorites; for [p]the Arnon *is* the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. 14 Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD:

"Waheb in Suphah,*
The brooks of the Arnon,
15 And the slope of the brooks
That reaches to the dwelling of [q]Ar,
And lies on the border of Moab."

16 From there *they went* [r]to Beer, which *is* the well where the LORD said to Moses, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water." 17 Then Israel sang this song:

[s]"Spring up, O well!
All of you sing to it—
18 The well the leaders sank,
Dug by the nation's nobles,
By the [t]lawgiver, with their staves."

And from the wilderness *they went* to Mattanah, 19 from Mattanah to Nahaliel,

*21:3 Literally *Utter Destruction* *21:14 Ancient unknown places; Vulgate reads *What He did in the Red Sea.*

21:5 *loathes this worthless bread.* As the psalmist later observed, "How often they provoked Him in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert!" (Ps. 78:40). In their contempt of the food, the people were actually spurning God who had given them this food. It is a sharp reminder to believers to do all things without grumbling (Phil. 2:14) so the glory of the Lord will be evident to those who are watching.

21:8 *fiery serpent . . . when he looks at it, shall live.* Jesus pointed to this stunning image in His dialogue with Nicodemus (John 3:14–15). Jesus was nailed to the cross, and those who look at it—who realize, "the cross is the price for *my* sins"—will receive eternal life. Each Israelite who looked at the bronze snake knew that the snake bites were the penalty for his own sinful attitudes. In both cases, only God has the cure.

20:21 [e] Deut. 2:27, 30 [f] Judg. 11:18 **20:22** [g] Num. 33:37 [h] Num. 21:4 **20:24** [i] Gen. 25:8 **20:25** [j] Num. 33:38 **20:28** [k] Ex. 29:29, 30 [l] Num. 33:38 **20:29** [m] Deut. 34:8 **21:1** [q] Judg. 1:16 **21:2** [b] Gen. 28:20 [c] Deut. 2:34 **21:4** [d] Judg. 11:18 **21:5** [e] Num. 20:4, 5 **21:6** [f] 1 Cor. 10:9 [g] Deut. 8:15 **21:7** [h] Num. 11:2 [i] Lev. 26:40 [j] Ex. 8:8 **21:8** [k] [John 3:14, 15] [l] Is. 14:29; 30:6 **21:9** [m] John 3:14, 15 **21:10** [n] Num. 33:43, 44 **21:12** [o] Deut. 2:13 **21:13** [p] Num. 22:36 **21:15** [q] Deut. 2:9, 18, 29 **21:16** [r] Judg. 9:21 **21:17** [s] Ex. 15:1 **21:18** [t] Is. 33:22

from Nahaliel to Bamoth, 20and from Bamoth, *in* the valley that *is* in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah which looks [u]down on the wasteland.*

King Sihon Defeated

21Then [v]Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, 22[w]"Let me pass through your land. We will not turn aside into fields or vineyards; we will not drink water from wells. We will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory." 23[x]But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together and went out against Israel in the wilderness, [y]and he came to Jahaz and fought against Israel. 24Then [z]Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon; for the border of the people of Ammon *was* fortified. 25So Israel took all these cities, and Israel [a]dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon and in all its villages. 26For Heshbon *was* the city of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and had taken all his land from his hand as far as the Arnon. 27Therefore those who speak in proverbs say:

"Come to Heshbon, let it be built;
Let the city of Sihon be repaired.

28 "For [b]fire went out from Heshbon,
A flame from the city of Sihon;
It consumed [c]Ar of Moab,
The lords of the [d]heights of the Arnon.
29 Woe to you, [e]Moab!
You have perished, O people of
[f]Chemosh!
He has given his [g]sons as fugitives,
And his [h]daughters into captivity,
To Sihon king of the Amorites.

30 "But we have shot at them;
Heshbon has perished [i]as far as Dibon.
Then we laid waste as far as Nophah,
Which *reaches* to [j]Medeba."

31Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites. 32Then Moses sent to spy out [k]Jazer; and they took its villages and drove out the Amorites who *were* there.

King Og Defeated

33[l]And they turned and went up by the way to [m]Bashan. So Og king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to battle [n]at Edrei. 34Then the LORD said to Moses, [o]"Do not fear him, for I have delivered him into your hand, with all his people and his land; and [p]you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon." 35[q]So they defeated him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left him; and they took possession of his land.

Balak Sends for Balaam

22 Then [a]the children of Israel moved, and camped in the plains of Moab on the side of the Jordan *across from* Jericho.

2Now [b]Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. 3And [c]Moab was exceedingly afraid of the people because they *were* many, and Moab was sick with dread because of the children of Israel. 4So Moab said to [d]the elders of Midian, "Now this company will lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." And Balak the son of Zippor *was* king of the Moabites at that time. 5Then [e]he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at [f]Pethor, which *is* near the River* in the land of the sons of his people,* to call him, saying: "Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! 6[g]Therefore please come at once, [h]curse this people for me, for they *are* too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless *is* blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

7So the elders of Moab and the elders of

* **21:20** Hebrew *Jeshimon* * **22:5** That is, the Euphrates • Or *the people of Amau*

21:21 ***king of the Amorites.*** The Amorites were one of the peoples that God had commissioned Israel to destroy (Ex. 33:2; 34:11).

21:21–24 Saying No to God—A stubborn "no" to an innocent and reasonable request can produce a counter-reaction. It is not that it is wrong to ever say "no," but the key fault on the part of the Amorites was a hard-hearted refusal to consider a request that would cost them nothing to grant. With God's wisdom, we need to consider our words carefully, and "if it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18).

21:27–32 ***people of Chemosh.*** This song begins with a recital of the earlier victory of the Amorites over the people of Moab and their god Chemosh. After defeating Sihon and the Amorites, Israel became a formidable threat to Moab. The Amorites were pointing out that the Moabites' god did not help them. Now that the Amorites had been defeated, it was clear that the God of Israel was greater than the gods of both the Moabites and the Amorites.

22:5 ***Balaam.*** Balak hired Balaam to destroy Israel by spiritual means. He thought that Balaam could cause Israel's "gods" to stop protecting them.

22:6 ***he whom you curse is cursed.*** The reality is that

21:20 [u] Num. 23:28 **21:21** [v] Deut. 2:26–37 **21:22** [w] Num. 20:16, 17 **21:23** [x] Deut. 29:7 [y] Judg. 11:20 **21:24** [z] Amos 2:9 **21:25** [a] Amos 2:10 **21:28** [b] Jer. 48:45, 46 [c] Is. 15:1 [d] Num. 22:41; 33:52 **21:29** [e] Jer. 48:46 [f] Judg. 11:24 [g] Is. 15:2, 5 [h] Is. 16:2 **21:30** [i] Num. 32:3, 34 [j] Is. 15:2 **21:32** [k] Jer. 48:32 **21:33** [l] Deut. 29:7 [m] Deut. 3:1 [n] Josh. 13:12 **21:34** [o] Deut. 3:2 [p] Num. 21:24 **21:35** [q] Deut. 3:3, 4; 29:7 **22:1** [a] Num. 33:48, 49 **22:2** [b] Judg. 11:25 **22:3** [c] Ex. 15:15 **22:4** [d] Num. 25:15–18; 31:1–3 **22:5** [e] 2 Pet. 2:15 [f] Deut. 23:4 **22:6** [g] Num. 22:17; 23:7, 8 [h] Num. 22:12; 24:9

Midian departed with the [i]diviner's fee in their hand, and they came to Balaam and spoke to him the words of Balak. 8And he said to them, [j]"Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, as the LORD speaks to me." So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.

9[k]Then God came to Balaam and said, "Who *are* these men with you?"

10So Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, *saying*, 11'Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out.'"

12And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for [l]they *are* blessed."

13So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go back to your land, for the LORD has refused to give me permission to go with you."

14And the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."

15Then Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more honorable than they. 16And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me; 17for I will certainly [m]honor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. [n]Therefore please come, curse this people for me.'"

18Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, [o]"Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, [p]I could not go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more. 19Now therefore, please, you also [q]stay here tonight, that I may know what more the LORD will say to me."

20[r]And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men come to call you, rise *and* go with them; but [s]only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do." 21So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.

Balaam, the Donkey, and the Angel

22Then God's anger was aroused because he went, [t]and the Angel of the LORD took His stand in the way as an adversary against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants *were* with him. 23Now [u]the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand, and the donkey turned aside out of the way and went into the field. So Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back onto the road. 24Then the Angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, *with* a wall on this side and a wall on that side. 25And when the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she pushed herself against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck her again. 26Then the Angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place where there *was* no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. 27And when the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam's anger was aroused, and he struck the donkey with his staff.

28Then the LORD [v]opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"

29And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, [w]for now I would kill you!"

30[x]So the donkey said to Balaam, "*Am* I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since *I became* yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?"

And he said, "No."

God's blessing on Israel could not be tampered with. It is important to remember that the Creator God is the source of all blessing and that no evil can stand against God's blessing and protection.

22:8 ***as the LORD speaks to me.*** Balaam speaks of the Lord as if he were intimate with Him. No doubt he had heard of the Lord, and no doubt the Lord did give him the words to say when Balaam looked at the Israelites. But Balaam did not give the Lord God any greater place in his own life than he gave to pagan gods, as is evidenced by his subsequent actions.

22:18 ***the LORD my God.*** This is not a confession of faith on Balaam's part, but a bold and false claim to be a medium of Israel's "god." Balaam was motivated by greed, not by a desire to please the Lord (2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11).

22:22 ***God's anger was aroused because he went.*** God had given Balaam permission to go, after he asked the second time, and yet God was angry. This is a little puzzling, but if we remember that God is not whimsical, it makes sense. God had already told Balaam "no," and when Balak's leaders came to him again, Balaam came to God again, saying in essence, "but now there is a lot of money and power available, so let me run this by You again . . . ." He was treating the Lord as if He were any little demon god, who is appealed to by money and divination rituals. Balaam did not comprehend that he was dealing with the real, powerful, awesome, and almighty God, until he encountered the angel with his drawn sword. God had a plan, and He was going to use Balaam to sabotage Balak's plans in a way that would definitely communicate to Balak exactly who the Israelites' God was, and what His plan was for His people. But Balaam needed to understand that it was the Lord who was in charge, not Balaam and his divination methods.

22:7 [i] 1 Sam. 9:7, 8 **22:8** [j] Num. 22:19 **22:9** [k] Gen. 20:3 **22:12** [l] [Rom. 11:28] **22:17** [m] Num. 24:11 [n] Num. 22:6 **22:18** [o] Num. 22:38; 24:13 [p] 1 Kin. 22:14 **22:19** [q] Num. 22:8 **22:20** [r] Num. 22:9 [s] Num. 22:35; 23:5, 12, 16, 26; 24:13 **22:22** [t] Ex. 4:24 **22:23** [u] Josh. 5:13 **22:28** [v] 2 Pet. 2:16 **22:29** [w] [Prov. 12:10] **22:30** [x] 2 Pet. 2:16

31 Then the LORD [y]opened Balaam's eyes,
and he saw the Angel of the LORD standing
in the way with His drawn sword in His
hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat
on his face. 32 And the Angel of the LORD
said to him, "Why have you struck your
donkey these three times? Behold, I have
come out to stand against you, because
your way is [z]perverse before Me. 33 The
donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me
these three times. If she had not turned
aside from Me, surely I would also have
killed you by now, and let her live."
34 And Balaam said to the Angel of the
LORD, [a]"I have sinned, for I did not know
You stood in the way against me. Now
therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn
back."
35 Then the Angel of the LORD said to Ba-
laam, "Go with the men, [b]but only the word
that I speak to you, that you shall speak."
So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.
36 Now when Balak heard that Balaam
was coming, [c]he went out to meet him at
the city of Moab, [d]which *is* on the border at
the Arnon, the boundary of the territory.
37 Then Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not
earnestly send to you, calling for you? Why
did you not come to me? Am I not able [e]to
honor you?"
38 And Balaam said to Balak, "Look, I
have come to you! Now, have I any power
at all to say anything? [f]The word that God
puts in my mouth, that I must speak." 39 So
Balaam went with Balak, and they came to
Kirjath Huzoth. 40 Then Balak offered oxen
and sheep, and he sent *some* to Balaam and
to the princes who *were* with him.

Balaam's First Prophecy

41 So it was, the next day, that Balak took
Balaam and brought him up to the [g]high
places of Baal, that from there he might
observe the extent of the people.

23 Then Balaam said to Balak, [a]"Build
seven altars for me here, and prepare
for me here seven bulls and seven rams."
2 And Balak did just as Balaam had spo-
ken, and Balak and Balaam [b]offered a bull
and a ram on *each* altar. 3 Then Balaam
said to Balak, [c]"Stand by your burnt offer-
ing, and I will go; perhaps the LORD will
come [d]to meet me, and whatever He shows
me I will tell you." So he went to a desolate
height. 4 [e]And God met Balaam, and he said
to Him, "I have prepared the seven altars,
and I have offered on *each* altar a bull and
a ram."
5 Then the LORD [f]put a word in Balaam's
mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and
thus you shall speak." 6 So he returned to
him, and there he was, standing by his
burnt offering, he and all the princes of
Moab.
7 And he [g]took up his oracle and said:

"Balak the king of Moab has brought
me from Aram,
From the mountains of the east.
[h]'Come, curse Jacob for me,
And come, [i]denounce Israel!'

8 "How[j] shall I curse whom God has not
cursed?
And how shall I denounce *whom* the
LORD has not denounced?
9 For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him;
There! [k]A people dwelling alone,
[l]Not reckoning itself among the
nations.

10 "Who[m] can count the dust* of Jacob,
Or number one-fourth of Israel?
Let me die [n]the death of the righteous,
And let my end be like his!"

11 Then Balak said to Balaam, "What
have you done to me? [o]I took you to curse
my enemies, and look, you have blessed
them bountifully!"
12 So he answered and said, [p]"Must I not
take heed to speak what the LORD has put
in my mouth?"

Balaam's Second Prophecy

13 Then Balak said to him, "Please come
with me to another place from which you
may see them; you shall see only the out-
er part of them, and shall not see them all;
curse them for me from there." 14 So he
brought him to the field of Zophim, to the
top of Pisgah, [q]and built seven altars, and
offered a bull and a ram on *each* altar.
15 And he said to Balak, "Stand here by
your burnt offering while I meet* *the* LORD
over there."
16 Then the LORD met Balaam, and [r]put

* **23:10** Or *dust cloud* * **23:15** Following Maso-
retic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Syriac reads *call;*
Septuagint reads *go and ask God.*

23:5 ***the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth.*** Even though Balaam was not a true servant of God, the words that Balaam spoke were truly God's blessing.
23:7–10 ***took up his oracle.*** The words that Balaam spoke, however unwillingly, certainly affirmed God's providence for the nation Israel. It is curious how the Lord used a mercenary and devious diviner to clearly speak the blessing on Israel, but that too was a part of God's providence. Balaam was claiming to speak for the Lord; the Lord would make sure that Balaam indeed spoke for Him.

22:31 [y] Gen. 21:19 **22:32** [z] [2 Pet. 2:14, 15] **22:34** [a] 2 Sam. 12:13 **22:35** [b] Num. 22:20 **22:36** [c] Gen. 14:17 [d] Num. 21:13 **22:37** [e] Num. 22:17; 24:11 **22:38** [f] 1 Kin. 22:14 **22:41** [g] Num. 21:28 **23:1** [a] Num. 23:29 **23:2** [b] Num. 23:14, 30 **23:3** [c] Num. 23:15 [d] Num. 23:4, 16 **23:4** [e] Num. 23:16 **23:5** [f] Deut. 18:18 **23:7** [g] Deut. 23:4 [h] Num. 22:6, 11, 17 [i] 1 Sam. 17:10 **23:8** [j] Num. 22:12 **23:9** [k] Deut. 32:8; 33:28 [l] Ex. 33:16 **23:10** [m] Gen. 13:16; 22:17; 28:14 [n] Ps. 116:15 **23:11** [o] Num. 22:11 **23:12** [p] Num. 22:38 **23:14** [q] Num. 23:1, 2 **23:16** [r] Num. 22:35; 23:5

a word in his mouth, and said, "Go back to Balak, and thus you shall speak." 17So he came to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab were with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the LORD spoken?"

18Then he took up his oracle and said:

[s]"Rise up, Balak, and hear!
Listen to me, son of Zippor!

19 "God[t] *is* not a man, that He should lie,
Nor a son of man, that He should repent.
Has He [u]said, and will He not do?
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?
20 Behold, I have received *a command* to bless;
[v]He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

21 "He[w] has not observed iniquity in Jacob,
Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel.
The LORD his God *is* with him,
[x]And the shout of a King *is* among them.
22 [y]God brings them out of Egypt;
He has [z]strength like a wild ox.

23 "For *there is* no sorcery against Jacob,
Nor any divination against Israel.
It now must be said of Jacob
And of Israel, 'Oh, [a]what God has done!'
24 Look, a people rises [b]like a lioness,
And lifts itself up like a lioness;
[c]It shall not lie down until it devours the prey,
And drinks the blood of the slain."

25Then Balak said to Balaam, "Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all!"

26So Balaam answered and said to Balak, "Did I not tell you, saying, [d]'All that the LORD speaks, that I must do'?"

Balaam's Third Prophecy

27Then Balak said to Balaam, "Please come, I will take you to another place; perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there." 28So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, that [e]overlooks the wasteland.* 29Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." 30And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on *every* altar.

24 Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go as at [a]other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his face toward the wilderness. 2And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel [b]encamped according to their tribes; and [c]the Spirit of God came upon him.

3[d]Then he took up his oracle and said:

"The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor,
The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened,
4 The utterance of him who hears the words of God,
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
Who [e]falls down, with eyes wide open:

5 "How lovely are your tents, O Jacob!
Your dwellings, O Israel!
6 Like valleys that stretch out,
[f]Like gardens by the riverside,
Like aloes [g]planted by the LORD,
Like cedars beside the waters.
7 He shall pour water from his buckets,
And his seed *shall be* [h]in many waters.

"His king shall be higher than [i]Agag,
And his [j]kingdom shall be exalted.

8 "God[k] brings him out of Egypt;
He has strength like a wild ox;
He shall [l]consume the nations, his enemies;
He shall [m]break their bones
And [n]pierce *them* with his arrows.
9 'He[o] bows down, he lies down as a lion;
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?'*

[p]"Blessed *is* he who blesses you,
And cursed *is* he who curses you."

10Then Balak's anger was aroused against Balaam, and he [q]struck his hands together; and Balak said to Balaam, [r]"I called you to curse my enemies, and look, you have bountifully blessed *them* these three times! 11Now therefore, flee to your place. [s]I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the LORD has kept you back from honor."

12So Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, 13'If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the LORD, to do good or bad of my own will. What the LORD says, that I must speak'? 14And now, indeed, I am going to my people. Come, [t]I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the [u]latter days."

* **23:28** Hebrew *Jeshimon* * **24:9** Genesis 49:9

23:18 [s] Judg. 3:20 **23:19** [t] Mal. 3:6 [u] 1 Kin. 8:56 **23:20** [v] Num. 22:12 **23:21** [w] [Rom. 4:7, 8] [x] Ps. 89:15–18 **23:22** [y] Num. 24:8 [z] Deut. 33:17 **23:23** [a] Ps. 31:19; 44:1 **23:24** [b] Gen. 49:9 [c] Gen. 49:27 **23:26** [d] Num. 22:38 **23:28** [e] Num. 21:20 **24:1** [a] Num. 23:3, 15 **24:2** [b] Num. 2:2, 34 [c] Num. 11:25 **24:3** [d] Num. 23:7, 18 **24:4** [e] Ezek. 1:28 **24:6** [f] Jer. 17:8 [g] Ps. 104:16 **24:7** [h] Jer. 51:13 [i] 1 Sam. 15:8, 9 [j] 2 Sam. 5:12 **24:8** [k] Num. 23:22 [l] Num. 14:9; 23:24 [m] Ps. 2:9 [n] Ps. 45:5 **24:9** [o] Gen. 49:9 [p] Gen. 12:3; 27:29 **24:10** [q] Ezek. 21:14, 17 [r] Num. 23:11 **24:11** [s] Num. 22:17, 37 **24:14** [t] [Mic. 6:5] [u] Gen. 49:1

Balaam's Fourth Prophecy

15 So he took up his oracle and said:

"The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor,
And the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened;
16 The utterance of him who hears the words of God,
And has the knowledge of the Most High,
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
Who falls down, with eyes wide open:

17 "I[v] see Him, but not now;
I behold Him, but not near;
[w]A Star shall come out of Jacob;
[x]A Scepter shall rise out of Israel,
And batter the brow of Moab,
And destroy all the sons of tumult.*

18 "And [y]Edom shall be a possession;
Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession,
While Israel does valiantly.
19 [z]Out of Jacob One shall have dominion,
And destroy the remains of the city."

20 Then he looked on Amalek, and he took up his oracle and said:

"Amalek *was* first among the nations,
But *shall be* last until he perishes."

21 Then he looked on the Kenites, and he took up his oracle and said:

"Firm is your dwelling place,
And your nest is set in the rock;
22 Nevertheless Kain shall be burned.
How long until Asshur carries you away captive?"

23 Then he took up his oracle and said:

"Alas! Who shall live when God does this?
24 But ships *shall come* from the coasts of [a]Cyprus,*
And they shall afflict Asshur and afflict [b]Eber,
And so shall *Amalek*,* until he perishes."

25 So Balaam rose and departed and [c]returned to his place; Balak also went his way.

Israel's Harlotry in Moab

25 Now Israel remained in [a]Acacia Grove,* and the [b]people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.
2 [c]They invited the people to [d]the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and [e]bowed down to their gods. 3 So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and [f]the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, [g]"Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, [h]that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel."

5 So Moses said to [i]the judges of Israel, [j]"Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor."

6 And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, [k]who *were* weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

* **24:17** Hebrew *Sheth* (compare Jeremiah 48:45)
* **24:24** Hebrew *Kittim* • Literally *he* or *that one*
* **25:1** Hebrew *Shittim*

24:17–19 ***I see him, but not now: . . . a Star shall come out of Jacob.*** This poetic language clearly refers to the Messiah. The pagan Balaam had a vision of the coming of the Hebrew Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible from afar, He was like a star, radiant and beautiful. And He is the victor over His enemies, including Moab—the nation that hired Balaam to curse Israel.

24:19 ***dominion.*** At this point Balaam should have repented of his involvement with Balak. It was clear that the Lord God was in control, not Balaam, and that the Lord's curses were not for hire. This should be a great encouragement to believers in our day, because we can trust in a God who has promised to bless those who trust in Him. Our God will not change His mind and forget those who have put their faith in Him.

24:22 ***until Asshur carries you away captive.*** Asshur is Assyria. This nation did take the rebellious Northern Kingdom of Israel captive in 772 B.C.

25:1–3 ***commit harlotry.*** Right on the edge of the Promised Land the Israelites had shown unfaithfulness to God again. It was not just that they had illicit sex with women outside their nation. They had participated in the licentious worship of the Baal of Peor. Worshiping idols on the side is not just a little slip, like eating between meals. They had enough information to know how seriously offended God would be, and they just did not care. Such behavior is always likened to adultery, and this was something that God rebuked His people for repeatedly (Is. 1:21; Jer. 3:1; Ezek. 16; Hos. 2:5).

25:1 ***the women of Moab.*** What the men of Moab could not do, the women were able to accomplish. They trapped the Israelite men in sexual immorality and false worship. The principal instigator of this sorry affair was none other than Balaam (31:16). Perhaps the most sobering aspect is the fact that the Moabites were descendants of Lot, through his daughter's incestuous relationship with her father, after their long sojourn in Sodom (Gen. 19). Sexual perversion had a long history in this group.

25:4–5 ***fierce anger of the LORD.*** This was the most serious challenge to God's authority yet. The people had been seduced into joining the worship of Baal. And it was Baal worship that they had been sent to Canaan to eliminate.

24:17 [v] Rev. 1:7 [w] Matt. 2:2 [x] Gen. 49:10 **24:18** [y] 2 Sam. 8:14 **24:19** [z] Amos 9:11, 12 **24:24** [a] Gen. 10:4 [b] Gen. 10:21, 25 **24:25** [c] Num. 21:34; 31:8 **25:1** [a] Josh. 2:1 [b] Rev. 2:14 **25:2** [c] Hos. 9:10 [d] Ex. 34:15 [e] Ex. 20:5 **25:3** [f] Ps. 106:28, 29 **25:4** [g] Deut. 4:3 [h] Num. 25:11 **25:5** [i] Ex. 18:21 [j] Deut. 13:6, 9 **25:6** [k] Joel 2:17

7 Now [l]when Phinehas [m]the son of Eleazar,
the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it,* he rose
from among the congregation and took a
javelin in his hand; 8 and he went after the
man of Israel into the tent and thrust both
of them through, the man of Israel, and the
woman through her body. So [n]the plague
was [o]stopped among the children of Israel.
9 And [p]those who died in the plague were
twenty-four thousand.

10 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
11 [q]"Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son
of Aaron the priest, has turned back My
wrath from the children of Israel, because
he was zealous with My zeal among them,
so that I did not consume the children of Is-
rael in [r]My zeal. 12 Therefore say, [s]'Behold, I
give to him [t]My covenant of peace; 13 and it
shall be to him and [u]his descendants after
him a covenant of [v]an everlasting priest-
hood, because he was [w]zealous for his God,
and [x]made atonement for the children of
Israel.'"

14 Now the name of the Israelite who was
killed, who was killed with the Midianite
woman, *was* Zimri the son of Salu, a leader
of a father's house among the Simeonites.
15 And the name of the Midianite woman
who was killed *was* Cozbi the daughter of
[y]Zur; he *was* head of the people of a father's
house in Midian.

16 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, say-
ing: 17 [z]"Harass the Midianites, and attack
them; 18 for they harassed you with their
[a]schemes by which they seduced you in
the matter of Peor and in the matter of
Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian,
their sister, who was killed in the day of the
plague because of Peor."

The Second Census of Israel

26 And it came to pass, after the [a]plague,
that the LORD spoke to Moses and
Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying:
2 [b]"Take a census of all the congregation of
the children of Israel [c]from twenty years
old and above, by their fathers' houses, all
who are able to go to war in Israel." 3 So
Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with
them [d]in the plains of Moab by the Jordan,
across from Jericho, saying: 4 "*Take a cen-
sus of the people* from twenty years old
and above, just as the LORD [e]commanded
Moses and the children of Israel who came
out of the land of Egypt."

5 [f]Reuben *was* the firstborn of Israel.
The children of Reuben *were: of* Hanoch,
the family of the Hanochites; *of* Pallu, the
family of the Palluites; 6 *of* Hezron, the fam-
ily of the Hezronites; *of* Carmi, the family
of the Carmites. 7 These *are* the families of
the Reubenites: those who were numbered
of them were forty-three thousand seven
hundred and thirty. 8 And the son of Pallu
was Eliab. 9 The sons of Eliab *were* Nemuel,
Dathan, and Abiram. These *are* the Dathan
and Abiram, [g]representatives of the con-
gregation, who contended against Moses
and Aaron in the company of Korah, when
they contended against the LORD; 10 [h]and
the earth opened its mouth and swallowed
them up together with Korah when that
company died, when the fire devoured two
hundred and fifty men; [i]and they became a
sign. 11 Nevertheless [j]the children of Korah
did not die.

12 The sons of Simeon according to
their families *were: of* Nemuel,* the fami-
ly of the Nemuelites; *of* Jamin, the family
of the Jaminites; *of* Jachin,* the family of
the Jachinites; 13 *of* Zerah,* the family of
the Zarhites; *of* Shaul, the family of the
Shaulites. 14 These *are* the families of the
Simeonites: twenty-two thousand two hun-
dred.

15 The sons of Gad according to their
families *were: of* Zephon,* the family of
the Zephonites; *of* Haggi, the family of
the Haggites; *of* Shuni, the family of the
Shunites; 16 *of* Ozni,* the family of the
Oznites; *of* Eri, the family of the Erites; 17 *of*
Arod,* the family of the Arodites; *of* Areli,
the family of the Arelites. 18 These *are*
the families of the sons of Gad according
to those who were numbered of them: forty
thousand five hundred.

19 [k]The sons of Judah *were* Er and Onan;
and Er and Onan died in the land of Ca-
naan. 20 And [l]the sons of Judah according
to their families were: *of* Shelah, the fam-
ily of the Shelanites; *of* Perez, the family
of the Parzites; *of* Zerah, the family of the
Zarhites. 21 And the sons of Perez were:
of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites;
of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.

* **26:12** Spelled *Jemuel* in Genesis 46:10 and Exodus 6:15 • Called *Jarib* in 1 Chronicles 4:24 * **26:13** Called *Zohar* in Genesis 46:10 * **26:15** Called *Ziphion* in Genesis 46:16 * **26:16** Called *Ezbon* in Genesis 46:16 * **26:17** Spelled *Arodi* in Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac, and Genesis 46:16

25:7 ***Phinehas the son of Eleazar.*** For this decisive and courageous act, Phinehas is praised, not only in this book, but in Psalm 106:30–31. In the psalm, it says that this act was "accounted to him for righteousness."
26:2 ***Take a census of all the congregation.*** The plague is over, the old generation has all died. This is a new beginning and a new census. Despite all the people who had died in the wilderness, the total population was not significantly different than the first census.

25:7 [l] Ps. 106:30 [m] Ex. 6:25 **25:8** [n] Ps. 106:30 [o] Num. 16:46–48 **25:9** [p] Deut. 4:3 **25:11** [q] Ps. 106:30 [r] [Ex. 20:5] **25:12** [s] [Mal. 2:4, 5; 3:1] [t] Is. 54:10 **25:13** [u] 1 Chr. 6:4–15 [v] Ex. 40:15 [w] Acts 22:3 [x] [Heb. 2:17] **25:15** [y] Num. 31:8 **25:17** [z] Num. 31:1–3 **25:18** [a] Rev. 2:14 **26:1** [a] Num. 25:9 **26:2** [b] Num. 1:2; 14:29 [c] Num. 1:3 **26:3** [d] Num. 22:1; 31:12; 33:48; 35:1 **26:4** [e] Num. 1:1 **26:5** [f] Ex. 6:14 **26:9** [g] Num. 1:16; 16:1, 2 **26:10** [h] Num. 16:32–35 [i] Num. 16:38–40 **26:11** [j] Ex. 6:24 **26:19** [k] Gen. 38:2; 46:12 **26:20** [l] 1 Chr. 2:3

22 These *are* the families of Judah according to those who were numbered of them:
seventy-six thousand five hundred.
23 The sons of Issachar according to their
families *were: of* Tola, the family of the To-
laites; of Puah,* the family of the Punites;*
24 of Jashub, the family of the Jashubites;
of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.
25 These *are* the families of Issachar ac-
cording to those who were numbered of
them: sixty-four thousand three hundred.
26 *m* The sons of Zebulun according to
their families *were:* of Sered, the family of
the Sardites; of Elon, the family of the Elon-
ites; of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.
27 These *are* the families of the Zebulunites
according to those who were numbered of
them: sixty thousand five hundred.
28 *n* The sons of Joseph according to their
families, by Manasseh and Ephraim, *were:*
29 The sons of [o]Manasseh: of [p]Machir, the
family of the Machirites; and Machir be-
got Gilead; of Gilead, the family of the
Gileadites. 30 These *are* the sons of Gilead:
of Jeezer,* the family of the Jeezerites; of
Helek, the family of the Helekites; 31 *of* Asri-
el, the family of the Asrielites; *of* Shechem,
the family of the Shechemites; 32 *of* She-
mida, the family of the Shemidaites; *of* He-
pher, the family of the Hepherites. 33 Now
[q]Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no
sons, but daughters; and the names of the
daughters of Zelophehad *were* Mahlah,
Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 34 These
are the families of Manasseh; and those
who were numbered of them *were* fifty-two
thousand seven hundred.
35 These *are* the sons of Ephraim ac-
cording to their families: of Shuthelah,
the family of the Shuthalhites; of Becher,*
the family of the Bachrites; of Tahan, the
family of the Tahanites. 36 And these *are*
the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family
of the Eranites. 37 These *are* the families
of the sons of Ephraim according to those
who were numbered of them: thirty-two
thousand five hundred.
These *are* the sons of Joseph according
to their families.
38 *r* The sons of Benjamin according to
their families were: of Bela, the family of
the Belaites; of Ashbel, the family of the
Ashbelites; of [s]Ahiram, the family of the
Ahiramites; 39 of [t]Shupham,* the family of
the Shuphamites; of Hupham,* the family
of the Huphamites. 40 And the sons of Bela
were Ard* and Naaman: [u]*of Ard,* the family
of the Ardites; of Naaman, the family of the
Naamites. 41 These *are* the sons of Benja-
min according to their families; and those
who were numbered of them *were* forty-
five thousand six hundred.
42 These *are* the sons of Dan according
to their families: of Shuham,* the family of
the Shuhamites. These *are* the families of
Dan according to their families. 43 All the
families of the Shuhamites, according to
those who were numbered of them, *were*
sixty-four thousand four hundred.
44 *v* The sons of Asher according to their
families *were:* of Jimna, the family of the
Jimnites; of Jesui, the family of the Jesu-
ites; of Beriah, the family of the Beriites.
45 Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the fam-
ily of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the family
of the Malchielites. 46 And the name of the
daughter of Asher *was* Serah. 47 These *are*
the families of the sons of Asher according
to those who were numbered of them: fifty-
three thousand four hundred.
48 *w* The sons of Naphtali according to
their families *were:* of Jahzeel,* the fam-
ily of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the family
of the Gunites; 49 of Jezer, the family of the
Jezerites; of [x]Shillem, the family of the
Shillemites. 50 These *are* the families of
Naphtali according to their families; and
those who were numbered of them *were*
forty-five thousand four hundred.
51 *y* These *are* those who were numbered
of the children of Israel: six hundred and
one thousand seven hundred and thirty.
52 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
53 *z* "To these the land shall be [a]divided as
an inheritance, according to the number of
names. 54 *b* To a large *tribe* you shall give
a larger inheritance, and to a small *tribe*
you shall give a smaller inheritance. Each
shall be given its inheritance according to
those who were numbered of them. 55 But
the land shall be [c]divided by lot; they shall
inherit according to the names of the tribes
of their fathers. 56 According to the lot their
inheritance shall be divided between the
larger and the smaller."
57 *d* And these *are* those who were num-
bered of the Levites according to their
families: of Gershon, the family of the
Gershonites; of Kohath, the family of the

* **26:23** Hebrew *Puvah* (compare Genesis 46:13 and 1 Chronicles 7:1); Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Puah.* • Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Puaites.* * **26:30** Called *Abiezer* in Joshua 17:2 * **26:35** Called *Bered* in 1 Chronicles 7:20 * **26:39** Masoretic Text reads *Shephupham,* spelled *Shephuphan* in 1 Chronicles 8:5. • Called *Huppim* in Genesis 46:21 * **26:40** Called *Addar* in 1 Chronicles 8:3 * **26:42** Called *Hushim* in Genesis 46:23 * **26:48** Spelled *Jahziel* in 1 Chronicles 7:13

26:51 ***those who were numbered.*** The totals of the twelve tribes are very similar. Some had increased, some had decreased. The final figure shows a slight decrease, from 603,550 to 601,730.

26:26 *m* Gen. 46:14 **26:28** *n* Gen. 46:20 **26:29** *o* Josh. 17:1 *p* 1 Chr. 7:14, 15 **26:33** *q* Num. 27:1; 36:11 **26:38** *r* Gen. 46:21 *s* 1 Chr. 8:1, 2 **26:39** *t* 1 Chr. 7:12 **26:40** *u* 1 Chr. 8:3 **26:44** *v* Gen. 46:17 **26:48** *w* 1 Chr. 7:13 **26:49** *x* 1 Chr. 7:13 **26:51** *y* Num. 1:46; 11:21 **26:53** *z* Josh. 11:23; 14:1 *a* Num. 33:54 **26:54** *b* Num. 33:54 **26:55** *c* Num. 33:54; 34:13 **26:57** *d* Gen. 46:11

Kohathites; of Merari, the family of the Merarites. 58These *are* the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, and the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begot Amram. 59The name of Amram's wife *was* [e]Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam. 60[f]To Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 61And [g]Nadab and Abihu died when they offered profane fire before the LORD.

62[h]Now those who were numbered of them were twenty-three thousand, every male from a month old and above; [i]for they were not numbered among the other children of Israel, because there was [j]no inheritance given to them among the children of Israel.

63These *are* those who were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel [k]in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. 64[l]But among these there was not a man of those who were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest when they numbered the children of Israel in the [m]Wilderness of Sinai. 65For the LORD had said of them, "They [n]shall surely die in the wilderness." So there was not left a man of them, [o]except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

Inheritance Laws

27 Then came the daughters of [a]Zelophehad the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, from the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph; and these *were* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 2And they stood before Moses, before Eleazar the priest, and before the leaders and all the congregation, *by* the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting, saying: 3"Our father [b]died in the wilderness; but he was not in the company of those who gathered together against the LORD, [c]in company with Korah, but he died in his own sin; and he had no sons. 4Why should the name of our father be [d]removed from among his family because he had no son? [e]Give us a possession among our father's brothers."

5So Moses [f]brought their case before the LORD.

6And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 7"The daughters of Zelophehad speak *what is* right; [g]you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them. 8And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter. 9If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. 10If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers. 11And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the relative closest to him in his family, and he shall possess it.'" And it shall be to the children of Israel [h]a statute of judgment, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

Joshua the Next Leader of Israel

12Now the LORD said to Moses: [i]"Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel. 13And when you have seen it, you also [j]shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered. 14For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you [k]rebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes." (These *are* the [l]waters of Meribah, at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.)

15Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying: 16"Let the LORD, [m]the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, 17[n]who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be [o]like sheep which have no shepherd."

18And the LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man [p]in whom *is* the Spirit, and [q]lay your hand on him; 19set him before Eleazar the priest

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27:1–5 *the daughters of Zelophehad.* In ancient Israel, women did not inherit land. Yet because their case made sense, Moses took the issue to the Lord.

27:7 *speak what is right.* Justice was done to women regarding inheritance because Moses took the case to God, and His truth was used as the foundation for the decree. Only as we base our decisions in life on God's truth, as expressed in the Bible and in Jesus Himself, will we be acting in truth. Any other way can bring injustice and decisions regretted because they spring from error.

27:18 Holy Spirit—Joshua was "a man in whom is the Spirit." In the Old Testament, only a few people had the Holy Spirit. It was not until after Jesus' resurrection that the Holy Spirit indwelt every believer. The way that God speaks to the heart of man, apart from the written Word, has generally been through the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit. Joshua apparently was a man led by the voice of the Spirit of God. He is not pictured as seeing visions or being led by angels, yet his leadership was effective and faithful.

26:59 [e] Ex. 2:1, 2; 6:20 **26:60** [f] Num. 3:2 **26:61** [g] Lev. 10:1, 2 **26:62** [h] Num. 3:39 [i] Num. 1:49 [j] Num. 18:20, 23, 24 **26:63** [k] Num. 26:3 **26:64** [l] Num. 14:29–35 [m] Num. 1:1–46 **26:65** [n] Num. 14:26–35 [o] Num. 14:30 **27:1** [a] Num. 26:33; 36:1, 11 **27:3** [b] Num. 14:35; 26:64, 65 [c] Num. 16:1, 2 **27:4** [d] Deut. 25:6 [e] Josh. 17:4 **27:5** [f] Ex. 18:13–26 **27:7** [g] Num. 36:2 **27:11** [h] Num. 35:29 **27:12** [i] Num. 33:47 **27:13** [j] Deut. 10:6; 34:5, 6 **27:14** [k] Ps. 106:32, 33 [l] Ex. 17:7 **27:16** [m] Num. 16:22 **27:17** [n] Deut. 31:2 [o] Zech. 10:2 **27:18** [p] Gen. 41:38 [q] Deut. 34:9

and before all the congregation, and [r]inaugurate him in their sight. 20And [s]you shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel [t]may be obedient. 21[u]He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him [v]by the judgment of the Urim. [w]At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation."

22So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. 23And he laid his hands on him [x]and inaugurated him, just as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

Daily Offerings

28 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Command the children of Israel, and say to them, 'My offering, [a]My food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me, you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time.'

3"And you shall say to them, [b]'This *is* the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs in their first year without blemish, day by day, as a regular burnt offering. 4The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, 5and [c]one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a [d]grain offering mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil. 6*It is* [e]a regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. 7And its drink offering *shall be* one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; [f]in a holy *place* you shall pour out the drink to the LORD as an offering. 8The other lamb you shall offer in the evening; as the morning grain offering and its drink offering, you shall offer *it* as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

Sabbath Offerings

9'And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering— 10*this is* [g]the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

Monthly Offerings

11[h]'At the beginnings of your months you shall present a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish; 12[i]three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; 13and one-tenth *of an ephah* of fine flour, mixed with oil, as a grain offering for each lamb, as a burnt offering of sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. 14Their drink offering shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, one-third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb; this *is* the burnt offering for each month throughout the months of the year. 15Also [j]one kid of the goats as a sin offering to the LORD shall be offered, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

Offerings at Passover

16[k]'On the fourteenth day of the first month *is* the Passover of the LORD. 17[l]And on the fifteenth day of this month *is* the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. 18On the [m]first day *you shall have* a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. 19And you shall present an offering made by fire as a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. [n]Be sure they are without blemish. 20Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* you shall offer for a bull, and two-tenths for a ram; 21you shall offer one-tenth *of an ephah* for each of the seven lambs; 22also [o]one goat *as* a sin offering, to make atonement for you. 23You shall offer these besides the burnt offering of the morning, which *is* for a regular burnt offering. 24In this manner you shall offer the food of the offering made by fire daily for seven days, as a sweet aroma to the LORD; it shall be offered besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. 25And [p]on the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.

Offerings at the Feast of Weeks

26'Also [q]on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the LORD at your *Feast of* Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. 27You shall present a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the LORD: [r]two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, 28with their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for each bull,

28:26 ***Feast of Weeks.*** The Feast of Weeks occurred 50 days after Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

27:19 [r] Deut. 3:28; 31:3, 7, 8, 23 **27:20** [s] Num. 11:17 [t] Josh. 1:16–18 **27:21** [u] 1 Sam. 23:9; 30:7 [v] Ex. 28:30 [w] 1 Sam. 22:10 **27:23** [x] Deut. 3:28; 31:7, 8 **28:2** [a] Lev. 3:11; 21:6, 8 **28:3** [b] Ex. 29:38–42 **28:5** [c] Ex. 16:36 [d] Lev. 2:1 **28:6** [e] Ex. 29:42 **28:7** [f] Ex. 29:42 **28:10** [g] Ezek. 46:4 **28:11** [h] Num. 10:10 **28:12** [i] Num. 15:4–12 **28:15** [j] Num. 15:24; 28:3, 22 **28:16** [k] Lev. 23:5–8 **28:17** [l] Lev. 23:6 **28:18** [m] Lev. 23:7 **28:19** [n] Deut. 15:21 **28:22** [o] Num. 28:15 **28:25** [p] Lev. 23:8 **28:26** [q] Deut. 16:9–12 **28:27** [r] Lev. 23:18, 19

two-tenths for the one ram, 29and one-tenth
for each of the seven lambs; 30*also* one kid
of the goats, to make atonement for you.
31[s]Be sure they are without blemish. You
shall present *them* with their drink offerings, besides the regular burnt offering
with its grain offering.

Offerings at the Feast of Trumpets

29 'And in the seventh month, on the
first *day* of the month, you shall have
a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For you [a]it is a day of blowing the trumpets. 2You shall offer a burnt
offering as a sweet aroma to the LORD: one
young bull, one ram, *and* seven lambs in
their first year, without blemish. 3Their
grain offering *shall be* fine flour mixed
with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for the
bull, two-tenths for the ram, 4and one-tenth
for each of the seven lambs; 5also one kid of
the goats *as* a sin offering, to make atonement for you; 6besides [b]the burnt offering
with its grain offering for the New Moon,
[c]the regular burnt offering with its grain
offering, and their drink offerings, [d]according to their ordinance, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

Offerings on the Day of Atonement

7[e]'On the tenth *day* of this seventh month
you shall have a holy convocation. You
shall [f]afflict your souls; you shall not do any
work. 8You shall present a burnt offering to
the LORD *as* a sweet aroma: one young bull,
one ram, *and* seven lambs in their first year.
[g]Be sure they are without blemish. 9Their
grain offering *shall be of* fine flour mixed
with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for the
bull, two-tenths for the one ram, 10and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 11also one
kid of the goats *as* a sin offering, besides
[h]the sin offering for atonement, the regular
burnt offering with its grain offering, and
their drink offerings.

Offerings at the Feast of Tabernacles

12[i]'On the fifteenth day of the seventh
month you shall have a holy convocation.
You shall do no customary work, and you
shall keep a feast to the LORD seven days.
13[j]You shall present a burnt offering, an
offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to
the LORD: thirteen young bulls, two rams,
and fourteen lambs in their first year. They
shall be without blemish. 14Their grain offering *shall be of* fine flour mixed with oil:
three-tenths *of an ephah* for each of the
thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the
two rams, 15and one-tenth for each of the
fourteen lambs; 16also one kid of the goats
as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt
offering, its grain offering, and its drink
offering.

17'On the [k]second day *present* twelve
young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs in
their first year without blemish, 18and their
grain offering and their drink offerings for
the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs,
by their number, [l]according to the ordinance; 19also one kid of the goats *as* a sin
offering, besides the regular burnt offering
with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

20'On the third day *present* eleven bulls,
two rams, fourteen lambs in their first year
without blemish, 21and their grain offering
and their drink offerings for the bulls, for
the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, [m]according to the ordinance; 22also
one goat *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and
its drink offering.

23'On the fourth day *present* ten bulls,
two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first
year, without blemish, 24and their grain
offering and their drink offerings for the
bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by
their number, according to the ordinance;
25also one kid of the goats *as* a sin offering,
besides the regular burnt offering, its grain
offering, and its drink offering.

26'On the fifth day *present* nine bulls,
two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first
year without blemish, 27and their grain
offering and their drink offerings for the
bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by
their number, according to the ordinance;
28also one goat *as* a sin offering, besides

29:1–40 *holy convocation.* This chapter regulates offerings to the Lord during the three sacred festivals of the seventh month: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Trumpets marked the beginning of Israel's civil year. It was a day of preparation for the next two celebrations. The Day of Atonement was a solemn day on which sins were confessed and special sacrifices made for the holy place, the priests, and the people. The Feast of Tabernacles was a time of rejoicing.

29:1 *a day of blowing the trumpets.* The celebration of the Feast of Trumpets involved blowing ram's horns. Later this festival became identified with the New Year festival.

29:11 *offering for atonement.* The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, was regarded as the most holy day of all. Leviticus 16 describes it as a day of fasting, rather than feasting.

29:12 *feast to the LORD seven days.* The celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, or Succoth, included both sacrifices and eight days of "no work." In later years Israelites lived in tents or booths during this celebration, to commemorate the years that their ancestors lived in tents in the desert.

28:31 [s] Num. 28:3, 19 **29:1** [a] Lev. 23:23–25
29:6 [b] Num. 28:11–15 [c] Num. 28:3 [d] Num. 15:11, 12
29:7 [e] Lev. 16:29–34; 23:26–32 [f] Is. 58:5 **29:8** [g] Num. 28:19 **29:11** [h] Lev. 16:3, 5 **29:12** [i] Deut. 16:13–15
29:13 [j] Ezra 3:4 **29:17** [k] Lev. 23:36 **29:18** [l] Num. 15:12; 28:7, 14; 29:3, 4, 9, 10 **29:21** [m] Num. 29:18

the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

29 'On the sixth day *present* eight bulls, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 30 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 31 also one goat *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

32 'On the seventh day *present* seven bulls, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs in their first year without blemish, 33 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 34 also one goat *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

35 'On the eighth day you shall have a [n]sacred assembly. You shall do no customary work. 36 You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to the LORD: one bull, one ram, seven lambs in their first year without blemish, 37 and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; 38 also one goat *as* a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

39 'These you shall present to the LORD at [o]your appointed feasts (besides your [p]vowed offerings and your freewill offerings) as your burnt offerings and your grain offerings, as your drink offerings and your peace offerings.'"

40 So Moses told the children of Israel everything, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Law Concerning Vows

30 Then Moses spoke to [a]the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, "This *is* the thing which the LORD has commanded: 2 [b]If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or [c]swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall [d]do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

3 "Or if a woman makes a vow to the LORD, and binds *herself* by some agreement while in her father's house in her youth, 4 and her father hears her vow and the agreement by which she has bound herself, and her father holds his peace, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement with which she has bound herself shall stand. 5 But if her father overrules her on the day that he hears, then none of her vows nor her agreements by which she has bound herself shall stand; and the LORD will release her, because her father overruled her.

6 "If indeed she takes a husband, while bound by her vows or by a rash utterance from her lips by which she bound herself, 7 and her husband hears *it,* and makes no response to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her agreements by which she bound herself shall stand. 8 But if her husband [e]overrules her on the day that he hears *it,* he shall make void her vow which she took and what she uttered with her lips, by which she bound herself, and the LORD will release her.

9 "Also any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her.

10 "If she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an agreement with an oath, 11 and her husband heard *it,* and made no response to her *and* did not overrule her, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement by which she bound herself shall stand. 12 But if her husband truly made them void on the day he heard *them,* then whatever proceeded from her lips concerning her vows or concerning the agreement binding her, it shall not stand; her husband has made them void, and the LORD will release her. 13 Every vow and every binding oath to afflict her soul, her husband may confirm it, or her husband may make it void. 14 Now if her husband makes no response whatever to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all the agreements that bind her; he confirms them, because he made no response to her on the day that he heard *them.* 15 But if he does make them void after he has heard *them,* then he shall bear her guilt."

16 These *are* the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father's house.

Vengeance on the Midianites

31 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 [a]"Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall [b]be gathered to your people."

30:2 ***If a man makes a vow.*** The key issue is clear: One who makes a vow shall not break his word. Vows that are made to the Lord must be carried out.

30:3 ***if a woman.*** In Israelite culture, an unmarried woman was under the protection of her father. If she made a vow, she might bring her father into an obligation that he did not want to fulfill, or could not fulfill. The same was true of a married woman (v. 6). Her vows would involve her husband, so the husband or father had to agree to the vow.

31:2 ***Midianites.*** The Midianites were descendants of Abraham and his wife Keturah, but were not part of the covenant that God had with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

29:35 [n] Lev. 23:36 **29:39** [o] Lev. 23:1–44 [p] Lev. 7:16; 22:18, 21, 23; 23:38 **30:1** [a] Num. 1:4, 16; 7:2 **30:2** [b] Lev. 27:2 [c] Matt. 14:9 [d] Job 22:27 **30:8** [e] [Gen. 3:16] **31:2** [a] Num. 25:17 [b] Num. 27:12, 13

3So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm some of yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the LORD on [c]Midian. 4A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war."

5So there were recruited from the divisions of Israel one thousand from *each* tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. 6Then Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from *each* tribe; he sent them to the war with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the holy articles and [d]the signal trumpets in his hand. 7And they warred against the Midianites, just as the LORD commanded Moses, and [e]they killed all the [f]males. 8They killed the kings of Midian with *the rest of* those who were killed—[g]Evi, Rekem, [h]Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. [i]Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.

9And the children of Israel took the women of Midian captive, with their little ones, and took as spoil all their cattle, all their flocks, and all their goods. 10They also burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, and all their forts. 11And [j]they took all the spoil and all the booty—of man and beast.

Return from the War

12Then they brought the captives, the booty, and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the children of Israel, to the camp in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. 13And Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp. 14But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, *with* the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle.

15And Moses said to them: "Have you kept [k]all the women alive? 16Look, [l]these *women* caused the children of Israel, through the [m]counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and [n]there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. 17Now therefore, [o]kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately. 18But keep alive [p]for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately. 19And as for you, [q]remain outside the camp seven days; whoever has killed any person, and [r]whoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day. 20Purify every garment, everything made of leather, everything woven of goats' *hair*, and everything made of wood."

21Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to the battle, "This *is* the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses: 22Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, 23everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, and it shall be clean; and it shall be purified [s]with the water of purification. But all that cannot endure fire you shall put through water. 24[t]And you shall wash your clothes on the seventh day and be clean, and afterward you may come into the camp."

Division of the Plunder

25Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 26"Count up the plunder that was taken—of man and beast—you and Eleazar the priest and the chief fathers of the congregation; 27and [u]divide the plunder into two parts, between those who took part in the war, who went out to battle, and all the congregation. 28And levy a tribute for the LORD on the men of war who went out to battle: [v]one of every five hundred of the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep; 29take *it* from their half, and [w]give *it* to Eleazar the priest as a heave offering to the LORD. 30And from the children of Israel's half you shall take [x]one of every fifty, drawn from the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep, from all the livestock, and give them to the Levites [y]who keep charge of the tabernacle of the LORD." 31So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

32The booty remaining from the plunder, which the men of war had taken, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, 33seventy-two thousand cattle, 34sixty-one thousand donkeys, 35and thirty-two thousand persons in all, of women who had not known a man intimately.

31:7–16 Unfaithfulness—Moses was ordered to campaign against the Midianites because of their wicked involvement in the seduction of Israel (25:17–18). He was angry with the officers of the army because they had not carried out the Lord's directive concerning the women who had caused Israel to act unfaithfully toward the Lord. There was no excuse for the officers' unfaithfulness. The plague that followed the seduction of Israel should have been enough to make them aware of the great responsibility they had to obey God's directives.

31:27 *divide the plunder.* The division of the plunder, or booty, among those who had gone to war and those who had not, set a standard for future battles. The proportion that was regarded as the Lord's also became a standard.

31:3 [c] Josh. 13:21 **31:6** [d] Num. 10:9 **31:7** [e] Deut. 20:13 [f] Gen. 34:25 **31:8** [g] Josh. 13:21 [h] Num. 25:15 [i] Josh. 13:22 **31:11** [j] Deut. 20:14 **31:15** [k] Deut. 20:14 **31:16** [l] Num. 25:2 [m] Rev. 2:14 [n] Num. 25:9 **31:17** [o] Deut. 7:2; 20:16–18 **31:18** [p] Deut. 21:10–14 **31:19** [q] Num. 5:2 [r] Num. 19:11–22 **31:23** [s] Num. 19:9, 17 **31:24** [t] Lev. 11:25 **31:27** [u] Josh. 22:8 **31:28** [v] Num. 31:30, 47 **31:29** [w] Deut. 18:1–5 **31:30** [x] Num. 31:42–47 [y] Num. 3:7, 8, 25, 31, 36; 18:3, 4

36And the half, the portion for those who had gone out to war, was in number three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep; 37and the LORD's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five. 38The cattle *were* thirty-six thousand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* seventy-two. 39The donkeys *were* thirty thousand five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute *was* sixty-one. 40The persons *were* sixteen thousand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* thirty-two persons. 41So Moses gave the tribute *which was* the LORD's heave offering to Eleazar the priest, *z*as the LORD commanded Moses.

42And from the children of Israel's half, which Moses separated from the men who fought— 43now the half belonging to the congregation was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep, 44thirty-six thousand cattle, 45thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, 46and sixteen thousand persons— 47and *a*from the children of Israel's half Moses took one of every fifty, drawn from man and beast, and gave them to the Levites, who kept charge of the tabernacle of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

48Then the officers who *were* over thousands of the army, the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, came near to Moses; 49and they said to Moses, "Your servants have taken a count of the men of war who *are* under our command, and not a man of us is missing. 50Therefore we have brought an offering for the LORD, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, *b*to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD." 51So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments. 52And all the gold of the offering that they offered to the LORD, from the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels. 53*c*(The men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.) 54And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of meeting *d*as a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

The Tribes Settling East of the Jordan

32 Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of livestock; and when they saw the land of *a*Jazer and the land of *b*Gilead, that indeed the region *was* a place for livestock, 2the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, 3"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, *c*Nimrah, *d*Heshbon, Elealeh, *e*Shebam, Nebo, and *f*Beon, 4the country *g*which the LORD defeated before the congregation of Israel, *is* a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock." 5Therefore they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan."

6And Moses said to the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben: "Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here? 7Now why will you *h*discourage the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD has given them? 8Thus your fathers did *i*when I sent them away from Kadesh Barnea *j*to see the land. 9For *k*when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them. 10*l*So the LORD's anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying, 11'Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, *m*from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because *n*they have not wholly followed Me, 12except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, *o*for they have wholly followed the LORD.' 13So the LORD's anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them *p*wander in the wilderness forty years, until *q*all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone. 14And look! You have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the *r*fierce anger of the LORD against Israel. 15For if you *s*turn away from following Him, He will once again leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

16Then they came near to him and said: "We will build sheepfolds here for our

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31:52 ***sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.*** The officers' gift was over 400 pounds of gold.
32:5 ***If we have found favor.*** Although an inheritance on the east side of the Jordan was not part of God's promise, the respectful request of the Reubenites and Gadites was granted, because they came humbly, not rebelliously.
32:8–13 ***Thus your fathers did.*** To discourage obedience of God's orders and so prevent His people from entering upon the full enjoyment of the promises is a serious sin. Let us never forget that without an obedient faith, it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6).

31:41 *z* Num. 5:9, 10; 18:8, 19 **31:47** *a* Num. 31:30 **31:50** *b* Ex. 30:12–16 **31:53** *c* Deut. 20:14 **31:54** *d* Ex. 30:16 **32:1** *a* Num. 21:32 *b* Deut. 3:13 **32:3** *c* Num. 32:36 *d* Josh. 13:17, 26 *e* Num. 32:38 *f* Num. 32:38 **32:4** *g* Num. 21:24, 34, 35 **32:7** *h* Num. 13:27—14:4 **32:8** *i* Num. 13:3, 26 *j* Deut. 1:19–25 **32:9** *k* Deut. 1:24, 28 **32:10** *l* Deut. 1:34–36 **32:11** *m* Num. 14:28, 29; 26:63–65 *n* Num. 14:24, 30 **32:12** *o* Deut. 1:36 **32:13** *p* Num. 14:33–35 *q* Num. 26:64, 65 **32:14** *r* Deut. 1:34 **32:15** *s* Deut. 30:17, 18

livestock, and cities for our little ones, 17but [t]we ourselves will be armed, ready *to go* before the children of Israel until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. 18[u]We will not return to our homes until every one of the children of Israel has received his inheritance. 19For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, [v]because our inheritance has fallen to us on this eastern side of the Jordan."

20Then [w]Moses said to them: "If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the LORD for the war, 21and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven out His enemies from before Him, 22and [x]the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward [y]you may return and be blameless before the LORD and before Israel; and [z]this land shall be your possession before the LORD. 23But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure [a]your sin will find you out. 24[b]Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do what has proceeded out of your mouth."

25And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying: "Your servants will do as my lord commands. 26[c]Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock will be there in the cities of Gilead; 27[d]but your servants will cross over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, just as my lord says."

28So Moses gave command [e]concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. 29And Moses said to them: "If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. 30But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan."

31Then the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying: "As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do. 32We will cross over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but the possession of our inheritance *shall remain* with us on this side of the Jordan."

33So [f]Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, and to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, [g]the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country. 34And the children of Gad built [h]Dibon and Ataroth and [i]Aroer, 35Atroth and Shophan and [j]Jazer and Jogbehah, 36[k]Beth Nimrah and Beth Haran, [l]fortified cities, and folds for sheep. 37And the children of Reuben built [m]Heshbon and Elealeh and Kirjathaim, 38[n]Nebo and [o]Baal Meon [p](*their* names being changed) and Shibmah; and they gave *other* names to the cities which they built.

39And the children of [q]Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who *were* in it. 40So Moses [r]gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it. 41Also [s]Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its small towns, and called them [t]Havoth Jair.* 42Then Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and he called it Nobah, after his own name.

Israel's Journey from Egypt Reviewed

33 These *are* the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the [a]hand of Moses and Aaron. 2Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the LORD. And these *are* their journeys according to their starting points:

3They [b]departed from Rameses in [c]the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out [d]with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. 4For the Egyptians were burying all *their* firstborn, [e]whom the LORD had killed among them. Also [f]on their gods the LORD had executed judgments.

5[g]Then the children of Israel moved from Rameses and camped at Succoth. 6They departed from [h]Succoth and camped at Etham, which *is* on the edge of the wilderness. 7[i]They moved from Etham and turned back to Pi Hahiroth, which *is* east of Baal Zephon; and they camped

* **32:41** Literally *Towns of Jair*

32:31 ***so we will do.*** Reuben and Gad gladly affirmed their allegiance to the Lord and their consideration of the remainder of the community of Israel. The benevolence of Reuben and Gad is a beautiful picture of the mutual ties between God's people. Truly, we are one body.

32:17 [t] Josh. 4:12, 13 **32:18** [u] Josh. 22:1–4
32:19 [v] Josh. 12:1; 13:8 **32:20** [w] Deut. 3:18

32:22 [x] Deut. 3:20 [y] Josh. 22:4 [z] Deut. 3:12, 15, 16, 18
32:23 [a] Is. 59:12 **32:24** [b] Num. 32:16 **32:26** [c] Josh. 1:14
32:27 [d] Josh. 4:12 **32:28** [e] Josh. 1:13 **32:33** [f] Deut. 3:8–17; 29:8 [g] Num. 21:24, 33, 35 **32:34** [h] Num. 33:45, 46 [i] Deut. 2:36 **32:35** [j] Num. 32:1, 3 **32:36** [k] Num. 32:3 [l] Num. 32:24 **32:37** [m] Num. 21:27 **32:38** [n] Is. 46:1 [o] Ezek. 25:9 [p] Ex. 23:13 **32:39** [q] Gen. 50:23
32:40 [r] Deut. 3:12, 13, 15 **32:41** [s] Deut. 3:14 [t] Judg. 10:4 **33:1** [a] Ps. 77:20 **33:3** [b] Ex. 12:37 [c] Ex. 12:2; 13:4 [d] Ex. 14:8 **33:4** [e] Ex. 12:29 [f] Is. 19:1 **33:5** [g] Ex. 12:37
33:6 [h] Ex. 13:20 **33:7** [i] Ex. 14:1, 2, 9

near Migdol. 8They departed from before Hahiroth* and [j]passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, went three days' journey in the Wilderness of Etham, and camped at Marah. 9They moved from Marah and [k]came to Elim. At Elim *were* twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there.

10They moved from Elim and camped by the Red Sea. 11They moved from the Red Sea and camped in the [l]Wilderness of Sin. 12They journeyed from the Wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. 13They departed from Dophkah and camped at Alush. 14They moved from Alush and camped at [m]Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

15They departed from Rephidim and camped in the [n]Wilderness of Sinai. 16They moved from the Wilderness of Sinai and camped [o]at Kibroth Hattaavah. 17They departed from Kibroth Hattaavah and [p]camped at Hazeroth. 18They departed from Hazeroth and camped at [q]Rithmah. 19They departed from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez. 20They departed from Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah. 21They moved from Libnah and camped at Rissah. 22They journeyed from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. 23They went from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. 24They moved from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. 25They moved from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. 26They moved from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. 27They departed from Tahath and camped at Terah. 28They moved from Terah and camped at Mithkah. 29They went from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. 30They departed from Hashmonah and [r]camped at Moseroth. 31They departed from Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan. 32They moved from [s]Bene Jaakan and [t]camped at Hor Hagidgad. 33They went from Hor Hagidgad and camped at Jotbathah. 34They moved from Jotbathah [u]and camped at Abronah. 35They departed from Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber. 36They moved from Ezion Geber and camped in the [v]Wilderness of Zin, which *is* Kadesh. 37They moved from [w]Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the boundary of the land of Edom.

38Then [x]Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, on the first *day* of the fifth month. 39Aaron *was* one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

40Now [y]the king of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.

41So they departed from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. 42They departed from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. 43They departed from Punon and [z]camped at Oboth. 44[a]They departed from Oboth and camped at Ije Abarim, at the border of Moab. 45They departed from Ijim* and camped [b]at Dibon Gad. 46They moved from Dibon Gad and camped at [c]Almon Diblathaim. 47They moved from Almon Diblathaim [d]and camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo. 48They departed from the mountains of Abarim and [e]camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. 49They camped by the Jordan, from Beth Jesimoth as far as the [f]Abel Acacia Grove* in the plains of Moab.

Instructions for the Conquest of Canaan

50Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho, saying, 51"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [g]'When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52[h]then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their high places; 53you shall dispossess *the inhabitants of* the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to [i]possess. 54And [j]you shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone's *inheritance* shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your

* **33:8** Many Hebrew manuscripts, Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *from Pi Hahiroth* (compare verse 7).
* **33:45** Same as *Ije Abarim,* verse 44
* **33:49** Hebrew *Abel Shittim*

33:53 ***for I have given you the land to possess.*** It was God's land, and He had transferred it from the Canaanites to the Israelites. Though the land was promised to the nation as a gift, it did not come into the possession of the people without their involvement. Israel had to drive out the inhabitants, destroy their high places, their figures, stones, and molten images. Still, the land was God's gracious gift to His people. In spite of all of our striving, we have only what we receive from the hand of the Lord.

33:8 [j] Ex. 14:22; 15:22, 23 **33:9** [k] Ex. 15:27 **33:11** [l] Ex. 16:1 **33:14** [m] Ex. 17:1; 19:2 **33:15** [n] Ex. 16:1; 19:1, 2 **33:16** [o] Num. 11:34 **33:17** [p] Num. 11:35 **33:18** [q] Num. 12:16 **33:30** [r] Deut. 10:6 **33:32** [s] Deut. 10:6 [t] Deut. 10:7 **33:34** [u] Deut. 2:8 **33:36** [v] Num. 20:1; 27:14 **33:37** [w] Num. 20:22, 23; 21:4 **33:38** [x] Num. 20:25, 28 **33:40** [y] Num. 21:1 **33:43** [z] Num. 21:10 **33:44** [a] Num. 21:11 **33:45** [b] Num. 32:34 **33:46** [c] Jer. 48:22 **33:47** [d] Deut. 32:49 **33:48** [e] Num. 22:1; 31:12; 35:1 **33:49** [f] Num. 25:1 **33:51** [g] Josh. 3:17 **33:52** [h] Deut. 7:2, 5; 12:3 **33:53** [i] Deut. 11:31 **33:54** [j] Num. 26:53–56

fathers. 55But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain *shall be* [k]irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. 56Moreover it shall be *that* I will do to you as I thought to do to them.'"

The Appointed Boundaries of Canaan

34 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Command the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into [a]the land of Canaan, this *is* the land that shall fall to you as an inheritance—the land of Canaan to its boundaries. 3[b]Your southern border shall be from the Wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom; then your southern border shall extend eastward to the end of [c]the Salt Sea; 4your border shall turn from the southern side of [d]the Ascent of Akrabbim, continue to Zin, and be on the south of [e]Kadesh Barnea; then it shall go on to [f]Hazar Addar, and continue to Azmon; 5the border shall turn from Azmon [g]to the Brook of Egypt, and it shall end at the Sea.

6'As for the [h]western border, you shall have the Great Sea for a border; this shall be your western border.

7'And this shall be your northern border: From the Great Sea you shall mark out your *border* line to [i]Mount Hor; 8from Mount Hor you shall mark out *your border* [j]to the entrance of Hamath; then the direction of the border shall be toward [k]Zedad; 9the border shall proceed to Ziphron, and it shall end at [l]Hazar Enan. This shall be your northern border.

10'You shall mark out your eastern border from Hazar Enan to Shepham; 11the border shall go down from Shepham to [m]Riblah on the east side of Ain; the border shall go down and reach to the eastern side of the Sea [n]of Chinnereth; 12the border shall go down along the Jordan, and it shall end at [o]the Salt Sea. This shall be your land with its surrounding boundaries.'"

13Then Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying: [p]"This *is* the land which you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe. 14[q]For the tribe of the children of Reuben according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad according to the house of their fathers, have received *their inheritance;* and the half-tribe of Manasseh has received its inheritance. 15The two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, *across from* Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise."

The Leaders Appointed to Divide the Land

16And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 17"These *are* the names of the men who shall divide the land among you as an inheritance: [r]Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun. 18And you shall take one [s]leader of every tribe to divide the land for the inheritance. 19These *are* the names of the men: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; 20from the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud; 21from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chislon; 22a leader from the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the son of Jogli; 23from the sons of Joseph: a leader from the tribe of the children of Manasseh, Hanniel the son of Ephod, 24and a leader from the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan; 25a leader from the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach; 26a leader from the tribe of the children of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan; 27a leader from the tribe of the children of Asher, Ahihud the son of Shelomi; 28and a leader from the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud."

29These *are* the ones the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance among the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

Cities for the Levites

35 And the LORD spoke to Moses in [a]the plains of Moab by the Jordan *across from* Jericho, saying: 2[b]"Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall *also* give the Levites [c]common-land around the cities. 3They shall have the cities to dwell in; and their common-land shall be for their cattle,

33:55–56 *But if you do not.* If the idolatrous Canaanites were allowed to live among God's people, they would be a constant enticement to sin. If the Israelites fell into the same sin as the Canaanites, their punishment would be the same.

34:1–12 *the land of Canaan to its boundaries.* Chapter 34 serves as a detailed display of the grandeur of the land that God was about to give to His people.

34:16–29 *These are the names of the men.* The listing of the men serves several purposes. It gives authenticity to the record, it memorializes these individuals in the history of Israel, and it serves as a legal arrangement so that the transfer of the land to the tribes would be done in order.

33:55 [k] Josh. 23:13 **34:2** [a] Gen. 17:8 **34:3** [b] Josh. 15:1–3 [c] Gen. 14:3 **34:4** [d] Josh. 15:3 [e] Num. 13:26; 32:8 [f] Josh. 15:3, 4 **34:5** [g] Josh. 15:4, 47 **34:6** [h] Ezek. 47:20 **34:7** [i] Num. 33:37 **34:8** [j] Num. 13:21 [k] Ezek. 47:15 **34:9** [l] Ezek. 47:17 **34:11** [m] 2 Kin. 23:33 [n] Deut. 3:17 **34:12** [o] Num. 34:3 **34:13** [p] Josh. 14:1–5 **34:14** [q] Num. 32:33 **34:17** [r] Josh. 14:1, 2; 19:51 **34:18** [s] Num. 1:4, 16 **35:1** [a] Num. 33:50 **35:2** [b] Josh. 14:3, 4; 21:2, 3 [c] Lev. 25:32–34

for their herds, and for all their animals.
4The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites *shall extend* from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around. 5And you shall measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city *shall be* in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.

6"Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* [d]six cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities. 7So all the cities you will give to the Levites *shall be* [e]forty-eight; these *you shall give* with their common-land. 8And the cities which you will give *shall be* [f]from the possession of the children of Israel; [g]from the larger *tribe* you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives."

Cities of Refuge

9Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: [h]'When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 11then [i]you shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there. 12[j]They shall be cities of refuge for you from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation in judgment. 13And of the cities which you give, you shall have [k]six cities of refuge. 14[l]You shall appoint three cities on this side of the Jordan, and three cities you shall appoint in the land of Canaan, *which* will be cities of refuge. 15These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, [m]for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there.

16[n]'But if he strikes him with an iron implement, so that he dies, he *is* a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. 17And if he strikes him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, and he does die, he *is* a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. 18Or *if* he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon, by which one could die, and he does die, he *is* a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. 19[o]The avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. 20[p]If he pushes him out of hatred or, [q]while lying in wait, hurls something at him so that he dies, 21or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck *him* shall surely be put to death. He *is* a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

22'However, if he pushes him suddenly [r]without enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, 23or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing *it* at him without seeing *him,* so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm, 24then [s]the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood according to these judgments. 25So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and [t]he shall remain there until the death of the high priest [u]who was anointed with the holy oil. 26But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, 27and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood, 28because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession.

29'And these *things* shall be [v]a statute of judgment to you throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 30Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the [w]testimony of witnesses; but one witness is not *sufficient* testimony against a person for the death *penalty.* 31Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who *is* guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death. 32And you shall take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the priest.

35:29–34 ***statute of judgment.*** The practice of blood vengeance was common in the ancient Near East. Divine law was formulated to control and limit blood vengeance in Israel (vv. 9–34). God's Word differed significantly from the surrounding cultures. The difference of practice was due to Israel's unique view of man created in God's image. These directives regarding blood vengeance are referred to here as a "statute of judgment," coming from a word meaning "to engrave." The Word of God was written, given to govern and direct their conduct "in all their dwellings." We can be truly grateful that the revelation of God comes to us in a permanently accessible form.

35:30–34 ***Whoever kills a person.*** The people were not to confuse accidental manslaughter with premeditated murder.

35:6 [d] Josh. 20:2, 7, 8; 21:3, 13 **35:7** [e] Josh. 21:41 **35:8** [f] Josh. 21:3 [g] Num. 26:54; 33:54 **35:10** [h] Josh. 20:1–9 **35:11** [i] Ex. 21:13 **35:12** [j] Deut. 19:6 **35:13** [k] Num. 35:6 **35:14** [l] Deut. 4:41 **35:15** [m] Num. 15:16 **35:16** [n] Lev. 24:17 **35:19** [o] Num. 35:21, 24, 27 **35:20** [p] Gen. 4:8 [q] Ex. 21:14 **35:22** [r] Ex. 21:13 **35:24** [s] Josh. 20:6 **35:25** [t] Josh. 20:6 [u] Ex. 29:7 **35:29** [v] Num. 27:11 **35:30** [w] Deut. 17:6; 19:15

33 So you shall not pollute the land where
you *are;* for blood [x]defiles the land, and no
atonement can be made for the land, for
the blood that is shed on it, except [y]by the
blood of him who shed it. 34 Therefore [z]do
not defile the land which you inhabit, in
the midst of which I dwell; for [a]I the LORD
dwell among the children of Israel.'"

Marriage of Female Heirs

36 Now the chief fathers of the families of the [a]children of Gilead the
son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the
families of the sons of Joseph, came near
and [b]spoke before Moses and before the
leaders, the chief fathers of the children
of Israel. 2 And they said: [c]"The LORD com-
manded my lord *Moses* to give the land as
an inheritance by lot to the children of Is-
rael, and [d]my lord was commanded by the
LORD to give the inheritance of our brother
Zelophehad to his daughters. 3 Now if they
are married to any of the sons of the *other*
tribes of the children of Israel, then their
inheritance will be [e]taken from the inheri-
tance of our fathers, and it will be added to
the inheritance of the tribe into which they
marry; so it will be taken from the lot of
our inheritance. 4 And when [f]the Jubilee of
the children of Israel comes, then their in-
heritance will be added to the inheritance
of the tribe into which they marry; so their
inheritance will be taken away from the in-
heritance of the tribe of our fathers."

5 Then Moses commanded the children
of Israel according to the word of the
LORD, saying: [g]"What the tribe of the sons
of Joseph speaks is right. 6 This *is* what the
LORD commands concerning the daugh-
ters of Zelophehad, saying, 'Let them mar-
ry whom they think best, [h]but they may
marry only within the family of their fa-
ther's tribe.' 7 So the inheritance of the chil-
dren of Israel shall not change hands from
tribe to tribe, for every one of the children
of Israel shall [i]keep the inheritance of the
tribe of his fathers. 8 And [j]every daughter
who possesses an inheritance in any tribe
of the children of Israel shall be the wife
of one of the family of her father's tribe, so
that the children of Israel each may pos-
sess the inheritance of his fathers. 9 Thus
no inheritance shall change hands from
one tribe to another, but every tribe of the
children of Israel shall keep its own inher-
itance."

10 Just as the LORD commanded Moses,
so did the daughters of Zelophehad; 11 [k]for
Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and
Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were
married to the sons of their father's broth-
ers. 12 They were married into the families
of the children of Manasseh the son of Jo-
seph, and their inheritance remained in the
tribe of their father's family.

13 These *are* the commandments and the
judgments which the LORD commanded
the children of Israel by the hand of Moses
[l]in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across*
from Jericho.

36:5–13 ***only within the family of their father's tribe.*** This beautiful example of concern for fair treatment of Zelophehad's daughters, consideration for the well-being of the tribe, and obedience to Moses' decision is a happy ending to this book that is so full of hard-heartedness and disobedience.

35:33 [x] Ps. 106:38 [y] Gen. 9:6 **35:34** [z] Lev. 18:24, 25
[a] Ex. 29:45, 46 **36:1** [a] Num. 26:29 [b] Num. 27:1–11
36:2 [c] Josh. 17:4 [d] Num. 27:1, 5–7 **36:3** [e] Num. 27:4
36:4 [f] Lev. 25:10 **36:5** [g] Num. 27:7 **36:6** [h] Num. 36:11, 12 **36:7** [i] 1 Kin. 21:3 **36:8** [j] 1 Chr. 23:22
36:11 [k] Num. 26:33; 27:1 **36:13** [l] Num. 26:3; 33:50

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
DEUTERONOMY

AUTHOR: Numerous external and internal evidences support the authorship of Moses. The Old Testament attributes Deuteronomy to Moses (Josh. 1:7; Judg. 3:4; 1 Kin. 2:3; 2 Kin. 14:6; Ezra 3:2; Neh. 1:7; Ps. 103:7; Dan. 9:11; Mal. 4:4), and there is evidence from Joshua and 1 Samuel to indicate that these laws existed in the form of codified written statutes that influenced the Israelites in Canaan. Christ quoted Deuteronomy when He was being tempted (Matt. 4:4,7,10) and attributed it to Moses (Matt. 19:7–9; Mark 7:10; Luke 20:28; John 5:45–47) as do the more than eighty citations of Deuteronomy in the New Testament. Internally, the book includes about forty claims to Moses as the author (1:1–5; 4:44–46; 29:1; 31:9,24–26). The political and geographic details of Deuteronomy indicate a firsthand knowledge of the events.

TIME: c. 1405 B.C. **KEY VERSES:** Deut. 30:19–20

THEME: Deuteronomy is a series of addresses that Moses gives to the nation of Israel just before it enters the Promised Land. In many ways it can be seen as the coach's speech given to a team just before it takes the field. The book reviews and reiterates what has been taught in the previous books of Moses in the same way that a coach's last instructions contain a review of the basic game plan and what has been covered in practice. The purpose of that speech is to focus on what to do and then create the motivation to carry it out. For the Israelites much of the previous instruction was somewhat hypothetical. Many of the laws assumed the occupation of the land. Now, as they stand looking over the Jordan River, they're within reach of moving from the hypothetical to the real and practical. God has renewed His marvelous covenant with them. Now is the time to live up to its requirements.

The Previous Command to Enter Canaan

1 These *are* the words which Moses spoke to all Israel [a]on this side of the Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain* opposite Suph,* between Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab. **2***It is* eleven days' *journey* from Horeb by way of Mount Seir [b]to Kadesh Barnea. **3**Now it came to pass [c]in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first *day* of the month, *that* Moses spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him as commandments to them, **4**[d]after he had killed Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashtaroth [e]in* Edrei.

5On this side of the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law, saying, **6**"The LORD our God spoke to us [f]in Horeb, saying: 'You have dwelt long [g]enough at this mountain. **7**Turn and take your journey, and go to the mountains of the Amorites, to all the neighboring *places* in the plain,* in the mountains and in the lowland, in the South and on the seacoast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates. **8**See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to [h]Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and their descendants after them.'

Tribal Leaders Appointed

9"And [i]I spoke to you at that time, saying: 'I alone am not able to bear you. **10**The LORD your God has multiplied you, [j]and here you

* **1:1** Hebrew *arabah* • One manuscript of the Septuagint, also Targum and Vulgate, read *Red Sea.* * **1:4** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *and* (compare Joshua 12:4). * **1:7** Hebrew *arabah*

1:2 ***eleven days' journey.*** A journey that might have taken Israel less than two weeks to complete lasted forty years because of unbelief and disobedience (Num. 13–14).

1:5 ***law.*** The Hebrew word translated "law" basically means "instruction."

1:1 [a] Deut. 4:44–46 **1:2** [b] Num. 13:26; 32:8 **1:3** [c] Num. 33:38 **1:4** [d] Num. 21:23, 24, 33–35 [e] Josh. 13:12 **1:6** [f] Ex. 3:1, 12 [g] Ex. 19:1, 2 **1:8** [h] Gen. 12:7; 15:5; 22:17; 26:3; 28:13 **1:9** [i] Ex. 18:18, 24 **1:10** [j] Gen. 15:5; 22:17

are today, as the stars of heaven in multitude. 11[k]May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you [l]as He has promised you! 12[m]How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints? 13Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable men from among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you.' 14And you answered me and said, 'The thing which you have told *us* to do *is* good.' 15So I took [n]the heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men, and made them heads over you, leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes.

16"Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear *the cases* between your brethren, and [o]judge righteously between a man and his [p]brother or the stranger who is with him. 17[q]You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for [r]the judgment *is* God's. The case that is too hard for you, [s]bring to me, and I will hear it.' 18And I commanded you at that time all the things which you should do.

Israel's Refusal to Enter the Land

19"So we departed from Horeb, [t]and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites, as the LORD our God had commanded us. Then [u]we came to Kadesh Barnea. 20And I said to you, 'You have come to the mountains of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. 21Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go up *and* possess *it*, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you; [v]do not fear or be discouraged.'

22"And every one of you came near to me and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.'

23"The plan pleased me well; so [w]I took twelve of your men, one man from *each* tribe. 24[x]And they departed and went up into the mountains, and came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out. 25They also took *some* of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought *it* down to us; and they brought back word to us, saying, '*It is* a [y]good land which the LORD our God is giving us.'

26[z]"Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; 27and you [a]complained in your tents, and said, 'Because the LORD [b]hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. 28Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, [c]"The people *are* greater and taller than we; the cities *are* great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the [d]Anakim there."'

29"Then I said to you, 'Do not be terrified, [e]or afraid of them. 30[f]The LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes, 31and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a [g]man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.' 32Yet, for all that, [h]you did not believe the LORD your God, 33[i]who went in the way before you [j]to search out a place for you to pitch your tents, to show you the way you should go, in the fire by night and in the cloud by day.

The Penalty for Israel's Rebellion

34"And the LORD heard the sound of your words, and was angry, [k]and took an oath, saying, 35[l]'Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers, 36[m]except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked, because [n]he wholly followed the LORD.' 37[o]The LORD was also angry with me for your sakes, saying, 'Even you shall not go in there. 38[p]Joshua the son of Nun, [q]who stands before you, he shall go in there. [r]Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

1:13 *wise, understanding.* The qualities of the leaders reflect the attributes of God. Wisdom is the ability to judge fairly and understand and make wise use of facts. Discernment or understanding is the ability to find the hidden or obscure aspects of a situation.

1:20 *Amorites.* The Amorites were one of the groups Israel encountered in their approach to the Promised Land. This term is often a general designation for the Canaanites.

1:26–28 *you complained.* An attitude of complaining and criticism toward the circumstances in our lives keeps us from seeing God's hand in the situation. Our situation may indeed be difficult, but God has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us. Paul said that he had learned how to be content in every circumstance. He made it a habit to give thanks in all things, and knew how to be contented with little, and how to be contented with much. He knew that he could do anything through Christ, who gives us strength (Phil. 4:13).

1:28 *the Anakim.* The Anakim were an ancient people known for their great size (Num. 13:28).

1:11 [k] 2 Sam. 24:3 [l] Gen. 15:5 **1:12** [m] 1 Kin. 3:8, 9 **1:15** [n] Ex. 18:25 **1:16** [o] Deut. 16:18 [p] Lev. 24:22 **1:17** [q] Prov. 24:23–26 [r] 2 Chr. 19:6 [s] Ex. 18:22, 26 **1:19** [t] Deut. 2:7; 8:15; 32:10 [u] Num. 13:26 **1:21** [v] Josh. 1:6, 9 **1:23** [w] Num. 13:2, 3 **1:24** [x] Num. 13:21–25 **1:25** [y] Num. 13:27 **1:26** [z] Num. 14:1–4 **1:27** [a] Ps. 106:25 [b] Deut. 9:28 **1:28** [c] Deut. 9:1, 2 [d] Num. 13:28 **1:29** [e] Num. 14:9 **1:30** [f] Ex. 14:14 **1:31** [g] Is. 46:3, 4; 63:9 **1:32** [h] Jude 5 **1:33** [i] Ex. 13:21 [j] Num. 10:33 **1:34** [k] Deut. 2:14, 15 **1:35** [l] Num. 14:22, 23 **1:36** [m] [Josh. 14:9] [n] Num. 32:11, 12 **1:37** [o] Deut. 3:26; 4:21; 34:4 **1:38** [p] Num. 14:30 [q] 1 Sam. 16:22 [r] Deut. 31:7, 23

39 [s]'Moreover your little ones and your children, who [t]you say will be victims, who today [u]have no knowledge of good and evil, they shall go in there; to them I will give it, and they shall possess it. 40 [v]But *as for* you, turn and take your journey into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea.'

41 "Then you answered and said to me, [w]'We have sinned against the LORD; we will go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.' And when everyone of you had girded on his weapons of war, you were ready to go up into the mountain.

42 "And the LORD said to me, 'Tell them, [x]"Do not go up nor fight, for I *am* not among you; lest you be defeated before your enemies."' 43 So I spoke to you; yet you would not listen, but [y]rebelled against the command of the LORD, and [z]presumptuously went up into the mountain. 44 And the Amorites who dwelt in that mountain came out against you and chased you [a]as bees do, and drove you back from Seir to Hormah. 45 Then you returned and wept before the LORD, but the LORD would not listen to your voice nor give ear to you.

46 [b]"So you remained in Kadesh many days, according to the days that you spent *there*.

The Desert Years

2 [a]"Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness of the Way of the Red Sea, [b]as the LORD spoke to me, and we skirted Mount Seir for many days.

2 "And the LORD spoke to me, saying: 3 'You have skirted this mountain [c]long enough; turn northward. 4 And command the people, saying, [d]"You *are about to* pass through the territory of [e]your brethren, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Therefore watch yourselves carefully. 5 Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of their land, no, not so much as one footstep, [f]because I have given Mount Seir to Esau *as* a possession. 6 You shall buy food from them with money, that you may eat; and you shall also buy water from them with money, that you may drink.

7 "For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. [g]These forty years the LORD your God *has been* with you; you have lacked nothing."'

8 "And when we passed beyond our brethren, the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir, away from the road of the plain, away from [h]Elath and Ezion Geber, we [i]turned and passed by way of the Wilderness of Moab. 9 Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you *any* of their land *as* a possession, because I have given [j]Ar to [k]the descendants of Lot *as* a possession.'"

10 [l](The Emim had dwelt there in times past, a people as great and numerous and tall as [m]the Anakim. 11 They were also regarded as giants,* like the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim. 12 [n]The Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave them.)

13 "'Now rise and cross over [o]the Valley of the Zered.' So we crossed over the Valley of the Zered. 14 And the time we took to come [p]from Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered *was* thirty-eight years, [q]until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, [r]just as the LORD had sworn to them. 15 For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp until they were consumed.

16 "So it was, when all the men of war had finally perished from among the people, 17 that the LORD spoke to me, saying: 18 'This day you are to cross over at Ar, the

* **2:11** Hebrew *rephaim*

1:39 ***your children, who you say will be victims.*** The most outrageous of Israel's complaints against God was that He had wanted their children to die (Num. 14:31). But the Lord demonstrated His love and faithfulness to His people by protecting those younger than 20 so that they could inherit the land.

1:44 ***Hormah.*** This name means "destruction," and probably refers to a site south of the Amorite hill country by Kadesh Barnea that was later called by that name.

2:7 ***God has blessed.*** The Israelites could not have survived forty years in the wilderness without the miraculous provision of God. That care has been an inspiration and encouragement to God's people throughout history. Those who receive God's bounty with a thankful heart find that it is enough, no matter how difficult the circumstances, and those who complain never recognize His blessing at all.

2:8 ***we turned and passed by way.*** The Israelites turned away from the way of the Red Sea, on which these cities were located and turned to the wilderness of Moab, which was the area east of Moab (Num. 33:44).

2:9 ***Ar.*** Ar is a synonym for the region of Moab. The Moabites were related to the Israelites through Lot (Gen. 19:37).

2:13 ***Zered.*** The brook of Zered was east of the Dead Sea at the border between Edom and Moab.

2:15 ***hand.*** The term "hand" suggests God's personal involvement both in acts of deliverance (Ex. 15:6) and in chastisement.

1:39 [s] Num. 14:31 [t] Num. 14:3 [u] Is. 7:15, 16 **1:40** [v] Num. 14:25 **1:41** [w] Num. 14:40 **1:42** [x] Num. 14:41–43 **1:43** [y] Num. 14:44 [z] Deut. 17:12, 13 **1:44** [a] Ps. 118:12 **1:46** [b] Deut. 2:7, 14 **2:1** [a] Deut. 1:40 [b] Num. 14:25 **2:3** [c] Deut. 2:7, 14 **2:4** [d] Num. 20:14–21 [e] Deut. 23:7 **2:5** [f] Gen. 36:8 **2:7** [g] Deut. 8:2–4 **2:8** [h] Judg. 11:18 [i] Num. 21:4 **2:9** [j] Deut. 2:18, 29 [k] Gen. 19:36–38 **2:10** [l] Gen. 14:5 [m] Deut. 9:2 **2:12** [n] Deut. 2:22 **2:13** [o] Num. 21:12 **2:14** [p] Num. 13:26 [q] Deut. 1:34, 35 [r] Num. 14:35

boundary of Moab. 19And *when* you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of the land of the people of Ammon *as* a possession, because I have given it to [s]the descendants of Lot *as* a possession.'"

20(That was also regarded as a land of giants;* giants formerly dwelt there. But the Ammonites call them [t]Zamzummim, 21[u]a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, 22just as He had done for the descendants of Esau, [v]who dwelt in Seir, when He destroyed [w]the Horites from before them. They dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, even to this day. 23And [x]the Avim, who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza—[y]the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and dwelt in their place.)

24"'Rise, take your journey, and [z]cross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand [a]Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess *it*, and engage him in battle. 25[b]This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall [c]tremble and be in anguish because of you.'

King Sihon Defeated

26"And I [d]sent messengers from the Wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon, [e]with words of peace, saying, 27[f]'Let me pass through your land; I will keep strictly to the road, and I will turn neither to the right nor to the left. 28You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink; [g]only let me pass through on foot, 29[h]just as the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir and the Moabites who dwell in Ar did for me, until I cross the Jordan to the land which the LORD our God is giving us.'

30[i]"But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass through, for [j]the LORD your God [k]hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that He might deliver him into your hand, as *it is* this day.

31"And the LORD said to me, 'See, I have begun to [l]give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to possess *it*, that you may inherit his land.' 32[m]Then Sihon and all his people came out against us to fight at Jahaz. 33And [n]the LORD our God delivered him over to us; so [o]we defeated him, his sons, and all his people. 34We took all his cities at that time, and we [p]utterly destroyed the men, women, and little ones of every city; we left none remaining. 35We took only the livestock as plunder for ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we took. 36[q]From Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and *from* [r]the city that *is* in the ravine, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us; [s]the LORD our God delivered all to us. 37Only you did not go near the land of the people of Ammon—anywhere along the River [t]Jabbok, or to the cities of the mountains, or [u]wherever the LORD our God had forbidden us.

King Og Defeated

3 "Then we turned and went up the road to Bashan; and [a]Og king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle [b]at Edrei. 2And the LORD said to me, 'Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand; you shall do to him as you did to [c]Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.'

3"So the LORD our God also delivered into our hands Og king of Bashan, with all his people, and we attacked him until he

* **2:20** Hebrew *rephaim*

2:23 *Avim . . . Gaza . . . Caphtorim . . . Caphtor.* The Avim lived in villages between the Jordan and the Mediterranean coast. Gaza was a Philistine city on the Mediterranean coast. The Caphtorim were a group of tribes that came by sea to the coasts of Canaan and Egypt. Caphtor is possibly the same as Crete (Gen. 10:14).

2:24 *River Arnon.* The river Arnon was the traditional border between Moab and Ammon.

2:26 *Wilderness of Kedemoth.* This desert within the territory of Sihon was located on its eastern border, east of the Dead Sea.

2:32 *Jahaz.* Jahaz was located north of Kedemoth (Is. 15:4).

2:34–35 *utterly destroyed.* By the law of the ban, every living thing, human and animal, was to be put to death. Sometimes, as in this case, the Lord permitted the Israelites to take livestock and property as spoil, and sometimes the Lord permitted the women and children to be spared. Canaanite idolatry had reached such abominable levels that the Lord was not willing to put up with it any longer. He intended to put an end to it, and also to prevent the Israelites from being corrupted by the Canaanites.

2:36–37 *Aroer . . . Gilead . . . Jabbok.* Aroer was a city on the northern bank of the river Arnon at the border between Sihon and Moab. Gilead was the northern boundary of Sihon. Jabbok was the river Jacob crossed on his way back to Canaan (Gen. 32:22).

3:1 *Bashan . . . Og.* Bashan was the region east of the Sea of Galilee. The territory of Og may have extended south of the river Yarmuk into Gilead.

2:19 [s] Gen. 19:38 **2:20** [t] Gen. 14:5 **2:21** [u] Deut. 2:10 **2:22** [v] Gen. 36:8 [w] Gen. 14:6; 36:20–30 **2:23** [x] Josh. 13:3 [y] Gen. 10:14 **2:24** [z] Judg. 11:18 [a] Deut. 1:4 **2:25** [b] Ex. 23:27 [c] Ex. 15:14–16 **2:26** [d] Num. 21:21–32 [e] Deut. 20:10 **2:27** [f] Judg. 11:19 **2:28** [g] Num. 20:19 **2:29** [h] Deut. 23:3, 4 **2:30** [i] Num. 21:23 [j] Josh. 11:20 [k] Ex. 4:21 **2:31** [l] Deut. 1:3, 8 **2:32** [m] Num. 21:23 **2:33** [n] Deut. 7:2 [o] Num. 21:24 **2:34** [p] Lev. 27:28 **2:36** [q] Deut. 3:12; 4:48 [r] Josh. 13:9, 16 [s] Ps. 44:3 **2:37** [t] Gen. 32:22 [u] Deut. 2:5, 9, 19 **3:1** [a] Num. 21:33–35 [b] Deut. 1:4 **3:2** [c] Num. 21:34

had no survivors remaining. 4And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them: sixty cities, [d]all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. 5All these cities *were* fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a great many rural towns. 6And we utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king [e]of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city. 7But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as booty for ourselves.

8"And at that time we took the [f]land from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on this side of the Jordan, from the River Arnon to Mount [g]Hermon 9(the Sidonians call [h]Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir), 10[i]all the cities of the plain, all Gilead, and [j]all Bashan, as far as Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

11[k]"For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of [l]the giants.* Indeed his bedstead *was* an iron bedstead. (*Is* it not in [m]Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits *is* its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit.

The Land East of the Jordan Divided

12"And this [n]land, *which* we possessed at that time, [o]from Aroer, which *is* by the River Arnon, and half the mountains of Gilead and [p]its cities, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites. 13[q]The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob, with all Bashan, was called the land of the giants.* 14[r]Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, [s]as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and [t]called Bashan after his own name, Havoth Jair,* to this day.)

15"Also I gave [u]Gilead to Machir. 16And to the Reubenites [v]and the Gadites I gave from Gilead as far as the River Arnon, the middle of the river as *the* border, as far as the River Jabbok, [w]the border of the people of Ammon; 17the plain also, with the Jordan as *the* border, from Chinnereth [x]as far as the east side of the Sea of the Arabah [y](the Salt Sea), below the slopes of Pisgah.

18"Then I commanded you at that time, saying: 'The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. [z]All you men of valor shall cross over armed before your brethren, the children of Israel. 19But your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall stay in your cities which I have given you, 20until the LORD has given [a]rest to your brethren as to you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may [b]return to his possession which I have given you.'

21"And [c]I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass. 22You must not fear them, for [d]the LORD your God Himself fights for you.'

Moses Forbidden to Enter the Land

23"Then [e]I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying: 24'O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant [f]Your greatness

* **3:11** Hebrew *rephaim* * **3:13** Hebrew *rephaim*
* **3:14** Literally *Towns of Jair*

3:8 *Mount Hermon.* Mount Hermon is in the mountain range in the north between Canaan and Lebanon.
3:9–11 *Sidonians.* The Sidonians were Phoenicians, a well-known ancient seafaring people.
3:10 *Salcah.* Salcah was a city located at the eastern border of Bashan.
3:11 *bedstead.* "Bedstead" could also be translated *sarcophagus,* that is, *stone coffin.* ***Rabbah.*** Rabbah was on the site of Amman, the capital of modern Jordan. ***cubit.*** The ordinary cubit is about eighteen inches. Nine cubits is about thirteen feet, and four cubits is about six feet.
3:14 *Geshurites . . . Maachathites.* The Geshurites lived east of the Sea of Galilee and south of Mount Hermon. The Maachathites were descended from Abraham's brother Nahor.
3:17 *Chinnereth.* Chinnereth is another name for the Sea of Galilee.
3:23–25 *pleaded with the LORD.* Moses was a man of prayer and a man of God. He had repeatedly interceded with God for the rebellious Israelites, and God had answered those prayers. Yet this request of Moses to enter the Promised Land was answered with a decided "no," and with the command not to mention the matter again. We usually don't know why God says "no" to things that seem not only reasonable, but right and good to us. It is hard to give thanks for the answer we did not want, but we must learn that "no" can also be the hand of our loving Heavenly Father. Most of the time we won't see, this side of heaven, how grateful we ought to be for the "no" of God.
3:24 *O Lord GOD.* The Hebrew word for "Lord," or "Master," is followed by the personal name of God (Yahweh, here translated "GOD"). The respect and humbleness in calling God "Master," the long companionship revealed in calling God by the covenant name, and the pleading, just to see the Promised Land, poignantly speak of Moses' longing.

3:4 [d] Deut. 3:13, 14 **3:6** [e] Deut. 2:24, 34, 35
3:8 [f] Josh. 12:6; 13:8–12 [g] 1 Chr. 5:23 **3:9** [h] 1 Chr. 5:23 **3:10** [i] Deut. 4:49 [j] Josh. 12:5; 13:11 **3:11** [k] Amos 2:9 [l] Deut. 2:11, 20 [m] Jer. 49:2 **3:12** [n] Num. 32:33 [o] Deut. 2:36 [p] Num. 34:14 **3:13** [q] Josh. 13:29–31; 17:1 **3:14** [r] 1 Chr. 2:22 [s] Josh. 13:13 [t] Num. 32:41
3:15 [u] Num. 32:39, 40 **3:16** [v] 2 Sam. 24:5 [w] Num. 21:24
3:17 [x] Num. 34:11, 12 [y] Gen. 14:3 **3:18** [z] Num. 32:20
3:20 [a] Deut. 12:9, 10 [b] Josh. 22:4 **3:21** [c] [Num. 27:22, 23]
3:22 [d] Ex. 14:14 **3:23** [e] [2 Cor. 12:8, 9] **3:24** [f] Deut. 5:24; 11:2

and Your mighty hand, for [g]what god *is there* in heaven or on earth who can do *anything* like Your works and Your mighty *deeds?* 25I pray, let me cross over and see [h]the good land beyond the Jordan, those pleasant mountains, and Lebanon.'

26"But the LORD [i]was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me. So the LORD said to me: 'Enough of that! Speak no more to Me of this matter. 27[j]Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes toward the west, the north, the south, and the east; behold *it* with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan. 28But [k]command Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.'

29"So we stayed in [l]the valley opposite Beth Peor.

Moses Commands Obedience

4 "Now, O Israel, listen to [a]the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you. 2[b]You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. 3Your eyes have seen what the LORD did at [c]Baal Peor; for the LORD your God has destroyed from among you all the men who followed Baal of Peor. 4But you who held fast to the LORD your God *are* alive today, every one of you.

5"Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according *to them* in the land which you go to possess. 6Therefore be careful to observe *them;* for this *is* [d]your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.'

7"For [e]what great nation *is there* that has [f]God *so* near to it, as the LORD our God *is* to us, for whatever *reason* we may call upon Him? 8And what great nation *is there* that has *such* statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day? 9Only take heed to yourself, and diligently [g]keep yourself, lest you [h]forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And [i]teach them to your children and your grandchildren, 10*especially concerning* [j]the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.'

11"Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. 12[k]And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; [l]*you* only *heard* a voice. 13[m]So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, [n]the Ten Commandments; and [o]He wrote them on two tablets of stone. 14And [p]the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.

Beware of Idolatry

15[q]"Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no [r]form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, 16lest you [s]act corruptly and [t]make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: [u]the likeness of male or female,

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3:29 ***Beth Peor.*** This was a pagan site dedicated to Baal of Peor (Num. 25:3–5) and was the scene of Israel's first disastrous encounter with the sexually centered worship of Baal (4:3).

4:1 ***listen.*** The exhortation to listen includes an encouragement to obey (4:9; 5:1; 6:3–4).

4:6 ***in the sight of the peoples.*** By living in obedience to God, Israel would become a countercultural force, showing the way of God in both society and government.

4:9 ***your children.*** One of the purposes of the family is to pass on from generation to generation the acts of God among men. In times where the written record did not exist, or where people could not read, the wonderful acts of God were repeated in stories and conversations. With the Bible readily available, we don't have to rely on our memories alone to recall the things that God has done, but we are still responsible to make these things known to our children. It is also important to tell our children about the times that the Lord has answered our prayers, convicted our conscience, and blessed us with His peace. The best role model a child can have is a parent whose heart is centered on the Lord.

4:12 ***heard . . . but saw no form.*** The Lord revealed His glory to the Israelites, but they saw no visual image other than darkness and fire. They did hear God's voice, however (v. 15). This verse reminds us that God is Spirit (John 4:24).

4:15–19 ***you saw no form.*** There was no way of describing or giving shape with any image to the experience of God's presence at Sinai (Ex. 20:18). Since Israel had not seen the form of God, they could not represent Him in any way. Although people were created in the likeness of God (Gen. 1:26–27), no image created in human likeness could represent God, nor could any animal or the majestic heavenly

3:24 [g] 2 Sam. 7:22 **3:25** [h] Deut. 4:22 **3:26** [i] Num. 20:12; 27:14 **3:27** [j] Num. 23:14; 27:12 **3:28** [k] Num. 27:18, 23 **3:29** [l] Deut. 4:46; 34:6 **4:1** [a] [Rom. 10:5] **4:2** [b] Prov. 30:6 **4:3** [c] Num. 25:1–9 **4:6** [d] [2 Tim. 3:15] **4:7** [e] [2 Sam. 7:23] [f] [Is. 55:6] **4:9** [g] Prov. 4:23 [h] Deut. 29:2–8 [i] Gen. 18:19 **4:10** [j] Ex. 19:9, 16, 17 **4:12** [k] Deut. 5:4, 22 [l] 1 Kin. 19:11–18 **4:13** [m] Deut. 9:9, 11 [n] Ex. 34:28 [o] Ex. 24:12 **4:14** [p] Ex. 21:1 **4:15** [q] Josh. 23:11 [r] Is. 40:18 **4:16** [s] Deut. 9:12; 31:29 [t] Ex. 20:4, 5 [u] Rom. 1:23

17 the likeness of any animal that *is* on the
earth or the likeness of any winged bird
that flies in the air, 18 the likeness of any-
thing that creeps on the ground or the like-
ness of any fish that *is* in the water beneath
the earth. 19 And *take heed,* lest you [v]lift
your eyes to heaven, and *when* you see the
sun, the moon, and the stars, [w]all the host
of heaven, you feel driven to [x]worship them
and serve them, which the LORD your God
has given to all the peoples under the whole
heaven as a heritage. 20 But the LORD has
taken you and [y]brought you out of the iron
furnace, out of Egypt, to be [z]His people,
an inheritance, as you are this day. 21 Fur-
thermore [a]the LORD was angry with me
for your sakes, and swore that [b]I would not
cross over the Jordan, and that I would not
enter the good land which the LORD your
God is giving you as an inheritance. 22 But
[c]I must die in this land, [d]I must not cross
over the Jordan; but you shall cross over
and possess [e]that good land. 23 Take heed
to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant
of the LORD your God which He made with
you, [f]and make for yourselves a carved
image in the form of anything which the
LORD your God has forbidden you. 24 For
[g]the LORD your God *is* a consuming fire,
[h]a jealous God.

25 "When you beget children and grand-
children and have grown old in the land,
and act corruptly and make a carved im-
age in the form of anything, and [i]do evil in
the sight of the LORD your God to provoke
Him to anger, 26 [j]I call heaven and earth to
witness against you this day, that you will
soon utterly perish from the land which
you cross over the Jordan to possess; you
will not prolong *your* days in it, but will
be utterly destroyed. 27 And the LORD [k]will
scatter you among the peoples, and you
will be left few in number among the na-
tions where the LORD will drive you. 28 And
[l]there you will serve gods, the work of
men's hands, wood and stone, [m]which nei-
ther see nor hear nor eat nor smell. 29 [n]But
from there you will seek the LORD your
God, and you will find *Him* if you seek Him
with all your heart and with all your soul.
30 When you are in distress, and all these
things come upon you in the [o]latter days,
when you [p]turn to the LORD your God and
obey His voice 31 (for the LORD your God *is*
a merciful God), He will not forsake you
nor [q]destroy you, nor forget the covenant of
your fathers which He swore to them.

32 "For [r]ask now concerning the days that
are past, which were before you, since the
day that God created man on the earth, and
ask [s]from one end of heaven to the other,
whether *any* great *thing* like this has hap-
pened, or *anything* like it has been heard.
33 [t]Did *any* people *ever* hear the voice of
God speaking out of the midst of the fire,
as you have heard, and live? 34 Or did God
ever try to go *and* take for Himself a na-
tion from the midst of *another* nation, [u]by
trials, [v]by signs, by wonders, by war, [w]by
a mighty hand and [x]an outstretched arm,
[y]and by great terrors, according to all that
the LORD your God did for you in Egypt be-
fore your eyes? 35 To you it was shown, that
you might know that the LORD Himself
is God; [z]*there is* none other besides Him.
36 [a]Out of heaven He let you hear His voice,
that He might instruct you; on earth He
showed you His great fire, and you heard
His words out of the midst of the fire. 37 And
because [b]He loved your fathers, therefore
He chose their descendants after them;
and [c]He brought you out of Egypt with His
Presence, with His mighty power, 38 [d]driv-
ing out from before you nations greater
and mightier than you, to bring you in, to
give you their land *as* an inheritance, as *it*
is this day. 39 Therefore know this day, and
consider *it* in your heart, that [e]the LORD
Himself *is* God in heaven above and on
the earth beneath; *there is* no other. 40 [f]You
shall therefore keep His statutes and His
commandments which I command you to-
day, that it may go well with you and with
your children after you, and that you may
prolong *your* days in the land which the
LORD your God is giving you for all time."

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bodies. The Israelites could know God's creation, His power, and His character, but they would have to be satisfied to know Him without any visual image.

4:24 ***a consuming fire . . . jealous.*** God is free to destroy disobedient and rebellious people. Israel had witnessed His righteous anger during the wilderness journey as well as in Canaan (Num. 16; Heb. 12:19). "Jealous" means that God will tolerate no rivalry or unfaithfulness. This word can also be translated *zealous.* God is zealous for His holiness.

4:26 ***heaven and earth.*** All creation would act as God's witness against a rebellious and obstinate people. God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature are all clearly seen in creation (Rom. 1:20), so that man is without excuse. The creation belongs to God just as much as man does, and God uses it for His eternal purposes, one of which is to stand as a witness to the disobedient.

4:27 ***scatter you among the peoples.*** This is a prophetic warning of the exiles that would take place in 722 and 586 B.C.

4:40 ***that it may go well with you.*** The promise of blessing in the land was conditional—it required obedience.

4:19 [v] Deut. 17:3 [w] 2 Kin. 21:3 [x] [Rom. 1:25] **4:20** [y] Jer. 11:4 [z] Deut. 7:6; 27:9 **4:21** [a] Num. 20:12 [b] Num. 27:13, 14 **4:22** [c] 2 Pet. 1:13–15 [d] Deut. 3:27 [e] Deut. 3:25 **4:23** [f] Deut. 4:16 **4:24** [g] Deut. 9:3 [h] Ex. 20:5; 34:14 **4:25** [i] 2 Kin. 17:17 **4:26** [j] Deut. 30:18, 19 **4:27** [k] Deut. 28:62 **4:28** [l] Jer. 16:13 [m] Ps. 115:4–7; 135:15–17 **4:29** [n] [2 Chr. 15:4] **4:30** [o] Hos. 3:5 [p] Joel 2:12 **4:31** [q] Jer. 30:11 **4:32** [r] Job 8:8 [s] Matt. 24:31 **4:33** [t] Deut. 5:24–26 **4:34** [u] Deut. 7:19 [v] Ex. 7:3 [w] Ex. 13:3 [x] Ex. 6:6 [y] Deut. 26:8 **4:35** [z] Mark 12:32 **4:36** [a] Heb. 12:19, 25 **4:37** [b] Deut. 7:7, 8; 10:15; 33:3 [c] Ex. 13:3, 9, 14 **4:38** [d] Deut. 7:1 **4:39** [e] Josh. 2:11 **4:40** [f] Lev. 22:31

Cities of Refuge East of the Jordan

41 Then Moses [g]set apart three cities on
this side of the Jordan, toward the rising of
the sun, 42 [h]that the manslayer might flee
there, who kills his neighbor unintention-
ally, without having hated him in time past,
and that by fleeing to one of these cities he
might live: 43 [i]Bezer in the wilderness on the
plateau for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gile-
ad for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for
the Manassites.

Introduction to God's Law

44 Now this *is* the law which Moses set
before the children of Israel. 45 These *are*
the testimonies, the statutes, and the judg-
ments which Moses spoke to the children
of Israel after they came out of Egypt,
46 on this side of the Jordan, [j]in the val-
ley opposite Beth Peor, in the land of Si-
hon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at
Heshbon, whom Moses and the children
of Israel [k]defeated after they came out of
Egypt. 47 And they took possession of his
land and the land [l]of Og king of Bashan,
two kings of the Amorites, who *were* on
this side of the Jordan, toward the rising
of the sun, 48 [m]from Aroer, which *is* on the
bank of the River Arnon, even to Mount
Sion* (that is, [n]Hermon), 49 and all the plain
on the east side of the Jordan as far as the
Sea of the Arabah, below the [o]slopes of
Pisgah.

The Ten Commandments Reviewed

5 And Moses called all Israel, and said to
them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and
judgments which I speak in your hearing
today, that you may learn them and be
careful to observe them. 2 [a]The LORD our
God made a covenant with us in Horeb.
3 The LORD [b]did not make this covenant
with our fathers, but with us, those who *are*
here today, all of us who *are* alive. 4 [c]The
LORD talked with you face to face on the
mountain from the midst of the fire. 5 [d]I
stood between the LORD and you at that
time, to declare to you the word of the
LORD; for [e]you were afraid because of the
fire, and you did not go up the mountain.
He said:

6 [f]'I *am* the LORD your God who brought
you out of the land of Egypt, out of
the house of bondage.
7 [g]'You shall have no other gods before Me.
8 [h]'You shall not make for yourself a
carved image—any likeness *of any-
thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that
is in the earth beneath, or that *is* in
the water under the earth; 9 you shall
not [i]bow down to them nor serve
them. For I, the LORD your God, *am*
a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of
the fathers upon the children to the
third and fourth *generations* of those
who hate Me, 10 [j]but showing mercy to
thousands, to those who love Me and
keep My commandments.
11 [k]'You shall not take the name of the LORD
your God in vain, for the LORD will
not hold *him* guiltless who takes His
name in vain.
12 [l]'Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it
holy, as the LORD your God com-
manded you. 13 [m]Six days you shall
labor and do all your work, 14 but
the seventh day *is* the [n]Sabbath of
the LORD your God. *In it* you shall
do no work: you, nor your son, nor
your daughter, nor your male ser-
vant, nor your female servant, nor
your ox, nor your donkey, nor any
of your cattle, nor your stranger
who *is* within your gates, that your
male servant and your female ser-
vant may rest as well as you. 15 [o]And
remember that you were a slave in
the land of Egypt, and the LORD
your God brought you out from there
[p]by a mighty hand and by an out-
stretched arm; therefore the LORD
your God commanded you to keep
the Sabbath day.
16 [q]'Honor your father and your mother, as
the LORD your God has commanded
you, [r]that your days may be long,
and that it may be well with [s]you in
the land which the LORD your God is
giving you.
17 [t]'You shall not murder.

* **4:48** Syriac reads *Sirion* (compare 3:9).

5:6–21 Commandments—The Ten Commandments are the basis for holy living—not just a list of rules, but an explanation of what God expects of us. Loving God comes first. Setting aside a day to focus on God is essential for maintaining this relationship. The way we feel about God will affect the way we feel about people, and this will have a direct effect on how we treat others. Even though these three ideas summarize the Commandments, it is also essential to examine each individual command and think about how it applies to our lives. It is not easy to faithfully obey these simple statements.

5:11 ***take . . . in vain.*** Taking the name of the Lord in vain refers to the abuse, misuse, blasphemy, cursing, or manipulation of the Lord's name. Something "vain" is empty or without value, significance, or meaning.

5:12 ***the Sabbath.*** The primary significance of the Sabbath was that it belonged to the Lord.

4:41 *g* Num. 35:6 **4:42** *h* Deut. 19:4 **4:43** *i* Josh. 20:8
4:46 *j* Deut. 3:29 *k* Num. 21:24 **4:47** *l* Num. 21:33–35
4:48 *m* Deut. 2:36; 3:12 *n* Deut. 3:9 **4:49** *o* Deut. 3:17
5:2 *a* Ex. 19:5 **5:3** *b* Heb. 8:9 **5:4** *c* Ex. 19:9 **5:5** *d* Gal. 3:19 *e* Ex. 19:16 **5:6** *f* Ex. 20:2–17 **5:7** *g* Hos. 13:4
5:8 *h* Ex. 20:4 **5:9** *i* Ex. 34:7, 14–16 **5:10** *j* Dan. 9:4
5:11 *k* Ex. 20:7 **5:12** *l* Ex. 20:8 **5:13** *m* Ex. 23:12; 35:2
5:14 *n* [Heb. 4:4] **5:15** *o* Deut. 15:15 *p* Deut. 4:34, 37
5:16 *q* Lev. 19:3 *r* Deut. 6:2 *s* Deut. 4:40 **5:17** *t* Matt. 5:21

18 [u]'You shall not commit adultery.
19 [v]'You shall not steal.
20 [w]'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
21 [x]'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that *is* your neighbor's.'

22 "These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly, in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He added no more. And [y]He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

The People Afraid of God's Presence

23 [z]"So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. 24 And you said: 'Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and [a]we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he [b]*still* lives. 25 Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; [c]if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die. 26 [d]For who *is there* of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? 27 You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and [e]tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do *it*.'

28 "Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. [f]They are right *in* all that they have spoken. 29 [g]Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and [h]always keep all My commandments, [i]that it might be well with them and with their children forever! 30 Go and say to them, "Return to your tents." 31 But as for you, stand here by Me, [j]and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe *them* in the land which I am giving them to possess.'

32 "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; [k]you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. 33 You shall walk in [l]all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live [m]and *that it may be* well with you, and *that* you may prolong *your* days in the land which you shall possess.

The Greatest Commandment

6 "Now this *is* [a]the commandment, *and these are* the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe *them* in the land which you are crossing over to possess, 2 [b]that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, [c]and that your days may be prolonged. 3 Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe *it*, that it may be well with you, and that you may [d]multiply greatly [e]as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—[f]'a land flowing with milk and honey.'*

* **6:3** Exodus 3:8

5:18 *adultery.* Adultery was a betrayal not only of a commitment, but of a relationship. Anyone who treated marriage lightly would also treat his or her relationship with God lightly.

5:21 *covet.* This command deals specifically with an attitude, rather than an action. Covetousness is self-centered dissatisfaction, which does not reflect loving concern for the well-being of others. Loving God and loving others are closely connected (Matt. 22:37–39).

5:22 *wrote them in two tablets . . . gave them.* The two tablets were two complete copies of the law. Usually two copies were made of ancient Middle Eastern treaties. One was retained by each of the contracting parties. But God gave both copies to Moses, signifying that God Himself would be with the Israelites. God and the Israelites kept their copies in the same place because they lived together.

5:25–26 *why should we die . . . LORD our God.* The Israelites' fear was an important part of understanding their sin and need for help in meeting the requirements of God. The living God is powerful, great, and holy, and He wants us to be like Him, so each sinner needs to realize the need for God's mercy.

5:29 *heart in them.* The people were impressed with what they saw and heard, but their hearts were unchanged.

6:2 *fear.* The fear of the Lord includes awe for His greatness and holiness, love for Him, and submission to His will. Initially, the fear of God may involve fright, knowing that God has the right to punish us for our sins. But when we look at His holiness and love, there is a joy in knowing God, who not only sees us for who we really are, but helps us to be who He wants us to be.

6:3 *God of your fathers.* God was their God, generation after generation, and He expected them to follow Him, from generation to generation as well.

5:18 [u] Ex. 20:14 **5:19** [v] [Rom. 13:9] **5:20** [w] Ex. 20:16; 23:1 **5:21** [x] Ex. 20:17 **5:22** [y] Deut. 4:13 **5:23** [z] Ex. 20:18, 19 **5:24** [a] Ex. 19:19 [b] Deut. 4:33 **5:25** [c] Deut. 18:16 **5:26** [d] Deut. 4:33 **5:27** [e] Ex. 20:19 **5:28** [f] Deut. 18:17 **5:29** [g] Ps. 81:13 [h] Deut. 11:1 [i] Deut. 4:40 **5:31** [j] [Gal. 3:19] **5:32** [k] Deut. 17:20; 28:14 **5:33** [l] Deut. 10:12 [m] Deut. 4:40 **6:1** [a] Deut. 12:1 **6:2** [b] [Eccl. 12:13] [c] Deut. 4:40 **6:3** [d] Deut. 7:13 [e] Gen. 22:17 [f] Ex. 3:8, 17

4 [g]"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one!* 5 [h]You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, [i]with all your soul, and with all your strength.

6 "And [j]these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 [k]You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 [l]You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 [m]You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Caution Against Disobedience

10 "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities [n]which you did not build, 11 houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—[o]when you have eaten and are full— 12 *then* beware, lest you forget the [p]LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. 13 You shall [q]fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and [r]shall take oaths in His name. 14 You shall not go after other gods, [s]the gods of the peoples who *are* all around you 15 (for [t]the LORD your God *is* a jealous God [u]among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

16 [v]"You shall not tempt the LORD your God [w]as you tempted *Him* in Massah. 17 You shall [x]diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. 18 And you [y]shall do *what is* right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers, 19 [z]to cast out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken.

20 [a]"When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What *is the meaning of* the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?' 21 then you shall say to your son: 'We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt [b]with a mighty hand; 22 and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. 23 Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. 24 And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, [c]to fear the LORD our God, [d]for our good always, that

* **6:4** Or *The LORD is our God, the LORD alone* (that is, the only one)

6:4 ***Hear, O Israel.*** This verse is the celebrated Shema, the basic confession of faith in Judaism (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:29; Luke 10:27). The first word, "hear," is the Hebrew word *shema.* The people are to hear and respond properly to God. He is their God, and He alone is the Lord.

6:4–9 Passing on the Faith—In the days leading up to the end of Moses' leadership, he laid out the essentials of raising a family to follow God. Moses knew that these instructions were a foundational element in Israel's future. The only way the Israelites could maintain the land they were going to possess was to make sure that the faith would be passed on to each succeeding generation. Nothing has changed. Today we need to heed the same instructions.

In a family's life the teaching of God is to be a constant, daily effort. God is to be made a part of everyday life. It is the responsibility of a parent to be constantly looking for opportunities to teach children about God's instructions for living. God's instructions should be like clothing. They should be put on the minute we get up and kept on all day. They are to be our constant companions. Sharing our faith should be a natural part of daily communication with our children. We should also remember that these instructions come in the text subsequent to the command to love God with all of our heart and soul and strength. How else can we love Him better than by obeying and following Him and teaching our children to do the same?

6:5 ***shall love.*** Moses repeatedly exhorted the Israelites to respond to God's love with devotion. God commanded His people to choose Him with all their being, and in the process to deny all other supposed deities.

6:8–9 ***hand . . . frontlets . . . doorposts . . . gates.*** In later years the Jews interpreted these instructions by wearing phylacteries (boxes containing Scripture) when they prayed. They attached a small vessel called a mezuzah, which contained these verses, to the doorpost. The purpose of this whole passage is to emphasize that God's ways are to be a part of our conversations, our homes, and every activity. They are to be as close to us and as visible as our hand or our forehead.

6:20–24 ***your son asks.*** The answer to the Israelite child's question would include four components: we were slaves in Egypt, the Lord brought us out with a mighty hand, He gave us land, and we have a challenge to responsible action. This is a powerful teaching tool, and one that applies to all Christians. We are to teach our children that we were slaves to sin, the Lord Jesus brought us out with a mighty hand, He has given us a Kingdom, and we have a challenge to responsible action.

6:4 [g] [1 Cor. 8:4, 6] **6:5** [h] Matt. 22:37 [i] 2 Kin. 23:25 **6:6** [j] Deut. 11:18–20 **6:7** [k] Deut. 4:9; 11:19 **6:8** [l] Prov. 3:3; 6:21; 7:3 **6:9** [m] Deut. 11:20 **6:10** [n] Josh. 24:13 **6:11** [o] Deut. 8:10; 11:15; 14:29 **6:12** [p] Deut. 8:11–18 **6:13** [q] Matt. 4:10 [r] Deut. 5:11 **6:14** [s] Deut. 13:7 **6:15** [t] Ex. 20:5 [u] Ex. 33:3 **6:16** [v] Luke 4:12 [w] [1 Cor. 10:9] **6:17** [x] Deut. 11:22 **6:18** [y] Ex. 15:26 **6:19** [z] Num. 33:52, 53 **6:20** [a] Ex. 13:8, 14 **6:21** [b] Ex. 13:3 **6:24** [c] Deut. 6:2 [d] Jer. 32:39

[e]He might preserve us alive, as *it is* this day. 25Then [f]it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.'

A Chosen People

7 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to [a]possess, and has cast out many [b]nations before you, [c]the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, 2and when the LORD your God delivers [d]them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. [e]You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. 3[f]Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. 4For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; [g]so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. 5But thus you shall deal with them: you shall [h]destroy their altars, and break down their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their wooden images,* and burn their carved images with fire.

6"For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God; [i]the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. 7The LORD did not set His [j]love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were [k]the least of all peoples; 8but [l]because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep [m]the oath which He swore to your fathers, [n]the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9"Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, [o]the faithful God [p]who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; 10and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be [q]slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. 11Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today, to observe them.

Blessings of Obedience

12"Then it shall come to pass, because you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers. 13And He will [r]love you and bless you and multiply you; [s]He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your land, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flock, in the land of which He swore to your fathers to give you. 14You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall not be a male or female [t]barren among you or among your livestock. 15And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and will afflict you with none of the [u]terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, but will lay *them* on all those who hate you. 16Also you shall destroy all the peoples whom the LORD your God delivers over to you; your eye shall have no pity on them; nor shall you serve their gods, for that [v]*will be* a snare to you.

17"If you should say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?'— 18you shall not be afraid of them, *but* you shall [w]remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: 19[x]the great trials which your eyes saw, the signs and the wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. 20[y]Moreover the LORD your God will send the hornet among them until those who are left, who hide themselves from you, are destroyed. 21You shall not be terrified of them; for the LORD your God, the great and awesome God, *is* among you. 22And the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you [z]little by

* **7:5** Hebrew *Asherim*, Canaanite deities

7:1 ***Hittites . . . Girgashites . . . Amorites . . . Canaanites . . . Perizzites . . . Hivites . . . Jebusites.*** The Hittites came originally from Asia Minor (Gen. 23:10). The Girgashites are an unknown people (Gen. 10:16; 1 Chr. 1:14). The Amorites were the native population of Canaan that had settled in the mountains. The Canaanites were the native population that had settled in the coastland, the Perizzites were the native population that had settled in the hill country, and the Hivites were the native population that had settled south of the Lebanon mountains. The Jebusites (perhaps an offshoot of the Hittites) were the native population settled near what later became Jerusalem.
7:2 ***covenant.*** Covenant refers to any treaty with the Canaanite nations that might undermine God's covenant with Israel.

7:22 ***little by little.*** God's plan was that the land would be conquered in two stages. The first was a broad, rapid conquest under Joshua, and the second was a gradual, area by area conquest.

6:24 [e] Deut. 4:1 **6:25** [f] [Rom. 10:3, 5] **7:1** [a] Deut. 6:10 [b] Gen. 15:19–21 [c] Ex. 33:2 **7:2** [d] Num. 31:17 [e] Josh. 2:14 **7:3** [f] 1 Kin. 11:2 **7:4** [g] Deut. 6:15 **7:5** [h] Ex. 23:24; 34:13 **7:6** [i] Ex. 19:5, 6 **7:7** [j] Deut. 4:37 [k] Deut. 10:22 **7:8** [l] Deut. 10:15 [m] Luke 1:55, 72, 73 [n] Ex. 13:3, 14 **7:9** [o] 1 Cor. 1:9 [p] Neh. 1:5 **7:10** [q] [2 Pet. 3:9, 10] **7:13** [r] John 14:21 [s] Deut. 28:4 **7:14** [t] Ex. 23:26 **7:15** [u] Ex. 9:14; 15:26 **7:16** [v] Judg. 8:27 **7:18** [w] Ps. 105:5 **7:19** [x] Deut. 4:34; 29:3 **7:20** [y] Josh. 24:12 **7:22** [z] Ex. 23:29, 30

little; you will be unable to destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become *too* numerous for you. 23But the LORD your God will deliver them over to you, and will inflict defeat upon them until they are destroyed. 24And [a]He will deliver their kings into your hand, and you will destroy their name from under heaven; [b]no one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. 25You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not [c]covet the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it *is* an abomination to the LORD your God. 26Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, [d]for it *is* an accursed thing.

Remember the LORD Your God

8 "Every commandment which I command you today [a]you must be careful to observe, that you may live and [b]multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. 2And you shall remember that the LORD your God [c]led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you *and* [d]test you, [e]to know what *was* in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3So He humbled you, [f]allowed you to hunger, and [g]fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall [h]not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. 4[i]Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. 5[j]You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, *so* the LORD your God chastens you.

6"Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, [k]to walk in His ways and to fear Him. 7For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, [l]a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; 8a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; 9a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones *are* iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10[m]When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

11"Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, 12[n]lest—*when* you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell *in them;* 13and *when* your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; 14[o]when your heart is lifted up, and you [p]forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 15who [q]led you through that great and terrible wilderness, [r]*in which were* fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; [s]who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; 16who fed you in the wilderness with [t]manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, [u]to do you good in the end— 17then you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.'

18"And you shall remember the LORD your God, [v]for *it is* He who gives you power to get wealth, [w]that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day. 19Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, [x]I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. 20As the nations which the LORD destroys before you, [y]so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God.

Israel's Rebellions Reviewed

9 "Hear, O Israel: You *are* to cross over the Jordan today, and go in to dispossess

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8:3 ***man shall not live by bread alone.*** Humans have a spiritual nature that can be satisfied only by the spiritual nutrients of God's word. Jesus used these words to rebuke Satan when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness (Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:1–4). ***proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.*** The Bible is valuable because it is the word of God. It is inspired by God not only in the sense that it is relating true events, but because God knows the kinds of things that people need to know to follow Him in a world of sin, uncertainty, and death. God's word is man's only wisdom and hope. When people study it, rely on it, and apply it, the word will prove to be both wise and right. For God is as good as His every word, and God's every word is as good as the One from whom it comes.

8:16 ***test you, to do you good.*** Through the whole experience in Egypt and the wilderness, the Lord was leading His children into decisions that would bring out their true nature. Difficult as the tests were, the Lord knew what was necessary to reveal to the Israelites not only His character, but theirs as well.

8:17 ***My power.*** Moses warned the people that prosperity and wealth often lead to an exaltation of self and a rejection of God.

7:24 [a] Josh. 10:24, 42; 12:1–24 [b] Josh. 23:9 **7:25** [c] Prov. 23:6 **7:26** [d] Deut. 13:17 **8:1** [a] Deut. 4:1; 6:24 [b] Deut. 30:16 **8:2** [c] Amos 2:10 [d] Ex. 16:4 [e] [John 2:25] **8:3** [f] Ex. 16:2, 3 [g] Ex. 16:12, 14, 35 [h] Matt. 4:4 **8:4** [i] Neh. 9:21 **8:5** [j] 2 Sam. 7:14 **8:6** [k] [Deut. 5:33] **8:7** [l] Deut. 11:9–12 **8:10** [m] Deut. 6:11, 12 **8:12** [n] Hos. 13:6 **8:14** [o] 1 Cor. 4:7 [p] Ps. 106:21 **8:15** [q] Is. 63:12–14 [r] Num. 21:6 [s] Num. 20:11 **8:16** [t] Ex. 16:15 [u] [Heb. 12:11] **8:18** [v] Hos. 2:8 [w] Deut. 7:8, 12 **8:19** [x] Deut. 4:26; 30:18 **8:20** [y] [Dan. 9:11, 12]

nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven,
2 a people great and tall, the [a]descendants of the Anakim, whom you know, and *of whom* you heard *it said*, 'Who can stand before the descendants of Anak?'
3 Therefore understand today that the LORD your God *is* He who [b]goes over before you *as* a [c]consuming fire. [d]He will destroy them and bring them down before you; [e]so you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has said to you.

4 [f]"Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast them out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land'; but *it is* [g]because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD is driving them out from before you.
5 [h]*It is* not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart *that* you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the [i]word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
6 Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you *are* a [j]stiff-necked people.

7 "Remember! Do not forget how you [k]provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. [l]From the day that you departed from the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD.
8 Also [m]in Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry *enough* with you to have destroyed you.
9 [n]When I went up into the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and [o]forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water.
10 [p]Then the LORD delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them *were* all the words which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire [q]in the day of the assembly.
11 And it came to pass, at the end of forty days and forty nights, *that* the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.

12 "Then the LORD said to me, [r]'Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you brought out of Egypt have acted corruptly; they have [s]quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them; they have made themselves a molded image.'

13 "Furthermore [t]the LORD spoke to me, saying, 'I have seen this people, and indeed [u]they are a stiff-necked people.
14 [v]Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and [w]blot out their name from under heaven; [x]and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.'

15 [y]"So I turned and came down from the mountain, and [z]the mountain burned with fire; and the two tablets of the covenant *were* in my two hands.
16 And [a]I looked, and behold, you had sinned against the LORD your God—had made for yourselves a molded calf! You had turned aside quickly from the way which the LORD had commanded you.
17 Then I took the two tablets and threw them out of my two hands and [b]broke them before your eyes.
18 And I [c]fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.
19 [d]For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD was angry with you, to destroy you. [e]But the LORD listened to me at that time also.
20 And the LORD was very angry with Aaron *and* would have destroyed him; so I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.
21 Then I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it *and* ground *it* very small, until it was as fine as dust; and I [f]threw its dust into the brook that descended from the mountain.

22 "Also at [g]Taberah and [h]Massah and [i]Kibroth Hattaavah you provoked the LORD to wrath.
23 Likewise, [j]when the LORD sent

9:4–6 *to possess this land.* The conquest of Canaan was both a judgment on the wickedness of the native population and a promise fulfilled to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 15:18–21). The land was a gift of grace, not a gift given because of the merits of the Israelites.

9:7 *Do not forget.* In addition to remembering the grace of God, the people also had to remember how vulnerable they were to apostasy (1:6—3:29).

9:9 *nor drank water.* A person cannot go more than approximately three days without water and survive. God supernaturally preserved Moses during the forty days.

9:10 *finger of God.* The Ten Commandments were written on stone by the hand of God. This visual picture of God writing His words is so personal. There is another time that God writes on tablets, and that is on the tablet of the human heart (2 Cor. 3:3). This, too, is intensely personal and life changing. In the end, His followers can only put the words of the stone tablets into effect after the Spirit of the living God has written on their hearts.

9:19 *the LORD listened to me.* For Moses' prayer, see verses 26–29. Daniel's prayer for the nation resembled Moses' intercession (Dan. 9:3–23).

9:2 [a] Num. 13:22, 28, 33 **9:3** [b] Josh. 3:11; 5:14 [c] Deut. 4:24 [d] Deut. 7:24 [e] Ex. 23:31 **9:4** [f] Deut. 8:17 [g] Lev. 18:3, 24–30 **9:5** [h] [Titus 3:5] [i] Gen. 50:24 **9:6** [j] Deut. 31:27 **9:7** [k] Num. 14:22 [l] Ex. 14:11 **9:8** [m] Ex. 32:1–8 **9:9** [n] Deut. 5:2–22 [o] Ex. 24:18 **9:10** [p] Deut. 4:13 [q] Ex. 19:17 **9:12** [r] Ex. 32:7, 8 [s] Deut. 31:29 **9:13** [t] Ex. 32:9 [u] Deut. 9:6 **9:14** [v] Ex. 32:10 [w] Deut. 29:20 [x] Num. 14:12 **9:15** [y] Ex. 32:15–19 [z] Ex. 19:18 **9:16** [a] Ex. 32:19 **9:17** [b] Ex. 32:19 **9:18** [c] Ex. 34:28 **9:19** [d] Ex. 32:10, 11 [e] Ex. 32:14 **9:21** [f] Ex. 32:20 **9:22** [g] Num. 11:1, 3 [h] Ex. 17:7 [i] Num. 11:4, 34 **9:23** [j] Num. 13:3

you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, 'Go up and possess the land which I have given you,' then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and [k]you did not believe Him nor obey His voice. 24[l]You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

25[m]"Thus I prostrated myself before the LORD; forty days and forty nights I kept prostrating myself, because the LORD had said He would destroy you. 26Therefore I prayed to the LORD, and said: 'O Lord GOD, do not destroy Your people and [n]Your inheritance whom You have redeemed through Your greatness, whom You have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 27Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not look on the stubbornness of this people, or on their wickedness or their sin, 28lest the land from which You brought us should say, "Because the LORD was not able to bring them to the land which He promised them, and because He hated them, He has brought them out to kill them in the wilderness." 29Yet they *are* Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out by Your mighty power and by Your outstretched arm.'

The Second Pair of Tablets

10 "At that time the LORD said to me, 'Hew for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to Me on the mountain and make yourself an [a]ark of wood. 2And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and [b]you shall put them in the ark.'

3"So I made an ark of acacia wood, hewed two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain, having the two tablets in my hand. 4And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, [c]which the LORD had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. 5Then I turned and [d]came down from the mountain, and [e]put the tablets in the ark which I had made; [f]and there they are, just as the LORD commanded me."

6(Now the children of Israel journeyed from the wells of Bene Jaakan to Moserah, where Aaron [g]died, and where he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered as priest in his stead. 7[h]From there they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of rivers of water. 8At that time [i]the LORD separated the tribe of Levi [j]to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [k]to stand before the LORD to minister to Him and [l]to bless in His name, to this day. 9[m]Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD *is* his inheritance, just as the LORD your God promised him.)

10"As at the first time, [n]I stayed in the mountain forty days and forty nights; [o]the LORD also heard me at that time, *and* the LORD chose not to destroy you. 11[p]Then the LORD said to me, 'Arise, begin *your* journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.'

The Essence of the Law

12"And now, Israel, [q]what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to [r]love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13*and* to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today [s]for your good? 14Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the [t]LORD your God, *also* the earth with all that *is* in it. 15The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as *it is* this day. 16Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your [u]heart, and be [v]stiff-necked no longer. 17For the LORD your God *is* [w]God of gods and [x]Lord of lords, the great God, [y]mighty and awesome, who [z]shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. 18[a]He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. 19Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. 20[b]You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. 21He *is* your praise, and He *is* your God, who has done for you

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9:26–29 *I prayed.* Moses took God's judgment seriously. Nevertheless he asked God for what he felt was important. He appealed to God's faithfulness, mercy, and honor. It is always all right to beseech the Lord for what seems right to us from our point of view, but as we pray, we remember that God knows more than we do, and we can trust Him to take the best course of action.

10:3 *acacia wood.* The acacia or shittim tree is still found in the Sinai peninsula, but in smaller numbers than when the Israelites passed through. Some varieties produce an attractive, highly figured hardwood.

10:19 *Therefore love the stranger.* God's good provision for their own needs should have motivated the Israelites to love the stranger among them. To love and provide for the disadvantaged was in fact following God's example.

9:23 [k] Ps. 106:24, 25 **9:24** [l] Deut. 9:7; 31:27
9:25 [m] Deut. 9:18 **9:26** [n] Deut. 32:9 **10:1** [o] Ex. 25:10
10:2 [b] Ex. 25:16, 21 **10:4** [c] Ex. 20:1; 34:28 **10:5** [d] Ex. 34:29 [e] Ex. 40:20 [f] 1 Kin. 8:9 **10:6** [g] Num. 20:25–28; 33:38 **10:7** [h] Num. 33:32–34 **10:8** [i] Num. 3:6 [j] Num. 4:5, 15; 10:21 [k] Deut. 18:5 [l] Num. 6:23 **10:9** [m] Deut. 18:1, 2 **10:10** [n] Deut. 9:18 [o] Ex. 32:14 **10:11** [p] Ex. 33:1 **10:12** [q] Mic. 6:8 [r] Deut. 6:5 **10:13** [s] Deut. 6:24 **10:14** [t] [Neh. 9:6] **10:16** [u] Jer. 4:4 [v] Deut. 9:6, 13
10:17 [w] Dan. 2:47 [x] Rev. 19:16 [y] Deut. 7:21 [z] Acts 10:34
10:18 [a] Ps. 68:5; 146:9 **10:20** [b] Matt. 4:10

these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. 22 Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.

Love and Obedience Rewarded

11 "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always. 2 Know today that *I do* not *speak* with your children, who have not known and who have not seen the chastening of the LORD your God, His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm— 3 His signs and His acts which He did in the midst of Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to all his land; 4 what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots: [a] how He made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you, and *how* the LORD has destroyed them to this day; 5 [b] what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place; 6 and what He did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents, and all the substance that *was* in their possession, in the midst of all Israel— 7 but your eyes have [c] seen every great act of the LORD which He did.

8 "Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today, that you may [d] be strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess, 9 and [e] that you may prolong *your* days in the land [f] which the LORD swore to give your fathers, to them and their descendants, [g] 'a land flowing with milk and honey.'* 10 For the land which you go to possess *is* not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered *it* by foot, as a vegetable garden; 11 [h] but the land which you cross over to possess *is* a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, 12 a land for which the LORD your God cares; [i] the eyes of the LORD your God *are* always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

13 "And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, 14 then [j] I* will give *you* the rain for your land in its season, [k] the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. 15 [l] And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may [m] eat and be filled.' 16 Take heed to yourselves, [n] lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and [o] serve other gods and worship them, 17 lest [p] the LORD's anger be aroused against you, and He [q] shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and [r] you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

18 "Therefore [s] you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your [t] soul, and [u] bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 [v] You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 20 [w] And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 that [x] your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like [y] the days of the heavens above the earth.

22 "For if [z] you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and [a] to hold fast to Him— 23 then the LORD will [b] drive out all these nations from before you, and you will [c] dispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves. 24 [d] Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: [e] from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea,* shall be your territory. 25 No man shall be able to [f] stand against you; the LORD your God will put the [g] dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you.

26 [h] "Behold, I set before you today a

* **11:9** Exodus 3:8 * **11:14** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *He.* * **11:24** That is, the Mediterranean

11:1 ***keep His charge.*** Loving God is in response to His love for us. We are directed to love God, but God first demonstrates His love for us. He rescued the Israelites from slavery to the Egyptians; He rescues us from slavery to sin (Rom. 6:20). Our first response is to return this love He has shown us. Our second response is to keep His commandments, to do the things He says to do. Love oils the wheels of obedience and makes obedience a blessing, not a burden.

11:9–12 ***not like the land of Egypt.*** Agriculture in Egypt depended on irrigation, the annual flooding of the Nile.

11:14 ***early rain . . . latter rain.*** The early rain encouraged the sprouting of seed and new growth. The late rain brought crops to maturity.

11:4 [a] Ps. 106:11 **11:5** [b] Ps. 106:16–18 **11:7** [c] Deut. 10:21; 29:2 **11:8** [d] Josh. 1:6, 7 **11:9** [e] Deut. 4:40; 5:16, 33; 6:2 [f] Deut. 9:5 [g] Ex. 3:8 **11:11** [h] Deut. 8:7 **11:12** [i] 1 Kin. 9:3 **11:14** [j] Deut. 28:12 [k] Joel 2:23 **11:15** [l] Ps. 104:14 [m] Deut. 6:11 **11:16** [n] Job 31:27 [o] Deut. 8:19 **11:17** [p] Deut. 6:15; 9:19 [q] 2 Chr. 6:26; 7:13 [r] Deut. 4:26 **11:18** [s] Deut. 6:6–9 [t] Ps. 119:2, 34 [u] Deut. 6:8 **11:19** [v] Deut. 4:9, 10; 6:7 **11:20** [w] Deut. 6:9 **11:21** [x] Deut. 4:40 [y] Ps. 72:5; 89:29 **11:22** [z] Deut. 11:1 [a] Deut. 10:20 **11:23** [b] Deut. 4:38 [c] Deut. 9:1 **11:24** [d] Josh. 1:3; 14:9 [e] Gen. 15:18 **11:25** [f] Deut. 7:24 [g] Deut. 2:25 **11:26** [h] Deut. 30:1, 15, 19

blessing and a curse: 27 [i]the blessing, if
you obey the commandments of the LORD
your God which I command you today;
28 and the [i]curse, if you do not obey the
commandments of the LORD your God, but
turn aside from the way which I command
you today, to go after other gods which you
have not known. 29 Now it shall be, when
the LORD your God has brought you into
the land which you go to possess, that you
shall put the [k]blessing on Mount Gerizim
and the [l]curse on Mount Ebal. 30 *Are*
they not on the other side of the Jordan, toward
the setting sun, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the plain opposite Gilgal,
[m]beside the terebinth trees of Moreh? 31 For
you will cross over the Jordan and go in
to possess the land which the LORD your
God is giving you, and you will possess it
and dwell in it. 32 And you shall be careful
to observe all the statutes and judgments
which I set before you today.

A Prescribed Place of Worship

12 "These [a]*are* the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to
observe in the land which the LORD God of
your fathers is giving you to possess, [b]all
the days that you live on the earth. 2 [c]You
shall utterly destroy all the places where
the nations which you shall dispossess
served their gods, [d]on the high mountains
and on the hills and under every green
tree. 3 And [e]you shall destroy their altars,
break their *sacred* pillars, and burn their
wooden images with fire; you shall cut
down the carved images of their gods and
destroy their names from that place. 4 You
shall not [f]worship the LORD your God *with*
such *things*.

5 "But you shall seek the [g]place where
the LORD your God chooses, out of all your
tribes, to put His name for His [h]dwelling
place; and there you shall go. 6 [i]There you
shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of
your hand, your vowed offerings, your
freewill offerings, and the [j]firstborn of
your herds and flocks. 7 And [k]there you
shall eat before the LORD your God, and
[l]you shall rejoice in all to which you have
put your hand, you and your households, in
which the LORD your God has blessed you.

8 "You shall not at all do as we are doing
here today—[m]every man doing whatever *is*
right in his own eyes— 9 for as yet you have
not come to the [n]rest and the inheritance
which the LORD your God is giving you.
10 But *when* you cross over the Jordan and
dwell in the land which the LORD your God
is giving you to inherit, and He gives you
[o]rest from all your enemies round about,
so that you dwell in safety, 11 then there
will be the place where the LORD your God
chooses to make His name abide. There
you shall bring all that I command you:
your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your
tithes, the heave offerings of your hand,
and all your choice offerings which you
vow to the LORD. 12 And [p]you shall rejoice
before the LORD your God, you and your
sons and your daughters, your male and
female servants, and the [q]Levite who *is*
within your gates, since he has no portion
nor inheritance with you. 13 Take heed to
yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; 14 but in
the place which the LORD chooses, in one of
your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt
offerings, and there you shall do all that I
command you.

15 "However, [r]you may slaughter and eat
meat within all your gates, whatever your
heart desires, according to the blessing of
the LORD your God which He has given
you; [s]the unclean and the clean may eat of
it, [t]of the gazelle and the deer alike. 16 [u]Only
you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it
on the earth like water. 17 You may not eat
within your gates the tithe of your grain or
your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn
of your herd or your flock, of any of your
offerings which you vow, of your freewill
offerings, or of the heave offering of your

12:1–4 *altars . . . pillars.* The sacred pillars were monuments dedicated to one of the gods. They represented the power of fertility. The poles refer to the altars dedicated to the goddess Asherah, who was frequently associated with Baal.

12:5 *seek.* Whatever one seeks is the object of one's desire and devotion. Once they were settled in the land, the different tribes would be spread out, but they would still find God in their midst, in the place that God chose. This place was to be the object of their desire, God Himself the object of their devotion.

12:6 *sacrifices.* The Hebrew word for sacrifice always designates the offering of an animal. The contribution of the hand was one which the priest lifted up to signify that it was a gift to the Lord (Ex. 29:27; Lev. 7:34). The priest took his share and the worshiper and his family ate the rest. A votive offering was made in the fulfillment of a vow (Lev. 7:16; Num. 6:21). A freewill offering was voluntary (Ex. 35:27–29; Lev. 7:16).

12:7 *eat . . . rejoice.* The communal offerings were to be eaten and enjoyed by those who offered them. It was a time of celebration before the Lord.

12:8 *whatever is right in his own eyes.* In the wilderness the people did not develop a common focus on the Lord. Moses challenged the new generation to act with common faithfulness and obedience.

12:17 *eat within your gates.* Aspects of God's worship were designed for community celebration, and were not to be done in the privacy of the home.

11:27 [i] Deut. 28:1–14 **11:28** [j] Deut. 28:15–68
11:29 [k] Josh. 8:33 [l] Deut. 27:13–26 **11:30** [m] Gen. 12:6 **12:1** [a] Deut. 6:1 [b] Deut. 4:9, 10 **12:2** [c] Ex. 34:13 [d] 2 Kin. 16:4; 17:10, 11 **12:3** [e] Num. 33:52 **12:4** [f] Deut. 12:31 **12:5** [g] Ex. 20:24 [h] Ex. 15:13 **12:6** [i] Lev. 17:3, 4 [j] Deut. 14:23 **12:7** [k] Deut. 14:26 [l] Deut. 12:12, 18 **12:8** [m] Judg. 17:6; 21:25 **12:9** [n] Deut. 3:20; 25:19 **12:10** [o] Josh. 11:23 **12:12** [p] Deut. 12:18; 26:11 [q] Deut. 10:9; 14:29 **12:15** [r] Deut. 12:21 [s] Deut. 12:22 [t] Deut. 14:5 **12:16** [u] Gen. 9:4

hand. 18But you must eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God chooses, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who *is* within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all to which you put your hands. 19Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.

20"When the LORD your God [v]enlarges your border as He has promised you, and you say, 'Let me eat meat,' because you long to eat meat, you may eat as much meat as your heart desires. 21If the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from [w]you, then you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock which the LORD has given you, just as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your gates as much as your heart desires. 22Just as the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you may eat them; the unclean and the clean alike may eat them. 23Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, [x]for the blood *is* the life; you may not eat the life with the meat. 24You shall not eat it; you shall pour it on the earth like water. 25You shall not eat it, [y]that it may go well with you and your children after you, [z]when you do *what is* right in the sight of the LORD. 26Only the [a]holy things which you have, and your vowed offerings, you shall take and go to the place which the LORD chooses. 27And [b]you shall offer your burnt offerings, the meat and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, and you shall eat the meat. 28Observe and obey all these words which I command you, [c]that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do *what is* good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Beware of False Gods

29"When [d]the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, 30take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' 31[e]You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for [f]they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

32"Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; [g]you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

Punishment of Apostates

13 "If there arises among you a prophet or a [a]dreamer of dreams, [b]and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2and [c]the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' 3you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God [d]is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4You shall [e]walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and [f]hold fast to Him. 5But [g]that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. [h]So you shall put away the evil from your midst.

6[i]"If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, [j]the wife of your bosom, or your friend [k]who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers, 7of the gods of the people which *are* all around you, near to you or far off from you, from *one* end of the earth to the *other*

12:30–31 ***take heed . . . that you are not ensnared.*** For forty years the basic sin which kept Israel out of Canaan was unbelief. However, once they settled in the Promised Land, the sin that eventually drove them out was idolatry. Idolatry is not only bowing down to a stone or wood image of a god; idolatry takes place every time our trust for our well-being is placed on something that is not the one true God. In the end, idolatry is the ultimate form of unbelief. It mocks God, because it imitates the dependence that people should have on Him, choosing a powerless placebo for the living God. The Lord would remove the temptation of the Canaanite nations, but the Israelites must not become curious and imitate the practices of the vanquished peoples. Calling it a snare was a warning that the temptation to copy would be hidden, a trick, something that would catch them unaware.

13:1–2 ***a prophet or a dreamer.*** Both prophecy and dreams were legitimate forms of revelation.

13:3 ***testing you.*** The revelation of God through Moses was the test of any sign or message. When the message deviated from God's prior revelation, Israel had to discern false teaching.

13:5 ***put away the evil.*** Discipline, punishment, and testing were God's means of keeping His people pure.

12:20 [v] Ex. 34:24 **12:21** [w] Deut. 14:24 **12:23** [x] Gen. 9:4 **12:25** [y] Deut. 4:40; 6:18 [z] Ex. 15:26 **12:26** [a] Num. 5:9, 10; 18:19 **12:27** [b] Lev. 1:5, 9, 13, 17 **12:28** [c] Deut. 12:25 **12:29** [d] Ex. 23:23 **12:31** [e] Lev. 18:3, 26, 30; 20:1, 2 [f] Deut. 18:10 **12:32** [g] Rev. 22:18, 19 **13:1** [a] Zech. 10:2 [b] Matt. 24:24 **13:2** [c] Deut. 18:22 **13:3** [d] Deut. 8:2, 16 **13:4** [e] 2 Kin. 23:3 [f] Deut. 30:20 **13:5** [g] Jer. 14:15 [h] Deut. 17:5, 7 **13:6** [i] Deut. 17:2 [j] Gen. 16:5 [k] 1 Sam. 18:1, 3

end of the earth, 8you shall [l]not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him; 9but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to [m]death, and afterward the hand of all the people. 10And you shall stone him with stones until he dies, because he sought to entice you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. 11So all Israel shall hear and [n]fear, and not again do such wickedness as this among you.

12[o]"If you hear someone in one of your cities, which the LORD your God gives you to dwell in, saying, 13'Corrupt men have gone out from among you and enticed the inhabitants of their city, saying, "Let us go and serve other gods" '—which you have not known— 14then you shall inquire, search out, and ask diligently. And *if it is* indeed true *and* certain *that* such an abomination was committed among you, 15you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it, all that is in it and its livestock—with the edge of the sword. 16And you shall gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and completely [p]burn with fire the city and all its plunder, for the LORD your God. It shall be [q]a heap forever; it shall not be built again. 17[r]So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand, that the LORD may [s]turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, have compassion on you and multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers, 18because you have listened to the voice of the LORD your God, [t]to keep all His commandments which I command you today, to do *what is* right in the eyes of the LORD your God.

Improper Mourning

14 "You *are* [a]the children of the LORD your God; [b]you shall not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head for the dead. 2[c]For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who *are* on the face of the earth.

Clean and Unclean Meat

3[d]"You shall not eat any detestable thing. 4[e]These *are* the animals which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, 5the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the mountain goat,* the antelope, and the mountain sheep. 6And you may eat every animal with cloven hooves, having the hoof split into two parts, *and that* chews the cud, among the animals. 7Nevertheless, of those that chew the cud or have cloven hooves, you shall not eat, *such as* these: the camel, the hare, and the rock hyrax; for they chew the cud but do not have cloven hooves; they *are* unclean for you. 8Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet *does* not *chew* the cud; you shall not eat their flesh [f]or touch their dead carcasses.

9[g]"These you may eat of all that *are* in the waters: you may eat all that have fins

* **14:5** Or *addax*

13:9 ***your hand shall be first.*** The relative or friend who brought the charge would lead in the capital punishment of the one who suggested idolatrous practices. With unforgettable words, Jesus emphasized the severity of this offense. Such a person should not have been born (Matt. 18:6–7).

13:13 ***serve other gods.*** Falling away from the truth is apostasy. Sometimes this can be fairly subtle, and that is why the word "enticed" is used with this concept. God clearly lays out a test that will always separate the truth from the lie. If someone says, "Let us go and serve other gods . . ." we know that the speaker is not from God. Our hope is in Christ alone. People do not recognize that they are going after "other gods" because they do not know the one true God. This is why it is so important to faithfully study the Bible, for in it all of the character and actions of God are revealed. We will not be fooled by the counterfeit if we are familiar with the genuine.

13:17–18 ***turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy.*** This seemingly harsh judgment of evil was an act of obedience. God required the punishment of evildoers so that immoral practices would not spread throughout the land. God would bless the Israelites, and bless the land, but not while the evil practices were still going on.

14:2 God's Plan and Israel—The modern-day student of the Bible may well ask why so much of Scripture is taken up with the history of a single nation. Certainly many Christians wonder why one nation should be called "God's chosen people." The answer to this question is bound up in God's purpose for Israel. When God promised Abraham that he would become the father of a great nation, He also promised that He would bless all peoples through that nation (Gen. 12:1–3). Therefore Israel was to be a channel of blessing as well as a recipient. Even their deliverance from Egypt was at least partially designed to show other nations that Israel's God was the only true God (Ex. 7:5; 14:18; Josh. 2:9–11). It was further prophesied by Isaiah that the Messiah would bring salvation to the Gentiles (Is. 49:6) The Psalms contain many invitations to other nations to come and worship the Lord in Israel (Ps. 2:10–12; 117:1). Ruth the Moabitess is an example of a foreigner who believed in Israel's God.

It is clear that God's promise to Abraham to bless the whole world through him is still being fulfilled. The life, ministry and death of Jesus Christ and the existence and influence of the church today, all came about through God's choice of Israel. All those the church wins to Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, enter into these great blessings channeled through Israel.

13:8 [l] Prov. 1:10 **13:9** [m] Deut. 17:7 **13:11** [n] Deut. 17:13 **13:12** [o] Judg. 20:1–48 **13:16** [p] Josh. 6:24 [q] Josh. 8:28 **13:17** [r] Josh. 6:18 [s] Josh. 7:26 **13:18** [t] Deut. 12:25, 28, 32 **14:1** [a] [Rom. 8:16] [b] Lev. 19:28; 21:1–5 **14:2** [c] Lev. 20:26 **14:3** [d] Ezek. 4:14 **14:4** [e] Lev. 11:2–45 **14:8** [f] Lev. 11:26, 27 **14:9** [g] Lev. 11:9

and scales. 10And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it *is* unclean for you.

11"All clean birds you may eat. 12[h]But these you shall not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, 13the red kite, the falcon, and the kite after their kinds; 14every raven after its kind; 15the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after their kinds; 16the little owl, the screech owl, the white owl, 17the jackdaw, the carrion vulture, the fisher owl, 18the stork, the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat.

19"Also [i]every creeping thing that flies is unclean for you; [j]they shall not be eaten.

20"You may eat all clean birds.

21[k]"You shall not eat anything that dies *of itself;* you may give it to the alien who *is* within your gates, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; [l]for you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God.

"[m]You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Tithing Principles

22[n]"You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. 23[o]And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of [p]the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. 24But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry *the tithe, or* [q]if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you, 25then you shall exchange *it* for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. 26And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall [r]rejoice, you and your household. 27You shall not forsake the [s]Levite who *is* within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you.

28[t]"At the end of *every* third year you shall bring out the [u]tithe of your produce of that year and store *it* up within your gates. 29And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

Debts Canceled Every Seven Years

15 "At the end of [a]*every* seven years you shall grant a release *of debts.* 2And this *is* the form of the release: Every creditor who has lent *anything* to his neighbor shall release *it;* he shall not require *it* of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the LORD's release. 3Of a foreigner you may require *it;* but you shall give up your claim to what is owed by your brother, 4except when there may be no poor among you; for the LORD will greatly [b]bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess *as* an inheritance— 5only if you carefully obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. 6For the LORD your God will bless you just as He promised you; [c]you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.

Generosity to the Poor

7"If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, [d]you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, 8but [e]you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs. 9Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your [f]eye be evil

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14:21 ***not boil . . . in its mother's milk.*** Unlike the Canaanites who boiled young goats alive in the milk of their mothers as a sacrifice to fertility gods, Israel was to practice a more humane method of animal sacrifice.

14:22–29 ***tithe of your grain.*** The tithe was to be enjoyed in the presence of the Lord, unless the people had come from a great distance. Then they could exchange it for silver and purchase food and drink with it in Jerusalem.

14:25 ***money.*** Money refers to uncoined silver. Coins were not struck until the Persian era.

15:1 ***every seven years.*** God taught His people to think in cycles of holy time: six days of work, the seventh to rest; six years of business, the seventh of giving freedom to the poor; six years of agricultural cultivation, and the seventh to let the land lie fallow (Ex. 23:10–13; Lev. 25:1–7).

15:7–15 ***a poor man.*** Israel's uniqueness in the ancient world is seen in the laws which connect a right relationship with God and worship of Him with interpersonal relationships. If you love God, you will also treat others well. God is intensely interested in the poor, and it is the responsibility of His people to imitate His concern. The story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–37) is both the simplest and the most profound picture of how this concern works out in real life.

15:7 ***not harden.*** The people's attitude toward the

14:12 [h] Lev. 11:13 **14:19** [i] Lev. 11:20 [j] Lev. 11:23
14:21 [k] Lev. 17:15; 22:8 [l] Deut. 14:2 [m] Ex. 23:19; 34:26
14:22 [n] Lev. 27:30 **14:23** [o] Deut. 12:5–7 [p] Deut. 15:19, 20 **14:24** [q] Deut. 12:5, 21 **14:26** [r] Deut. 12:7
14:27 [s] Deut. 12:12 **14:28** [t] Deut. 26:12 [u] Num. 18:21–24
15:1 [a] Ex. 21:2; 23:10, 11 **15:4** [b] Deut. 7:13 **15:6** [c] Deut. 28:12, 44 **15:7** [d] Lev. 25:35–37 **15:8** [e] Matt. 5:42
15:9 [f] Deut. 28:54, 56

against your poor brother and you give
him nothing, and [g]he cry out to the LORD
against you, and [h]it become sin among
you. 10You shall surely give to him, and
[i]your heart should not be grieved when
you give to him, because [j]for this thing the
LORD your God will bless you in all your
works and in all to which you put your
hand. 11For [k]the poor will never cease
from the land; therefore I command you,
saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to
your brother, to your poor and your needy,
in your land.'

The Law Concerning Bondservants

12[l]"If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a
Hebrew woman, is [m]sold to you and serves
you six years, then in the seventh year you
shall let him go free from you. 13And when
you send him away free from you, you
shall not let him go away empty-handed;
14you shall supply him liberally from your
flock, from your threshing floor, and from
your winepress. *From what* the LORD your
God has [n]blessed you with, you shall give
to him. 15[o]You shall remember that you
were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the
LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I
command you this thing today. 16[p]And if it
happens that he says to you, 'I will not go
away from you,' because he loves you and
your house, since he prospers with you,
17then you shall take an awl and thrust *it*
through his ear to the door, and he shall be
your servant forever. Also to your female
servant you shall do likewise. 18It shall
not seem hard to you when you send him
away free from you; for he has been worth
[q]a double hired servant in serving you six
years. Then the LORD your God will bless
you in all that you do.

The Law Concerning Firstborn Animals

19[r]"All the firstborn males that come
from your herd and your flock you shall
sanctify to the LORD your God; you shall
do no work with the firstborn of your
herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock.
20[s]You and your household shall eat *it* be-
fore the LORD your God year by year in
the place which the LORD chooses. 21[t]But
if there is a defect in it, *if it is* lame or blind
or has any serious defect, you shall not
sacrifice it to the LORD your God. 22You
may eat it within your gates; [u]the unclean
and the clean *person* alike *may eat it*, as *if*
it were a gazelle or a deer. 23Only you shall
not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the
ground like water.

The Passover Reviewed

16 "Observe the [a]month of Abib, and
keep the Passover to the LORD your
God, for [b]in the month of Abib the LORD
your God brought you out of Egypt by
night. 2Therefore you shall sacrifice the
Passover to the LORD your God, from the
flock and [c]the herd, in the [d]place where the
LORD chooses to put His name. 3You shall
eat no leavened bread with it; [e]seven days
you shall eat unleavened bread with it, *that*
is, the bread of affliction (for you came out
of the land of Egypt in haste), that you may
[f]remember the day in which you came out
of the land of Egypt all the days of your
life. 4[g]And no leaven shall be seen among
you in all your territory for seven days, nor
shall *any* of the meat which you sacrifice
the first day at twilight remain overnight
until [h]morning.

5"You may not sacrifice the Passover
within any of your gates which the LORD
your God gives you; 6but at the place where
the LORD your God chooses to make His
name abide, there you shall sacrifice the
Passover [i]at twilight, at the going down of
the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt.
7And you shall roast and eat *it* in the place
which the LORD your God chooses, and [j]in
the morning you shall turn and go to your
tents. 8Six days you shall eat unleavened
bread, and [k]on the seventh day there *shall*
be a sacred assembly to the LORD your
God. You shall do no work *on it*.

The Feast of Weeks Reviewed

9"You shall count seven weeks for your-
self; begin to count the seven weeks from
the time you begin *to put* the sickle to the
grain. 10Then you shall keep the [l]Feast of
Weeks to the LORD your God with the trib-
ute of a freewill offering from your hand,
which you shall give [m]as the LORD your
God blesses you. 11[n]You shall rejoice before
the LORD your God, you and your son and
your daughter, your male servant and your
female servant, the Levite who *is* within

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poor should have been a reflection of their gratitude for God's gifts to them.

15:19 ***shall do no work . . . nor shear.*** The owners of firstborn male livestock could not profit from the firstborn because they belonged to the Lord.

16:1 ***Passover.*** Passover was observed on the fourteenth of Abib, or Nisan, which corresponds to our March-April (Ex. 12:1–21; Lev. 23:5–8; Num. 28:16–25).

16:6 ***going down of the sun.*** The twilight sacrifice was in commemoration of the Exodus, which occurred at night.

16:9 ***sickle to the grain.*** This took place on the second day of the Feast of the Passover.

15:9 *g* Deut. 24:15 *h* [Matt. 25:41, 42] **15:10** *i* 2 Cor. 9:5, 7 *j* Deut. 14:29 **15:11** *k* Matt. 26:11 **15:12** *l* Ex. 21:2–6 *m* Lev. 25:39–46 **15:14** *n* Prov. 10:22 **15:15** *o* Deut. 5:15 **15:16** *p* Ex. 21:5, 6 **15:18** *q* Is. 16:14 **15:19** *r* Ex. 13:2, 12 **15:20** *s* Deut. 12:5; 14:23 **15:21** *t* Lev. 22:19–25 **15:22** *u* Deut. 12:15, 16, 22 **16:1** *a* Ex. 12:2 *b* Ex. 13:4 **16:2** *c* Num. 28:19 *d* Deut. 12:5, 26; 15:20 **16:3** *e* Num. 29:12 *f* Ex. 13:3 **16:4** *g* Ex. 13:7 *h* Num. 9:12 **16:6** *i* Ex. 12:7–10 **16:7** *j* 2 Kin. 23:23 **16:8** *k* Lev. 23:8, 36 **16:10** *l* Ex. 34:22 *m* 1 Cor. 16:2 **16:11** *n* Deut. 16:14

your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. 12[o]And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

The Feast of Tabernacles Reviewed

13[p]"You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress. 14And [q]you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who *are* within your gates. 15[r]Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice.

16[s]"Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and [t]they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. 17Every man *shall give* as he is able, [u]according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

Justice Must Be Administered

18"You shall appoint [v]judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment. 19[w]You shall not pervert justice; [x]you shall not show partiality, [y]nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. 20You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may [z]live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

21[a]"You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a wooden image, near the altar which you build for yourself to the LORD your God. 22[b]You shall not set up a *sacred* pillar, which the LORD your God hates.

17 "You [a]shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God a bull or sheep which has any blemish *or* defect, for that *is* an abomination to the LORD your God.

2[b]"If there is found among you, within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or a woman who has been wicked in the sight of the LORD your God, [c]in transgressing His covenant, 3who has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either [d]the sun or moon or any of the host of heaven, [e]which I have not commanded, 4[f]and it is told you, and you hear *of it,* then you shall inquire diligently. And if *it is* indeed true *and* certain that such an abomination has been committed in Israel, 5then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has committed that wicked thing, and [g]shall stone [h]to death that man or woman with stones. 6Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three [i]witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. 7The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among [j]you.

8[k]"If a matter arises which is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the [l]place which the LORD your God chooses. 9And [m]you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and [n]to the judge *there* in those days, and inquire *of them;* [o]they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. 10You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce

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16:13–15 ***Feast of Tabernacles.*** The harvest festival was a time to celebrate God's goodness, and to remember how He cared for them when they lived in tents in the wilderness. Today this celebration is called Succoth, from the Hebrew word for booths.

16:19 ***not pervert justice.*** The foundation for a just and honest application of law in human society is God Himself. God entrusts rule to men who function in His place in dispensing justice. To pervert this justice with favoritism or bribes is to malign the character of God, and that is a sin that God always deals with sooner or later.

17:2 ***transgressing.*** The Hebrew verb for transgressing is used elsewhere to indicate the crossing of a border or stream. Here the word is used to indicate "crossing over" the boundaries that God had set for His people.

17:4–6 ***inquire diligently.*** An investigation, rather than gossip, determined the truth of any report of idolatry. There must be two or three witnesses for a person to be condemned to death.

17:7 ***hands of the witnesses . . . first.*** The witnesses participated in the stoning of the guilty because they were responsible for the person's condemnation. Jesus' words about throwing the "first stone" referred to this practice (John 8:7).

17:8 ***degrees of guilt.*** This refers to cases of manslaughter or murder—that is, accidental or intentional homicide.

16:12 [o] Deut. 15:15 **16:13** [p] Ex. 23:16 **16:14** [q] Neh. 8:9 **16:15** [r] Lev. 23:39–41 **16:16** [s] Ex. 23:14–17; 34:22–24 [t] Ex. 23:15 **16:17** [u] Deut. 16:10 **16:18** [v] Deut. 1:16, 17 **16:19** [w] Ex. 23:2, 6 [x] Deut. 1:17 [y] Ex. 23:8 **16:20** [z] Ezek. 18:5–9 **16:21** [a] Ex. 34:13 **16:22** [b] Lev. 26:1 **17:1** [a] Deut. 15:21 **17:2** [b] Deut. 13:6 [c] Josh. 7:11 **17:3** [d] Deut. 4:19 [e] Jer. 7:22 **17:4** [f] Deut. 13:12, 14 **17:5** [g] Lev. 24:14–16 [h] Deut. 13:6–18 **17:6** [i] Num. 35:30 **17:7** [j] Deut. 13:5; 19:19 **17:8** [k] Deut. 1:17 [l] Deut. 12:5; 16:2 **17:9** [m] Jer. 18:18 [n] Deut. 19:17–19 [o] Ezek. 44:24

upon you in that place which the LORD chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you. 11According to the sentence of the law in which they instruct you, according to the judgment which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside *to* the right hand or *to* the left from the sentence which they pronounce upon you. 12Now [p]the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. 13[q]And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously.

Principles Governing Kings

14"When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, [r]'I will set a king over me like all the nations that *are* around me,' 15you shall surely set a king over you [s]whom the LORD your God chooses; *one* [t]from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who *is* not your brother. 16But he shall not multiply [u]horses for himself, nor cause the people [v]to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for [w]the LORD has said to you, [x]'You shall not return that way again.' 17Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and [y]gold for himself.

18"Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from *the one* [z]before the priests, the Levites. 19And [a]it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he [b]may not turn aside from the commandment *to* the right hand or *to* the left, and that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

The Portion of the Priests and Levites

18 "The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have no part nor [a]inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion. 2Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them.

3"And this shall be the priest's [b]due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, whether *it is* bull or sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. 4[c]The firstfruits of your grain and your new wine and your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him. 5For [d]the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes [e]to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons forever.

6"So if a Levite comes from any of your gates, from where he [f]dwells among all Israel, and comes with all the desire of his mind [g]to the place which the LORD chooses, 7then he may serve in the name of the LORD his God [h]as all his brethren the Levites *do,* who stand there before the LORD. 8They shall have equal [i]portions to eat, besides what comes from the sale of his inheritance.

Avoid Wicked Customs

9"When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, [j]you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. 10There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter [k]pass through the fire, [l]*or one* who practices witchcraft, *or* a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11[m]or [n]one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. 12For all who do these things *are* an abomination to the LORD, and [o]because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. 13You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. 14For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you.

17:12 ***acts presumptuously.*** It is presumptuous to ask for judgment and then to refuse to follow the verdict of the priests. It is both asking them to take the weight of the decision and then willfully disregarding that decision.

17:13 ***hear.*** To hear is to respond and obey.

17:14 ***a king.*** The regulations that follow anticipate the request that the Israelites would make for a king. At the time of Moses the Israelites were unique among nations. God Himself ruled them through appointed leaders, but there was no king.

18:10–12 ***pass through the fire . . . witchcraft.*** Each of the activities that the Lord forbids in this passage come under the category of occult activities. Passing through the fire was sacrificing a son or daughter to learn about the future or seek favor with a supposed deity. Divination, witchcraft, sorcery, casting spells and interpreting omens, mediums, spiritists, and necromancers (those who call up the dead) are all part of the demonic realm, an attempt to bypass God in foretelling and controlling the future. These activities are detestable to God and should be to His followers as well.

17:12 [p] Num. 15:30 **17:13** [q] Deut. 13:11 **17:14** [r] 1 Sam. 8:5, 19, 20; 10:19 **17:15** [s] 1 Sam. 9:15, 16; 10:24; 16:12, 13 [t] Jer. 30:21 **17:16** [u] 1 Kin. 4:26; 10:26–29 [v] Ezek. 17:15 [w] Ex. 13:17, 18 [x] Deut. 28:68 **17:17** [y] 1 Kin. 10:14 **17:18** [z] Deut. 31:24–26 **17:19** [a] Ps. 119:97, 98 **17:20** [b] Deut. 5:32 **18:1** [a] Deut. 10:9 **18:3** [b] Lev. 7:32–34; 1 Sam. 2:13–16, 29 **18:4** [c] Ex. 22:29 **18:5** [d] Ex. 28:1 [e] Deut. 10:8 **18:6** [f] Num. 35:2 [g] Deut. 12:5; 14:23 **18:7** [h] 2 Chr. 31:2 **18:8** [i] 2 Chr. 31:4 **18:9** [j] Deut. 12:29, 30; 20:16–18 **18:10** [k] Deut. 12:31 [l] Is. 8:19 **18:11** [m] Lev. 20:27 [n] 1 Sam. 28:7 **18:12** [o] Lev. 18:24

A New Prophet Like Moses

15 [p]"The LORD your God will raise up for
you a Prophet like me from your midst,
from your brethren. Him you shall hear,
16 according to all you desired of the LORD
your God in Horeb [q]in the day of the as-
sembly, saying, [r]'Let me not hear again the
voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see
this great fire anymore, lest I die.'
17 "And the LORD said to me: [s]'What they
have spoken is good. 18 [t]I will raise up for
them a Prophet like you from among their
brethren, and [u]will put My words in His
mouth, [v]and He shall speak to them all that
I command Him. 19 [w]And it shall be *that*
whoever will not hear My words, which
He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of
him. 20 But [x]the prophet who presumes to
speak a word in My name, which I have not
commanded him to speak, or [y]who speaks
in the name of other gods, that prophet
shall die.' 21 And if you say in your heart,
'How shall we know the word which the
LORD has not spoken?'— 22 [z]when a proph-
et speaks in the name of the LORD, [a]if the
thing does not happen or come to pass, that
is the thing which the LORD has not spo-
ken; the prophet has spoken it [b]presumptu-
ously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Three Cities of Refuge

19 "When the LORD your God [a]has cut off
the nations whose land the LORD your
God is giving you, and you dispossess them
and dwell in their cities and in their houses,
2 [b]you shall separate three cities for yourself
in the midst of your land which the LORD
your God is giving you to possess. 3 You
shall prepare roads for yourself, and divide
into three parts the territory of your land
which the LORD your God is giving you to
inherit, that any manslayer may flee there.
4 "And [c]this *is* the case of the manslayer
who flees there, that he may live: Whoever
kills his neighbor unintentionally, not hav-
ing hated him in time past— 5 as when *a*
man goes to the woods with his neighbor
to cut timber, and his hand swings a stroke
with the ax to cut down the tree, and the
head slips from the handle and strikes his
neighbor so that he dies—he shall flee to
one of these cities and live; 6 [d]lest the aveng-
er of blood, while his anger is hot, pursue
the manslayer and overtake him, because
the way is long, and kill him, though he
was not deserving of death, since he had
not hated the victim in time past. 7 There-
fore I command you, saying, 'You shall
separate three cities for yourself.'
8 "Now if the LORD your God [e]enlarges
your territory, as He swore to [f]your fathers,
and gives you the land which He promised
to give to your fathers, 9 and if you keep all
these commandments and do them, which
I command you today, to love the LORD
your God and to walk always in His ways,
[g]then you shall add three more cities for
yourself besides these three, 10 [h]lest inno-
cent blood be shed in the midst of your land
which the LORD your God is giving you *as*
an inheritance, and *thus* guilt of bloodshed
be upon you.
11 "But [i]if anyone hates his neighbor,
lies in wait for him, rises against him and
strikes him mortally, so that he dies, and
he flees to one of these cities, 12 then the el-
ders of his city shall send and bring him
from there, and deliver him over to the
hand of the avenger of blood, that he may
die. 13 [j]Your eye shall not pity him, [k]but you
shall put away *the guilt of* innocent blood
from Israel, that it may go well with you.

Property Boundaries

14 [l]"You shall not remove your neighbor's
landmark, which the men of old have set, in
your inheritance which you will inherit in
the land that the LORD your God is giving
you to possess.

18:15 ***raise up for you a Prophet.*** A true prophet came from the Lord; no one could become a true prophet by self-will or desire.

18:22 ***shall not be afraid of him.*** These words of warning for discerning a false prophet were also words of comfort. If the prophet did not come from God, there was no need to become anxious about whatever he might predict.

19:3–4 ***divide into three parts.*** The cities of refuge were intertribal cities. Anyone from any tribe could flee to the city that was closest to him.

19:6 ***avenger of blood.*** The avenger was possibly a relative commissioned by the elders of the city to execute justice. This Hebrew word is sometimes translated *kinsman redeemer,* and in this verse means "protector of family rights." This individual also stood up for the family to redeem property and persons. The glory of Israel was that its Avenger and Kinsman Redeemer was God Himself (Is. 41:14).

19:9–13 ***keep all these.*** The people of Israel were about to enter a land where they would be exposed to ideas and practices in the name of religion that God says are an abomination. The temptation to imitate would be great, but they must not do so. The believer is not different from his world for the sake of difference, but because he must not imitate the things that are inconsistent with a life of fellowship with a holy and just God. Copying the ways of the ungodly not only grieves the Lord, but it mars the picture He is making of Himself in the lives of those who follow Him.

19:14 ***remove your neighbor's landmark.*** Removing a landmark was far more than moving a stone. It

18:15 [p] Matt. 21:11; Luke 1:76; 2:25–34; 7:16; 24:19; John 1:45; Acts 3:22 **18:16** [q] Deut. 5:23–27 [r] Ex. 20:18, 19 **18:17** [s] Deut. 5:28 **18:18** [t] John 1:45; 6:14; Acts 3:22 [u] Is. 49:2; 51:16; John 17:8 [v] [John 4:25; 8:28] **18:19** [w] Acts 3:23; [Heb. 12:25] **18:20** [x] Jer. 14:14, 15 [y] Jer. 2:8 **18:22** [z] Jer. 28:9 [a] Deut. 13:2 [b] Deut. 18:20 **19:1** [a] Deut. 12:29 **19:2** [b] Num. 35:10–15 **19:4** [c] Num. 35:9–34 **19:6** [d] Num. 35:12 **19:8** [e] Deut. 12:20 [f] Gen. 15:18–21 **19:9** [g] Josh. 20:7–9 **19:10** [h] Deut. 21:1–9 **19:11** [i] Num. 35:16, 24 **19:13** [j] Deut. 13:8 [k] 1 Kin. 2:31 **19:14** [l] Prov. 22:28

The Law Concerning Witnesses

15 [m]"One witness shall not rise against a
man concerning any iniquity or any sin that
he commits; by the mouth of two or three
witnesses the matter shall be established.
16 If a false witness [n]rises against any man
to testify against him of wrongdoing, 17 then
both men in the controversy shall stand be-
fore the LORD, [o]before the priests and the
judges who serve in those days. 18 And the
judges shall make careful inquiry, and in-
deed, *if* the witness *is* a false witness, who
has testified falsely against his brother,
19 [p]then you shall do to him as he thought
to have done to his brother; so [q]you shall
put away the evil from among you. 20 [r]And
those who remain shall hear and fear, and
hereafter they shall not again commit such
evil among you. 21 [s]Your eye shall not pity:
[t]life *shall be* for life, eye for eye, tooth for
tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Principles Governing Warfare

20 "When you go out to battle against
your enemies, and see [a]horses and
chariots *and* people more numerous than
you, do not be [b]afraid of them; for the LORD
your God *is* [c]with you, who brought you up
from the land of Egypt. 2 So it shall be, when
you are on the verge of battle, that the priest
shall approach and speak to the people.
3 And he shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel:
Today you are on the verge of battle with
your enemies. Do not let your heart faint,
do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be
terrified because of them; 4 for the LORD
your God *is* He who goes with you, [d]to fight
for you against your enemies, to save you.'
5 "Then the officers shall speak to the
people, saying: 'What man *is there* who has
built a new house and has not [e]dedicated it?
Let him go and return to his house, lest he
die in the battle and another man dedicate
it. 6 Also what man *is there* who has planted
a vineyard and has not eaten of it? Let him
go and return to his house, lest he die in the
battle and another man eat of it. 7 [f]And what
man *is there* who is betrothed to a woman
and has not married her? Let him go and
return to his house, lest he die in the battle
and another man marry her.'
8 "The officers shall speak further to
the people, and say, [g]'What man *is there*
who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him
go and return to his house, lest the heart
of his brethren faint* like his heart.' 9 And
so it shall be, when the officers have fin-
ished speaking to the people, that they
shall make captains of the armies to lead
the people.
10 "When you go near a city to fight
against it, [h]then proclaim an offer of peace
to it. 11 And it shall be that if they accept your
offer of peace, and open to you, then all the
people *who are* found in it shall be placed
under tribute to you, and serve you. 12 Now
if *the city* will not make peace with you,
but war against you, then you shall besiege
it. 13 And when the LORD your God delivers
it into your hands, [i]you shall strike every
male in it with the edge of the sword. 14 But
the women, the little ones, [j]the livestock,
and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you
shall plunder for yourself; and [k]you shall
eat the enemies' plunder which the LORD
your God gives you. 15 Thus you shall do to
all the cities *which are* very far from you,
which *are* not of the cities of these nations.
16 "But [l]of the cities of these peoples which
the LORD your God gives you *as* an inher-
itance, you shall let nothing that breathes
remain alive, 17 but you shall utterly destroy
them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the
Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite
and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God
has commanded you, 18 lest [m]they teach you
to do according to all their abominations
which they have done for their gods, and
you [n]sin against the LORD your God.
19 "When you besiege a city for a long
time, while making war against it to take it,

* **20:8** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *lest he make his brother's heart faint.*

was changing a property line and in effect cheating some family out of the inheritance of land that God had given them.

19:15 ***by the mouth of two or three witnesses.*** Requiring two or three witnesses was a safeguard against the dangerous lies of an individual.

19:21 ***life shall be for life, eye for eye.*** The law of retribution established the principle that the punishment should not exceed the crime.

20:5–7 ***built a new house . . . planted a vineyard . . . betrothed to a woman.*** Each of these activities represents a time of planning and preparation that has not yet been fulfilled. The Lord graciously acknowledges that it is right for people to have a chance to enjoy the fruits of their labor before they risk their lives for the nation.

20:8 ***fearful and fainthearted.*** Unlike the previous situations, the fearful and fainthearted endanger their fellow soldiers. The number of warriors was not as important as the army's belief that God was fighting for them.

20:17 ***utterly destroy.*** This was not just a symbolic war; the entire Canaanite population was to be destroyed.

20:18 ***lest they teach you.*** The principal concern of the Lord was for the welfare of His people. The Canaanite population in the land was like a deadly tumor eating away at the body. If the tumor was cut

19:15 [m] Num. 35:30 **19:16** [n] Ex. 23:1 **19:17** [o] Deut. 17:8–11; 21:5 **19:19** [p] Prov. 19:5 [q] Deut. 13:5; 17:7; 21:21; 22:21 **19:20** [r] Deut. 17:13; 21:21 **19:21** [s] Deut. 19:13 [t] Ex. 21:23, 24 **20:1** [a] Ps. 20:7 [b] Deut. 7:18 [c] 2 Chr. 13:12; 32:7, 8 **20:4** [d] Josh. 23:10 **20:5** [e] Neh. 12:27 **20:7** [f] Deut. 24:5 **20:8** [g] Judg. 7:3 **20:10** [h] 2 Sam. 10:19 **20:13** [i] Num. 31:7 **20:14** [j] Josh. 8:2 [k] 1 Sam. 14:30 **20:16** [l] Deut. 7:1–5 **20:18** [m] Deut. 7:4; 12:30; 18:9 [n] Ex. 23:33

you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them; if you can eat of them, do not cut them down to use in the siege, for the tree of the field *is* man's *food.* 20Only the trees which you know *are* not trees for food you may destroy and cut down, to build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it is subdued.

The Law Concerning Unsolved Murder

21 "If *anyone* is found slain, lying in the field in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess, *and* it is not known who killed him, 2then your elders and your judges shall go out and measure *the distance* from the slain man to the surrounding cities. 3And it shall be *that* the elders of the city nearest to the slain man will take a heifer which has not been worked *and* which has not pulled with a [a]yoke. 4The elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with flowing water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and they shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. 5Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for [b]the LORD your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name of the LORD; [c]by their word every controversy and every assault shall be *settled.* 6And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain *man* [d]shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley. 7Then they shall answer and say, 'Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen *it.* 8Provide atonement, O LORD, for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, [e]and do not lay innocent blood to the charge of Your people Israel.' And atonement shall be provided on their behalf for the blood. 9So [f]you shall put away the *guilt of* innocent blood from among you when you do *what is* right in the sight of the LORD.

Female Captives

10"When you go out to war against your enemies, and the LORD your God delivers them into your hand, and you take them captive, 11and you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and desire her and would take her for your [g]wife, 12then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall [h]shave her head and trim her nails. 13She shall put off the clothes of her captivity, remain in your house, and [i]mourn her father and her mother a full month; after that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. 14And it shall be, if you have no delight in her, then you shall set her free, but you certainly shall not sell her for money; you shall not treat her brutally, because you have [j]humbled her.

Firstborn Inheritance Rights

15"If a man has two wives, one loved [k]and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, *both* the loved and the unloved, and *if* the firstborn son is of her who is unloved, 16then it shall be, [l]on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, *that* he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the *true* firstborn. 17But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife *as* the firstborn [m]by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he [n]*is* the beginning of his strength; [o]the right of the firstborn *is* his.

The Rebellious Son

18"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and *who,* when they have chastened him, will not heed them, 19then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. 20And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' 21Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; [p]so you shall put away the evil from among you, [q]and all Israel shall hear and fear.

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out, the body could live. No one could thrive in that land as a follower of God as long as the Canaanites were there.

21:1–9 *anyone is found slain.* Although the people were innocent of the act and of any knowledge of the actual death of this individual, the elders must still ask the Lord for forgiveness for the shedding of innocent blood. An honest attempt must be made to find justice and to say, "We know this was wrong." God is teaching His people about an active social conscience in this passage. When we know that an innocent party has been wronged we are not to turn our backs and say that we are not involved. Even the simple act of publicly saying that such action is not pleasing to God is effective in reminding those who hear that God sees all and will judge the perpetrators of sin at some point.

21:15 *two wives.* Polygamy was commonly practiced in the cultures of the ancient Middle East and was assumed in the law of Moses. It is apparently something that God allowed, as He did divorce (Matt. 19:3–9), but from the beginning it was not that way.

21:16 *firstborn.* A father was expected to show consideration for the firstborn child, regardless of his attitude toward the child's mother.

21:3 [a] Num. 19:2 **21:5** [b] 1 Chr. 23:13 [c] Deut. 17:8, 9 **21:6** [d] Matt. 27:24 **21:8** [e] Jon. 1:14 **21:9** [f] Deut. 19:13 **21:11** [g] Num. 31:18 **21:12** [h] Lev. 14:8, 9 **21:13** [i] Ps. 45:10 **21:14** [j] Judg. 19:24 **21:15** [k] Gen. 29:33 **21:16** [l] 1 Chr. 5:2; 26:10 **21:17** [m] 2 Kin. 2:9 [n] Gen. 49:3 [o] Gen. 25:31, 33 **21:21** [p] Deut. 13:5; 19:19, 20; 22:21, 24 [q] Deut. 13:11

Miscellaneous Laws

22 "If a man has committed a sin [r]deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23[s]his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that [t]you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance; for [u]he who is hanged *is* accursed of God.

22 "You [a]shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. 2And if your brother *is* not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him. 3You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing of your brother's, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise; you must not hide yourself.

4[b]"You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift *them* up again.

5"A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all who do so *are* an abomination to the LORD your God.

6"If a bird's nest happens to be before you along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, with the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, [c]you shall not take the mother with the young; 7you shall surely let the mother go, and take the young for yourself, [d]that it may be well with you and *that* you may prolong *your* days.

8"When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it.

9[e]"You shall not sow your vineyard with different kinds of seed, lest the yield of the seed which you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be defiled.

10[f]"You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

11[g]"You shall not wear a garment of different sorts, *such as* wool and linen mixed together.

12"You shall make [h]tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover *yourself.*

Laws of Sexual Morality

13"If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and [i]detests her, 14and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she *was* not a virgin,' 15then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out *the evidence of* the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. 16And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her. 17Now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter *was* not a virgin," and yet these *are the evidences of* my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. 18Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him; 19and they shall fine him one hundred *shekels* of silver and give *them* to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.

20"But if the thing is true, *and evidences of* virginity are not found for the young woman, 21then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with [j]stones, because she has [k]done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house. [l]So you shall put away the evil from among you.

22[m]"If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.

23"If a young woman *who is* a virgin is

21:22 ***hang him.*** The guilty person was not executed by hanging, but after the person was stoned the corpse was impaled for public viewing as an example.

22:1–4 Kindness—In the same way that God cares for us, we are to care for others. If we see a kindness that we can do for another, we are to do it cheerfully and willingly. Receiving an act of kindness is heartwarming; doing such an act is a great joy.

22:8 ***parapet.*** The parapet was a low wall around the edge of the roof. The rooftop was used as an extra room, and if the home owner did not provide safety measures, he would be responsible for any accidents.

22:11 ***wool and linen . . . together.*** These restrictions were a reminder that the Hebrews were not a mixed people. They were separated to God and they were not to mix with other nations, nor were they to mix two kinds of animals, grain, or fabric. It was part of the concept of purity that governed every aspect of life.

22:14 ***brings a bad name on her.*** Charging her indicated a public accusation. Virginity was highly regarded, for if the legitimacy of children was disputable, inheritance rights and positions in family would also be disputed. It is easy to determine the mother of a child, for pregnancy is obvious, but determining the father of the child was a matter of trust that the wife was faithful to marriage vows.

21:22 [r] Acts 23:29 **21:23** [s] John 19:31 [t] Lev. 18:25 [u] Gal. 3:13 **22:1** [a] Ex. 23:4 **22:4** [b] Ex. 23:5 **22:6** [c] Lev. 22:28 **22:7** [d] Deut. 4:40 **22:9** [e] Lev. 19:19 **22:10** [f] [2 Cor. 6:14–16] **22:11** [g] Lev. 19:19 **22:12** [h] Num. 15:37–41 **22:13** [i] Deut. 21:15; 24:3 **22:21** [j] Deut. 21:21 [k] Gen. 34:7 [l] Deut. 13:5 **22:22** [m] Lev. 20:10

[n]betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, 24then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he [o]humbled his neighbor's wife; [p]so you shall put away the evil from among you.

25"But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. 26But you shall do nothing to the young woman; *there is* in the young woman no sin *deserving* of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so *is* this matter. 27For he found her in the countryside, *and* the betrothed young woman cried out, but *there was* no one to save her.

28[q]"If a man finds a young woman *who is* a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, 29then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father [r]fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife [s]because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days.

30[t]"A man shall not take his father's wife, nor [u]uncover his father's bed.

Those Excluded from the Congregation

23 "He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall [a]not enter the assembly of the LORD.

2"One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD.

3[b]"An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, 4[c]because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and [d]because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia,* to curse you. 5Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God [e]loves you. 6[f]You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

7"You shall not abhor an Edomite, [g]for he *is* your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because [h]you were an alien in his land. 8The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

Cleanliness of the Campsite

9"When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing. 10[i]If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp. 11But it shall be, when evening comes, that [j]he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.

12"Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; 13and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse. 14For the LORD your God [k]walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.

Miscellaneous Laws

15[l]"You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. 16He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; [m]you shall not oppress him.

17"There shall be no *ritual* harlot*[n] of the daughters of Israel, or a [o]perverted* one of the sons of Israel. 18You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the LORD your God for any vowed offering, for both of these *are* an abomination to the LORD your God.

*23:4 Hebrew *Aram Naharaim* *23:17 Hebrew *qedeshah*, feminine of *qadesh* (see next note) • Hebrew *qadesh*, that is, one practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals

23:1 *emasculated.* An emasculated man had had all or part of the sexual organs removed. This was done to men who were put in charge of harems to prevent sexual relations with the women. It was also a pagan practice. Genital mutilation was prohibited in Israel.

23:17 *harlot . . . perverted.* The cult prostitute was used for the worship of the Canaanite gods and goddesses of fertility. They believed that having intimate relations with the cult prostitutes (either male or female) would bring fertility to their families, fields, and herds. This debased system of worship was one of the reasons God had decided to utterly destroy this group of people.

23:18 *wages of a harlot . . . price of a dog.* God did not need or want money earned by such practices that He called abominations. "Dogs" does not refer to the animal. It is still insulting in the Middle East to call a person a dog, and "dogs" are listed with sorcerers, immoral persons, murderers, idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying, as those who are outside the heavenly city (Rev. 22:15).

22:23 [n] Matt. 1:18, 19 **22:24** [o] Deut. 21:14 [p] Deut. 22:21, 22 **22:28** [q] Ex. 22:16, 17 **22:29** [r] Ex. 22:16, 17 [s] Deut. 22:24 **22:30** [t] Deut. 27:20 [u] Ezek. 16:8 **23:1** [a] Lev. 21:20; 22:24 **23:3** [b] Neh. 13:1, 2 **23:4** [c] Deut. 2:27–30 [d] Num. 22:5, 6; 23:7 **23:5** [e] Deut. 4:37 **23:6** [f] Ezra 9:12 **23:7** [g] Obad. 10, 12 [h] Deut. 10:19 **23:10** [i] Lev. 15:16 **23:11** [j] Lev. 15:5 **23:14** [k] Lev. 26:12 **23:15** [l] 1 Sam. 30:15 **23:16** [m] Ex. 22:21 **23:17** [n] Lev. 19:29 [o] 2 Kin. 23:7

19 [p]"You shall not charge interest to your
brother—interest on money *or* food *or* anything that is lent out at interest. 20 [q]To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, [r]that the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess.

21 [s]"When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. 22 But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. 23 [t]That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth.

24 "When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put *any* in your container. 25 When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, [u]you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

Law Concerning Divorce

24 "When a [a]man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a [b]certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, 2 when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's *wife,* 3 *if* the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, 4 [c]*then* her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that *is* an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance.

Miscellaneous Laws

5 [d]"When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and [e]bring happiness to his wife whom he has taken.

6 "No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes *one's* living in pledge.

7 "If a man is [f]found kidnapping any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and mistreats him or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die; [g]and you shall put away the evil from among you.

8 "Take heed in [h]an outbreak of leprosy, that you carefully observe and do according to all that the priests, the Levites, shall teach you; just as I commanded them, *so* you shall be careful to do. 9 [i]Remember what the LORD your God did [j]to Miriam on the way when you came out of Egypt!

10 "When you [k]lend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge. 11 You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you. 12 And if the man *is* poor, you shall not keep his pledge overnight. 13 [l]You shall in any case return the pledge to him again when the sun goes down, that he may sleep in his own garment and [m]bless you; and [n]it shall be righteousness to you before the LORD your God.

14 "You shall not [o]oppress a hired servant *who is* poor and needy, *whether* one of your brethren or one of the aliens who *is* in your land within your gates. 15 Each day [p]you shall give *him* his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he *is* poor and has set his heart on it; [q]lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you.

16 [r]"Fathers shall not be put to death for *their* children, nor shall children be put to death for *their* fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

17 [s]"You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, [t]nor take a

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23:21 *vow.* A vow was purely voluntary, and not necessary for the development of godliness. But if a vow was made, it must be kept.

24:1–4 *a certificate of divorce.* Marriage was instituted by God (Gen. 2:24). It was intended to be a union of one man and one woman for life. And yet, the Mosaic law allowed divorce, even though God said through His prophet Malachi (Mal. 2:16) that He hates divorce. When the Pharisees were asking Jesus about divorce, Jesus explained that it had not been so designed in the beginning, but "because of the hardness of your hearts" Moses had allowed it. Then Jesus raised the standard set by Moses, saying that those whom God had joined, no man should separate. With the death and resurrection of Christ, all believers receive the Holy Spirit, and it is at this point that hard hearts are changed.

24:4 *defiled.* Returning to her first husband after an intervening marriage might have placed the woman in the same position as an unfaithful wife.

24:6 *millstone.* A pair of millstones was used for grinding grain into flour. The flour was ground between two stones, and to deprive a household of the use of one of the stones was to deprive them of the necessities of daily life.

24:8 *leprosy.* Leprosy refers to a variety of infectious skin diseases. The disease known today as leprosy, Hansen's disease, is different from the diseases described here.

23:19 [p] Ex. 22:25 **23:20** [q] Deut. 15:3 [r] Deut. 15:10 **23:21** [s] Eccl. 5:4, 5 **23:23** [t] Ps. 66:13, 14 **23:25** [u] Luke 6:1 **24:1** [a] [Matt. 5:31; 19:7] [b] [Jer. 3:8] **24:4** [c] [Jer. 3:1] **24:5** [d] Deut. 20:7 [e] Prov. 5:18 **24:7** [f] Ex. 21:16 [g] Deut. 19:19 **24:8** [h] Lev. 13:2; 14:2 **24:9** [i] [1 Cor. 10:6] [j] Num. 12:10 **24:10** [k] Matt. 5:42 **24:13** [l] Ex. 22:26 [m] 2 Tim. 1:18 [n] Deut. 6:25 **24:14** [o] [Mal. 3:5] **24:15** [p] Lev. 19:13 [q] James 5:4 **24:16** [r] Ezek. 18:20 **24:17** [s] Ex. 23:6 [t] Ex. 22:26

widow's garment as a pledge. 18But [u]you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing.

19[v]"When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may [w]bless you in all the work of your hands. 20When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. 21When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean *it* afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. 22And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.

25 "If there is a [a]dispute between men, and they come to court, that *the judges* may judge them, and they [b]justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, 2then it shall be, if the wicked man [c]deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down [d]and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. 3[e]Forty blows he may give him *and* no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother [f]be humiliated in your sight.

4[g]"You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out *the grain.*

Marriage Duty of the Surviving Brother

5[h]"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be *married* to a stranger outside *the family;* her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. 6And it shall be *that* the firstborn son which she bears [i]will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that [j]his name may not be blotted out of Israel. 7But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the [k]gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' 8Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But *if* he stands firm and says, [l]'I do not want to take her,' 9then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, [m]remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not [n]build up his brother's house.' 10And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

Miscellaneous Laws

11"If *two* men fight together, and the wife of one draws near to rescue her husband from the hand of the one attacking him, and puts out her hand and seizes him by the genitals, 12then you shall cut off her hand; [o]your eye shall not pity *her.*

13[p]"You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a heavy and a light. 14You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small. 15You shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure, [q]that your days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. 16For [r]all who do such things, all who behave unrighteously, *are* an abomination to the LORD your God.

Destroy the Amalekites

17[s]"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, 18how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you *were* tired and weary; and he [t]did not fear God. 19Therefore it shall be, [u]when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess *as* an inheritance, *that* you will [v]blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

25:3 *Forty blows.* Later Jewish law restricted the number to forty minus one (2 Cor. 11:24) to make sure that the authorities remained within the set limits.

25:4 *not muzzle an ox.* Muzzling kept the animal from eating while it worked. Later the apostle Paul used this law as a principle for providing a living for those who spend their lives preaching the gospel (1 Tim. 5:18).

25:5 *dies and has no son.* The firstborn son of the marriage would be acknowledged as the legal son of the dead brother. Taking a brother's widow as a second wife provided her with care, and preserved the name, position, and inheritance of the dead brother.

25:7–10 *does not want to take.* Legally the brother-in-law was bound to keep the family name alive. His unwillingness to do so was a public issue, involving the elders of the community. The removal of the sandal was a sign of giving up of one's rights, and spitting was a strong act of public contempt.

25:19 *blot out the remembrance.* The Amalekites would in effect come under the same ban as the Canaanite nations. The fact that they did not fear God made them a stumbling block to any nation that was following God.

24:18 [u] Deut. 24:22 **24:19** [v] Lev. 19:9, 10 [w] Ps. 41:1
25:1 [a] Deut. 17:8–13; 19:17 [b] Prov. 17:15 **25:2** [c] Prov. 19:29 [d] Matt. 10:17 **25:3** [e] 2 Cor. 11:24 [f] Job 18:3
25:4 [g] [Prov. 12:10] **25:5** [h] Matt. 22:24 **25:6** [i] Gen. 38:9 [j] Ruth 4:5, 10 **25:7** [k] Ruth 4:1, 2 **25:8** [l] Ruth 4:6
25:9 [m] Ruth 4:7, 8 [n] Ruth 4:11 **25:12** [o] Deut. 7:2; 19:13
25:13 [p] Mic. 6:11 **25:15** [q] Ex. 20:12 **25:16** [r] Prov. 11:1
25:17 [s] Ex. 17:8–16 **25:18** [t] Rom. 3:18 **25:19** [u] 1 Sam. 15:3 [v] Ex. 17:14

Offerings of Firstfruits and Tithes

26 "And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, **2**[q]that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put *it* in a basket and [b]go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. **3**And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your* God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.'

4"Then the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. **5**And you shall answer and say before the LORD your God: 'My father *was* [c]a Syrian,* [d]about to perish, and [e]he went down to Egypt and dwelt there, [f]few in number; and there he became a nation, [g]great, mighty, and populous. **6**But the [h]Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. **7**[i]Then we cried out to the LORD God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression. **8**So [j]the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, [k]with great terror and with signs and wonders. **9**He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, [l]"a land flowing with milk and honey";* **10**and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me.'

"Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God. **11**So [m]you shall rejoice in every good *thing* which the LORD your God has given to you and your house, you and the Levite and the stranger who *is* among you.

12"When you have finished laying aside all the [n]tithe of your increase in the third year—[o]the year of tithing—and have given *it* to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled, **13**then you shall say before the LORD your God: 'I have removed the holy *tithe* from *my* house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, [p]nor have I forgotten *them*. **14**[q]I have not eaten any of it when in mourning, nor have I removed *any* of it for an unclean *use*, nor given *any* of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me. **15**[r]Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, just as You swore to our fathers, [s]"a land flowing with milk and honey."'*

A Special People of God

16"This day the LORD your God commands you to observe these statutes and judgments; therefore you shall be careful to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. **17**Today you have [t]proclaimed the LORD to be your God, and that you will walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments, and His judgments, and that you will [u]obey His voice. **18**Also today [v]the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that *you* should keep all His commandments, **19**and that He will set you [w]high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be [x]a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken."

The Law Inscribed on Stones

27 Now Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying: "Keep all the commandments which I command you today. **2**And it shall be, on the day [a]when you cross over the Jordan

* **26:3** Septuagint reads *my.* * **26:5** Or *Aramean*
* **26:9** Exodus 3:8 * **26:15** Exodus 3:8

26:5 ***Syrian.*** This is a reference to Jacob, whose parents' ancestral home was in Syria (Gen. 24:1–10).

26:8 ***mighty hand . . . outstretched arm.*** God with His own hand demonstrated His power to the Egyptians and delivered the Israelites. The idea of God rescuing His people with His mighty arm is repeated in Isaiah 62 and 63.

26:10 ***I have brought.*** When the worshiper made a statement of what he was doing (see v. 13), he was taking responsibility for the items he was presenting to the Lord, not just blindly following a set form.

26:15 ***Your holy habitation.*** People direct their prayers to heaven, acknowledging at the same time that God is everywhere (Is. 66:1–2). Heaven most often refers to the dwelling place of God and the holy angels. Heaven is the place from which Christ came when He came to earth and He returned there after He was resurrected (Acts 1:11). One day He will come from heaven back to earth (Matt. 24:30) and heaven will ultimately be the home of all believers (1 Pet. 1:4). Heaven is the place where the will of God is perfectly done, so it is a place of hope and inspiration.

26:16 ***with all your heart and with all your soul.*** This is a regular emphasis in Deuteronomy. God wants obedience, but He wants it to be the obedience of the engaged heart and mind.

26:2 [a] Ex. 22:29; 23:16, 19 [b] Deut. 12:5 **26:5** [c] Hos. 12:12 [d] Gen. 43:1, 2; 45:7, 11 [e] Acts 7:15 [f] Deut. 10:22 [g] Deut. 1:10 **26:6** [h] Ex. 1:8–11, 14 **26:7** [i] Ex. 2:23–25; 3:9; 4:31 **26:8** [j] Deut. 5:15 [k] Deut. 4:34; 34:11, 12 **26:9** [l] Ex. 3:8, 17 **26:11** [m] Deut. 12:7; 16:11 **26:12** [n] Lev. 27:30 [o] Deut. 14:28, 29 **26:13** [p] Ps. 119:141, 153, 176 **26:14** [q] Hos. 9:4 **26:15** [r] Is. 63:15 [s] Ex. 3:8 **26:17** [t] Ex. 20:19 [u] Deut. 15:5 **26:18** [v] Ex. 6:7; 19:5 **26:19** [w] Deut. 4:7, 8; 28:1 [x] [1 Pet. 2:9] **27:2** [a] Josh. 4:1

to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that [b]you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime. 3You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, [c]"a land flowing with milk and honey,"* just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you. 4Therefore it shall be, when you have crossed over the Jordan, *that* [d]on Mount Ebal you shall set up these stones, which I command you today, and you shall whitewash them with lime. 5And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; [e]you shall not use an iron *tool* on them. 6You shall build with whole stones the altar of the LORD your God, and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. 7You shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and [f]rejoice before the LORD your God. 8And you shall [g]write very plainly on the stones all the words of this law."

9Then Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, "Take heed and listen, O Israel: [h]This day you have become the people of the LORD your God. 10Therefore you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God, and observe His commandments and His statutes which I command you today."

Curses Pronounced from Mount Ebal

11And Moses commanded the people on the same day, saying, 12"These shall stand [i]on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when you have crossed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin; 13and [j]these shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

14"And [k]the Levites shall speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel: 15[l]'Cursed *is* the one who makes a carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets *it* up in secret.'

[m]"And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen!'

16[n]'Cursed *is* the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

17[o]'Cursed *is* the one who moves his neighbor's landmark.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

18[p]'Cursed *is* the one who makes the blind to wander off the road.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

19[q]'Cursed *is* the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

20[r]'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's bed.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

21[s]'Cursed *is* the one who lies with any kind of animal.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

22[t]'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

23[u]'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his mother-in-law.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

24[v]'Cursed *is* the one who attacks his neighbor secretly.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

25[w]'Cursed *is* the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

26[x]'Cursed *is* the one who does not confirm *all* the words of this law by observing them.'

"And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'"

Blessings on Obedience

28 "Now it shall come to pass, [a]if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God [b]will set you high above all nations of the earth. 2And all these blessings shall come upon you and [c]overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:

* **27:3** Exodus 3:8

27:7 *peace offerings.* Many of the sacrifices had to do with sin, repentance, and making things right with God. This particular sacrifice was a time to be thankful and to rejoice in the good care of God.

27:11–13 *Mount Gerizim . . . Mount Ebal.* Mount Gerizim, the mountain of blessing, is usually covered with vegetation. Mount Ebal, the mountain of cursing, is a barren peak. The visual contrast made a memorable object lesson.

27:26 *confirm all the words of this law by observing them.* All of the actions listed in the curses are contrary to the law, as explained in the Book of Leviticus.

28:1–9 *diligently obey.* This passage repeatedly emphasizes the Israelites' responsibility to obey. God had already saved them from slavery, made them His people, promised to be their God, and to give them a land to dwell in. But the blessings would only come with Israel's obedience. Sadly, Israel failed again and again to follow God. It was only after Christ that the followers of God could have the new Spirit which enabled them to obey from the heart (Rom. 7).

27:2 [b] Josh. 8:32 **27:3** [c] Ex. 3:8 **27:4** [d] Deut. 11:29 **27:5** [e] Ex. 20:25 **27:7** [f] Deut. 26:11 **27:8** [g] Josh. 8:32 **27:9** [h] Deut. 26:18 **27:12** [i] Josh. 8:33 **27:13** [j] Deut. 11:29 **27:14** [k] Deut. 33:10 **27:15** [l] Ex. 20:4, 23; 34:17 [m] Num. 5:22 **27:16** [n] Ezek. 22:7 **27:17** [o] Deut. 19:14 **27:18** [p] Lev. 19:14 **27:19** [q] Ex. 22:21, 22; 23:9 **27:20** [r] Deut. 22:30 **27:21** [s] Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16 **27:22** [t] Lev. 18:9 **27:23** [u] Lev. 18:17; 20:14 **27:24** [v] Ex. 20:13; 21:12 **27:25** [w] Ex. 23:7 **27:26** [x] Gal. 3:10 **28:1** [a] Ex. 15:26 [b] Deut. 26:19 **28:2** [c] Deut. 28:15

3 [d]"Blessed *shall* you *be* in the city, and
blessed *shall* you *be* [e]in the country.
4 "Blessed *shall be* [f]the fruit of your
body, the produce of your ground and the
increase of your herds, the increase of your
cattle and the offspring of your flocks.
5 "Blessed *shall be* your basket and your
kneading bowl.
6 [g]"Blessed *shall* you *be* when you come
in, and blessed *shall* you *be* when you go
out.
7 "The LORD [h]will cause your enemies
who rise against you to be defeated before
your face; they shall come out against you
one way and flee before you seven ways.
8 "The LORD will [i]command the bless-
ing on you in your storehouses and in all
to which you [j]set your hand, and He will
bless you in the land which the LORD your
God is giving you.
9 [k]"The LORD will establish you as a
holy people to Himself, just as He has
sworn to you, if you keep the command-
ments of the LORD your God and walk in
His ways. 10 Then all peoples of the earth
shall see that you are [l]called by the name
of the LORD, and they shall be [m]afraid of
you. 11 And [n]the LORD will grant you plenty
of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the
increase of your livestock, and in the pro-
duce of your ground, in the land of which
the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.
12 The LORD will open to you His good trea-
sure, the heavens, [o]to give the rain to your
land in its season, and [p]to bless all the work
of your hand. [q]You shall lend to many na-
tions, but you shall not borrow. 13 And the
LORD will make [r]you the head and not the
tail; you shall be above only, and not be
beneath, if you heed the commandments
of the LORD your God, which I command
you today, and are careful to observe *them*.
14 [s]So you shall not turn aside from any of
the words which I command you this day,
to the right or the left, to go after other
gods to serve them.

Curses on Disobedience

15 "But it shall come to pass, [t]if you do
not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to
observe carefully all His commandments
and His statutes which I command you to-
day, that all these curses will come upon
you and overtake you:
16 "Cursed *shall* you *be* in the city, and
cursed *shall* you *be* in the country.
17 "Cursed *shall be* your basket and your
kneading bowl.
18 "Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body
and the produce of your land, the increase
of your cattle and the offspring of your
flocks.
19 "Cursed *shall* you *be* when you come
in, and cursed *shall* you *be* when you go
out.
20 "The LORD will send on you [u]cursing,
[v]confusion, and [w]rebuke in all that you set
your hand to do, until you are destroyed
and until you perish quickly, because of the
wickedness of your doings in which you
have forsaken Me. 21 The LORD will make
the plague cling to you until He has con-
sumed you from the land which you are go-
ing to possess. 22 [x]The LORD will strike you
with consumption, with fever, with inflam-
mation, with severe burning fever, with the
sword, with [y]scorching, and with mildew;
they shall pursue you until you perish.
23 And [z]your heavens which *are* over your
head shall be bronze, and the earth which
is under you *shall be* iron. 24 The LORD will
change the rain of your land to powder and
dust; from the heaven it shall come down
on you until you are destroyed.
25 [a]"The LORD will cause you to be de-
feated before your enemies; you shall go
out one way against them and flee seven
ways before them; and you shall become
troublesome to all the kingdoms of the
earth. 26 [b]Your carcasses shall be food for
all the birds of the air and the beasts of
the earth, and no one shall frighten *them*
away. 27 The LORD will strike you with [c]the
boils of Egypt, with [d]tumors, with the scab,
and with the itch, from which you cannot
be healed. 28 The LORD will strike you with
madness and blindness and [e]confusion of
heart. 29 And you shall [f]grope at noonday,
as a blind man gropes in darkness; you
shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be

28:15–19 Disobedience—The price of disobedience is always more than one can imagine in the beginning. It is not only the loss of peace or blessing, great as that may be, but there is also the loss of all that might have been. In God's plan the obedience is for the benefit of the follower of God, for the benefit of those who are watching and are influenced by this follower, and for the kingdom of God. If the follower disobeys, he may see how his actions affect himself, but he cannot know what other blessings are lost in the wider sphere of his own influence. It is a terrible thing to find oneself in the position of working against God.

28:20–57 ***cursing, confusion, and rebuke.*** Disobedience brings suffering, and this suffering often spills over onto other people, even into future generations. The suffering is a wake-up call, something that is meant to remind the disobedient that they are living against God, and that they need to repent, turn to God, and ask for help. The problem is, that often the disobedient have a skewed idea of who God is and what He desires, so they blame God and become more rebellious. There is another kind of suffering as well. This is the suffering of the innocent, as in the

28:3 [d] Ps. 128:1, 4 [e] Gen. 39:5 **28:4** [f] Gen. 22:17 **28:6** [g] Ps. 121:8 **28:7** [h] Lev. 26:7, 8 **28:8** [i] Lev. 25:21 [j] Deut. 15:10 **28:9** [k] Ex. 19:5, 6 **28:10** [l] Num. 6:27 [m] Deut. 11:25 **28:11** [n] Deut. 30:9 **28:12** [o] Lev. 26:4 [p] Deut. 14:29 [q] Deut. 15:6 **28:13** [r] [Is. 9:14, 15] **28:14** [s] Deut. 5:32 **28:15** [t] Lev. 26:14–39 **28:20** [u] Mal. 2:2 [v] Is. 65:14 [w] Is. 30:17 **28:22** [x] Lev. 26:16 [y] Amos 4:9 **28:23** [z] Lev. 26:19 **28:25** [a] Deut. 32:30 **28:26** [b] 1 Sam. 17:44 **28:27** [c] Ex. 15:26 [d] 1 Sam. 5:6 **28:28** [e] Jer. 4:9 **28:29** [f] Job 5:14

only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save *you.*

30 [g]"You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; [h]you shall build a house, but [i]you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. 31 Your ox *shall be* slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey *shall be* violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep *shall be* given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue *them.* 32 Your sons and your daughters *shall be* given to [j]another people, and your eyes shall look and [k]fail *with longing* for them all day long; and *there shall be* no strength in your [l]hand. 33 A nation whom you have not known shall eat [m]the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. 34 So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. 35 The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

36 "The LORD will [n]bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and [o]there you shall serve other gods—wood and stone. 37 And you shall become [p]an astonishment, a proverb, [q]and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

38 [r]"You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for [s]the locust shall consume it. 39 You shall plant vineyards and tend *them,* but you shall neither drink *of* the [t]wine nor gather the *grapes;* for the worms shall eat them. 40 You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint *yourself* with the oil; for your olives shall drop off. 41 You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for [u]they shall go into captivity. 42 Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

43 "The alien who *is* among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. 44 He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

45 "Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. 46 And they shall be upon [v]you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

47 [w]"Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, [x]for the abundance of everything, 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in [y]hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He [z]will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. 49 [a]The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, [b]*as swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, 50 a nation of fierce countenance, [c]which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. 51 And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, *or* the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

52 "They shall [d]besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you. 53 [e]You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. 54 The sensitive and very refined man among you [f]will be hostile toward his brother, toward [g]the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, 55 so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. 56 The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse* to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 her placenta which

* **28:56** Literally *her eye shall be evil toward*

case of Job, where God allowed Satan to test him to show Satan that Job really loved God and was not merely faithful because God had blessed him.

28:30 *betroth a wife . . . build a house . . . plant a vineyard.* Each of these momentous events of life were reasons to be excused from service in the army (20:5–7), yet if the Israelites were disobedient, life itself would prevent them from realizing the fruits of their labors.

28:52–57 *besiege you at all your gates.* Moses forewarned the people of the terrible stresses of sieges (2 Kin. 6:24–31; Lam. 2:20; 4:10). The horrors of hunger and deprivation would lead people to behave in ways that they otherwise could never imagine.

28:30 [g] Jer. 8:10 [h] Amos 5:11 [i] Deut. 20:6 **28:32** [j] 2 Chr. 29:9 [k] Ps. 119:82 [l] Neh. 5:5 **28:33** [m] Jer. 5:15, 17 **28:36** [n] Jer. 39:1–9 [o] Deut. 4:28 **28:37** [p] 1 Kin. 9:7, 8 [q] Ps. 44:14 **28:38** [r] Mic. 6:15 [s] Joel 1:4 **28:39** [t] Zeph. 1:13 **28:41** [u] Lam. 1:5 **28:46** [v] Is. 8:18 **28:47** [w] Neh. 9:35–37 [x] Deut. 32:15 **28:48** [y] Lam. 4:4–6 [z] Jer. 28:13, 14 **28:49** [a] Jer. 5:15 [b] Jer. 48:40; 49:22 **28:50** [c] 2 Chr. 36:17 **28:52** [d] 2 Kin. 25:1, 2, 4 **28:53** [e] Lev. 26:29 **28:54** [f] Deut. 15:9 [g] Deut. 13:6

comes out [h]from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

58"If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear [i]this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, 59then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants [j]extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. 60Moreover He will bring back on you all [k]the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. 61Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. 62You [l]shall be left few in number, whereas you were [m]as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. 63And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD [n]rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD [o]will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be [p]plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

64"Then the LORD [q]will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and [r]there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone. 65And [s]among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; [t]but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and [u]anguish of soul. 66Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. 67[v]In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and [w]because of the sight which your eyes see.

68"And the LORD [x]will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, [y]'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you*."

The Covenant Renewed in Moab

29 These *are* the words of the [a]covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb.

2Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: [b]"You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land— 3[c]the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders. 4Yet [d]the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this *very* day. 5[e]And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. [f]Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. 6[g]You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or *similar* drink, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God. 7And when you came to this place, [h]Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan came out against us to battle, and we conquered them. 8We took their land and [i]gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh. 9Therefore [j]keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may [k]prosper in all that you do.

10"All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, 11your little ones and your wives—also the stranger who *is* in your camp, from [l]the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water— 12that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and [m]into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today, 13that He may [n]establish you today as a people for Himself, and *that* He may be God to you, [o]just as He has spoken to you, and [p]just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

14"I make this covenant and this oath, [q]not with you alone, 15but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, [r]as well as with *him* who *is* not here with us today 16(for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by, 17and you saw their abominations and their idols which *were* among them—wood and

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29:9–13 ***keep the words of this covenant.*** The members of the covenant community included all adults, children, and strangers who had joined the Israelites, as well as those yet to be born.

29:10–15 The Covenant Renewed—As Israel reached the plains of Moab, anticipating their entrance into the Promised Land, it was important for the people to review and renew their covenantal relationship with God. So Moses summoned the people together and challenged them to keep the covenant that God had established with their forefathers. The essential terms of the covenant gave Israel the

28:57 [h] Gen. 49:10 **28:58** [i] Ex. 6:3 **28:59** [j] Dan. 9:12 **28:60** [k] Deut. 7:15 **28:62** [l] Deut. 4:27 [m] Neh. 9:23 **28:63** [n] Jer. 32:41 [o] Prov. 1:26 [p] Jer. 12:14; 45:4 **28:64** [q] Jer. 16:13 [r] Deut. 28:36 **28:65** [s] Amos 9:4 [t] Lev. 26:36 [u] Lev. 26:16 **28:67** [v] Job 7:4 [w] Deut. 28:34 **28:68** [x] Hos. 8:13 [y] Deut. 17:16 **29:1** [a] Deut. 5:2, 3 **29:2** [b] Ex. 19:4 **29:3** [c] Deut. 4:34; 7:19 **29:4** [d] [Acts 28:26, 27] **29:5** [e] Deut. 1:3; 8:2 [f] Deut. 8:4 **29:6** [g] Deut. 8:3 **29:7** [h] Num. 21:23, 24 **29:8** [i] Deut. 3:12, 13 **29:9** [j] Deut. 4:6 [k] Josh. 1:7 **29:11** [l] Josh. 9:21, 23, 27 **29:12** [m] Neh. 10:29 **29:13** [n] Deut. 28:9 [o] Ex. 6:7 [p] Gen. 17:7, 8 **29:14** [q] [Jer. 31:31] **29:15** [r] Acts 2:39

stone and silver and gold); 18so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, [s]whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, [t]and that there may not be among you a root bearing [u]bitterness or wormwood; 19and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the [v]dictates* of my heart'—[w]as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.

20[x]"The LORD would not spare him; for then [y]the anger of the LORD and [z]His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD [a]would blot out his name from under heaven. 21And the LORD [b]would separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the [c]Law, 22so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they [d]see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it:

23'The whole land *is* brimstone, [e]salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does any grass grow there, [f]like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.' 24All nations would say, [g]'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' 25Then *people* would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt; 26for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them. 27Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, [h]to bring on it every curse that is written in this book. 28And the LORD [i]uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.'

29"The secret *things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.

The Blessing of Returning to God

30 "Now [a]it shall come to pass, when [b]all these things come upon you, the blessing and the [c]curse which I have set before you, and [d]you call *them* to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, 2and you [e]return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, 3[f]that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity,

* **29:19** Or *stubbornness*

Promised Land and prosperity in their possession of it, but only on the condition of their obedience and willingness to walk in God's ways.

29:18 ***heart turns away.*** To be in the position of once having known the way of the Lord, and then to have turned and followed a path of disobedience and rebellion is a miserable position. It is the cause of great heartache for the faithful ones who see it happening. The backslider becomes more and more hardened against God, and it will ultimately affect a wider and wider group of people. There is no security or safety while persisting in a course of flagrant and continuous rebellion. ***root bearing bitterness or wormwood.*** Tolerance for idolatry and pagan practices would always corrupt the community, and therefore the covenant relationship with God.

29:24–28 ***Why has the LORD done so.*** The lesson of faithless Israel would become known among the nations, even as the deliverance of Israel was to be known by them.

29:29 Revelation—Revelation may be defined as that process by which God gives to us truths that we would not otherwise know. The details of the creation story in Genesis 1 and 2 are an example of general revelation. In that man was not created until the sixth day, there was no human to even write about creation until after it happened. God revealed the creation facts to Moses. All created things have an innate knowledge of their Creator through creation itself.

We know God spoke to the human authors of our Bible. We are not sure exactly how it happened, but Scripture gives some examples of specific revelation. God's call to Samuel was in an audible voice he mistook for Eli's (1 Sam. 3). Often God spoke through angels such as when Gabriel was sent to tell Mary she would give birth to the Messiah (Luke 1:26–37). On other occasions it appears that God spoke directly to a man, as He did to Noah (Gen. 6) and Moses through the burning bush (Ex. 3). On still other occasions God communicated through dreams or visions as He did with the wise men (Matt. 2:12) and Peter (Acts 10).

One of the most important ways God reveals Himself to people in Scripture is through encounters where God takes on human form called a theophany or Christophany. In Genesis 32 Jacob wrestled with God, and in Joshua 5 Joshua encounters a commander of the Lord's that most Bible students take to be a preincarnate Christ.

30:1 ***when all these things come upon you.*** God had allowed Moses to foresee Israel's future apostasy and God's dispersal of the people among the nations. Hundreds of years later, these verses must have been both sad and encouraging to the Israelites as they saw the time of their dispersal.

29:18 [s] Deut. 11:16 [t] Heb. 12:15 [u] Deut. 32:32
29:19 [v] Jer. 3:17; 7:24 [w] Is. 30:1 **29:20** [x] Ezek. 14:7 [y] Ps. 74:1 [z] Ps. 79:5 [a] Deut. 9:14 **29:21** [b] [Matt. 24:51] [c] Deut. 30:10 **29:22** [d] Jer. 19:8; 49:17; 50:13 **29:23** [e] Zeph. 2:9 [f] Gen. 19:24, 25 **29:24** [g] 1 Kin. 9:8 **29:27** [h] Dan. 9:11 **29:28** [i] 1 Kin. 14:15 **30:1** [a] Lev. 26:40 [b] Deut. 28:2 [c] Deut. 28:15–45 [d] Deut. 4:29, 30 **30:2** [e] Neh. 1:9 **30:3** [f] Jer. 29:14

and have compassion on you, and [g]gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. 4[h]If *any* of you are driven out to the farthest *parts* under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. 5Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. 6And [i]the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

7"Also the LORD your God will put all these [j]curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8And you will [k]again obey the voice of the LORD and do all His commandments which I command you today. 9[l]The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the LORD will again [m]rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers, 10if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, *and* if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

The Choice of Life or Death

11"For this commandment which I command you today [n]*is* not *too* mysterious for you, nor *is* it far off. 12[o]It *is* not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 13Nor *is* it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 14But the word *is* very near you, [p]in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

15"See, [q]I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, 16in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. 17But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, 18[r]I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. 19[s]I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* [t]I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; 20that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He *is* your [u]life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

Joshua the New Leader of Israel

31 Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. 2And he said to them: "I [a]*am* one hundred and twenty years old today. I can no longer [b]go out and come in. Also the LORD has said to me, [c]'You shall not cross over this Jordan.' 3The LORD your God [d]Himself crosses over before you; He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them. [e]Joshua himself crosses over before you, just [f]as the LORD has said. 4[g]And the LORD will do to them [h]as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites and their land, when He destroyed them. 5[i]The LORD

30:6 ***circumcise your heart.*** God's intentions for His people have always been for the whole person to respond to Him. Outward symbols, such as circumcision, were always intended to be the mark of an inner reality, the heart that was tender to the Lord.

30:10 ***this Book of the Law.*** A reference to the Book of Deuteronomy. ***all your heart . . . all your soul.*** An open heart in the presence of God through the law creates a dynamic of "life" and "blessing" (v. 19).

30:11 ***not too mysterious for you.*** This is not a task that is hard to understand.

30:12–13 ***not in heaven . . . beyond the sea.*** Obeying God's law is entirely within the reach of the average person.

30:14 ***very near you.*** The revelation of God, unlike any other book, makes the truth of immediate importance to the reader.

30:18 ***today.*** Moses establishes here the best pattern for the preaching of the Word of God. Responses to God should not be delayed. Assuming that there will be a later day to respond to Him is dangerous thinking.

30:19 ***life and death.*** Biblical teaching is remarkable for the clarity with which it presents the great issues that demand decision. Either we love the Lord and walk in His ways, or we turn from Him to worship idols. We can choose life or death, blessing or cursing. God takes no pleasure in the misery of sinners, but urges us to choose life for our good and the good of unborn generations. The Lord has spoken, and we cannot plead ignorance. ***and your descendants.*** The present generation's choice always determines the direction of future generations.

31:2–3 ***You shall not cross over this Jordan.*** Moses spoke regretfully of God's refusal to permit him to enter the Promised Land, yet he continued to make the most important point of all. The leadership of God Himself would not cease with Moses' death.

30:3 [g] Ezek. 34:13 **30:4** [h] Neh. 1:9 **30:6** [i] Deut. 10:16 **30:7** [j] Jer. 30:16, 20 **30:8** [k] Zeph. 3:20 **30:9** [l] Deut. 28:11 [m] Jer. 32:41 **30:11** [n] Is. 45:19 **30:12** [o] Rom. 10:6–8 **30:14** [p] Rom. 10:8 **30:15** [q] Deut. 30:1, 19 **30:18** [r] Deut. 4:26; 8:19 **30:19** [s] Deut. 4:26 [t] Deut. 30:15 **30:20** [u] [John 11:25; 14:6] **31:2** [a] Deut. 34:7 [b] 1 Kin. 3:7 [c] Num. 20:12 **31:3** [d] Deut. 9:3 [e] Num. 27:18 [f] Num. 27:21 **31:4** [g] Deut. 3:21 [h] Num. 21:24, 33 **31:5** [i] Deut. 7:2; 20:10–20

will give them over to you, that you may do to them according to every commandment which I have commanded you. 6[j]Be strong and of good courage, [k]do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, [l]He *is* the One who goes with you. [m]He will not leave you nor forsake you."

7Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, [n]"Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. 8And the LORD, [o]He *is* the One who goes before you. [p]He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

The Law to Be Read Every Seven Years

9So Moses wrote this law [q]and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, [r]who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. 10And Moses commanded them, saying: "At the end of *every* seven years, at the appointed time in the [s]year of release, [t]at the Feast of Tabernacles, 11when all Israel comes to [u]appear before the LORD your God in the [v]place which He chooses, [w]you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12[x]Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who *is* within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, 13and *that* their children, [y]who have not known it, [z]may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess."

Prediction of Israel's Rebellion

14Then the LORD said to Moses, [a]"Behold, the days approach when you must die; call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of meeting, that [b]I may inaugurate him."

So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tabernacle of meeting. 15Now [c]the LORD appeared at the tabernacle in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood above the door of the tabernacle.

16And the LORD said to Moses: "Behold, you will rest with your fathers; and this people will [d]rise and [e]play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go *to be* among them, and they will [f]forsake Me and [g]break My covenant which I have made with them. 17Then My anger shall be [h]aroused against them in that day, and [i]I will forsake them, and I will [j]hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, [k]'Have not these evils come upon us because our God *is* [l]not among us?' 18And [m]I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods.

19"Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be [n]a witness for Me against the children of Israel. 20When I have brought them to the land flowing with milk and honey, of which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and filled themselves [o]and grown fat, [p]then they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant. 21Then it shall be, [q]when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify against them as a witness; for it will not be forgotten in the mouths of their descendants, for [r]I know the inclination [s]of their behavior today, even before I have brought them to the land of which I swore *to give them*."

22Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel. 23[t]Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, [u]"Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

24So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, 25that Moses

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31:12–13 Obeying God—Because the Israelites had no Bibles, they had to come together to listen to God's word as read by a priest from a scroll. The laws were to be read to the whole assembly including women and children. No doubt memorization was important as a way of impressing the laws on the minds and hearts of the people. But it was not the end. The expected end result of hearing was obedience. Obedience to the Word of God is the only way that the child of God can please God in the new life. "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22).

31:16 *play the harlot.* This expression speaks both of spiritual adultery and physical acts of sexual immorality that were performed in association with the worship of Baal and Asherah, the gods of Canaan.

31:22 *Therefore Moses wrote.* Psalm 90 is also attributed to Moses, and perhaps Psalm 91. Both psalms are logical meditations for these last chapters of Deuteronomy.

31:6 [j] Josh. 10:25 [k] Deut. 1:29 [l] Deut. 20:4 [m] Heb. 13:5 **31:7** [n] Deut. 31:23 **31:8** [o] Ex. 13:21 [p] Josh. 1:5 **31:9** [q] Deut. 17:18; 31:25, 26 [r] Josh. 3:3 **31:10** [s] Deut. 15:1, 2 [t] Lev. 23:34 **31:11** [u] Deut. 16:16 [v] Deut. 12:5 [w] Josh. 8:34 **31:12** [x] Deut. 4:10 **31:13** [y] Deut. 11:2 [z] Ps. 78:6, 7 **31:14** [a] Num. 27:13 [b] Deut. 3:28 **31:15** [c] Ex. 33:9 **31:16** [d] Deut. 29:22 [e] Ex. 34:15 [f] Deut. 32:15 [g] Judg. 2:20 **31:17** [h] Judg. 2:14; 6:13 [i] 2 Chr. 15:2 [j] Deut. 32:20 [k] Judg. 6:13 [l] Num. 14:42 **31:18** [m] Deut. 31:17 **31:19** [n] Deut. 31:22, 26 **31:20** [o] Deut. 32:15–17 [p] Deut. 31:16 **31:21** [q] Deut. 31:17 [r] Hos. 5:3 [s] Amos 5:25, 26 **31:23** [t] Num. 27:23 [u] Deut. 31:7

commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying:
26 "Take this Book of the Law, [v]and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there [w]as a witness against you; 27 [x]for I know your rebellion and your [y]stiff neck. *If* today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death? 28 Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing [z]and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that after my death you will [a]become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And [b]evil will befall you [c]in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands."

The Song of Moses

30 Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:

32 "Give [a]ear, O heavens, and I will speak;
And hear, O [b]earth, the words of my mouth.
2 Let [c]my teaching drop as the rain,
My speech distill as the dew,
[d]As raindrops on the tender herb,
And as showers on the grass.
3 For I proclaim the [e]name of the LORD:
[f]Ascribe greatness to our God.
4 *He is* [g]the Rock, [h]His work *is* perfect;
For all His ways *are* justice,
[i]A God of truth and [j]without injustice;
Righteous and upright *is* He.
5 "They[k] have corrupted themselves;
They are not His children,
Because of their blemish:
A [l]perverse and crooked generation.
6 Do you thus [m]deal with the LORD,
O foolish and unwise people?
Is He not [n]your Father, *who* [o]bought you?
Has He not [p]made you and established you?
7 "Remember[q] the days of old,
Consider the years of many generations.
[r]Ask your father, and he will show you;
Your elders, and they will tell you:
8 When the Most High [s]divided their inheritance to the nations,
When He [t]separated the sons of Adam,
He set the boundaries of the peoples
According to the number of the children of Israel.
9 For [u]the LORD's portion *is* His people;
Jacob *is* the place of His inheritance.
10 "He found him [v]in a desert land
And in the wasteland, a howling wilderness;
He encircled him, He instructed him,
He [w]kept him as the apple of His eye.
11 [x]As an eagle stirs up its nest,
Hovers over its young,
Spreading out its wings, taking them up,
Carrying them on its wings,
12 So the LORD alone led him,
And *there was* no foreign god with him.
13 "He[y] made him ride in the heights of the earth,
That he might eat the produce of the fields;
He made him draw honey from the rock,
And oil from the flinty rock;

32:7 Remembering the Works of God—The Bible's revelation of God's work in the past provides an informative and exciting panorama of centuries of divine activity toward man.

First, it gives man an education in truths unknowable apart from divine revelation. For example, the creation of man described in Genesis 1 and 2 answers man's most basic questions: "Who am I?" and "Where did I come from?" The only way we can get this information is from God Himself.

Second, the Bible sets forth a significant body of historical evidence for the truth and validity of the Christian faith. These evidences include fulfilled prophecy, the miracles of Christ, and Christ's death and resurrection. The believer's faith is thus grounded in historical events and is much more than just "a leap in the dark."

Third, the Bible records examples to help present-day Christians. Israel's failures and the consequences that resulted are used by the New Testament writers as lessons. Believers are urged to avoid grumbling, as Israel did (1 Cor. 10:10–11), and the deviant behavior of Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Pet. 2: 4–9). Paul is said to be a living example for believers to follow (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1), as is Jesus' humility in the midst of suffering (1 Pet. 2:21).

Fourth, the Bible provides encouragement for Christians in their life and witness. If God could use an adulterer and murderer like David, then God can surely use a struggling Christian today if that person has David's passion for the Lord. Likewise, if God saved Saul of Tarsus, the chief enemy of the early church (Acts 9:1–31), He can certainly save the people with whom Christians daily share their faith.

32:12 *the LORD alone.* Deuteronomy is an extended argument against idolatry and paganism. Clearly the Israelites had no reason to abandon the God of grace and love, who had given them all they needed.

31:26 [v] 2 Kin. 22:8 [w] Deut. 31:19 **31:27** [x] Deut. 9:7, 24 [y] Ex. 32:9 **31:28** [z] Deut. 30:19 **31:29** [a] Judg. 2:19 [b] Deut. 28:15 [c] Gen. 49:1 **32:1** [a] Deut. 4:26 [b] Jer. 6:19 **32:2** [c] Is. 55:10, 11 [d] Ps. 72:6 **32:3** [e] Deut. 28:58 [f] 1 Chr. 29:11 **32:4** [g] Ps. 18:2 [h] 2 Sam. 22:31 [i] Is. 65:16 [j] Job 34:10 **32:5** [k] Deut. 4:25; 31:29 [l] Phil. 2:15 **32:6** [m] Ps. 116:12 [n] Is. 63:16 [o] Ps. 74:2 [p] Deut. 32:15 **32:7** [q] Ps. 44:1 [r] Ps. 78:5–8 **32:8** [s] Acts 17:26 [t] Gen. 11:8 **32:9** [u] Ex. 19:5 **32:10** [v] Jer. 2:6 [w] Ps. 17:8 **32:11** [x] Is. 31:5 **32:13** [y] Is. 58:14

14 Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock,
[z]With fat of lambs;
And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats,
With the choicest wheat;
And you drank wine, the [a]blood of the grapes.

15 "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked;
[b]You grew fat, you grew thick,
You are obese!
Then he [c]forsook God *who* [d]made him,
And scornfully esteemed the [e]Rock of his salvation.
16 [f]They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign *gods;*
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.
17 [g]They sacrificed to demons, not to God,
To gods they did not know,
To new *gods,* new arrivals
That your fathers did not fear.
18 [h]Of the Rock *who* begot you, you are unmindful,
And have [i]forgotten the God who fathered you.

19 "And[j] when the LORD saw *it,* He spurned *them,*
Because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters.
20 And He said: 'I will hide My face from them,
I will see what their end *will be,*
For they *are* a perverse generation,
[k]Children in whom *is* no faith.
21 [l]They have provoked Me to jealousy by *what* is not God;
They have moved Me to anger [m]by their foolish idols.
But [n]I will provoke them to jealousy by *those who are* not a nation;
I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.
22 For [o]a fire is kindled in My anger,
And shall burn to the lowest hell;
It shall consume the earth with her increase,
And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 'I will [p]heap disasters on them;
[q]I will spend My arrows on them.
24 *They shall be* wasted with hunger,
Devoured by pestilence and bitter destruction;
I will also send against them the [r]teeth of beasts,
With the poison of serpents of the dust.
25 The sword shall destroy outside;
There shall be terror within
For the young man and virgin,
The nursing child with the man of gray hairs.
26 [s]I would have said, "I will dash them in pieces,
I will make the memory of them to cease from among men,"
27 Had I not feared the wrath of the enemy,
Lest their adversaries should misunderstand,
Lest they should say, [t]"Our hand *is* high;
And it is not the LORD who has done all this."'

28 "For they *are* a nation void of counsel,
Nor *is there any* understanding in them.
29 [u]Oh, that they were wise, *that* they understood this,
That they would consider their [v]latter end!
30 How could one chase a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Unless their Rock [w]had sold them,
And the LORD had surrendered them?
31 For their rock *is* not like our Rock,
[x]Even our enemies themselves *being* judges.
32 For [y]their vine *is* of the vine of Sodom
And of the fields of Gomorrah;

32:15 ***Jeshurun.*** Jeshurun, a pet name for Israel, means "uprightness." This part of the song contrasts what Israel should have been (upright) and what they became (rebellious). ***he forsook God.*** A nation or a person who has forsaken God is godless. Because God is the source of blessing, peace, joy, wisdom, and comfort, they have also forsaken all of these attributes. One would think that that would be enough to drive people back to God. But persistence in willful disobedience and willful ignorance of God's ways creates a kind of blindness and deafness that makes people unwilling to turn back. At this point God sometimes hides His face, and they experience greater misfortunes.

32:17 ***demons.*** Scripture makes it clear that the false gods do not exist as such, and this passage identifies the power behind these gods: demons. It is important to remember this, especially in this era of multiculturalism, when many voices protest the exclusiveness of Christianity.

32:29 ***consider their latter end.*** In this great prophetic song Moses longs for the nation of Israel to turn to God and repent of its wickedness. As history proved, there was continual need for Israel to repent and turn back to God. They did abandon their covenant with God, but God did not abandon them, although He let them reap the consequences of their disobedience. Moses was not the last prophet to long for their repentance, and we can only guess at the heavenly joy Moses felt on the Mount of Transfiguration, seeing Jesus the Christ, who would finally redeem the people (Mark 9).

32:14 [z] Ps. 81:16 [a] Gen. 49:11 **32:15** [b] Deut. 31:20 [c] Is. 1:4 [d] Is. 51:13 [e] Ps. 95:1 **32:16** [f] 1 Cor. 10:22 **32:17** [g] Rev. 9:20 **32:18** [h] Is. 17:10 [i] Jer. 2:32 **32:19** [j] Judg. 2:14 **32:20** [k] Matt. 17:17 **32:21** [l] Ps. 78:58 [m] Ps. 31:6 [n] Rom. 10:19 **32:22** [o] Lam. 4:11 **32:23** [p] Ex. 32:12 [q] Ps. 7:12, 13 **32:24** [r] Lev. 26:22 **32:26** [s] Ezek. 20:23 **32:27** [t] Is. 10:12–15 **32:29** [u] [Luke 19:42] [v] Deut. 31:29 **32:30** [w] Judg. 2:14 **32:31** [x] [1 Sam. 4:7, 8] **32:32** [y] Is. 1:8–10

Their grapes *are* grapes of gall,
Their clusters *are* bitter.
33 Their wine *is* [z]the poison of serpents,
And the cruel [a]venom of cobras.

34 'Is this not [b]laid up in store with Me,
Sealed up among My treasures?
35 [c]Vengeance is Mine, and recompense;
Their foot shall slip in *due* time;
[d]For the day of their calamity *is* at hand,
And the things to come hasten upon them.'

36 "For[e] the LORD will judge His people
[f]And have compassion on His servants,
When He sees that *their* power is gone,
And [g]*there is* no one *remaining*, bond or free.
37 He will say: [h]'Where *are* their gods,
The rock in which they sought refuge?
38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices,
And drank the wine of their drink offering?
Let them rise and help you,
And be your refuge.

39 'Now see that [i]I, *even* I, *am* He,
And [j]*there is* no God besides Me;
[k]I kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
Nor *is there any* who can deliver from My hand.
40 For I raise My hand to heaven,
And say, "*As* I live forever,
41 [l]If I whet My glittering sword,
And My hand takes hold on judgment,
I will render vengeance to My enemies,
And repay those who hate Me.
42 I will make My arrows drunk with blood,
And My sword shall devour flesh,
With the blood of the slain and the captives,
From the heads of the leaders of the enemy."'

43 "Rejoice,[m] O Gentiles, *with* His people;*
For He will [n]avenge the blood of His servants,
And render vengeance to His adversaries;
He [o]will provide atonement for His land *and* His people."

44 So Moses came with Joshua* the son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. 45 Moses finished speaking all these words to all Israel, 46 and he said to them: [p]"Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your [q]children to be careful to observe—all the words of this law. 47 For it *is* not a futile thing for you, because it *is* your [r]life, and by this word you shall prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess."

Moses to Die on Mount Nebo

48 Then the LORD spoke to Moses that very same day, saying: 49 [s]"Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which *is* in the land of Moab, across from Jericho; view the land of Canaan, which I give to the children of Israel as a possession; 50 and die on the mountain which you ascend, and be gathered to your people, just as [t]Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people; 51 because [u]you trespassed against Me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah Kadesh, in the Wilderness of Zin, because you [v]did not hallow Me in the midst of the children of Israel. 52 [w]Yet you shall see the land before *you*, though you shall not go there, into the land which I am giving to the children of Israel."

* **32:43** A Dead Sea Scroll fragment adds *And let all the gods (angels) worship Him* (compare Septuagint and Hebrews 1:6). * **32:44** Hebrew *Hoshea* (compare Numbers 13:8, 16)

32:35 ***Vengeance is Mine.*** Only God who is completely just can judge and make right all the wrongs committed (Rom. 12:19–20).

32:36 ***have compassion on his servants.*** God will discern between the righteous and the wicked (Mal. 3:16).

32:39 God's Sovereignty—In his final words to the Israelites, Moses reminds them where they came from. Their history could not be written without God being in the central position. Their future, likewise, was intimately tied to God. To think otherwise would be folly (Deut. 32:28–29). The basic point is that no matter how you want to look at it, God is in charge. That was the most basic fact in the Israelites' situation.

God's sovereignty is also the central fact in ours. It is not always easy to affirm it. We would much rather see *ourselves* as the central controlling force in our lives. Most of us simply don't like being told what to do or how to live. The problem is that the whole history of man teaches us that when God's laws are not followed, disaster ensues. When we put ourselves in charge, sooner or later we pay the price.

A whole generation of Israelites failed to understand God's sovereignty. As a result, they died in the desert, never having arrived at the Promised Land. While it is true that they lived out their lives, they surely missed out on what could have been. That fact is the basic backdrop for Moses' last words to the new generation, as they approached the Promised Land. We dare not ignore the lesson.

32:43 ***Rejoice, O Gentiles.*** The Gentiles are invited here to join in worship of the living God. All through history there have been a few who accepted this invitation (such as Ruth), and it was fulfilled in Christ (Rom. 15).

32:33 [z] Ps. 58:4 [a] Rom. 3:13 **32:34** [b] [Jer. 2:22] **32:35** [c] Heb. 10:30 [d] 2 Pet. 2:3 **32:36** [e] Ps. 135:14 [f] Jer. 31:20 [g] 2 Kin. 14:26 **32:37** [h] Judg. 10:14 **32:39** [i] Is. 41:4; 43:10 [j] Is. 45:5 [k] 1 Sam. 2:6 **32:41** [l] Is. 1:24; 66:16 **32:43** [m] Rom. 15:10 [n] Rev. 6:10; 19:2 [o] Ps. 65:3; 79:9; 85:1 **32:46** [p] Ezek. 40:4; 44:5 [q] Deut. 11:19 **32:47** [r] Deut. 8:3; 30:15–20 **32:49** [s] Num. 27:12–14 **32:50** [t] Num. 20:25, 28; 33:38 **32:51** [u] Num. 20:11–13 [v] Lev. 10:3 **32:52** [w] Deut. 34:1–5

Moses' Final Blessing on Israel

33 Now this *is* [a]the blessing with which Moses [b]the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. **2**And he said:

[c]"The LORD came from Sinai,
And dawned on them from [d]Seir;
He shone forth from [e]Mount Paran,
And He came with [f]ten thousands of saints;
From His right hand
Came a fiery law for them.
3 Yes, [g]He loves the people;
[h]All His saints *are* in Your hand;
They [i]sit down at Your feet;
Everyone [j]receives Your words.
4 [k]Moses commanded a law for us,
[l]A heritage of the congregation of Jacob.
5 And He was [m]King in [n]Jeshurun,
When the leaders of the people were gathered,
All the tribes of Israel together.

6 "Let [o]Reuben live, and not die,
Nor let his men be few."

7And this he said of [p]Judah:

"Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah,
And bring him to his people;
[q]Let his hands be sufficient for him,
And may You be [r]a help against his enemies."

8And of [s]Levi he said:

[t]"*Let* Your Thummim and Your Urim *be* with Your holy one,
[u]Whom You tested at Massah,
And with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah,
9 [v]Who says of his father and mother,
'I have not [w]seen them';
[x]Nor did he acknowledge his brothers,
Or know his own children;
For [y]they have observed Your word
And kept Your covenant.
10 [z]They shall teach Jacob Your judgments,
And Israel Your law.
They shall put incense before You,
[a]And a whole burnt sacrifice on Your altar.
11 Bless his substance, LORD,
And [b]accept the work of his hands;
Strike the loins of those who rise against him,
And of those who hate him, that they rise not again."

12Of Benjamin he said:

"The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by Him,
Who shelters him all the day long;
And he shall dwell between His shoulders."

13And of Joseph he said:

[c]"Blessed of the LORD *is* his land,
With the precious things of heaven, with the [d]dew,
And the deep lying beneath,
14 With the precious fruits of the sun,
With the precious produce of the months,
15 With the best things of [e]the ancient mountains,
With the precious things [f]of the everlasting hills,
16 With the precious things of the earth and its fullness,
And the favor of [g]Him who dwelt in the bush.
Let *the blessing* come [h]'on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him *who was* separate from his brothers.'*
17 His glory *is like* a [i]firstborn bull,
And his horns *like* the [j]horns of the wild ox;
Together with them
[k]He shall push the peoples
To the ends of the earth;
[l]They *are* the ten thousands of Ephraim,
And they *are* the thousands of Manasseh."

18And of Zebulun he said:

[m]"Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out,
And Issachar in your tents!
19 They shall [n]call the peoples *to* the mountain;

* **33:16** Genesis 49:26

33:1 ***Moses the man of God.*** In spite of his failure at the waters of Meribah Kadesh, Moses is noted here and throughout the Bible as "the man of God."

33:4 ***commanded a law for us.*** God chose Israel alone to receive His instructions, yet the law was ultimately for His whole creation, as Jesus demonstrated when He broke down the wall between Jew and Gentile (Rom. 3–7).

33:9–10 ***they have observed Your word.*** The Levites were keepers of God's word, even when it meant drawing their swords against their own brothers (Ex. 32:25–29). This is a degree of testing that most believers will never experience, but Jesus promised that the world would hate His followers, and they would experience opposition even from their own families (Matt. 10:22). It is not easy to be a follower of God in a world of sin and death, but the Christian may be assured that as he walks in obedience to God's truth, God "always leads us in triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14).

33:1 [a] Gen. 49:28 [b] Ps. 90 **33:2** [c] Ps. 68:8, 17 [d] Deut. 2:1, 4 [e] Num. 10:12 [f] Dan. 7:10 **33:3** [g] Hos. 11:1 [h] 1 Sam. 2:9 [i] [Luke 10:39] [j] Prov. 2:1 **33:4** [k] John 1:17; 7:19 [l] Ps. 119:111 **33:5** [m] Ex. 15:18 [n] Deut. 32:15 **33:6** [o] Gen. 49:3, 4 **33:7** [p] Gen. 49:8–12 [q] Gen. 49:8 [r] Ps. 146:5 **33:8** [s] Gen. 49:5 [t] Ex. 28:30 [u] Ps. 81:7 **33:9** [v] [Num. 25:5–8] [w] [Gen. 29:32] [x] Ex. 32:26–28 [y] Mal. 2:5, 6 **33:10** [z] Lev. 10:11 [a] Ps. 51:19 **33:11** [b] 2 Sam. 24:23 **33:13** [c] Gen. 49:22–26 [d] Gen. 27:28 **33:15** [e] Gen. 49:26 [f] Hab. 3:6 **33:16** [g] Ex. 3:2–4 [h] Gen. 49:26 **33:17** [i] 1 Chr. 5:1 [j] Num. 23:22 [k] Ps. 44:5 [l] Gen. 48:19 **33:18** [m] Gen. 49:13–15 **33:19** [n] Is. 2:3

There [o]they shall offer sacrifices of
righteousness;
For they shall partake *of* the
abundance of the seas
And *of* treasures hidden in the sand."

20 And of Gad he said:

"Blessed *is* he who [p]enlarges Gad;
He dwells as a lion,
And tears the arm and the crown of
his head.
21 [q]He provided the first *part* for himself,
Because a lawgiver's portion was
reserved there.
[r]He came *with* the heads of the people;
He administered the justice of the LORD,
And His judgments with Israel."

22 And of Dan he said:

"Dan *is* a lion's whelp;
[s]He shall leap from Bashan."

23 And of Naphtali he said:

"O Naphtali, [t]satisfied with favor,
And full of the blessing of the LORD,
[u]Possess the west and the south."

24 And of Asher he said:

[v]"Asher *is* most blessed of sons;
Let him be favored by his brothers,
And let him [w]dip his foot in oil.
25 Your sandals *shall be* [x]iron and
bronze;
As your days, *so shall* your
strength *be*.

26 "*There is* [y]no one like the God of
[z]Jeshurun,
[a]*Who* rides the heavens to help you,
And in His excellency on the clouds.
27 The eternal God *is your* [b]refuge,
And underneath *are* the everlasting
arms;
[c]He will thrust out the enemy from
before you,
And will say, 'Destroy!'
28 Then [d]Israel shall dwell in safety,
[e]The fountain of Jacob [f]alone,
In a land of grain and new wine;
His [g]heavens shall also drop dew.
29 [h]Happy *are* you, O Israel!
[i]Who *is* like you, a people saved by the
LORD,
[j]The shield of your help
And the sword of your majesty!
Your enemies [k]shall submit to you,
And [l]you shall tread down their high
places."

Moses Dies on Mount Nebo

34 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to [a]Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land of Gilead as far as Dan, **2** all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea,* **3** the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, [b]the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. **4** Then the LORD said to him, [c]"This *is* the land of which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' [d]I have caused you to see *it* with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there."

5 [e]So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. **6** And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but [f]no one knows his grave to this day. **7** [g]Moses *was* one hundred and twenty years old when he died. [h]His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished. **8** And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab [i]thirty days. So the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses ended.

9 Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the [j]spirit of wisdom, for [k]Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

10 But since then there [l]has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, [m]whom the LORD knew face to face, **11** in all [n]the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, **12** and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

* **34:2** That is, the Mediterranean

33:22 ***lion's whelp.*** This may refer to the small size of the tribe of Dan. Though Dan's land inheritance was close to Judah by the coastal plains, the tribe would not be able to keep their inheritance because of the hostility of the Philistines. Therefore, the Danites would one day migrate to the region of Bashan, south of Mount Hermon (Judg. 18).

34:1–2 ***Moab . . . Jericho . . . Western Sea.*** Moab was where Moses had given Israel an explanation of the law and led them in a covenant renewal. Jericho was the first city in Canaan to be conquered. The sea is the Mediterranean.

34:6 ***no one knows his grave.*** If his burial place had been known, some people would have been tempted to make it a shrine and possibly have begun to worship there.

34:9 ***Joshua . . . full of the spirit of wisdom.*** Joshua was the leader chosen to succeed Moses, and God filled him with the spirit of wisdom. But there was another, a prophet like Moses, who would be greater even than Moses. That other was the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19–26).

33:19 [o] Ps. 4:5; 51:19 **33:20** [p] 1 Chr. 12:8 **33:21** [q] Num. 32:16, 17 [r] Josh. 4:12 **33:22** [s] Josh. 19:47 **33:23** [t] Gen. 49:21 [u] Josh. 19:32 **33:24** [v] Gen. 49:20 [w] Job 29:6 **33:25** [x] Deut. 8:9 **33:26** [y] Ex. 15:11 [z] Deut. 32:15 [a] Ps. 68:3, 33, 34; 104:3 **33:27** [b] [Ps. 90:1; 91:2, 9] [c] Deut. 9:3–5 **33:28** [d] Jer. 23:6; 33:16 [e] Deut. 8:7, 8 [f] Num. 23:9 [g] Gen. 27:28 **33:29** [h] Ps. 144:15 [i] 2 Sam. 7:23 [j] Ps. 115:9 [k] Ps. 18:44; 66:3 [l] Num. 33:52 **34:1** [a] Deut. 32:49 **34:3** [b] 2 Chr. 28:15 **34:4** [c] Gen. 12:7 [d] Deut. 3:27 **34:5** [e] Deut. 32:50; Josh. 1:1, 2 **34:6** [f] Jude 9 **34:7** [g] Deut. 31:2 [h] Gen. 27:1; 48:10 **34:8** [i] Gen. 50:3, 10 **34:9** [j] Is. 11:2 [k] Num. 27:18, 23 **34:10** [l] Deut. 18:15, 18 [m] Ex. 33:11 **34:11** [n] Deut. 7:19

THE BOOK OF
JOSHUA

▶ **AUTHOR:** Jewish tradition seems correct in assigning the authorship of this book to Joshua himself. The unity of style and organization suggest a single authorship for the majority of the book, with the exception of three small portions that may have been added after Joshua's death: Othniel's capture of Kirjath Sepher (15:13–19); Dan's migration to the north (19:47); and Joshua's death and burial (24:29–33). However, Joshua 24:26 makes this clear statement: "Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God."

▶ **TIME:** c. 1405–1398 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Josh. 11:23

▶ **THEME:** In the Book of Joshua, the Israelites are commanded to destroy everything and everybody so that they can take full possession of the land. The transition of leadership is from Moses to Joshua. A nomadic people attaches themselves to given tracts of land, and a nation is formed from a wandering tribe as the conquest is completed in 21:43–45. We also see how a failure to carry out God's plan completely lays a foundation for future problems.

God's Commission to Joshua

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' [a]assistant, saying: **2** [b]"Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. **3** [c]Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. **4** [d]From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. **5** [e]No man shall *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life; [f]as I was with Moses, *so* [g]I will be with you. [h]I will not leave you nor forsake you. **6** [i]Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. **7** Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law [j]which Moses My servant commanded you; [k]do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. **8** [l]This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but [m]you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. **9** [n]Have I not commanded you? Be strong

1:1 ***the servant of the LORD.*** In the Hebrew Scripture this is a special title given only to Moses, Joshua (24:29; Judg. 2:8), David (Ps. 18:title; 36:title), and the Messiah (Is. 42:19). ***the LORD spoke to Joshua.*** God spoke directly to Joshua encouraging him and urging him to obey all the law. True success cannot occur apart from knowing God personally and doing His will.

1:7–8 Perseverance—A successful mission in the service of the Lord is dependent upon courage, meditation and obedience. Keeping God's words in our hearts molds our character and guides our footsteps.

1:8 Meditating upon God's Word—Helping people become prosperous and successful is big business. Late night infomercials point to a plethora of techniques for getting rich. Everyone wants to be wealthy. Everyone wants to be successful. These kinds of feelings are particularly strong when starting a new endeavor as Joshua was. At the very beginning of Joshua's leadership of Israel, God lays out for Joshua His key to success, meditating on God's word. Meditate upon the Word of God by rehearsing it in thought over and over in order to understand its implications for the situations of life. The meditation process results in changed thinking, because God's thoughts can literally become our thoughts. Then we are more likely to do what God wants of us. As we live in sync with God's plan for our lives, it follows that we will be more successful and prosperous than if we ignore His teachings.

People spend a large part of their lives in obtaining an education and working at a career in order to be prosperous and successful. Scripture points to itself as the primary means toward that end.

1:1 [a] Ex. 24:13 **1:2** [b] Deut. 34:5 **1:3** [c] Deut. 11:24 **1:4** [d] Gen. 15:18 **1:5** [e] Deut. 7:24 [f] Ex. 3:12 [g] Deut. 31:8, 23 [h] Deut. 31:6, 7 **1:6** [i] Deut. 31:7, 23 **1:7** [j] Deut. 31:7 [k] Deut. 5:32 **1:8** [l] Josh. 8:34 [m] Ps. 1:1–3 **1:9** [n] Deut. 31:7

and of good courage; [o]do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

The Order to Cross the Jordan

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, 11 "Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for [p]within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"

12 And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying, 13 "Remember [q]the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.' 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, 15 until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He *gave* you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. [r]Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise."

16 So they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you. Only the LORD your God [s]be with you, as He was with Moses. 18 Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage."

Rahab Hides the Spies

2 Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men [q]from Acacia Grove* to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho."

So they went, and [b]came to the house of a harlot named [c]Rahab, and lodged there. 2 And [d]it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country."

3 So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country."

4 [e]Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they *were* from. 5 And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them." 6 (But [f]she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) 7 Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.

8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, 9 and said to the men: [g]"I know that the LORD has given you the land, that [h]the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land [i]are fainthearted because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD [j]dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and [k]what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you [l]utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we [m]heard *these things*, [n]our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for [o]the LORD your God, He *is* God in heaven above and on earth beneath. 12 Now therefore, I beg you, [p]swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to [q]my father's house, and [r]give me a true token, 13 and [s]spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

14 So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that [t]we will deal kindly and truly with you."

* **2:1** Hebrew *Shittim*

1:18 ***be strong and of good courage.*** Joshua's task was not an easy one, for not only must he deal with the ungodly inhabitants of the Promised Land, he must also provide leadership for his own fearful and complaining people.

2:1 ***Rahab.*** Rahab was a Canaanite prostitute, yet out of all the populace of Jericho, only she reached out to the living God, and He in turn saved her (6:25).

2:4–6 ***Where the men went I do not know.*** Rahab lied to the men searching for the Israelite spies, and Joshua praised her, as did the apostle James and the writer of Hebrews (Heb. 11:31; James 2:25). Throughout both the Old and the New Testament, the commands of God forbid lying, the prophets condemn it, and godly people avoid doing it. Scripture does not address Rahab's sin, but it does praise her for her faith in God. Christians have struggled for centuries over whether lying to save an innocent person's life is acceptable. There does not seem to be a clear-cut answer, but Rahab did her best with the knowledge she had to protect the Israelite men.

1:9 [o] Ps. 27:1 **1:11** [p] Deut. 9:1 **1:13** [q] Num. 32:20–28 **1:15** [r] Josh. 22:1–4 **1:17** [s] 1 Sam. 20:13 **2:1** [q] Num. 25:1 [b] James 2:25 [c] Matt. 1:5 **2:2** [d] Josh. 2:22 **2:4** [e] 2 Sam. 17:19, 20 **2:6** [f] Ex. 1:17 **2:9** [g] Deut. 1:8 [h] Deut. 2:25; 11:25 [i] Josh. 5:1 **2:10** [j] Ex. 14:21 [k] Num. 21:21–35 [l] Josh. 6:21 **2:11** [m] Ex. 15:14, 15 [n] Josh. 5:1; 7:5 [o] Deut. 4:39 **2:12** [p] 1 Sam. 20:14, 15, 17 [q] 1 Tim. 5:8 [r] Josh. 2:18 **2:13** [s] Josh. 6:23–25 **2:14** [t] Judg. 1:24

15 Then she [u]let them down by a rope
through the window, for her house *was* on
the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. 16 And
she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest
the pursuers meet you. Hide there three
days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way."

17 So the men said to her: "We *will be*
[v]blameless of this oath of yours which you
have made us swear, 18 [w]unless, *when* we
come into the land, you bind this line of
scarlet cord in the window through which
you let us down, [x]and unless you bring your
father, your mother, your brothers, and all
your father's household to your own home.
19 So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside
the doors of your house into the street, his
blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will*
be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the
house, [y]his blood *shall be* on our head if a
hand is laid on him. 20 And if you tell this
business of ours, then we will be free from
your oath which you made us swear."

21 Then she said, "According to your
words, so *be* it." And she sent them away,
and they departed. And she bound the
scarlet cord in the window.

22 They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the
pursuers returned. The pursuers sought
them all along the way, but did not find
them. 23 So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over;
and they came to Joshua the son of Nun,
and told him all that had befallen them.
24 And they said to Joshua, "Truly [z]the
LORD has delivered all the land into our
hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the
country are fainthearted because of us."

Israel Crosses the Jordan

3 Then Joshua rose early in the morning;
and they set out [a]from Acacia Grove*
and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they
crossed over. 2 So it was, [b]after three days,
that the officers went through the camp;
3 and they commanded the people, saying,
[c]"When you see the ark of the covenant of
the LORD your God, [d]and the priests, the
Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out
from your place and go after it. 4 [e]Yet there
shall be a space between you and it, about
two thousand cubits by measure. Do not
come near it, that you may know the way
by which you must go, for you have not
passed *this* way before."

5 And Joshua said to the people, [f]"Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will
do wonders among you." 6 Then Joshua
spoke to the priests, saying, [g]"Take up the
ark of the covenant and cross over before
the people."

So they took up the ark of the covenant
and went before the people.

7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day
I will begin to [h]exalt you in the sight of all
Israel, that they may know that, [i]as I was
with Moses, *so* I will be with you. 8 You
shall command [j]the priests who bear the
ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you
have come to the edge of the water of the
Jordan, [k]you shall stand in the Jordan.'"

9 So Joshua said to the children of Israel,
"Come here, and hear the words of the LORD
your God." 10 And Joshua said, "By this you
shall know that [l]the living God *is* among
you, and *that* He will without fail [m]drive
out from before you the [n]Canaanites and
the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: 11 Behold, the ark of
the covenant of [o]the Lord of all the earth
is crossing over before you into the Jordan. 12 Now therefore, [p]take for yourselves
twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one
man from every tribe. 13 And it shall come
to pass, [q]as soon as the soles of the feet of
the priests who bear the ark of the LORD,
[r]the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the
waters of the Jordan, *that* the waters of
the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that
come down from upstream, and they [s]shall
stand as a heap."

14 So it was, when the people set out from
their camp to cross over the Jordan, with
the priests bearing the [t]ark of the covenant
before the people, 15 and as those who bore
the ark came to the Jordan, and [u]the feet
of the priests who bore the ark dipped in
the edge of the water (for the [v]Jordan overflows all its banks [w]during the whole time

* **3:1** Hebrew *Shittim*

2:16 ***Get to the mountain.*** The pursuers had gone down to the Jordan River (v. 7), logically supposing that the spies would be returning to their camp on the eastern side of the river. The only hills near Jericho are to the west, in the opposite direction from the Israelite camp, and further into the land of Canaan.

3:4 ***two thousand cubits.*** Two thousand cubits was more than half a mile. God was serious about the people showing due respect for the ark of the covenant.

3:9 Inspiration—God conveyed His message by means of words spoken by a specific, chosen person. He descended to the human level and through humanity spoke His word of absolute truth.

3:13 ***Lord of all the earth.*** The term "Adonai," translated "Lord," means "master." It refers to the fact that God is indeed the Sovereign of the entire universe.

3:15 ***Jordan overflows.*** God did not merely slow the great river to a trickle during a time of drought; He

2:15 [u] Acts 9:25 **2:17** [v] Ex. 20:7 **2:18** [w] Josh. 2:12 [x] Josh. 6:23 **2:19** [y] 1 Kin. 2:32 **2:24** [z] Ex. 23:31 **3:1** [a] Josh. 2:1 **3:2** [b] Josh. 1:10, 11 **3:3** [c] Num. 10:33 [d] Deut. 31:9, 25 **3:4** [e] Ex. 19:12 **3:5** [f] Josh. 7:13 **3:6** [g] Num. 4:15 **3:7** [h] Josh. 4:14 [i] Josh. 1:5, 9 **3:8** [j] Josh. 3:3 [k] Josh. 3:17 **3:10** [l] 1 Thess. 1:9 [m] Ex. 33:2 [n] Acts 13:19 **3:11** [o] Zech. 4:14; 6:5 **3:12** [p] Josh. 4:2, 4 **3:13** [q] Josh. 3:15, 16 [r] Josh. 3:11 [s] Ps. 78:13; 114:3 **3:14** [t] Acts 7:44, 45 **3:15** [u] Josh. 3:13 [v] 1 Chr. 12:15 [w] Josh. 4:18; 5:10, 12

of harvest), 16that the waters which came down from upstream stood *still, and* rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that *is* beside [x]Zaretan. So the waters that went down [y]into the Sea of the Arabah, [z]the Salt Sea, failed, *and* were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. 17Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; [a]and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

The Memorial Stones

4 And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed [a]over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: 2[b]"Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, 3and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where [c]the priests' feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in [d]the lodging place where you lodge tonight.'"

4Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; 5and Joshua said to them: "Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, 6that this may be [e]a sign among you [f]when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones *mean* to you?' 7Then you shall answer them that [g]the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for [h]a memorial to the children of Israel forever."

8And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. 9Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day.

10So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. 11Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the [i]ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. 12And [i]the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. 13About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. 14On that day the LORD [k]exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, 16"Command the priests who bear [l]the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan." 17Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan." 18And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD had come from the midst of the Jordan, *and* the soles of the priests' feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place [m]and overflowed all its banks as before.

19Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped [n]in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. 20And [o]those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. 21Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: [p]"When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What *are* these stones?' 22then

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stopped the waters when the river was high. This is significant because it makes the point that a great miracle was involved.

3:16 ***Adam.*** Adam was a city about 18 miles north of Jericho. The Sea of Arabah is another name for the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan flows from the north. The Dead Sea is the lowest place on earth, 1,286 feet below sea level. The phrase "Salt Sea" is added to the name because the sea has no outlet and loses its water by evaporation. The concentration of salt and other minerals is so high that nothing can live in it.

4:10 ***the people hurried and crossed over.*** This is a flashback; 3:17 and 4:1 have already told of the crossing over. The purpose is to look back and reflect upon the people's obedience.

4:14 ***the LORD exalted Joshua.*** God is once again proclaiming Joshua as the man He has chosen to take Moses' place as leader of His people.

4:16 ***Testimony.*** In this sense, a "testimony" is a reminder. The ark contained the two stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written, reminding people of God's covenant and His law.

4:21–24 Fear of God—The Scriptures are full of stories of the acts God performed that built up the respect of the people for Him. The awesome things God did were told to each new generation to develop respect for who God is. This miracle was performed

3:16 [x] 1 Kin. 4:12; 7:46 [y] Deut. 3:17 [z] Gen. 14:3
3:17 [a] Ex. 3:8; 6:1–8; 14:21, 22, 29; 33:1 **4:1** [a] Deut. 27:2 **4:2** [b] Josh. 3:12 **4:3** [c] Josh. 3:13 [d] Josh. 4:19, 20 **4:6** [e] Deut. 27:2 [f] Deut. 6:20 **4:7** [g] Josh. 3:13, 16 [h] Num. 16:40 **4:11** [i] Josh. 3:11; 6:11 **4:12** [j] Num. 32:17, 20, 27, 28 **4:14** [k] Josh. 3:7 **4:16** [l] Ex. 25:16, 22 **4:18** [m] Josh. 3:15 **4:19** [n] Josh. 5:9 **4:20** [o] Josh. 4:3; 5:9, 10 **4:21** [p] Josh. 4:6

you shall let your children know, saying, [q]'Israel crossed over this Jordan on [r]dry land'; 23for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, [s]which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, 24[t]that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* [u]mighty, that you may [v]fear the LORD your God forever."

The Second Generation Circumcised

5 So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who *were* on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites [a]who *were* by the sea, [b]heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we* had crossed over, that their heart melted; [c]and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

2At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make [d]flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." 3So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.* 4And this *is* the reason why Joshua circumcised them: [e]All the people who came out of Egypt *who were* males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. 5For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. 6For the children of Israel walked [f]forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *who were* men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD—to whom the LORD swore that [g]He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, [h]"a land flowing with milk and honey."* 7Then Joshua circumcised [i]their sons *whom* He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

8So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that they stayed in their places in the camp [j]till they were healed. 9Then the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away [k]the reproach of Egypt from you." Therefore the name of the place is called [l]Gilgal* to this day.

10Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover [m]on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. 11And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. 12Then [n]the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

The Commander of the Army of the LORD

13And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, [o]a Man stood opposite him [p]with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "*Are* You for us or for our adversaries?"

14So He said, "No, but *as* Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come."

And Joshua [q]fell on his face to the earth and [r]worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?"

15Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, s"Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand *is* holy." And Joshua did so.

The Destruction of Jericho

6 Now [a]Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. 2And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! [b]I have given Jericho into your hand, its [c]king, *and* the mighty men of valor. 3You shall march around the city, all *you* men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. 4And seven priests shall

* **5:1** Following Kethib; Qere, some Hebrew manuscripts and editions, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *they*. * **5:3** Hebrew *Gibeath Haaraloth* * **5:6** Exodus 3:8 * **5:9** Literally *Rolling*

not only for the purpose of getting the Israelites across the Jordan. It was also a sign to all peoples of the power of God.

5:2 *the second time.* The generation that left Egypt had been circumcised. However, that generation had died in the wilderness and for some reason they had neglected to circumcise their children, the generation which would enter the Promised Land.

5:6 *milk and honey.* The land God had promised to Israel was no wilderness, but a land that was fertile for both crops and cattle, and ready to provide for them and supply all their needs.

5:15 *Take your sandal off.* The command for Joshua to remove his sandal was practically identical to the command Moses received at the burning bush (Ex. 3:1–6). Joshua was confronted with the living God, just as Moses had been (Ex. 33:9–11).

6:3 *all around the city once.* The city of Jericho measured less than half a mile in circumference, so the march would have been completed quickly.

4:22 [q] Deut. 26:5–9 [r] Josh. 3:17 **4:23** [s] Ex. 14:21 **4:24** [t] 1 Kin. 8:42 [u] 1 Chr. 29:12 [v] Jer. 10:7 **5:1** [a] Num. 13:29 [b] Ex. 15:14, 15 [c] Josh. 2:10, 11; 9:9 **5:2** [d] Ex. 4:25 **5:4** [e] Deut. 2:14–16 **5:6** [f] Num. 14:33 [g] Heb. 3:11 [h] Ex. 3:8 **5:7** [i] Deut. 1:39 **5:8** [j] Gen. 34:25 **5:9** [k] Gen. 34:14 [l] Josh. 4:19 **5:10** [m] Ex. 12:6 **5:12** [n] Ex. 16:35 **5:13** [o] Gen. 18:1, 2; 32:24, 30 [p] Num. 22:23 **5:14** [q] Gen. 17:3 [r] Ex. 34:8 **5:15** [s] Ex. 3:5 **6:1** [a] Josh. 2:1 **6:2** [b] Josh. 2:9, 24; 8:1 [c] Deut. 7:24

bear seven [d]trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city [e]seven times, and [f]the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5It shall come to pass, when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

6Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD." 7And he said to the people, "Proceed, and march around the city, and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the LORD."

8So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD advanced and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. 9The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, [g]and the rear guard came after the ark, while *the priests* continued blowing the trumpets. 10Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, "You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout." 11So he had [h]the ark of the LORD circle the city, going around *it* once. Then they came into the camp and lodged in the camp.

12And Joshua rose early in the morning, [i]and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually and blew with the trumpets. And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while *the priests* continued blowing the trumpets. 14And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days.

15But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. 16And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people: "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city! 17Now the city shall be [j]doomed by the LORD to destruction, it and all who *are* in it. Only [k]Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who *are* with her in the house, because [l]she hid the messengers that we sent. 18And you, [m]by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, [n]and trouble it. 19But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, *are* consecrated to the LORD; they shall come into the treasury of the LORD."

20So the people shouted when *the priests* blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that [o]the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. 21And they [p]utterly destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

22But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, "Go into the harlot's house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, [q]as you swore to her." 23And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, [r]her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. 24But they burned the city and all that *was* in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. 25And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So [s]she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26Then Joshua charged *them* at that time, saying, [t]"Cursed *be* the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates."

27So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

6:6–21 Zeal—Crossing the Jordan marked the beginning step in the fulfillment of God's promise to give His people the land of Canaan. Immediately the task of conquering Jericho loomed before them. The Lord appeared to Joshua reminding him that God Himself was in charge and the presence of the Holy One assured victory (v. 2). The plan for Jericho's capture was a test of Israel's zeal for the Lord and seems to have been designed to instill the lesson that submission to God's directives was key to victory. How different Israel's history would have been if they had continued to carry out God's plans fully and zealously! God calls us to the same level of obedience today.

6:26 *Cursed . . . before the LORD.* Joshua's curse found dramatic fulfillment many centuries later when Hiel of Bethel laid its foundation and rebuilt its gates at great personal cost (1 Kin. 16:34).

6:4 [d] Lev. 25:9 [e] 1 Kin. 18:43 [f] Num. 10:8 **6:9** [g] Num. 10:25 **6:11** [h] Josh. 4:11 **6:12** [i] Deut. 31:25 **6:17** [j] Deut. 13:17 [k] Matt. 1:5 [l] Josh. 2:4, 6 **6:18** [m] Deut. 7:26 [n] Josh. 7:1, 12, 25 **6:20** [o] Heb. 11:30 **6:21** [p] Deut. 7:2; 20:16, 17 **6:22** [q] Josh. 2:12–19 **6:23** [r] Josh. 2:13 **6:25** [s] [Matt. 1:5] **6:26** [t] 1 Kin. 16:34

Defeat at Ai

7 But the children of Israel committed a [a]trespass regarding the [b]accursed things, for [c]Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi,* the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.

2Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which *is* beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, "Go up and spy out the country." So the men went up and spied out Ai. **3**And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for *the people of Ai are* few." **4**So about three thousand men went up there from the people, [d]but they fled before the men of Ai. **5**And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them *from* before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore [e]the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

6Then Joshua [f]tore his clothes, and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they [g]put dust on their heads. **7**And Joshua said, "Alas, Lord GOD, [h]why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all—to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan! **8**O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies? **9**For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear *it,* and surround us, and [i]cut off our name from the earth. Then [j]what will You do for Your great name?"

The Sin of Achan

10So the LORD said to Joshua: "Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? **11**Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. [k]For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and [l]deceived; and they have also put *it* among their own stuff. **12**[m]Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because [n]they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you. **13**Get up, [o]sanctify the people, and say, [p]'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel: "*There is* an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you." **14**In the morning therefore you shall be brought according to your tribes. And it shall be *that* the tribe which [q]the LORD takes shall come according to families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man. **15**[r]Then it shall be *that* he who is taken with the accursed thing shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has [s]transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he [t]has done a disgraceful thing in Israel.'"

16So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. **17**He brought the clan of Judah, and he took the family of the Zarhites; and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. **18**Then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, [u]was taken.

19Now Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I beg you, [v]give glory to the LORD God of Israel, [w]and make confession to Him, and [x]tell me now what you have done; do not hide *it* from me."

20And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed [y]I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: **21**When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels

* **7:1** Called *Zimri* in 1 Chronicles 2:6

7:6–9 Suffering—Joshua's prayer was one of despair. Why had God allowed their defeat? Whenever tragedy strikes it is hard to understand why God allowed it to happen to us. In this case it is clearly explained. Achan had greedily taken what was banned by God. Through his sin the whole camp was guilty of deception and thievery. There are other reasons, not related to sin, for God's permission of tragedy. Sometimes people suffer in order to fulfill a sovereign purpose not immediately apparent.

7:9 *Your great name.* Joshua is aware that there is an even larger issue at stake: God's reputation.

7:10–15 *Israel has sinned.* God had consistent standards for both Israel and the Canaanites. He had ordered Israel to destroy Canaan because of their sin. He could not allow Israel to accommodate sin and corruption, even that of only one man.

7:13 *until you take away.* The relationship between obedience and blessing is well illustrated here. Israel would have no further successes until the sin had been uncovered.

7:19 *give glory to the LORD . . . tell me now what you have done.* We too dishonor the Lord when we hide our sins, and we honor Him when we confess them.

7:1 [a] Josh. 7:20, 21 [b] Josh. 6:17–19 [c] Josh. 22:20
7:4 [d] Lev. 26:17 **7:5** [e] Lev. 26:36 **7:6** [f] Gen. 37:29, 34 [g] 1 Sam. 4:12 **7:7** [h] Ex. 17:3 **7:9** [i] Deut. 32:26 [j] Ex. 32:12 **7:11** [k] Josh. 6:17–19 [l] Acts 5:1, 2 **7:12** [m] Judg. 2:14 [n] [Hag. 2:13, 14] **7:13** [o] Ex. 19:10 [p] Josh. 3:5
7:14 [q] [Prov. 16:33] **7:15** [r] 1 Sam. 14:38, 39 [s] Josh. 7:11 [t] Gen. 34:7 **7:18** [u] 1 Sam. 14:42 **7:19** [v] Jer. 13:16 [w] Num. 5:6, 7 [x] 1 Sam. 14:43 **7:20** [y] Num. 22:34

of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

22So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it. 23And they took them from the midst of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. 24Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and [z]all that he had, and they brought them to [a]the Valley of Achor. 25And Joshua said, [b]"Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day." [c]So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones.

26Then they [d]raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So [e]the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called [f]the Valley of Achor* to this day.

The Fall of Ai

8 Now the LORD said to Joshua: [a]"Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, [b]I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. 2And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to [c]Jericho and its king. Only [d]its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it."

3So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night. 4And he commanded them, saying: "Behold, [e]you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready. 5Then I and all the people who *are* with me will approach the city; and it will come about, when they come out against us as at the first, that [f]we shall flee before them. 6For they will come out after us till we have drawn them from the city, for they will say, '*They are* fleeing before us as at the first.' Therefore we will flee before them. 7Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. 8And it will be, when you have taken the city, *that* you shall set the city on fire. According to the commandment of the LORD you shall do. [g]See, I have commanded you."

9Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people. 10Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. 11[h]And all the people of war who *were* with him went up and drew near; and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley *lay* between them and Ai. 12So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. 13And when they had set the people, all the army that *was* on the north of the city, and its rear guard on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

14Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain. But he [i]did not know that *there was* an ambush against him behind the city. 15And Joshua and all Israel [j]made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. 16So all the people who *were* in Ai were called together to pursue them. And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city. 17There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel.

* **7:26** Literally *Trouble*

7:25 *stoned him with stones.* Achan and all that he had were brought out and stoned. This seems like a severe punishment and one that is hard to understand. But it illustrated God's firm insistence on holiness. God could not tolerate the sin Achan had committed and He had to deal with him. It is a sobering thought for us, to remember that often our sins do not affect only ourselves, they also cause others to stumble and fall. We deserve punishment as severe as Achan's, but Jesus Christ took over our penalty and through His blood we can be reconciled to God.

8:1 *Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed.* The sins of Achan had broken the special relationship God had established with His people, but God had not abandoned them.

8:7 *the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.* Israel was completely dependent on God for their success.

8:12–17 Wisdom—The name Ai means "ruin" or "heap." Unlike Jericho, Ai was not a walled city, to Israel it was just a rubble heap. It looked so easy, especially after their resounding victory at Jericho, that they set out to attack without asking for the Lord's direction. In facing tasks that seem well within our powers, we also often forget to ask for the Lord's help. Wisdom in the believer's life demands persistence in depending on the Lord's strength and direction in little problems as well as the big ones.

7:24 [z] Num. 16:32, 33 [a] Josh. 7:26; 15:7 **7:25** [b] Josh. 6:18 [c] Deut. 17:5 **7:26** [d] 2 Sam. 18:17 [e] Deut. 13:17 [f] Is. 65:10 **8:1** [a] Josh. 1:9; 10:8 [b] Josh. 6:2 **8:2** [c] Josh. 6:21 [d] Deut. 20:14 **8:4** [e] Judg. 20:29 **8:5** [f] Judg. 20:32 **8:8** [g] 2 Sam. 13:28 **8:11** [h] Josh. 8:5 **8:14** [i] Judg. 20:34 **8:15** [j] Judg. 20:36

So they left the city open and pursued Israel.

18 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the spear that *is* in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the spear that *was* in his hand toward the city. 19 So *those in* ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire. 20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers.

21 Now when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city ascended, they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. 22 Then the others came out of the city against them; so they were *caught* in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. And they struck them down, so that they [k]let none of them remain or escape. 23 But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

24 And it came to pass when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they pursued them, and when they all had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. 25 So it was *that* all who fell that day, both men and women, *were* twelve thousand—all the people of Ai. 26 For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had [l]utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. 27 [m]Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which He had [n]commanded Joshua. 28 So Joshua burned Ai and made it [o]a heap forever, a desolation to this day. 29 [p]And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening. [q]And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and [r]raise over it a great heap of stones *that remains* to this day.

Joshua Renews the Covenant

30 Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel [s]in Mount Ebal, 31 as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: [t]"an altar of whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron *tool*."* And [u]they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. 32 And there, in the presence of the children of Israel, [v]he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. 33 Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges, stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, [w]who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [x]the stranger as well as he who was born among them. Half of them *were* in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, [y]as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. 34 And afterward [z]he read all the words of the law, [a]the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the [b]Book of the Law. 35 There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, [c]with the women, the little ones, [d]and the strangers who were living among them.

The Treaty with the Gibeonites

9 And it came to pass when [a]all the kings who *were* on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of [b]the Great Sea toward Lebanon—[c]the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—heard *about it*, 2 that they [d]gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord.

3 But when the inhabitants of [e]Gibeon [f]heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, 4 they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors. And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, 5 old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry *and* moldy. 6 And they went to Joshua, [g]to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us."

7 Then the men of Israel said to the [h]Hivites, "Perhaps you dwell among us; so [i]how can we make a covenant with you?"

* **8:31** Deuteronomy 27:5, 6

9:3 ***Gibeon.*** Gibeon was relatively close to Ai, and about five miles northwest of Jerusalem.

9:6 ***We have come from a far country.*** Israel was allowed to make treaties with cities that were far away (Ex. 34:11–12; Deut. 20:10–18). If the Gibeonites had been telling the truth, a treaty with them would have been permissible.

8:22 [k] Deut. 7:2 **8:26** [l] Josh. 6:21 **8:27** [m] Num. 31:22, 26 [n] Josh. 8:2 **8:28** [o] Deut. 13:16 **8:29** [p] Josh. 10:26 [q] Deut. 21:22, 23 [r] Josh. 7:26; 10:27 **8:30** [s] Deut. 27:4–8 **8:31** [t] Ex. 20:25 [u] Ex. 20:24 **8:32** [v] Deut. 27:2, 3, 8 **8:33** [w] Deut. 31:9, 25 [x] Deut. 31:12 [y] Deut. 11:29; 27:12 **8:34** [z] Neh. 8:3 [a] Deut. 28:2, 15, 45; 29:20, 21; 30:19 [b] Josh. 1:8 **8:35** [c] Deut. 31:12 [d] Josh. 8:33 **9:1** [a] Josh. 3:10 [b] Num. 34:6 [c] Ex. 3:17; 23:23 **9:2** [d] Ps. 83:3, 5 **9:3** [e] Josh. 9:17, 22; 10:2; 21:17 [f] Josh. 6:27 **9:6** [g] Josh. 5:10 **9:7** [h] Josh. 9:1; 11:19 [i] Ex. 23:32

8 But they said to Joshua, [j]"We *are* your
servants."
And Joshua said to them, "Who *are* you,
and where do you come from?"
9 So they said to him: [k]"From a very far
country your servants have come, because
of the name of the LORD your God; for we
have [l]heard of His fame, and all that He did
in Egypt, 10 and [m]all that He did to the two
kings of the Amorites who *were* beyond
the Jordan—to Sihon king of Heshbon, and
Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth.
11 Therefore our elders and all the inhab-
itants of our country spoke to us, saying,
'Take provisions with you for the journey,
and go to meet them, and say to them, "We
are your servants; now therefore, make a
covenant with us."' 12 This bread of ours we
took hot *for* our provision from our houses
on the day we departed to come to you. But
now look, it is dry and moldy. 13 And these
wineskins which we filled *were* new, and
see, they are torn; and these our garments
and our sandals have become old because
of the very long journey."
14 Then the men of Israel took some
of their provisions; [n]but they did not ask
counsel of the LORD. 15 So Joshua [o]made
peace with them, and made a covenant
with them to let them live; and the rulers of
the congregation swore to them.
16 And it happened at the end of three
days, after they had made a covenant with
them, that they heard that they *were* their
neighbors who dwelt near them. 17 Then the
children of Israel journeyed and came to
their cities on the third day. Now their cit-
ies *were* [p]Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and
Kirjath Jearim. 18 But the children of Israel
did not attack them, [q]because the rulers of
the congregation had sworn to them by the
LORD God of Israel. And all the congrega-
tion complained against the rulers.
19 Then all the rulers said to all the con-
gregation, "We have sworn to them by the
LORD God of Israel; now therefore, we may
not touch them. 20 This we will do to them:
We will let them live, lest [r]wrath be upon
us because of the oath which we swore to
them." 21 And the rulers said to them, "Let
them live, but let them be [s]woodcutters and
water carriers for all the congregation, as
the rulers had [t]promised them."
22 Then Joshua called for them, and he
spoke to them, saying, "Why have you de-
ceived us, saying, [u]'We *are* very far from
you,' when [v]you dwell near us? 23 Now
therefore, you *are* [w]cursed, and none of
you shall be freed from being slaves—
woodcutters and water carriers for the
house of my God."
24 So they answered Joshua and said,
"Because your servants were clearly told
that the LORD your God [x]commanded His
servant Moses to give you all the land, and
to destroy all the inhabitants of the land
from before you; therefore [y]we were very
much afraid for our lives because of you,
and have done this thing. 25 And now, here
we are, [z]in your hands; do with us as it
seems good and right to do to us." 26 So he
did to them, and delivered them out of the
hand of the children of Israel, so that they
did not kill them. 27 And that day Joshua
made them [a]woodcutters and water carri-
ers for the congregation and for the altar
of the LORD, [b]in the place which He would
choose, even to this day.

The Sun Stands Still

10 Now it came to pass when Adoni-
Zedek king of Jerusalem [a]heard
how Joshua had taken [b]Ai and had utterly
destroyed it—[c]as he had done to Jericho
and its king, so he had done to [d]Ai and its
king—and [e]how the inhabitants of Gibeon
had made peace with Israel and were
among them, 2 that they [f]feared greatly, be-
cause Gibeon *was* a great city, like one of
the royal cities, and because it *was* greater
than Ai, and all its men *were* mighty.
3 Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusa-
lem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram
king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish,
and Debir king of Eglon, saying, 4 "Come
up to me and help me, that we may attack
Gibeon, for [g]it has made peace with Joshua
and with the children of Israel." 5 Therefore
the five kings of the [h]Amorites, the king of
Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of
Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king
of Eglon, [i]gathered together and went up,

9:14 ***did not ask counsel of the LORD.*** Significantly, the Israelites did not ask God's advice about making peace with the Gibeonites, contrary to God's explicit instructions to Joshua (Num. 27:21).

9:18 Questioning—The congregation rose up and complained to their leaders about making the treaty with Gibeon because they knew the leaders had not consulted the Lord. There is a time to confront leaders, specifically when they sin or when they act in their own wisdom without asking for God's direction. When the leaders appear to be traveling down the wrong path, the people can always ask respectfully, "Have you consulted the Lord about this? Did you get an answer?"

9:20 ***the oath which we swore.*** Oath taking and swearing was serious business. To take an oath was to give a sacred and unbreakable promise to do a certain thing. Because of the unbreakable nature of an oath, the covenant the Israelites made with the Gibeonites could not be revoked, even though it was obtained under false pretenses.

9:8 [j] Deut. 20:11 **9:9** [k] Deut. 20:15 [l] Josh. 2:9, 10; 5:1 **9:10** [m] Num. 21:24, 33 **9:14** [n] Num. 27:21 **9:15** [o] 2 Sam. 21:2 **9:17** [p] Josh. 18:25 **9:18** [q] Ps. 15:4 **9:20** [r] 2 Sam. 21:1, 2, 6 **9:21** [s] Deut. 29:11 [t] Josh. 9:15 **9:22** [u] Josh. 9:6, 9 [v] Josh. 9:16 **9:23** [w] Gen. 9:25 **9:24** [x] Deut. 7:1, 2 [y] Ex. 15:14 **9:25** [z] Gen. 16:6 **9:27** [a] Josh. 9:21, 23 [b] Deut. 12:5 **10:1** [a] Josh. 9:1 [b] Josh. 8:1 [c] Josh. 6:21 [d] Josh. 8:22, 26, 28 [e] Josh. 9:15 **10:2** [f] Ex. 15:14–16 **10:4** [g] Josh. 9:15; 10:1 **10:5** [h] Num. 13:29 [i] Josh. 9:2

they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it.

6 And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp [j]at Gilgal, saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us."

7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and [k]all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. 8 And the LORD said to Joshua, [l]"Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; [m]not a man of them shall [n]stand before you." 9 Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. 10 So the LORD [o]routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes [p]to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as [q]Azekah and Makkedah. 11 And it happened, as they fled before Israel *and* were on the descent of Beth Horon, [r]that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. *There were* more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.

12 Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel:

[s]"Sun, stand still over Gibeon;
And Moon, in the Valley of [t]Aijalon."
13 So the sun stood still,
And the moon stopped,
Till the people had revenge
Upon their enemies.

[u]*Is* this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day. 14 And there has been [v]no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for [w]the LORD fought for Israel.

15 [x]Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

The Amorite Kings Executed

16 But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. 17 And it was told Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah."

18 So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them. 19 And do not stay *there* yourselves, *but* pursue your enemies, and attack their rear *guard*. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand." 20 Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished, that those who escaped entered fortified cities. 21 And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace.

[y]No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

22 Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave." 23 And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon.

24 So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and [z]put their feet on their necks. 25 Then Joshua said to them, [a]"Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for [b]thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." 26 And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they [c]were hanging on the trees until evening. 27 So it was at the time of the going down of the sun *that* Joshua commanded, and they [d]took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

10:10 ***the LORD routed them.*** Despite Joshua's presence with his warriors, it was God who gave the victory, and God who received the credit.

10:13 ***the Book of Jasher.*** This piece of literature is mentioned again in 2 Samuel 1:18, confirming what is said here. Nothing else is known of the Book of Jasher; it is not part of the Bible, and no known portion of it has survived.

10:14 ***the LORD heeded the voice of a man.*** Any person can gain God's attention in prayer. God may answer our pleas by saying no, but we can be certain that He always listens and answers. This incident was remembered as being like no other because God said yes to a request which He otherwise always answers no: He actually stopped time to allow the Israelites to finish the battle.

10:24 ***put your feet on the necks of these kings.*** Putting one's foot on a slain enemy was a declaration of victory. In Psalm 110:1 the Lord said, "I [will] make Your enemies Your footstool" (see also Ps. 8:6). God also speaks of placing Jesus' enemies under His feet (1 Cor. 15:25–27). Ancient sculptures show Assyrian kings doing this to their vanquished enemies.

10:25 ***be strong and of good courage.*** Joshua encourages the people with the same words God used to encourage him (1:6,9; 10:8). God's words, written for us in the Bible, are the best form of encouragement we could have.

10:6 [j] Josh. 5:10; 9:6 **10:7** [k] Josh. 8:1 **10:8** [l] Josh. 11:6 [m] Josh. 1:5, 9 [n] Josh. 21:44 **10:10** [o] Is. 28:21 [p] Josh. 16:3, 5 [q] Josh. 15:35 **10:11** [r] Is. 30:30 **10:12** [s] Hab. 3:11 [t] Judg. 12:12 **10:13** [u] 2 Sam. 1:18 **10:14** [v] Is. 38:7, 8 [w] Deut. 1:30; 20:4 **10:15** [x] Josh. 10:43 **10:21** [y] Ex. 11:7 **10:24** [z] Mal. 4:3 **10:25** [a] Deut. 31:6–8 [b] Deut. 3:21; 7:19 **10:26** [c] Josh. 8:29 **10:27** [d] Deut. 21:22, 23

Conquest of the Southland

28 On that day Joshua took Makkedah,
and struck it and its king with the edge of
the sword. He utterly [e]destroyed them*—
all the people who *were* in it. He let none re-
main. He also did to the king of Makkedah
[f]as he had done to the king of Jericho.
29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah,
and all Israel with him, to [g]Libnah; and they
fought against Libnah. 30 And the LORD also
delivered it and its king into the hand of
Israel; he struck it and all the people who
were in it with the edge of the sword. He let
none remain in it, but did to its king as he
had done to the king of Jericho.
31 Then Joshua passed from Libnah, and
all Israel with him, to Lachish; and they
encamped against it and fought against it.
32 And the LORD delivered Lachish into the
hand of Israel, who took it on the second
day, and struck it and all the people who
were in it with the edge of the sword, ac-
cording to all that he had done to Libnah.
33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to
help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and
his people, until he left him none remain-
ing.
34 From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon,
and all Israel with him; and they encamped
against it and fought against it. 35 They
took it on that day and struck it with the
edge of the sword; all the people who *were*
in it he utterly destroyed that day, accord-
ing to all that he had done to Lachish.
36 So Joshua went up from Eglon, and
all Israel with him, to [h]Hebron; and they
fought against it. 37 And they took it and
struck it with the edge of the sword—its
king, all its cities, and all the people who
were in it; he left none remaining, accord-
ing to all that he had done to Eglon, but
utterly destroyed it and all the people who
were in it.
38 Then Joshua returned, and all Is-
rael with him, to [i]Debir; and they fought
against it. 39 And he took it and its king and
all its cities; they struck them with the edge
of the sword and utterly destroyed all the
people who *were* in it. He left none remain-
ing; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to
Debir and its king, as he had done also to
Libnah and its king.
40 So Joshua conquered all the land: the
[j]mountain country and the South* and the
lowland and the wilderness slopes, and [k]all
their kings; he left none remaining, but
[l]utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the
LORD God of Israel had commanded. 41 And
Joshua conquered them from [m]Kadesh
Barnea as far as [n]Gaza, [o]and all the coun-
try of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. 42 All
these kings and their land Joshua took at
one time, [p]because the LORD God of Israel
fought for Israel. 43 Then Joshua returned,
and all Israel with him, to the camp at
Gilgal.

The Northern Conquest

11 And it came to pass, when Jabin king
of Hazor heard *these things,* that he
[a]sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king
[b]of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, 2 and
to the kings who *were* from the north, in
the mountains, in the plain south of [c]Chin-
neroth, in the lowland, and in the heights
[d]of Dor on the west, 3 to the Canaanites in
the east and in the west, the [e]Amorite, the
Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the
mountains, [f]and the Hivite below [g]Hermon
[h]in the land of Mizpah. 4 So they went out,
they and all their armies with them, *as*
many people [i]*as* the sand that *is* on the sea-
shore in multitude, with very many horses
and chariots. 5 And when all these kings

* **10:28** Following Masoretic Text and most authorities; many Hebrew manuscripts, some manuscripts of the Septuagint, and some manuscripts of the Targum read *it*. * **10:40** Hebrew *Negev*, and so throughout this book

10:30 *the LORD.* Here again we are reminded that the Lord was Israel's warrior. As He fought for them, we too can trust Him fully to fight for us. Indeed, He fought the ultimate fight for us on the cross, to set us free from death forever. We can also trust Him to be with us in the day-to-day fight against evil and sin.

10:28–43 Fervor—All of Israel was zealous to do just as the Lord commanded, and the success they experienced was attributed to the Lord. But how can such destruction be regarded as honoring to God? The Bible gives reasons for the wiping out of these peoples, and these reasons are in accord with the tenor of the whole Bible. The Canaanites were guilty of extreme wickedness (Deut. 7:2–11; 20:16–18). God is completely holy, and He therefore cannot tolerate sin. Sin must be judged. He is also patient. For many years the Canaanite sin did not justify annihilation. But that time did arrive, and it came in the time of Joshua. Israel was a tool in the hand of God to judge the wickedness of those nations. Leviticus 18 is a gruesome list of their evil actions, including incest, adultery, child sacrifice, homosexuality, and bestiality. The Canaanites brought God's judgment on themselves by their own sins. Canaan was not destroyed without plenty of warning. God is never unjust. They were a thoroughly debased society, hostile to all God's ways (Deut. 9:4–5). The most sobering reflection is that now, today, many of those wicked sins listed in Leviticus 18 are present in our society. God's judgment in the last day will be complete indeed.

11:4 *very many horses and chariots.* In this time in history, horses were used for pulling chariots which accompanied the infantry and carried a rider with a bow or a supply of spears. The enemy of Israel came well armed and with many soldiers to fight—but it made no difference. Again God defeated Israel's

10:28 [e] Deut. 7:2, 16 [f] Josh. 6:21 **10:29** [g] Josh. 15:42; 21:13 **10:36** [h] Josh. 14:13–15; 15:13 **10:38** [i] Josh. 15:15 **10:40** [j] Deut. 1:7 [k] Deut. 7:24 [l] Deut. 20:16, 17 **10:41** [m] Deut. 9:23 [n] Gen. 10:19 [o] Josh. 11:16; 15:51 **10:42** [p] Josh. 10:14 **11:1** [a] Josh. 10:3 [b] Josh. 19:15 **11:2** [c] Num. 34:11 [d] Josh. 17:11 **11:3** [e] Josh. 9:1 [f] Judg. 3:3, 5 [g] Josh. 11:17; 13:5, 11 [h] Gen. 31:49 **11:4** [i] Judg. 7:12

had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

6 But the LORD said to Joshua, [i]"Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall [k]hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." 7 So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom, and they attacked them. 8 And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who defeated them and chased them to Greater [l]Sidon, to the Brook [m]Misrephoth,* and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward; they attacked them until they left none of them remaining. 9 So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

10 Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor, and struck its king with the sword; for Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms. 11 And they struck all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, [n]utterly destroying *them.* There was none left [o]breathing. Then he burned Hazor with fire.

12 So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them, [p]as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. 13 But *as for* the cities that stood on their mounds,* Israel burned none of them, except Hazor only, *which* Joshua burned. 14 And all the [q]spoil of these cities and the livestock, the children of Israel took as booty for themselves; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing. 15 [r]As the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so [s]Moses commanded Joshua, and [t]so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

Summary of Joshua's Conquests

16 Thus Joshua took all this land: [u]the mountain country, all the South, [v]all the land of Goshen, the lowland, and the Jordan plain*—the mountains of Israel and its lowlands, 17 [w]from Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured [x]all their kings, and struck them down and killed them. 18 Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. 19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except [y]the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All *the others* they took in battle. 20 For [z]it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, *and* that they might receive no mercy, but that He might destroy them, [a]as the LORD had commanded Moses.

21 And at that time Joshua came and cut off [b]the Anakim from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. 22 None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only [c]in Gaza, in Gath, [d]and in Ashdod.

23 So Joshua took the whole land, [e]according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel [f]according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land [g]rested from war.

The Kings Conquered by Moses

12 These *are* the kings of the land whom the children of Israel defeated, and whose land they possessed on the other side of the Jordan toward the rising of the sun, [a]from the River Arnon [b]to Mount Hermon, and all the eastern Jordan plain: 2 *One king was* [c]Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon *and* ruled half of Gilead, from Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, from the middle of that river, even as far as the River Jabbok, *which is* the border of the Ammonites, 3 and [d]the eastern Jordan plain from the Sea of Chinneroth as far as the Sea of the Arabah (the

* **11:8** Hebrew *Misrephoth Maim* * **11:13** Hebrew *tel,* a heap of successive city ruins
* **11:16** Hebrew *arabah*

enemy. God limited the size of the Israelite army so they would not be depending on military strength, but rather on Him.

11:8 ***Greater Sidon, to the Brook Misrephoth.*** Great Sidon was a Phoenician city on the Mediterranean coast, and Misrephoth was south of it. The defeat of the Canaanites described here shows them fleeing in all directions.

11:16—12:24 Zeal—Joshua and the people served as the instruments of divine justice and fulfilled the word spoken to Moses concerning the gift of the land of Canaan. The list of the defeated kings who had banded together against Israel bears testimony to the zeal of Israel for God and the obedience and faithfulness of Joshua. As Christians we can eagerly anticipate the final outcome of world history, when the "kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. 11:15).

11:20 ***to harden their hearts.*** The people whose hearts God hardened were not good people, but people already committed to doing evil.

11:6 [i] Josh. 10:8 [k] 2 Sam. 8:4 **11:8** [l] Gen. 49:13 [m] Josh. 13:6 **11:11** [n] Deut. 20:16 [o] Josh. 10:40 **11:12** [p] Num. 33:50–56 **11:14** [q] Deut. 20:14–18 **11:15** [r] Ex. 34:10–17 [s] Deut. 31:7, 8 [t] Josh. 1:7 **11:16** [u] Josh. 12:8 [v] Josh. 10:40, 41 **11:17** [w] Josh. 12:7 [x] Deut. 7:24 **11:19** [y] Josh. 9:3–7 **11:20** [z] Deut. 2:30 [a] Deut. 20:16, 17 **11:21** [b] Num. 13:22, 33 **11:22** [c] 1 Sam. 17:4 [d] Josh. 15:46 **11:23** [e] Num. 34:2–15 [f] Num. 26:53 [g] Deut. 12:9, 10; 25:19 **12:1** [a] Num. 21:24 [b] Deut. 3:8 **12:2** [c] Deut. 2:24–27 **12:3** [d] Deut. 3:17

Salt Sea), [e]the road to Beth Jeshimoth, and southward below [f]the slopes of Pisgah.
4 *The other king was* [g]Og king of Bashan and his territory, *who was* of [h]the remnant of the giants, [i]who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, 5and reigned over [j]Mount Hermon, [k]over Salcah, over all Bashan, [l]as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and over half of Gilead *to* the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

6[m]These Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel had conquered; and [n]Moses the servant of the LORD had given it *as* a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

The Kings Conquered by Joshua

7And these *are* the kings of the country [o]which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan, on the west, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to [p]Seir, which Joshua [q]gave to the tribes of Israel *as* a possession according to their divisions, 8[r]in the mountain country, in the lowlands, in the *Jordan* plain, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the South—[s]the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:
9[t]the king of Jericho, one; [u]the king of Ai, which *is* beside Bethel, one; 10[v]the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;
11the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; 12the king of Eglon, one; [w]the king of Gezer, one; 13[x]the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; 14the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; 15[y]the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; 16[z]the king of Makkedah, one; [a]the king of Bethel, one; 17the king of Tappuah, one; [b]the king of Hepher, one; 18the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;
19the king of Madon, one; [c]the king of Hazor, one; 20the king of [d]Shimron Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; 21the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;
22[e]the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; 23the king of Dor in the [f]heights of Dor, one; the king of [g]the people of Gilgal, one; 24the king of Tirzah, one—[h]all the kings, thirty-one.

Remaining Land to Be Conquered

13 Now Joshua [a]was old, advanced in years. And the LORD said to him: "You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed.
2[b]This is the land that yet remains: [c]all the territory of the Philistines and all [d]*that of* the Geshurites, 3[e]from Sihor, which *is* east of Egypt, as far as the border of Ekron northward (*which* is counted as Canaanite); the [f]five lords of the Philistines—the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also [g]the Avites; 4from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians [h]as far as Aphek, to the border of [i]the Amorites; 5the land of [j]the Gebalites,* and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, [k]from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon as far as the entrance to Hamath;
6all the inhabitants of the mountains from Lebanon as far as [l]the Brook Misrephoth,* *and* all the Sidonians—them [m]I will drive out from before the children of Israel; only [n]divide it by lot to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you. 7Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh."

The Land Divided East of the Jordan

8With the other half-tribe the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, [o]which Moses had given them, [p]beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the LORD had given them: 9from Aroer which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and the town that *is* in the midst of the ravine, [q]and all the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon; 10[r]all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the children of Ammon;
11[s]Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salcah; 12all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei, who remained of [t]the remnant of the giants; [u]for Moses had defeated and cast out these.

13Nevertheless the children of Israel [v]did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites, but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

14[w]Only to the tribe of Levi he had given

* **13:5** Or *Giblites* * **13:6** Hebrew *Misrephoth Maim*

13:14 ***to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance.*** Originally, the tribe of Levi was sentenced to be landless because of Levi's violent behavior (Gen.

12:3 [e] Josh. 13:20 [f] Deut. 3:17; 4:49 **12:4** [g] Num. 21:33 [h] Deut. 3:11 [i] Deut. 1:4 **12:5** [j] Deut. 3:8 [k] Deut. 3:10 [l] Deut. 3:14 **12:6** [m] Num. 21:24, 35 [n] Num. 32:29–33 **12:7** [o] Josh. 11:17 [p] Gen. 14:6; 32:3 [q] Josh. 11:23 **12:8** [r] Josh. 10:40; 11:16 [s] Ex. 3:8; 23:23 **12:9** [t] Josh. 6:2 [u] Josh. 8:29 **12:10** [v] Josh. 10:23 **12:12** [w] Josh. 10:33 **12:13** [x] Josh. 10:38, 39 **12:15** [y] Josh. 10:29, 30

12:16 [z] Josh. 10:28 [a] Judg. 1:22 **12:17** [b] 1 Kin. 4:10 **12:19** [c] Josh. 11:10 **12:20** [d] Josh. 11:1; 19:15 **12:22** [e] Josh. 19:37; 20:7; 21:32 **12:23** [f] Josh. 11:2 [g] Is. 9:1 **12:24** [h] Deut. 7:24 **13:1** [a] Josh. 14:10; 23:1, 2 **13:2** [b] Judg. 3:1–3 [c] Joel 3:4 [d] 2 Sam. 3:3 **13:3** [e] Jer. 2:18 [f] Judg. 3:3 [g] Deut. 2:23 **13:4** [h] Josh. 12:18; 19:30 [i] Judg. 1:34 **13:5** [j] 1 Kin. 5:18; Ezek. 27:9 [k] Josh. 12:7 **13:6** [l] Josh. 11:8 [m] Josh. 23:13 [n] Josh. 14:1, 2 **13:8** [o] Num. 32:33 [p] Josh. 12:1–6 **13:9** [q] Num. 21:30 **13:10** [r] Num. 21:24, 25 **13:11** [s] Josh. 12:5 **13:12** [t] Deut. 3:11 [u] Num. 21:24, 34, 35 **13:13** [v] Josh. 13:11 **13:14** [w] Josh. 14:3, 4

no inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire *are* their inheritance, [x]as He said to them.

The Land of Reuben

15 [y]And Moses had given to the tribe of the children of Reuben *an inheritance* according to their families. 16 Their territory was [z]from Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, [a]and the city that *is* in the midst of the ravine, [b]and all the plain by Medeba; 17 [c]Heshbon and all its cities that *are* in the plain: Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon, 18 [d]Jahaza, Kedemoth, Mephaath, 19 [e]Kirjathaim, [f]Sibmah, Zereth Shahar on the mountain of the valley, 20 Beth Peor, [g]the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth— 21 [h]all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, [i]whom Moses had struck [j]with the princes of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, who *were* princes of Sihon dwelling in the country. 22 The children of Israel also killed with the sword [k]Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them. 23 And the border of the children of Reuben was the bank of the Jordan. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

The Land of Gad

24 [l]Moses also had given *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the children of Gad according to their families. 25 [m]Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, [n]and half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer, which *is* before [o]Rabbah, 26 and from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir, 27 and in the valley [p]Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, [q]Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as *its* border, as far as the edge [r]of the Sea of Chinnereth, on the other side of the Jordan eastward. 28 This *is* the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

Half the Tribe of Manasseh (East)

29 [s]Moses also had given *an inheritance* to half the tribe of Manasseh; it was for half the tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their families: 30 Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and [t]all the towns of Jair which are in Bashan, sixty cities; 31 half of Gilead, and [u]Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were* for the [v]children of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the children of Machir according to their families.

32 These *are the areas* which Moses had distributed as an inheritance in the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward. 33 [w]But to the tribe of Levi Moses had given no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel *was* their inheritance, [x]as He had said to them.

The Land Divided West of the Jordan

14 These *are the areas* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, [a]which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them. 2 Their inheritance *was* [b]by lot, as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe. 3 [c]For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them. 4 For [d]the children of Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. And they gave no part to the Levites in the land, except [e]cities to dwell *in*, with their common-lands for their livestock and their property. 5 [f]As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.

Caleb Inherits Hebron

6 Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the [g]Kenizzite said to him: "You know [h]the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning [i]you

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49:5–7). But later the Levites showed their faithfulness to the Lord (Ex. 32:25–28) and were promised a blessing (Deut. 33:8–11). Instead of land, the sacrifices of God would be their privileged inheritance.

13:22 ***Balaam the son of Beor.*** Balaam was a pagan fortune-teller who had been hired by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 22–24).

14:6 ***Caleb . . . the Kenizzite.*** The Kenizzites were a non-Israelite group descended from Esau through Kenaz (Gen. 15:19; 36:11,15,42). It seems that Caleb, one of the most faithful to God of his time, was just a generation removed from a non-Israelite family. Although the Jews are indeed God's chosen people, He loves and honors anyone who obeys His commands.

13:14 [x] Josh. 13:33 **13:15** [y] Num. 34:14 **13:16** [z] Josh. 12:2 [a] Num. 21:28 [b] Num. 21:30 **13:17** [c] Num. 21:28, 30 **13:18** [d] Num. 21:23 **13:19** [e] Num. 32:37 [f] Num. 32:38 **13:20** [g] Deut. 3:17 **13:21** [h] Deut. 3:10 [i] Num. 21:24 [j] Num. 31:8 **13:22** [k] Num. 22:5; 31:8 **13:24** [l] Num. 34:14 **13:25** [m] Num. 32:1, 35 [n] Judg. 11:13, 15 [o] Deut. 3:11 **13:27** [p] Num. 32:36 [q] Gen. 33:17 [r] Num. 34:11 **13:29** [s] Num. 34:14 **13:30** [t] Num. 32:41 **13:31** [u] Josh. 9:10; 12:4; 13:12 [v] Num. 32:39, 40 **13:33** [w] Josh. 13:14; 18:7 [x] Num. 18:20 **14:1** [a] Num. 34:16–29 **14:2** [b] Num. 26:55; 33:54; 34:13 **14:3** [c] Josh. 13:8, 32, 33 **14:4** [d] 2 Chr. 30:1 [e] Num. 35:2–8 **14:5** [f] Josh. 21:2 **14:6** [g] Num. 32:11, 12 [h] Num. 14:24, 30 [i] Num. 13:26

and me in Kadesh Barnea. 7I *was* forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD [i]sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as *it was* in my heart. 8Nevertheless [k]my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly [l]followed the LORD my God. 9So Moses swore on that day, saying, [m]'Surely the land [n]where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.' 10And now, behold, the LORD has kept me [o]alive, [p]as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. 11[q]As yet I *am as* strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength *was* then, so now *is* my strength for war, both [r]for going out and for coming in. 12Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how [s]the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. [t]It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and [u]I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said."

13And Joshua [v]blessed him, [w]and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. 14[x]Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he [y]wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. 15And [z]the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba was* the greatest man among the Anakim).

[a]Then the land had rest from war.

The Land of Judah

15 So *this* was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:

[a]The border of Edom at the [b]Wilderness of Zin southward *was* the extreme southern boundary. 2And their [c]southern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward. 3Then it went out to the southern side of [d]the Ascent of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin, ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea, passed along to Hezron, went up to Adar, and went around to Karkaa. 4*From there* it passed [e]toward Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your southern border.

5The east border *was* the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan.

And the [f]border on the northern quarter *began* at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. 6The border went up to [g]Beth Hoglah and passed north of Beth Arabah; and the border went up [h]to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. 7Then the border went up toward [i]Debir from [j]the Valley of Achor, and it turned northward toward Gilgal, which *is* before the Ascent of Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the valley. The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh and ended at [k]En Rogel. 8And the border went up [l]by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the [m]Jebusite *city* (which *is* Jerusalem). The border went up to the top of the mountain that *lies* before the Valley of Hinnom westward, which *is* at the end of the Valley [n]of Rephaim* northward. 9Then the border went around from the top of the hill to [o]the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and extended to the cities of Mount Ephron. And the border went around [p]to Baalah (which *is* [q]Kirjath Jearim). 10Then the border turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (which *is* Chesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to [r]Timnah. 11And the border went out to the side of [s]Ekron northward. Then the border went around to Shicron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel; and the border ended at the sea.

12The west border *was* [t]the coastline of the Great Sea. This *is* the boundary of the children of Judah all around according to their families.

* **15:8** Literally *Giants*

14:10–11 Thankfulness—God's Word is as dependable as its author. His promise to Caleb waited forty-five years for fulfillment, but His blessing was sure. Caleb's view of all God's goodness to him resounded with thankfulness. Being silently thankful is important—God knows our hearts—but thankfulness should also be expressed with words of praise and glorification for the giver of all good things.

14:14 *he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.* Caleb's wholehearted devotion to God was never a question, even in the wilderness. In the Bible, people are sometimes rewarded in this life for their faithfulness to God, but not always (Heb. 11:32–40). The believer's ultimate blessing will come in eternity. Those who set their hope on that promise will lose nothing, whatever they suffer in this life.

15:1–12 *the lot of the tribe.* The boundaries of Judah in southern Canaan are described in detail. These details may at first seem uninteresting, but they serve to underline the fact that this passage is talking about real people, in a real place, in a real time in history.

14:7 [i] Num. 13:6, 17; 14:6 **14:8** [k] Num. 13:31, 32 [l] Num. 14:24 **14:9** [m] Num. 14:23, 24 [n] Deut. 1:36 **14:10** [o] Num. 14:24, 30, 38 [p] Josh. 5:6 **14:11** [q] Deut. 34:7 [r] Deut. 31:2 **14:12** [s] Num. 13:28, 33 [t] Rom. 8:31 [u] Josh. 15:14 **14:13** [v] Josh. 22:6 [w] Josh. 10:37; 15:13 **14:14** [x] Josh. 21:12 [y] Josh. 14:8, 9 **14:15** [z] Gen. 23:2 [a] Josh. 11:23 **15:1** [a] Num. 34:3 [b] Num. 33:36 **15:2** [c] Num. 34:3, 4 **15:3** [d] Num. 34:4 **15:4** [e] Num. 34:5 **15:5** [f] Josh. 18:15–19 **15:6** [g] Josh. 18:19, 21 [h] Josh. 18:17 **15:7** [i] Josh. 13:26 [j] Josh. 7:26 [k] 2 Sam. 17:17 **15:8** [l] Josh. 18:16 [m] Judg. 1:21; 19:10 [n] Josh. 18:16 **15:9** [o] Josh. 18:15 [p] 1 Chr. 13:6 [q] Judg. 18:12 **15:10** [r] Gen. 38:13 **15:11** [s] Josh. 19:43 **15:12** [t] Num. 34:6, 7

Caleb Occupies Hebron and Debir

13 [u]Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh
he gave a share among the children of [v]Ju-
dah, according to the commandment of the
LORD to Joshua, *namely,* [w]Kirjath Arba,
which *is* Hebron (*Arba was* the father of
Anak). 14 Caleb drove out [x]the three sons
of Anak from there: [y]Sheshai, Ahiman,
and Talmai, the children of Anak. 15 Then
[z]he went up from there to the inhabitants
of Debir (formerly the name of Debir *was*
Kirjath Sepher).
16 [a]And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kir-
jath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give
Achsah my daughter as wife." 17 So [b]Oth-
niel the [c]son of Kenaz, the brother of Ca-
leb, took it; and he gave him [d]Achsah his
daughter as wife. 18 [e]Now it was so, when
she came *to him,* that she persuaded him to
ask her father for a field. So [f]she dismount-
ed from *her* donkey, and Caleb said to her,
"What do you wish?" 19 She answered,
"Give me a [g]blessing; since you have given
me land in the South, give me also springs
of water." So he gave her the upper springs
and the lower springs.

The Cities of Judah

20 This *was* the inheritance of the tribe
of the children of Judah according to their
families:
21 The cities at the limits of the tribe
of the children of Judah, toward the bor-
der of Edom in the South, were Kabzeel,
[h]Eder, Jagur, 22 Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah,
23 Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, 24 [i]Ziph, Telem,
Bealoth, 25 Hazor, Hadattah, Kerioth, Hez-
ron (which *is* Hazor), 26 Amam, Shema,
Moladah, 27 Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon,
Beth Pelet, 28 Hazar Shual, [j]Beersheba, Biz-
jothjah, 29 Baalah, Ijim, Ezem, 30 Eltolad,
Chesil, [k]Hormah, 31 [l]Ziklag, Madmannah,
Sansannah, 32 Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and
[m]Rimmon: all the cities *are* twenty-nine,
with their villages.
33 In the lowland: [n]Eshtaol, Zorah, Ash-
nah, 34 Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah,
Enam, 35 Jarmuth, [o]Adullam, Socoh, Aze-
kah, 36 Sharaim, Adithaim, Gederah, and
Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their
villages; 37 Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad,
38 Dilean, Mizpah, [p]Joktheel, 39 [q]Lachish,
Bozkath, [r]Eglon, 40 Cabbon, Lahmas,* Kith-
lish, 41 Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah,
and Makkedah: sixteen cities with their
villages; 42 [s]Libnah, Ether, Ashan, 43 Jiph-
tah, Ashnah, Nezib, 44 Keilah, Achzib, and
Mareshah: nine cities with their villag-
es; 45 Ekron, with its towns and villages;
46 from Ekron to the sea, all that *lay* near
[t]Ashdod, with their villages; 47 Ashdod with
its towns and villages, Gaza with its towns
and villages—as far as [u]the Brook of Egypt
and [v]the Great Sea with *its* coastline.
48 And in the mountain country: Sham-
ir, Jattir, Sochoh, 49 Dannah, Kirjath San-
nah (which *is* Debir), 50 Anab, Eshtemoh,
Anim, 51 [w]Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: elev-
en cities with their villages; 52 Arab, Du-
mah, Eshean, 53 Janum, Beth Tappuah,
Aphekah, 54 Humtah, [x]Kirjath Arba (which
is Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their
villages; 55 [y]Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah,
56 Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, 57 Kain, Gibe-
ah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villag-
es; 58 Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, 59 Maarath,
Beth Anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with
their villages; 60 [z]Kirjath Baal (which *is* Kir-
jath Jearim) and Rabbah: two cities with
their villages.
61 In the wilderness: Beth Arabah, Mid-
din, Secacah, 62 Nibshan, the City of Salt,
and [a]En Gedi: six cities with their villages.
63 As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants
of Jerusalem, [b]the children of Judah could
not drive them out; [c]but the Jebusites dwell
with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to
this day.

Ephraim and West Manasseh

16 The lot fell to the children of Joseph
from the Jordan, by Jericho, to the
waters of Jericho on the east, to the [a]wil-
derness that goes up from Jericho through
the mountains to Bethel, 2 then went out
from [b]Bethel to Luz,* passed along to the
border of the Archites at Ataroth, 3 and
went down westward to the boundary of
the Japhletites, [c]as far as the boundary of

* **15:40** Or *Lahmam* * **16:2** Septuagint reads *Bethel* (that is, Luz).

15:13 Word of God—Caleb was not afraid to face the giants of Hebron because he knew God would be with him. In the same way, we as Christians need not fear the "giants" we face in spiritual battle. God will be with us also. His resources are more than sufficient to overcome the hosts of darkness which confront us in this world (1 John 4:4).

15:63 ***with the children of Judah.*** Judges 1:21 repeats this verse almost verbatim, except that it says Benjamin, not Judah, failed to drive the Jebusites out of Jerusalem. Jerusalem sat astride the boundary between Judah and Benjamin. In the early period, Jerusalem did not belong strictly to either tribe. The tribe of Judah later captured the city from the Jebusites (Judg. 1:8), and from then on it was considered a city of Judah.

15:13 [u] Josh. 14:13 [v] Num. 13:6 [w] Josh. 14:15
15:14 [x] Judg. 1:10, 20 [y] Num. 13:22 **15:15** [z] Judg. 1:11 **15:16** [a] Judg. 1:12 **15:17** [b] Judg. 1:13; 3:9 [c] Num. 32:12 [d] Judg. 1:12 **15:18** [e] Judg. 1:14 [f] Gen. 24:64 **15:19** [g] Gen. 33:11 **15:21** [h] Gen. 35:21
15:24 [i] 1 Sam. 23:14 **15:28** [j] Gen. 21:31 **15:30** [k] Josh. 19:4 **15:31** [l] 1 Sam. 27:6; 30:1 **15:32** [m] Judg. 20:45, 47 **15:33** [n] Judg. 13:25; 16:31 **15:35** [o] 1 Sam. 22:1 **15:38** [p] 2 Kin. 14:7 **15:39** [q] 2 Kin. 14:19 [r] Josh. 10:3 **15:42** [s] Josh. 21:13 **15:46** [t] Josh. 11:22 **15:47** [u] Josh. 15:4 [v] Num. 34:6 **15:51** [w] Josh. 10:41; 11:16 **15:54** [x] Josh. 14:15 **15:55** [y] 1 Sam. 23:24, 25 **15:60** [z] Josh. 18:14 **15:62** [a] 1 Sam. 23:29
15:63 [b] 2 Sam. 5:6 [c] Judg. 1:21 **16:1** [a] Josh. 8:15; 18:12
16:2 [b] Josh. 18:13 **16:3** [c] 2 Chr. 8:5

Lower Beth Horon to [d]Gezer; and it ended at the sea.

4 [e]So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

The Land of Ephraim

5 [f]The border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus:* The border of their inheritance on the east side was [g]Ataroth Addar [h]as far as Upper Beth Horon.

6 And the border went out toward the sea on the north side of [i]Michmethath; then the border went around eastward to Taanath Shiloh, and passed by it on the east of Janohah. 7 Then it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and Naarah,* reached to Jericho, and came out at the Jordan.

8 The border went out from [j]Tappuah westward to the [k]Brook Kanah, and it ended at the sea. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their families. 9 [l]The separate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

10 [m]And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers.

The Other Half-Tribe of Manasseh (West)

17 There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he *was* the [a]firstborn of Joseph: *namely* for [b]Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war; therefore he was given [c]Gilead and Bashan. 2 And there was *a lot* for [d]the rest of the children of Manasseh according to their families: [e]for the children of Abiezer,* the children of Helek, [f]the children of Asriel, the children of Shechem, [g]the children of Hepher, and the children of Shemida; these *were* the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families.

3 But [h]Zelophehad the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters. And these *are* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 4 And they came near before [i]Eleazar the priest, before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying, [j]"The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers." Therefore, according to the commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among their father's brothers. 5 Ten shares fell to [k]Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which *were* on the other side of the Jordan, 6 because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons; and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

7 And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher to [l]Michmethath, that *lies* east of Shechem; and the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah. 8 Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but [m]Tappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim. 9 And the border descended to the Brook Kanah, southward to the brook. [n]These cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh. The border of Manasseh *was* on the north side of the brook; and it ended at the sea.

10 Southward *it was* Ephraim's, northward *it was* Manasseh's, and the sea was its border. Manasseh's territory was adjoining Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. 11 And in Issachar and in Asher, [o]Manasseh had [p]Beth Shean and its towns, Ibleam and its towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of En Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns—three hilly regions. 12 Yet [q]the children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants of* those cities, but the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. 13 And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong, that they put the Canaanites to [r]forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

More Land for Ephraim and Manasseh

14 [s]Then the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given us *only* [t]one lot and one share to inherit, since we *are* [u]a great people, inasmuch as the LORD has blessed us until now?"

15 So Joshua answered them, "If you *are* a great people, *then* go up to the forest *country* and clear a place for yourself

* **16:7** Or *Naaran* (compare 1 Chronicles 7:28)
* **17:2** Called *Jeezer* in Numbers 26:30

17:3–6 ***Zelophehad . . . had no sons but only daughters.*** This account serves to show again the theme of the Book of Joshua—that God is faithful to keep His promises. Joshua also was faithful to carry out the commands of God concerning His promise through Moses for the daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 26:33; 27:1–11).

16:3 [d] 1 Kin. 9:15 **16:4** [e] Josh. 17:14 **16:5** [f] Judg. 1:29 [g] Josh. 18:13 [h] 2 Chr. 8:5 **16:6** [i] Josh. 17:7 **16:8** [j] Josh. 17:8 [k] Josh. 17:9 **16:9** [l] Josh. 17:9 **16:10** [m] Judg. 1:29 **17:1** [a] Gen. 41:51; 46:20; 48:18 [b] Gen. 50:23 [c] Deut. 3:15 **17:2** [d] Num. 26:29–33 [e] 1 Chr. 7:18 [f] Num. 26:31 [g] Num. 26:32 **17:3** [h] Num. 26:33; 27:1; 36:2 **17:4** [i] Josh. 14:1 [j] Num. 27:2–11 **17:5** [k] Josh. 22:7 **17:7** [l] Josh. 16:6 **17:8** [m] Josh. 16:8 **17:9** [n] Josh. 16:9 **17:11** [o] 1 Chr. 7:29 [p] 1 Kin. 4:12 **17:12** [q] Judg. 1:19, 27, 28 **17:13** [r] Josh. 16:10 **17:14** [s] Josh. 16:4 [t] Gen. 48:22 [u] Gen. 48:19

there in the land of the Perizzites and the giants, since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you."

16But the children of Joseph said, "The mountain country is not enough for us; and all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley have [v]chariots of iron, *both those* who *are* of Beth Shean and its towns and *those* who *are* [w]of the Valley of Jezreel."

17And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—saying, "You *are* a great people and have great power; you shall not have *only* one lot, 18but the mountain country shall be yours. Although it *is* wooded, you shall cut it down, and its farthest extent shall be yours; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, [x]though they have iron chariots *and* are strong."

The Remainder of the Land Divided

18 Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together [a]at Shiloh, and [b]set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. 2But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance.

3Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: [c]"How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers has given you? 4Pick out from among you three men for *each* tribe, and I will send them; they shall rise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come *back* to me. 5And they shall divide it into seven parts. [d]Judah shall remain in their territory on the south, and the [e]house of Joseph shall remain in their territory on the north. 6You shall therefore survey the land in seven parts and bring *the survey* here to me, [f]that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. 7[g]But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance. [h]And Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them."

8Then the men arose to go away; and Joshua charged those who went to survey the land, saying, "Go, walk [i]through the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh." 9So the men went, passed through the land, and wrote the survey in a book in seven parts by cities; and they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh. 10Then Joshua cast [j]lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and there [k]Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions.

The Land of Benjamin

11[l]Now the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families, and the territory of their lot came out between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. 12[m]Their border on the north side began at the Jordan, and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north, and went up through the mountains westward; it ended at the Wilderness of Beth Aven. 13The border went over from there toward Luz, to the side of Luz [n](which *is* Bethel) southward; and the border descended to Ataroth Addar, near the hill that *lies* on the south side [o]of Lower Beth Horon.

14Then the border extended around the west side to the south, from the hill that *lies* before Beth Horon southward; and it ended at [p]Kirjath Baal (which *is* Kirjath Jearim), a city of the children of Judah. This *was* the west side.

15The south side *began* at the end of Kirjath Jearim, and the border extended on the west and went out to [q]the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. 16Then the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lies* before [r]the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which *is* in the Valley of the Rephaim* on the north, descended to the Valley of Hinnom, to the side of the Jebusite *city* on the south, and descended to [s]En Rogel. 17And it went around from the north, went out to En Shemesh, and extended toward Geliloth, which is before the Ascent of Adummim, and descended to [t]the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. 18Then it passed

* **18:16** Literally *Giants*

18:1 *Shiloh.* Shiloh was about 15 miles northwest of Jericho. Here the Israelites set up the tent of meeting (Ex. 26). This remained an important religious center for several hundred years (Judg. 18:31; 1 Sam. 1:9) until the taking of Jerusalem in David's day.

18:3 Unfaithfulness—The seven tribes yet to be settled seemed to have little desire to receive their inheritance and were rebuked for their half-heartedness. They had easily defeated the Canaanites, but they had not followed up on their victories and taken possession of all the land. This laziness was disobedience to God and showed lack of faith in His promises. In our own lives it is fatally easy to begin a work that God sets before us, and then slack off in our faithfulness before it is finished. The believer's inheritance is reserved in heaven, and cannot be bought by any work of our own. However, God requests holiness of living on our part, and His commands must be obeyed.

17:16 [v] Judg. 1:19; 4:3 [w] 1 Kin. 4:12 **17:18** [x] Deut. 20:1 **18:1** [a] Jer. 7:12 [b] Judg. 18:31 **18:3** [c] Judg. 18:9 **18:5** [d] Josh. 15:1 [e] Josh. 16:1—17:18 **18:6** [f] Josh. 14:2; 18:10 **18:7** [g] Josh. 13:33 [h] Josh. 13:8 **18:8** [i] Gen. 13:17 **18:10** [j] Acts 13:19 [k] Num. 34:16–29 **18:11** [l] Judg. 1:21 **18:12** [m] Josh. 16:1 **18:13** [n] Gen. 28:19 [o] Josh. 16:3 **18:14** [p] Josh. 15:9 **18:15** [q] Josh. 15:9 **18:16** [r] Josh. 15:8 [s] Josh. 15:7 **18:17** [t] Josh. 15:6

along toward the north side of Arabah,* and went down to Arabah. 19And the border passed along to the north side of Beth Hoglah; then the border ended at the north bay at the [u]Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This *was* the southern boundary.

20The Jordan was its border on the east side. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, according to its boundaries all around, according to their families.

21Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, 22Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, 23Avim, Parah, Ophrah, 24Chephar Haammoni, Ophni, and Gaba: twelve cities with their villages; 25[v]Gibeon, [w]Ramah, Beeroth, 26Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah, 27Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, 28Zelah, Eleph, [x]Jebus (which *is* Jerusalem), Gibeath, *and* Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

Simeon's Inheritance with Judah

19 The [a]second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. [b]And their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah. 2[c]They had in their inheritance Beersheba (Sheba), Moladah, 3Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, 4Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, 5Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, 6Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhen: thirteen cities and their villages; 7Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan: four cities and their villages; 8and all the villages that *were* all around these cities as far as Baalath Beer, [d]Ramah of the South. This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.

9The inheritance of the children of Simeon *was included* in the share of the children of Judah, for the share of the children of Judah was too much for them. [e]Therefore the children of Simeon had *their* inheritance within the inheritance of that people.

The Land of Zebulun

10The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families, and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid. 11[f]Their border went toward the west and to Maralah, went to Dabbasheth, and extended along the brook that is [g]east of Jokneam. 12Then from Sarid it went eastward toward the sunrise along the border of Chisloth Tabor, and went out toward [h]Daberath, bypassing Japhia. 13And from there it passed along on the east of [i]Gath Hepher, toward Eth Kazin, and extended to Rimmon, which borders on Neah. 14Then the border went around it on the north side of Hannathon, and it ended in the Valley of Jiphthah El. 15Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. 16This *was* the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

The Land of Issachar

17The fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families. 18And their territory went to Jezreel, and *included* Chesulloth, Shunem, 19Haphraim, Shion, Anaharath, 20Rabbith, Kishion, Abez, 21Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez. 22And the border reached to Tabor, Shahazimah, and [j]Beth Shemesh; their border ended at the Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages. 23This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

The Land of Asher

24[k]The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. 25And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, 26Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal; it reached to [l]Mount Carmel westward, along *the Brook* Shihor Libnath. 27It turned toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon; and it reached to Zebulun and to the Valley of Jiphthah El, then northward beyond Beth Emek and Neiel, bypassing [m]Cabul *which was* on the left, 28including Ebron,* Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, [n]as far as Greater Sidon. 29And the border turned to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre; then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the region of [o]Achzib. 30Also Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob *were included:* twenty-two cities with their villages. 31This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

The Land of Naphtali

32[p]The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, for the children of Naphtali according to their families. 33And their border began at Heleph, enclosing the territory from the terebinth tree in Zaanannim, Adami Nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; it ended at the Jordan. 34[q]From Heleph the border extended westward to

* **18:18** Or *Beth Arabah* (compare 15:6 and 18:22)
* **19:28** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; a few Hebrew manuscripts read *Abdon* (compare 21:30 and 1 Chronicles 6:74).

18:19 [u] Josh. 15:2, 5 **18:25** [v] 1 Kin. 3:4, 5 [w] Jer. 31:15 **18:28** [x] Josh. 15:8, 63 **19:1** [a] Judg. 1:3 [b] Josh. 19:9 **19:2** [c] 1 Chr. 4:28 **19:8** [d] 1 Sam. 30:27 **19:9** [e] Josh. 19:1 **19:11** [f] Gen. 49:13 [g] Josh. 12:22 **19:12** [h] 1 Chr. 6:72

19:13 [i] 2 Kin. 14:25 **19:22** [j] Josh. 15:10 **19:24** [k] Judg. 1:31, 32 **19:26** [l] Jer. 46:18 **19:27** [m] 1 Kin. 9:13 **19:28** [n] Judg. 1:31 **19:29** [o] Judg. 1:31 **19:32** [p] Judg. 1:33 **19:34** [q] Deut. 33:23

Aznoth Tabor, and went out from there toward Hukkok; it adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side, and ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise. 35And the fortified cities *are* Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, 36Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, 37[r]Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, 38Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh: nineteen cities with their villages. 39This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.

The Land of Dan

40[s]The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. 41And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, [t]Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, 42[u]Shaalabbin, [v]Aijalon, Jethlah, 43Elon, Timnah, [w]Ekron, 44Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, 45Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, 46Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa. 47And the [x]border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, [y]Dan, after the name of Dan their father. 48This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

Joshua's Inheritance

49When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. 50According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, [z]Timnath [a]Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it.

51[b]These *were* the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel divided as an inheritance by lot [c]in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So they made an end of dividing the country.

The Cities of Refuge

20 The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: [a]'Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, 3that the slayer who kills a person accidentally *or* unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. 4And when he flees to one of those cities, and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. 5[b]Then if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand. 6And he shall dwell in that city [c]until he stands before the congregation for judgment, *and* until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.'"

7So they appointed [d]Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, [e]Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and [f]Kirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron) in [g]the mountains of Judah. 8And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned [h]Bezer in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, [i]Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and [j]Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. 9[k]These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood [l]until he stood before the congregation.

Cities of the Levites

21 Then the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the [a]Levites came near to [b]Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and

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19:50 Commandments—The account of the distribution of the land began with the recognition of Caleb's faithfulness to God. The conclusion recognizes Joshua as one who also believed God. Joshua's extreme service and faithfulness was rewarded by the Lord's command. When we delight to obey the word of the Lord, He also delights in giving us the desires of our hearts (Ps. 37:4).

20:3 *accidentally.* God's laws made allowance for motive and intent, just as modern criminal codes distinguish unintentional killing from murder. The avenger of blood was a close relative who was the "protector of family rights." (Ruth 3:13 and 4:1 translate the word used here for "avenger of blood" as "close relative.") God did not give license to take revenge however. He has clearly reserved that task for Himself alone (Deut. 32:35; Is. 34:8; Rom. 12:19). God's provision of these cities of refuge put a limit on private acts of vengeance.

20:7–8 *appointed.* The cities of refuge were evenly distributed so that none was more than a day's journey from any part of Israel's land.

19:37 [r] Josh. 20:7 **19:40** [s] Judg. 1:34–36 **19:41** [t] Josh. 15:33 **19:42** [u] Judg. 1:35 [v] Josh. 10:12; 21:24 **19:43** [w] Judg. 1:18 **19:47** [x] Judg. 18 [y] Judg. 18:29 **19:50** [z] Josh. 24:30 [a] 1 Chr. 7:24 **19:51** [b] Num. 34:17 [c] Josh. 18:1, 10 **20:2** [a] Num. 35:6–34 **20:5** [b] Num. 35:12 **20:6** [c] Num. 35:12, 24, 25 **20:7** [d] 1 Chr. 6:76 [e] Josh. 21:21 [f] Josh. 14:15; 21:11, 13 [g] Luke 1:39 **20:8** [h] Deut. 4:43 [i] Josh. 21:38 [j] Josh. 21:27 **20:9** [k] Num. 35:15 [l] Josh. 20:6 **21:1** [a] Num. 35:1–8 [b] Josh. 14:1; 17:4

to the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the tribes of the children of Israel. 2And they spoke to them at [c]Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, [d]"The LORD commanded through Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for our livestock." 3So the children of Israel gave to the Levites from their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their common-lands:

4Now the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites. And [e]the children of Aaron the priest, *who were* of the Levites, [f]had thirteen cities by lot from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin. 5[g]The rest of the children of Kohath had ten cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh.

6And [h]the children of Gershon had thirteen cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

7[i]The children of Merari according to their families had twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun.

8[j]And the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands by lot to the Levites, [k]as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.

9So they gave from the tribe of the children of Judah and from the tribe of the children of Simeon these cities which are designated by name, 10which were for the children of Aaron, one of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi; for the lot was theirs first. 11[l]And they gave them Kirjath Arba (*Arba was* the father of [m]Anak), [n]which *is* Hebron, in the mountains of Judah, with the common-land surrounding it. 12But [o]the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

13Thus [p]to the children of Aaron the priest they gave [q]Hebron with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), [r]Libnah with its common-land, 14[s]Jattir with its common-land, [t]Eshtemoa with its common-land, 15[u]Holon with its common-land, [v]Debir with its common-land, 16[w]Ain with its common-land, [x]Juttah with its common-land, and [y]Beth Shemesh with its common-land: nine cities from those two tribes; 17and from the tribe of Benjamin, [z]Gibeon with its common-land, [a]Geba with its common-land, 18Anathoth with its common-land, and [b]Almon with its common-land: four cities. 19All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, *were* thirteen cities with their common-lands.

20[c]And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites, the rest of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot from the tribe of Ephraim. 21For they gave them [d]Shechem with its common-land in the mountains of Ephraim (a city of refuge for the slayer), [e]Gezer with its common-land, 22Kibzaim with its common-land, and Beth Horon with its common-land: four cities; 23and from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its common-land, Gibbethon with its common-land, 24[f]Aijalon with its common-land, *and* Gath Rimmon with its common-land: four cities; 25and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with its common-land and Gath Rimmon with its common-land: two cities. 26All the ten cities with their common-lands were for the rest of the families of the children of Kohath.

27[g]Also to the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, from the *other* half-tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* [h]Golan in Bashan with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), and Be Eshterah with its common-land: two cities; 28and from the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its common-land, Daberath with its common-land, 29Jarmuth with its common-land, *and* En Gannim with its common-land: four cities; 30and from the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its common-land, Abdon with its common-land, 31Helkath with its common-land, and Rehob with its common-land: four cities; 32and from the tribe of Naphtali, [i]Kedesh in Galilee with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Hammoth Dor with its common-land, and Kartan with its common-land: three cities. 33All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families *were* thirteen cities with their common-lands.

34[j]And to the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its common-land, Kartah with its common-land, 35Dimnah with its common-land, *and* Nahalal with its common-land: four cities; 36and from the tribe of Reuben, [k]Bezer with its common-land, Jahaz with its common-land, 37Kedemoth with

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21:4–8 *by lot.* Even though this seems as if it was done by chance, we know God was in control of every aspect of the inheritance process.

21:2 [c] Josh. 18:1 [d] Num. 35:2 **21:4** [e] Josh. 21:8, 19 [f] Josh. 19:51 **21:5** [g] Josh. 21:20 **21:6** [h] Josh. 21:27 **21:7** [i] Josh. 21:34 **21:8** [j] Josh. 21:3 [k] Num. 35:2 **21:11** [l] 1 Chr. 6:55 [m] Josh. 14:15; 15:13, 14 [n] Josh. 20:7 **21:12** [o] Josh. 14:14 **21:13** [p] 1 Chr. 6:57 [q] Josh. 15:54; 20:2, 7 [r] Josh. 15:42 **21:14** [s] Josh. 15:48 [t] Josh. 15:50 **21:15** [u] 1 Chr. 6:58 [v] Josh. 15:49 **21:16** [w] 1 Chr. 6:59 [x] Josh. 15:55 [y] Josh. 15:10 **21:17** [z] Josh. 18:25 [a] Josh. 18:24 **21:18** [b] 1 Chr. 6:60 **21:20** [c] 1 Chr. 6:66 **21:21** [d] Josh. 20:7 [e] Judg. 1:29 **21:24** [f] Josh. 10:12 **21:27** [g] 1 Chr. 6:71 [h] Josh. 20:8 **21:32** [i] Josh. 20:7 **21:34** [j] 1 Chr. 6:77–81 **21:36** [k] Josh. 20:8

its common-land, and Mephaath with its common-land: four cities;* 38and from the tribe of Gad, [l]Ramoth in Gilead with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer), Mahanaim with its common-land, 39Heshbon with its common-land, *and* Jazer with its common-land: four cities in all. 40So all the cities for the children of Merari according to their families, the rest of the families of the Levites, were *by* their lot twelve cities.

41[m]All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel *were* forty-eight cities with their common-lands. 42Every one of these cities had its common-land surrounding it; thus *were* all these cities.

The Promise Fulfilled

43So the LORD gave to Israel [n]all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they [o]took possession of it and dwelt in it. 44[p]The LORD gave them [q]rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And [r]not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. 45[s]Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

Eastern Tribes Return to Their Lands

22 Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, 2and said to them: "You have kept [a]all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, [b]and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. 3You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. 4And now the LORD your God has given [c]rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents *and* to the land of your possession, [d]which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. 5But [e]take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, [f]to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul." 6So Joshua [g]blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

7Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, [h]but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave *a possession* among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward. And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, 8and spoke to them, saying, "Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing. [i]Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren."

9So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go to [j]the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

An Altar by the Jordan

10And when they came to the region of the Jordan which *is* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan—a great, impressive altar. 11Now the children of Israel [k]heard *someone* say, "Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan—on the children of Israel's side." 12And when the children of Israel heard *of it,* [l]the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them.

13Then the children of Israel [m]sent [n]Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest

* **21:37** Following Septuagint and Vulgate (compare 1 Chronicles 6:78, 79); Masoretic Text, Bomberg, and Targum omit verses 36 and 37.

21:43–45 ***which He had sworn.*** Again we see the nature of our God—not only did He keep every promise, He also guaranteed that His people would have rest.

22:5 Perseverance—Past victories do not lessen the responsibility for present faithfulness. Joshua impressed upon the people, especially the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh (because they would be living in isolation from the rest of Israel), the urgent need to continue to zealously serve God. Our zeal for the Lord cannot cease because a crisis has passed. There is no certificate of discharge from the army of Christ.

22:11–12 ***have built an altar.*** The Bible does not reveal why this altar was built until the events have developed into a full-blown crisis. God had commanded Israel not to offer burnt offerings or sacrifices at any location except the tabernacle (Lev. 17:8–9) and not to worship other gods (Deut. 13:12–15). The punishment for violating both laws was death. This was why Israel gathered together to go to war against the three apparently erring tribes.

21:38 [l] Josh. 20:8 **21:41** [m] Num. 35:7 **21:43** [n] Gen. 12:7; 26:3, 4; 28:4, 13, 14 [o] Num. 33:53 **21:44** [p] Deut. 7:23, 24 [q] Josh. 1:13, 15; 11:23 [r] Deut. 7:24 **21:45** [s] Josh. 23:14 **22:2** [a] Num. 32:20–22 [b] Josh. 1:12–18 **22:4** [c] Josh. 21:44 [d] Num. 32:33 **22:5** [e] Deut. 6:6, 17; 11:22 [f] Deut. 10:12; 11:13, 22 **22:6** [g] 2 Sam. 6:18 **22:7** [h] Josh. 17:1–13 **22:8** [i] 1 Sam. 30:24 **22:9** [j] Num. 32:1, 26, 29 **22:11** [k] Judg. 20:12, 13 **22:12** [l] Josh. 18:1 **22:13** [m] Deut. 13:14 [n] Ex. 6:25

to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, 14and with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house of every tribe of Israel; and [o]each one *was* the head of the house of his father among the divisions* of Israel. 15Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying, 16"Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD: 'What [p]treachery *is* this that you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that you have built for yourselves an altar, [q]that you might rebel this day against the LORD? 17*Is* the iniquity [r]of Peor not enough for us, from which we are not cleansed till this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, 18but that you must turn away this day from following the LORD? And it shall be, if you rebel today against the LORD, that tomorrow [s]He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel. 19Nevertheless, if the land of your possession *is* unclean, *then* cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD, [t]where the LORD's tabernacle stands, and take possession among us; but do not rebel against the LORD, nor rebel against us, by building yourselves an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God. 20[u]Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.'"

21Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh answered and said to the heads of the divisions* of Israel: 22"The LORD [v]God of gods, the LORD God of gods, He [w]knows, and let Israel itself know—if *it is* in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD, do not save us this day. 23If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, or if to offer peace offerings on it, let the LORD Himself [x]require *an account*. 24But in fact we have done it for fear, for a reason, saying, 'In time to come your descendants may speak to our descendants, saying, "What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel? 25For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between you and us, *you* children of Reuben and children of Gad. You have no part in the LORD." So your descendants would make our descendants cease fearing the LORD.' 26Therefore we said, 'Let us now prepare to build ourselves an altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice, 27but *that* it *may be* [y]a witness between you and us and our generations after us, that we may [z]perform the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your descendants may not say to our descendants in time to come, "You have no part in the LORD."' 28Therefore we said that it will be, when they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say, 'Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices; but it *is* a witness between you and us.' 29Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn from following the LORD this day, [a]to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God which *is* before His tabernacle."

30Now when Phinehas the priest and the rulers of the congregation, the heads of the divisions* of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them. 31Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh, "This day we perceive that the LORD *is* [b]among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD. Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD."

32And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the rulers, returned from the children of Reuben and the children of

*22:14 Literally *thousands* *22:21 Literally *thousands* *22:30 Literally *thousands*

22:16–18 ***treachery.*** This is sometimes translated "trespass" and is the same word used to describe Achan's sin (7:1). No one can sin in isolation. If the tribes east of the Jordan were indeed sinning, then the entire nation would feel the effects, as in the case of Achan.

22:23–28 ***we have done it for fear.*** The tribes to the east of the Jordan were afraid that geographical distance would isolate them and in time cause the Israelites west of the Jordan to reject them. Thus they built the altar to help prevent the existing unity from being lost. The eastern tribes were careful to label the altar for what it really was—a replica to serve as a witness for future generations.

22:30–31 Prudence—Jumping to conclusions can bring one to the brink of disaster. While their motives were good (maintaining purity), they did not stop to find out what was really going on. This incident provides us with a good example of the importance of communicating before we act. Even when we are dealing with a case of serious sin (as the western tribes thought they were), the first reaction should be to try and persuade the sinner to repent and return to the Lord.

22:14 [o] Num. 1:4 **22:16** [p] Deut. 12:5–14 [q] Lev. 17:8, 9 **22:17** [r] Num. 25:1–9 **22:18** [s] Num. 16:22 **22:19** [t] Josh. 18:1 **22:20** [u] Josh. 7:1–26 **22:22** [v] Deut. 4:35; 10:17 [w] [Jer. 12:3] **22:23** [x] 1 Sam. 20:16 **22:27** [y] Gen. 31:48 [z] Deut. 12:5, 14 **22:29** [a] Deut. 12:13, 14 **22:31** [b] Lev. 26:11, 12

Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought back word to them. 33So the thing pleased the children of Israel, and the children of Israel [c]blessed God; they spoke no more of going against them in battle, to destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

34The children of Reuben and the children of Gad* called the altar, *Witness,* "For *it is* a witness between us that the LORD *is* God."

Joshua's Farewell Address

23 Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD [a]had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua [b]was old, advanced in age. 2And Joshua [c]called for all Israel, for their elders, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers, and said to them:

"I am old, advanced in age. 3You have seen all that the [d]LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the [e]LORD your God *is* He who has fought for you. 4See, [f]I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, as far as the Great Sea westward. 5And the LORD your God [g]will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight. So you shall possess their land, [h]as the LORD your God promised you. 6[i]Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, [j]lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, 7*and* lest you [k]go among these nations, these who remain among you. You shall not [l]make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause *anyone* to [m]swear *by them;* you shall not [n]serve them nor bow down to them, 8but you shall [o]hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day. 9[p]For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but *as for* you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day. 10[q]One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God *is* He who fights for you, [r]as He promised you. 11[s]Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. 12Or else, if indeed you do [t]go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain among you—and [u]make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, 13know for certain that [v]the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. [w]But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

14"Behold, this day [x]I *am* going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that [y]not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed. 15[z]Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the LORD your God promised you, so the LORD will bring upon you [a]all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the LORD your God has given you. 16When you have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them, then the [b]anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you."

The Covenant at Shechem

24 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to [a]Shechem and [b]called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they

* **22:34** Septuagint adds *and half the tribe of Manasseh.*

23:3 ***He who has fought for you.*** This is a reminder that the land belonged to the Lord and that He gave it to Israel.

23:10 ***One man of you shall chase.*** The power seen in God's people was so dramatic it had to be miraculous.

23:11 Duty—Certain outlines of duty are imposed on all mankind (Mic. 6:8). We know that one man's specific duty may differ from another's, but all share a single common requirement: all must give account before God of what they have done or left undone. The church cannot decide how well each person is performing; there is no "spiritual commitment meter" to give an exact rating of each person's fulfillment of duty. Each person is responsible to maintain his or her own spiritual life.

23:12–13 ***make marriages with them.*** Years later, Solomon ignored this command and proved how destructive the sin of being unequally yoked could be (1 Kin. 3:1; 11:1–8; 2 Cor. 6:14).

23:16 ***perish . . . from the good land.*** This warning saw its most dramatic fulfillment when Judah was carried into Babylon because of its repeated rebellion against God (2 Kin. 25). The saddest thing is that Israel's rebellion began almost immediately. God lovingly gave them every good thing, but when they disobeyed, they had to be punished.

24:1 ***Shechem.*** Shechem was a site of ancient religious significance and covenant making going back to Abraham's day (Gen. 12:6; 33:18–20).

22:33 [c] 1 Chr. 29:20 **23:1** [a] Josh. 21:44; 22:4 [b] Josh. 13:1; 24:29 **23:2** [c] Deut. 31:28 **23:3** [d] Ps. 44:3 [e] Deut. 1:30 **23:4** [f] Josh. 13:2, 6; 18:10 **23:5** [g] Ex. 23:30; 33:2 [h] Num. 33:53 **23:6** [i] Josh. 1:7 [j] Deut. 5:32 **23:7** [k] Deut. 7:2, 3 [l] Ex. 23:13 [m] Deut. 6:13; 10:20 [n] Ex. 20:5 **23:8** [o] Deut. 10:20 **23:9** [p] Deut. 7:24; 11:23 **23:10** [q] Lev. 26:8 [r] Ex. 14:14 **23:11** [s] Josh. 22:5 **23:12** [t] [2 Pet. 2:20, 21] [u] Deut. 7:3, 4 **23:13** [v] Judg. 2:3 [w] Ex. 23:33; 34:12 **23:14** [x] 1 Kin. 2:2 [y] Josh. 21:45 **23:15** [z] Deut. 28:63 [a] Deut. 28:15–68 **23:16** [b] Deut. 4:24–28 **24:1** [a] Gen. 35:4 [b] Josh. 23:2

[c]presented themselves before God. 2And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: [d]'Your fathers, *including* Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River* in old times; and [e]they served other gods. 3[f]Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and [g]gave him Isaac. 4To Isaac I gave [h]Jacob and Esau. To [i]Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, [j]but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. 5[k]Also I sent Moses and Aaron, and [l]I plagued Egypt, according to what I did among them. Afterward I brought you out.

6'Then I [m]brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. 7So they cried out to the LORD; and He put [n]darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And [o]your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness [p]a long time. 8And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, [q]and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you. 9Then [r]Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel, and [s]sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. 10[t]But I would not listen to Balaam; [u]therefore he continued to bless you. So I delivered you out of his hand. 11Then [v]you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And [w]the men of Jericho fought against you—*also* the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. 12[x]I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, *also* the two kings of the Amorites, *but* [y]not with your sword or with your bow. 13I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and [z]cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

14[a]"Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in [b]sincerity and in truth, and [c]put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and [d]in Egypt. Serve the LORD! 15And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, [e]choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether [f]the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or [g]the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. [h]But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

16So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; 17for the LORD our God *is* He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. 18And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. [i]We also will serve the LORD, for He *is* our God."

19But Joshua said to the people, [j]"You cannot serve the LORD, for He *is* a [k]holy God. He *is* [l]a jealous God; [m]He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20[n]If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, [o]then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good."

21And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!"

22So Joshua said to the people, "You *are* witnesses against yourselves that [p]you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him."

And they said, "*We are* witnesses!"

23"Now therefore," *he said*, [q]"put away the foreign gods which *are* among you, and [r]incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel."

24And the people [s]said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"

25So Joshua [t]made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance [u]in Shechem.

26Then Joshua [v]wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took [w]a large stone, and [x]set it up there [y]under

* **24:2** Hebrew *Nahar*, the Euphrates, and so in verses 3, 14, and 15

24:13 ***a land for which you did not labor.*** This fulfills the promise given to Moses in Deuteronomy 6:10–11. The land was a gift from God to His people. In a similar sense, He has given us another gift for which we did not labor. The gift of salvation, through Jesus Christ, cannot be bought or paid for; it is graciously given from a loving God to those who will accept it.

24:15 ***as for me and my house.*** Joshua's famous words show the stand we must take—on the side of the living God.

24:1 [c] 1 Sam. 10:19 **24:2** [d] Gen. 11:7–32 [e] Josh. 24:14 **24:3** [f] Gen. 12:1; Acts 7:2, 3 [g] [Ps. 127:3] **24:4** [h] Gen. 25:24–26 [i] Deut. 2:5 [j] Gen. 46:1, 3, 6 **24:5** [k] Ex. 3:10 [l] Ex. 7–10 **24:6** [m] Ex. 12:37, 51; 14:2–31 **24:7** [n] Ex. 14:20 [o] Deut. 4:34 [p] Josh. 5:6 **24:8** [q] Num. 21:21–35 **24:9** [r] Judg. 11:25 [s] Num. 22:2–14 **24:10** [t] Deut. 23:5 [u] Num. 23:11, 20; 24:10 **24:11** [v] Josh. 3:14, 17 [w] Josh. 6:1; 10:1 **24:12** [x] Ex. 23:28 [y] Ps. 44:3 **24:13** [z] Deut. 6:10, 11 **24:14** [a] 1 Sam. 12:24 [b] 2 Cor. 1:12 [c] Ezek. 20:18 [d] Ezek. 20:7, 8 **24:15** [e] 1 Kin. 18:21 [f] Josh. 24:2 [g] Ex. 23:24, 32 [h] Gen. 18:19 **24:18** [i] Ps. 116:16 **24:19** [j] Matt. 6:24 [k] 1 Sam. 6:20 [l] Ex. 20:5 [m] Ex. 23:21 **24:20** [n] Ezra 8:22 [o] Deut. 4:24–26 **24:22** [p] Ps. 119:173 **24:23** [q] Gen. 35:2 [r] 1 Kin. 8:57, 58 **24:24** [s] Deut. 5:24–27 **24:25** [t] Ex. 15:25 [u] Josh. 24:1 **24:26** [v] Deut. 31:24 [w] Judg. 9:6 [x] Gen. 28:18 [y] Gen. 35:4

the oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD. 27And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be [z]a witness to us, for [a]it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God." 28So [b]Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.

Death of Joshua and Eleazar

29[c]Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* one hundred and ten years old. 30And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at [d]Timnath Serah, which *is* in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash.

31[e]Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had [f]known all the works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

32[g]The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at Shechem, in the plot of ground [h]which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of silver, and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.

33And [i]Eleazar the son of Aaron died. They buried him in a hill *belonging to* [j]Phinehas his son, which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim.

24:32 ***The bones of Joseph.*** The brief account of the transfer of Joseph's body to Canaan from Egypt notes the fulfillment of Joseph's prophecy hundreds of years before (Gen. 50:24–25).

24:27 [z] Gen. 31:48 [a] Deut. 32:1 **24:28** [b] Judg. 2:6, 7 **24:29** [c] Judg. 2:8 **24:30** [d] Josh. 19:50 **24:31** [e] Judg. 2:7 [f] Deut. 11:2 **24:32** [g] Gen. 50:25 [h] Gen. 33:19 **24:33** [i] Ex. 28:1 [j] Ex. 6:25

THE BOOK OF
JUDGES

▶ **AUTHOR:** Although the author of Judges is anonymous, Jewish tradition contained in the Talmud attributes Judges to Samuel. Samuel lived during the time the book could have been written, and he was a principal character in the transition to the next phase. He would have been aware of the events that occur in the book. Samuel certainly was the crucial link between the period of the judges and the period of the kings. His prophetic ministry clearly fits the moral commentary of Judges, and the consistent style and orderly scheme of the book points to a single compiler.

▶ **TIME:** c. 1380–1045 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Judg. 2:20–21

▶ **THEME:** During the Book of Judges, the land wasn't fully conquered. There was political chaos. The Israelites appeared to live mostly in the land between the cities of the Philistines, who dominate them much of the time. Two common phrases occur in the book: The first is the Israelites "did evil in the sight of the LORD." The second is "everyone did what was right in his own eyes." In the midst of this situation God raises up judges, who in addition to playing the role of adjudicator, also provide leadership in pulling the tribes together to fight the unconquered nations. Most are reluctant. Nevertheless, God is able to use them and demonstrate His power through these individuals.

The Continuing Conquest of Canaan

1 Now after the [a]death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel [b]asked the LORD, saying, "Who shall be first to go up for us against the [c]Canaanites to fight against them?"

2And the LORD said, [d]"Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand."

3So Judah said to [e]Simeon his brother, "Come up with me to my allotted territory, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and [f]I will likewise go with you to your allotted territory." And Simeon went with him. **4**Then Judah went up, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they killed ten thousand men at [g]Bezek. **5**And they found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, and fought against him; and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. **6**Then Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes. **7**And Adoni-Bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather *scraps* under my table; [h]as I have done, so God has repaid me." Then they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

8Now [i]the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it; they struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. **9**[j]And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who dwelt in the mountains, in the South,* and in the lowland. **10**Then Judah went against the Canaanites who dwelt in [k]Hebron. (Now the name of Hebron *was*

* **1:9** Hebrew *Negev*, and so throughout this book

1:1 ***Now after the death of Joshua.*** Judges begins as the Book of Joshua does, with reference to the death of the previous leader. Yet no new leader was commissioned to lead Israel after Joshua. The tribe of Judah was designated to lead in the fight against the Canaanites, the first hint of the fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy (Gen. 49:8–12).

1:3 ***Judah . . . Simeon.*** History bound the tribes of Judah and Simeon together. They were descended from the same mother (Gen. 29:33–35), and Simeon had inherited land in Judah's territory (Josh. 19:1,9).

1:6–7 ***thumbs and big toes.*** To cut off a warrior's thumbs and big toes would prevent him from ever engaging in battle again, besides subjecting him to pain and humiliation.

1:8 ***Jerusalem.*** Jerusalem was captured and burned, but not settled. The complete conquest and settlement of Jerusalem was not accomplished until David's day (2 Sam. 5:6–10).

1:10 ***Hebron.*** Hebron, about 20 miles southwest of

1:1 [a] Josh. 24:29 [b] Num. 27:21 [c] Josh. 17:12, 13
1:2 [d] Gen. 49:8, 9 **1:3** [e] Josh. 19:1 [f] Judg. 1:17
1:4 [g] 1 Sam. 11:8 **1:7** [h] Lev. 24:19 **1:8** [i] Josh. 15:63
1:9 [j] Josh. 10:36; 11:21; 15:13 **1:10** [k] Josh. 15:13–19

formerly [l]Kirjath Arba.) And they killed Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.
11 [m]From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. (The name of Debir *was* formerly Kirjath Sepher.)
12 [n]Then Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah as wife." 13 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, [o]Caleb's younger brother, took it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife. 14 [p]Now it happened, when she came *to him*, that she urged him* to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from *her* donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" 15 So she said to him, [q]"Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water."
And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.
16 [r]Now the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up [s]from the City of Palms with the children of Judah into the Wilderness of Judah, which *lies* in the South *near* [t]Arad; [u]and they went and dwelt among the people. 17 [v]And Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called [w]Hormah. 18 Also Judah took [x]Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. 19 So the LORD was with Judah. And they drove out the mountaineers, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland, because they had [y]chariots of iron. 20 [z]And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said. Then he expelled from there the [a]three sons of Anak. 21 [b]But the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem; so the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.
22 And the house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, [c]and the LORD *was* with them. 23 So the house of Joseph [d]sent men to spy out Bethel. (The name of the city *was* formerly [e]Luz.) 24 And when the spies saw a man coming out of the city, they said to him, "Please show us the entrance to the city, and [f]we will show you mercy." 25 So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword; but they let the man and all his family go. 26 And the man went to the land of the Hittites, built a city, and called its name Luz, which *is* its name to this day.

Incomplete Conquest of the Land

27 [g]However, Manasseh did not drive out *the inhabitants of* Beth Shean and its villages, or [h]Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of [i]Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; for the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. 28 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites under tribute, but did not completely drive them out.
29 [j]Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; so the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.
30 Nor did [k]Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites dwelt among them, and were put under tribute.
31 [l]Nor did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acco or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or Rehob. 32 So the Asherites [m]dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.
33 [n]Nor did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh or the inhabitants of Beth Anath; but they dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were put under tribute to them.
34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley; 35 and the Amorites were determined to dwell in Mount Heres, [o]in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim;* yet when the strength of the

* **1:14** Septuagint and Vulgate read *he urged her.*
* **1:35** Spelled *Shaalabbin* in Joshua 19:42

Jerusalem, was where Abraham settled and built an altar (Gen. 13:18).

1:16 *the Kenite.* The Kenites were Midianites, descendants of Abraham's son by Keturah (Gen. 25:1–4).

1:18 *Gaza . . . Ashkelon . . . Ekron.* Israel was not able to hold these cities for long. By Samson's day, all three were in Philistine hands again (14:19; 16:1; 1 Sam. 5:10).

1:21 Unfaithfulness—This verse duplicates Joshua 15:63 almost exactly, except that in Joshua the tribe of Judah is held responsible. Jerusalem lay on the border between Judah and Benjamin; either or both tribes were responsible for driving out the Canaanites. Their failure to do so was not because the task was too hard, but because they did not really take God's commands and promises seriously. Jerusalem was not claimed for Israel until David came, a man who trusted the Lord for his victories and obeyed His word. Victories for the Lord are won only through faith.

1:22 *Bethel.* Bethel means "house of God." It was a site with an honored history, beginning with Abraham's first sacrifice to God (Gen. 13:3–4) and Jacob's revelation from God there (Gen. 31:13).

1:10 [l] Josh. 14:15 **1:11** [m] Josh. 15:15 **1:12** [n] Josh. 15:16, 17 **1:13** [o] Judg. 3:9 **1:14** [p] Josh. 15:18, 19 **1:15** [q] Gen. 33:11 **1:16** [r] Num. 10:29–32 [s] Deut. 34:3 [t] Josh. 12:14 [u] 1 Sam. 15:6 **1:17** [v] Judg. 1:3 [w] Num. 21:3 **1:18** [x] Josh. 11:22 **1:19** [y] Josh. 17:16, 18 **1:20** [z] Josh. 14:9, 14 [a] Josh. 15:14 **1:21** [b] Josh. 15:63 **1:22** [c] Judg. 1:19 **1:23** [d] Josh. 2:1; 7:2 [e] Gen. 28:19 **1:24** [f] Josh. 2:12, 14 **1:27** [g] Josh. 17:11–13 [h] Josh. 21:25 [i] Josh. 17:11 **1:29** [j] Josh. 16:10 **1:30** [k] Josh. 19:10–16 **1:31** [l] Josh. 19:24–31 **1:32** [m] Ps. 106:34, 35 **1:33** [n] Josh. 19:32–39 **1:35** [o] Josh. 19:42

house of Joseph became greater, they were put under tribute.

36 Now the boundary of the Amorites *was* [p]from the Ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela, and upward.

Israel's Disobedience

2 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: [a]"I led you up from Egypt and [b]brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and [c]I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you. 2 And [d]you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; [e]you shall tear down their altars.' [f]But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? 3 Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be [g]*thorns* in your side,* and [h]their gods shall be a [i]snare to you.'" 4 So it was, when the Angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept.

5 Then they called the name of that place Bochim;* and they sacrificed there to the LORD. 6 And when [j]Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land.

Death of Joshua

7 [k]So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel. 8 Now [l]Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died *when he was* one hundred and ten years old. 9 [m]And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at [n]Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. 10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who [o]did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel.

Israel's Unfaithfulness

11 Then the children of Israel did [p]evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; 12 and they [q]forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed [r]other gods from *among* the gods of the people who *were* all around them, and they [s]bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. 13 They forsook the LORD [t]and served Baal and the Ashtoreths.* 14 [u]And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. So He [v]delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and [w]He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they [x]could no longer stand before their enemies. 15 Wherever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had [y]sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.

16 Nevertheless, [z]the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. 17 Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they [a]played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. 18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, [b]the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; [c]for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. 19 And it came to pass, [d]when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to

* **2:3** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *enemies to you.* * **2:5** Literally *Weeping* * **2:13** Canaanite goddesses

2:1 *the Angel of the LORD.* The Angel of the Lord appears as God's representative here, speaking authoritatively to the people about their covenant disobedience.

2:2 *you shall make no covenant.* God's commands to make no covenants with pagan nations and to tear down their altars are found in Exodus 23:32; 34:13; Deuteronomy 12:3.

2:8–10 *Joshua . . . died.* Most likely the reference to Joshua's death in 1:1 is placed chronologically, and this subsequent passage has been inserted by the author out of sequence. It is a "flashback" that leads into the second major section of the book, emphasizing the spiritual downfall of the nation after their leader was gone.

2:13 *Ashtoreths.* Ashtoreth was a female fertility goddess and a goddess of love and war, closely associated with Baal (10:6; 1 Sam. 7:4; 12:10).

2:15 *as the LORD had sworn.* God had promised to deliver Israel into the hands of its enemies if the people forsook Him (Deut. 28:25; Josh. 23:13).

2:18 Pity—God is compassionate toward His people at all times. But God had given notice to His people (Deut. 28) that if they disobeyed Him, and did not live according to the covenant, then He would have to discipline them. However, if they did live according to the covenant, then He would bless them as a nation. Throughout Judges the pattern occurred that when the people forgot God another nation would come down upon them as an act of judgment from God. When the nation turned to God, He also would turn and "hear" and "pity" them and bring deliverance. God had not forgotten them when they were in trouble, but He wanted that trouble to cause them to turn to Him.

1:36 [p] Josh. 15:3 **2:1** [a] Ex. 20:2 [b] Deut. 1:8 [c] Gen. 17:7, 8 **2:2** [d] Deut. 7:2 [e] Deut. 12:3 [f] Ps. 106:34 **2:3** [g] Josh. 23:13 [h] Judg. 3:6 [i] Ps. 106:36 **2:6** [j] Josh. 22:6; 24:28–31 **2:7** [k] Josh. 24:31 **2:8** [l] Josh. 24:29 **2:9** [m] Josh. 24:30 [n] Josh. 19:49, 50 **2:10** [o] 1 Sam. 2:12 **2:11** [p] Judg. 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1 **2:12** [q] Deut. 31:16 [r] Deut. 6:14 [s] Ex. 20:5 **2:13** [t] Judg. 10:6 **2:14** [u] Deut. 31:17 [v] 2 Kin. 17:20 [w] Is. 50:1 [x] Lev. 26:37 **2:15** [y] Lev. 26:14–26 **2:16** [z] Ps. 106:43–45 **2:17** [a] Ex. 34:15 **2:18** [b] Josh. 1:5 [c] Gen. 6:6 **2:19** [d] Judg. 3:12

them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

20Then the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He said, "Because this nation has [e]transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, 21I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua [f]left when he died, 22so [g]that through them I may [h]test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the LORD, to walk in them as their fathers kept *them*, or not." 23Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out immediately; nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

The Nations Remaining in the Land

3 Now these *are* [a]the nations which the LORD left, that He might test Israel by them, *that is,* all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan 2(*this was* only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those who had not formerly known it), 3*namely,* [b]five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to the entrance of Hamath. 4And they were *left, that He might* test Israel by them, to know whether they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

5[c]Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 6And [d]they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods.

Othniel

7So the children of Israel did [e]evil in the sight of the LORD. They [f]forgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs.* 8Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He [g]sold them into the hand of [h]Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim eight years. 9When the children of Israel [i]cried out to the LORD, the LORD [j]raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: [k]Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10[l]The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD delivered Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-Rishathaim. 11So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

Ehud

12[m]And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened [n]Eglon king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD. 13Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and [o]Amalek, went and defeated Israel, and took possession of [p]the City of Palms. 14So the children of Israel [q]served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years.

15But when the children of Israel [r]cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a [s]left-handed man. By him the children of Israel sent tribute to Eglon king of Moab. 16Now Ehud made himself a dagger (it was double-edged and a cubit in length) and fastened it under his clothes on his right thigh. 17So he brought the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. (Now Eglon *was* a very fat man.) 18And when he had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. 19But he himself turned back [t]from the stone images that *were* at Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king."

He said, "Keep silence!" And all who attended him went out from him.

20So Ehud came to him (now he was

* **3:7** Name or symbol for Canaanite goddesses

3:1 *test Israel.* The idea of testing implies difficulty and adversity; elsewhere the same word refers to God's testing of Abraham (Gen. 22:1) and Hezekiah (2 Chr. 32:31). Here God was testing Israel to refine it.
3:8 *Cushan-Rishathaim.* This name means "Cushan of double wickedness." This may not have been his actual name, but instead a name pinned on him by the author of Judges for ridicule.
3:9 *Othniel.* Othniel was the hero who captured the city of Kirjath Sepher (1:13; Josh. 15:17). He was from Judah and was Caleb's near kinsman.
3:12 *Moab.* Moab was a plateau southeast of the Dead Sea. It was populated by nomadic herders and farmers in small agrarian settlements but had no large cities. It sat on either side of the King's Highway, an important north-south trade route. The ancestor of the Moabites was the offspring of Lot's incestuous relationship with his older daughter (Gen. 19:37), so the Moabites and Israelites were distantly related. The Bible frequently mentions conflict between the two peoples, and particularly the trouble caused by the Israelite tendency to embrace Moab's false gods.
3:20 *cool private chamber.* In ancient cities, a small room was often built onto the flat roof of a house, providing a cool, private place away from the cooking fires and general living areas.

2:20 [e] [Josh. 23:16] **2:21** [f] Josh. 23:4, 5, 13 **2:22** [g] Judg. 3:1, 4 [h] Deut. 8:2, 16; 13:3 **3:1** [a] Judg. 1:1; 2:21, 22 **3:3** [b] Josh. 13:3 **3:5** [c] Ps. 106:35 **3:6** [d] Ex. 34:15, 16 **3:7** [e] Judg. 2:11 [f] Deut. 32:18 **3:8** [g] Judg. 2:14 [h] Hab. 3:7 **3:9** [i] Judg. 3:15 [j] Judg. 2:16 [k] Judg. 1:13 **3:10** [l] Num. 27:18 **3:12** [m] Judg. 2:19 [n] 1 Sam. 12:9 **3:13** [o] Judg. 5:14 [p] Judg. 1:16 **3:14** [q] Deut. 28:48 **3:15** [r] Ps. 78:34 [s] Judg. 20:16 **3:19** [t] Josh. 4:20

sitting upstairs in his cool private chamber). Then Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." So he arose from *his* seat. 21Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. 22Even the hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his entrails came out. 23Then Ehud went out through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them.

24When he had gone out, *Eglon's** servants came to look, and *to their* surprise, the doors of the upper room were locked. So they said, "He is probably [u]attending to his needs in the cool chamber." 25So they waited till they were [v]embarrassed, and still he had not opened the doors of the upper room. Therefore they took the key and opened *them*. And there was their master, fallen dead on the floor.

26But Ehud had escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the stone images and escaped to Seirah. 27And it happened, when he arrived, that [w]he blew the trumpet in the [x]mountains of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mountains; and he led them. 28Then he said to them, "Follow *me*, for [y]the LORD has delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him, seized the [z]fords of the Jordan leading to Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross over. 29And at that time they killed about ten thousand men of Moab, all stout men of valor; not a man escaped. 30So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And [a]the land had rest for eighty years.

Shamgar

31After him was [b]Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed six hundred men of the Philistines [c]with an ox goad; [d]and he also delivered [e]Israel.

Deborah

4 When Ehud was dead, [a]the children of Israel again did [b]evil in the sight of the LORD. 2So the LORD [c]sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in [d]Hazor. The commander of his army *was* [e]Sisera, who dwelt in [f]Harosheth Hagoyim. 3And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD; for Jabin had nine hundred [g]chariots of iron, and for twenty years [h]he had harshly oppressed the children of Israel.

4Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. 5[i]And she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. 6Then she sent and called for [j]Barak the son of Abinoam from [k]Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, 'Go and deploy *troops* at Mount [l]Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; 7and against you [m]I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the [n]River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand'?"

8And Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go!"

9So she said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will [o]sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. 10And Barak called [p]Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men [q]under his command,* and Deborah went up with him.

11Now Heber [r]the Kenite, of the children of [s]Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zaanaim, [t]which *is* beside Kedesh.

12And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. 13So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron,

* **3:24** Literally *his* * **4:10** Literally *at his feet*

4:2 ***Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor.*** Years earlier, Joshua had defeated a king of Hazor named Jabin (Josh. 11:1–15). Probably Jabin was a title rather than a proper name.

4:4 ***Deborah.*** Deborah is shown in the best light of all the judges in the book. She is called a prophetess (v. 4), and many sought out her decisions (v. 5). For this reason, she is called "a mother in Israel" (5:7). She is probably included among the leaders in Israel (5:2), and she instructed Barak in the strategy of the battle (4:9,14). She was also a prominent author of the victory song (5:1) and gave her name to a place in Israel, the palm tree of Deborah (v. 5).

4:9 ***no glory for you.*** Barak clearly respected Deborah as the Lord's spokesperson, and wanted her to be nearby so that he could receive instructions from the Lord. It is not clear whether Deborah's response was a rebuke, or just a statement, but it seems that part of the reason Israel was judged by a woman was because the men were not listening that closely to God, or willing to take the responsibility. Whatever his stage of spiritual growth was at the time, Barak did obey the Lord and is listed in the Book of Hebrews as a man of great faith (Heb. 11:32).

3:24 [u] 1 Sam. 24:3 **3:25** [v] 2 Kin. 2:17; 8:11 **3:27** [w] 1 Sam. 13:3 [x] Josh. 17:15 **3:28** [y] Judg. 7:9, 15 [z] Josh. 2:7 **3:30** [a] Judg. 3:11 **3:31** [b] Judg. 5:6 [c] 1 Sam. 17:47 [d] Judg. 2:16 [e] 1 Sam. 4:1 **4:1** [a] Judg. 2:19 [b] Judg. 2:11 **4:2** [c] Judg. 2:14 [d] Josh. 11:1, 10 [e] 1 Sam. 12:9 [f] Judg. 4:13, 16 **4:3** [g] Judg. 1:19 [h] Ps. 106:42 **4:5** [i] Gen. 35:8 **4:6** [j] Heb. 11:32 [k] Josh. 19:37; 21:32 [l] Judg. 8:18 **4:7** [m] Ex. 14:4 [n] Ps. 83:9, 10 **4:9** [o] Judg. 2:14 **4:10** [p] Judg. 5:18 [q] 1 Kin. 20:10 **4:11** [r] Judg. 1:16 [s] Num. 10:29 [t] Judg. 4:6

and all the people who *were* with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the River Kishon.

14 Then Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this *is* the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. [u]Has not the LORD gone out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. 15 And the LORD routed Sisera and all *his* chariots and all *his* army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from *his* chariot and fled away on foot. 16 But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth Hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was [v]left.

17 However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of [w]Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for *there was* peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. 18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear." And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket.

19 Then he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened [x]a jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him. 20 And he said to her, "Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there any man here?' you shall say, 'No.'"

21 Then Jael, Heber's wife, [y]took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. 22 And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, I will show you the man whom you seek." And when he went into her *tent*, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple.

23 So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel. 24 And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

The Song of Deborah

5 Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam [a]sang on that day, saying:

2 "When leaders [b]lead in Israel,
[c]When the people willingly offer themselves,
Bless the LORD!

3 "Hear,[d] O kings! Give ear, O princes!
I, *even* [e]I, will sing to the LORD;
I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

4 "LORD, [f]when You went out from Seir,
When You marched from [g]the field of Edom,
The earth trembled and the heavens poured,
The clouds also poured water;
5 [h]The mountains gushed before the LORD,
[i]This Sinai, before the LORD God of Israel.

6 "In the days of [j]Shamgar, son of Anath,
In the days of [k]Jael,
[l]The highways were deserted,
And the travelers walked along the byways.
7 Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel,
Until I, Deborah, arose,
Arose a mother in Israel.
8 They chose [m]new gods;
Then *there was* war in the gates;
Not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.
9 My heart *is* with the rulers of Israel
Who offered themselves willingly with the people.
Bless the LORD!

10 "Speak, you who ride on white [n]donkeys,
Who sit in judges' attire,
And who walk along the road.
11 Far from the noise of the archers, among the watering places,
There they shall recount the righteous acts of the LORD,
The righteous acts *for* His villagers in Israel;
Then the people of the LORD shall go down to the gates.

12 "Awake,[o] awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, sing a song!
Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away,
O son of Abinoam!

5:2 ***when leaders lead in Israel.*** The phrase literally means "the long-haired ones who let their hair hang loose." The precise meaning of the phrase is obscure, but it may mean that loosed locks or flowing hair were signs of great strength or leadership.

5:2–3 Praise—Deborah did not attribute their success to herself or to Barak, or even to Jael, but to the Lord. He was the one to whom all praise and thanksgiving were directed in the celebration of their victory.

5:7 ***a mother in Israel.*** This phrase occurs twice in the Old Testament, here and in 2 Samuel 20:19. The title is given to Deborah as one of honor, respect, and prominence.

5:10 ***ride on white donkeys . . . walk along the road.*** This verse calls all classes of society to bear witness to the mighty acts of God, from the ruling classes, those riding on white donkeys, to the lowest classes, those who walk on the road.

4:14 [u] Deut. 9:3; 31:3 **4:16** [v] Ex. 14:28 **4:17** [w] Judg. 5:6 **4:19** [x] Judg. 5:24–27 **4:21** [y] Judg. 5:24–27 **5:1** [a] Judg. 4:4 **5:2** [b] Ps. 18:47 [c] 2 Chr. 17:16 **5:3** [d] Deut. 32:1, 3 [e] Ps. 27:6 **5:4** [f] Deut. 33:2 [g] Ps. 68:8 **5:5** [h] Ps. 97:5 [i] Ex. 19:18 **5:6** [j] Judg. 3:31 [k] Judg. 4:17 [l] Is. 33:8 **5:8** [m] Deut. 32:17 **5:10** [n] Judg. 10:4; 12:14 **5:12** [o] Ps. 57:8

13 "Then the survivors came down, the people against the nobles;
The LORD came down for me against the mighty.
14 From Ephraim *were* those whose roots were in [p]Amalek.
After you, Benjamin, with your peoples,
From Machir rulers came down,
And from Zebulun those who bear the recruiter's staff.
15 And the princes of Issachar* *were* with Deborah;
As Issachar, so *was* Barak
Sent into the valley under his command;*
Among the divisions of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart.
16 Why did you sit among the sheepfolds,
To hear the pipings for the flocks?
The divisions of Reuben have great searchings of heart.
17 [q]Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan,
And why did Dan remain on ships?*
[r]Asher continued at the seashore,
And stayed by his inlets.
18 [s]Zebulun *is* a people *who* jeopardized their lives to the point of death,
Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield.

19 "The kings came *and* fought,
Then the kings of Canaan fought
In [t]Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;
They took no spoils of silver.
20 They fought from the heavens;
The stars from their courses fought against Sisera.
21 [u]The torrent of Kishon swept them away,
That ancient torrent, the torrent of Kishon.
O my soul, march on in strength!
22 Then the horses' hooves pounded,
The galloping, galloping of his steeds.
23 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel* of the LORD,
'Curse its inhabitants bitterly,
Because they did not come to the help of the LORD,
To the help of the LORD against the mighty.'

24 "Most blessed among women is Jael,
The wife of Heber the Kenite;
[v]Blessed is she among women in tents.
25 He asked for water, she gave milk;
She brought out cream in a lordly bowl.
26 She stretched her hand to the tent peg,
Her right hand to the workmen's hammer;
She pounded Sisera, she pierced his head,
She split and struck through his temple.
27 At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still;
At her feet he sank, he fell;
Where he sank, there he fell [w]dead.

28 "The mother of Sisera looked through the window,
And cried out through the lattice,
'Why is his chariot *so* long in coming?
Why tarries the clatter of his chariots?'
29 Her wisest ladies answered her,
Yes, she answered herself,
30 'Are they not finding and dividing the spoil:
To every man a girl *or* two;
For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments,
Plunder of garments embroidered and dyed,
Two pieces of dyed embroidery for the neck of the looter?'

31 "Thus let all Your enemies [x]perish, O LORD!
But *let* those who love Him *be* [y]like the [z]sun
When it comes out in full [a]strength."

So the land had rest for forty years.

Midianites Oppress Israel

6 Then the children of Israel did [a]evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD delivered them into the hand of [b]Midian for seven years, 2and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the

* **5:15** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *And my princes in Issachar.* • Literally *at his feet* * **5:17** Or *at ease* * **5:23** Or *Angel*

5:17 ***remain on ships.*** The reference to Dan remaining "in ships" probably reflects the location of their original inheritance, which was along the south-central coastal plain where they would have had access to the sea (Josh. 19:40–46). Later they migrated northward, having been forced out of their territory (1:34; 18:1; Josh. 19:47).

5:26 ***Sisera.*** The poem describes Sisera's death using graphic, emotive language, which it repeats several times to make the point. Sisera's death was probably a bloodier affair than the prose account indicates.

6:1 ***Midian.*** Midian was located in the Arabian Peninsula, southeast of Israel and east of the Sinai Peninsula. The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1–2), so they were distantly related to the Israelites. Midianites bought Joseph from his brothers (Gen. 37:25–36), welcomed Moses in the wilderness (Ex. 2:15–21), and hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22:7). Generally speaking, Israel counted Midian among its foes. In this account, the Midianites were menacing Israel, burning, looting, and leaving many near starvation (6:4–5).

5:14 [p] Judg. 3:13 **5:17** [q] Josh. 22:9 [r] Josh. 19:29, 31 **5:18** [s] Judg. 4:6, 10 **5:19** [t] Judg. 1:27 **5:21** [u] Judg. 4:7 **5:24** [v] [Luke 1:28] **5:27** [w] Judg. 4:18–21 **5:31** [x] Ps. 92:9 [y] 2 Sam. 23:4 [z] Ps. 37:6; 89:36, 37 [a] Ps. 19:5 **6:1** [a] Judg. 2:11 [b] Num. 22:4; 31:1–3

Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, [c]the caves, and the strongholds which *are* in the mountains. 3So it was, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the [d]people of the East would come up against them. 4Then they would encamp against them and [e]destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor [f]donkey. 5For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as numerous as locusts; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it. 6So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel [g]cried out to the LORD.

7And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the LORD because of the Midianites, 8that the LORD sent a prophet to the children of Israel, who said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the [h]house of bondage; 9and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you, and [i]drove them out before you and gave you their land. 10Also I said to you, "I *am* the LORD your God; [j]do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell." But you have not obeyed My [k]voice.'"

Gideon

11Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which *was* in Ophrah, which *belonged* to Joash [l]the Abiezrite, while his son [m]Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide *it* from the Midianites. 12And the [n]Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD *is* [o]with you, you mighty man of valor!"

13Gideon said to Him, "O my lord,* if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And [p]where *are* all His miracles [q]which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has [r]forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."

14Then the LORD turned to him and said, [s]"Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. [t]Have I not sent you?"

15So he said to Him, "O my Lord,* how can I save Israel? Indeed [u]my clan *is* the weakest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house."

16And the LORD said to him, [v]"Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

17Then he said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, then [w]show me a sign that it is You who talk with me. 18[x]Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set *it* before You."

And He said, "I will wait until you come back."

19[y]So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought *them* out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented *them*. 20The

* **6:13** Hebrew *adoni*, used of man * **6:15** Hebrew *Adonai*, used of God

6:3 ***Amalekites.*** The Amalekites were a nomadic people who lived in the Sinai desert and the Negev, the desert south of Israel. They were descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12) and they joined the Midianites against Israel.

6:11–16 Doubt—Doubt, at first thought, appears to be an innocuous sin, so harmless that it affects only the attitude of the one who doubts. But doubt is much more serious than this. Doubt of God's Word, planted by the arch deceiver, was at the root of that first sin committed in the garden of Eden. Doubt of God's goodness and truth arose before desire for the forbidden fruit led to disobedience. Doubt of God and doubt of God's Word cause men to make decisions based on human reckonings. Doubts undispelled lead to sin and defeat.

6:11 ***terebinth.*** The terebinth, sometimes called an oak, is a large tree with a thick trunk and heavy branches. Botanically speaking, it is not an oak tree, but it has a similar majestic appearance. ***winepress.*** A winepress was a square or circular pit carved into rock, in which grapes were crushed. Wheat was usually separated on open threshing floors so the wind could carry away the chaff in the winnowing process. The fact that Gideon was forced to thresh wheat hidden inside a winepress—despite the fact that he had access to a threshing floor (v. 37)—is yet another illustration of the desperate state the Israelites were in.

6:13 ***my lord . . . the LORD.*** "My lord" was a polite form of address, but "the LORD" is the personal name of God (Yahweh).

6:15 ***I am the least in my father's house.*** Gideon's objection is reminiscent of the words spoken by Moses (Ex. 3:11) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:6).

6:16 ***I will be with you.*** This was the same great promise that God had given to Moses and Joshua previously (Ex. 3:12; Josh. 1:5–9). This should have greatly encouraged Gideon, but he still had doubts. Often we are quick to judge those who doubt God even when they have firsthand evidence of His mighty works. But we all fail to trust God fully at times. God accomplished His will despite Gideon's weakness, and He can do the same through us.

6:2 [c] 1 Sam. 13:6 **6:3** [d] Judg. 7:12 **6:4** [e] Lev. 26:16 [f] Deut. 28:31 **6:6** [g] Hos. 5:15 **6:8** [h] Josh. 24:17 **6:9** [i] Ps. 44:2, 3 **6:10** [j] 2 Kin. 17:35, 37, 38 [k] Judg. 2:1, 2 **6:11** [l] Josh. 17:2 [m] Heb. 11:32 **6:12** [n] Judg. 13:3 [o] Josh. 1:5 **6:13** [p] [Is. 59:1] [q] Ps. 44:1 [r] Ps. 44:9–16 **6:14** [s] 1 Sam. 12:11 [t] Josh. 1:9 **6:15** [u] 1 Sam. 9:21 **6:16** [v] Ex. 3:12 **6:17** [w] Judg. 6:36, 37 **6:18** [x] Gen. 18:3, 5 **6:19** [y] Gen. 18:6–8

Angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and [z]lay *them* on this rock, and [a]pour out the broth." And he did so.

21 Then the Angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that *was* in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and [b]fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

22 Now Gideon [c]perceived that He *was* the Angel of the LORD. So Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! [d]For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face."

23 Then the LORD said to him, [e]"Peace *be* with you; do not fear, you shall not die." **24** So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it The-LORD-*Is*-Peace.* To this day it *is* still [f]in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

25 Now it came to pass the same night that the LORD said to him, "Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and [g]tear down the altar of [h]Baal that your father has, and [i]cut down the wooden image* that *is* beside it; **26** and build an altar to the LORD your God on top of this rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image which you shall cut down." **27** So Gideon took ten men from among his servants and did as the LORD had said to him. But because he feared his father's household and the men of the city too much to do *it* by day, he did *it* by night.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, there was the altar of Baal, torn down; and the wooden image that *was* beside it was cut down, and the second bull was being offered on the altar *which had been* built. **29** So they said to one another, "Who has done this thing?" And when they had inquired and asked, they said, "Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing." **30** Then the men of the city said to Joash, "Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the wooden image that *was* beside it."

31 But Joash said to all who stood against him, "Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he *is* a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down!" **32** Therefore on that day he called him [j]Jerubbaal,* saying, "Let Baal plead against him, because he has torn down his altar."

33 Then all [k]the Midianites and Amalekites, the people of the East, gathered together; and they crossed over and encamped in [l]the Valley of Jezreel. **34** But [m]the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; then he [n]blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him. **35** And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to [o]Asher, [p]Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

The Sign of the Fleece

36 So Gideon said to God, "If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said— **37** [q]look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and *it is* dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said." **38** And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water. **39** Then Gideon said to God, [r]"Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on

* **6:24** Hebrew *YHWH Shalom* * **6:25** Hebrew *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess * **6:32** Literally *Let Baal Plead*

6:22 ***Gideon perceived.*** When the Angel of the Lord vanished, then Gideon realized who it was and feared for his life. This reaction of fear appears to have been rooted in the knowledge that anyone who gazed upon God would die (Ex. 33:20).

6:24 ***To this day.*** This expression lends authenticity to the account. It is the author's way of declaring to later generations that they could verify the story by going and seeing this altar themselves.

6:25 ***wooden image.*** Asherah was the Canaanite fertility goddess. Sacred wooden poles or groves were erected at places where she was worshiped.

6:26 ***the wood of the image.*** Gideon's sacrifice was to be a bold statement of the superiority of the Lord over the false gods His people were worshiping.

6:36–40 Prayer—Gideon had already received an unmistakable message from God, and he had been assured that God would lead him to victory. His prayer and request for a sign were the result of his lack of faith, but in spite of Gideon's wavering, God kindly accommodated his requests. Many people have relied on Gideon's example as a way of seeking guidance from the Lord. Occasionally God has chosen to answer such requests, even as He did for Gideon, because He is compassionate and makes allowances for our weakness, but putting out a fleece is not the action of faith. Isaiah modeled a proper response to God's clearly revealed will: he said, "Here am I; send me" (Is. 6:8). So too did the disciples, who dropped their nets immediately and followed Jesus (Mark 1:18).

6:39 ***Let me test . . . just once more.*** Gideon's desire to test God's sign could have been a violation of the law which prohibited people from testing God (Deut.

6:20 [z] Judg. 13:19 [a] 1 Kin. 18:33, 34 **6:21** [b] Lev. 9:24 **6:22** [c] Judg. 13:21, 22 [d] Gen. 16:13 **6:23** [e] Dan. 10:19 **6:24** [f] Judg. 8:32 **6:25** [g] Judg. 2:2 [h] Judg. 3:7 [i] Ex. 34:13 **6:32** [j] 1 Sam. 12:11 **6:33** [k] Judg. 6:3 [l] Josh. 17:16 **6:34** [m] Judg. 3:10 [n] Judg. 3:27 **6:35** [o] Judg. 5:17; 7:23 [p] Judg. 4:6, 10; 5:18 **6:37** [q] [Ex. 4:3–7] **6:39** [r] Gen. 18:32

the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew." 40And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground.

Gideon's Valiant Three Hundred

7 Then [a]Jerubbaal (that *is*, Gideon) and all the people who *were* with him rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod, so that the camp of the Midianites was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

2And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people who *are* with you *are* too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel [b]claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' 3Now therefore, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, [c]'Whoever *is* fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead.'" And twenty-two thousand of the people returned, and ten thousand remained.

4But the LORD said to Gideon, "The people *are* still *too* many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, *that* of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' the same shall not go." 5So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "Everyone who laps from the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set apart by himself; likewise everyone who gets down on his knees to drink." 6And the number of those who lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water. 7Then the LORD said to Gideon, [d]"By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the *other* people go, every man to his place." 8So the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all *the rest of* Israel, every man to his tent, and retained those three hundred men. Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

9It happened on the same [e]night that the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have delivered it into your hand. 10But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant, 11and you shall [f]hear what they say; and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp." Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outpost of the armed men who *were* in the camp. 12Now the Midianites and Amalekites, [g]all the people of the East, were lying in the valley [h]as numerous as locusts; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude.

13And when Gideon had come, there was a man telling a dream to his companion. He said, "I have had a dream: *To my* surprise, a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian; it came to a tent and struck it so that it fell and overturned, and the tent collapsed."

14Then his companion answered and said, "This *is* nothing else but the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel! Into his hand [i]God has delivered Midian and the whole camp."

15And so it was, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, that he worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel, and said, "Arise, for the LORD has delivered the camp of Midian into your hand." 16Then he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers. 17And he said to them, "Look at me and do likewise; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp you shall do as I do: 18When I blow the trumpet, I and all who *are* with me, then you also blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, and say, '*The sword of* the LORD and of Gideon!'"

19So Gideon and the hundred men who *were* with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that *were* in their hands. 20Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!" 21And [j]every man stood in his place all around the camp; [k]and the whole army ran and cried out and fled. 22When the three hundred [l]blew the trumpets, [m]the LORD set [n]every man's sword against his companion throughout

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6:16). Gideon himself was aware that he was doing something unwise, if not sinful, since he asked God not to be angry with him.

7:3 *fearful and afraid.* Mosaic law allowed military exemptions for several classes of people, including those who had just built a home, those who had just planted a vineyard, those engaged to be married, and those who were fearful (Deut. 20:5–8).

7:4–5 *The people are still too many.* God reduced Gideon's army to emphasize who was really bringing victory.

7:19 *middle watch.* According to Jewish tradition, the hours between sunset and sunrise were divided into three watches, which would put the time of this attack at roughly 10:00 P.M.

7:1 [a] Judg. 6:32 **7:2** [b] Deut. 8:17 **7:3** [c] Deut. 20:8 **7:7** [d] 1 Sam. 14:6 **7:9** [e] Judg. 6:25 **7:11** [f] 1 Sam. 14:9, 10 **7:12** [g] Judg. 6:3, 33; 8:10 [h] Judg. 6:5 **7:14** [i] Judg. 6:14, 16 **7:21** [j] 2 Chr. 20:17 [k] 2 Kin. 7:7 **7:22** [l] Josh. 6:4, 16, 20 [m] Is. 9:4 [n] 1 Sam. 14:20

the whole camp; and the army fled to Beth Acacia,* toward Zererah, as far as the border of [o]Abel Meholah, by Tabbath.

23 And the men of Israel gathered together from [p]Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh, and pursued the Midianites.

24 Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the [q]mountains of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan." Then all the men of Ephraim gathered together and [r]seized the watering places as far as [s]Beth Barah and the Jordan. **25** And they captured [t]two princes of the Midianites, [u]Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the [v]other side of the Jordan.

Gideon Subdues the Midianites

8 Now [q]the men of Ephraim said to him, "Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?" And they reprimanded him sharply.

2 So he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? *Is* not the gleaning *of the grapes* of Ephraim better than the vintage of [b]Abiezer? **3** [c]God has delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. And what was I able to do in comparison with you?" Then their [d]anger toward him subsided when he said that.

4 When Gideon came [e]to the Jordan, he and [f]the three hundred men who *were* with him crossed over, exhausted but still in pursuit. **5** Then he said to the men of [g]Succoth, "Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian."

6 And the leaders of Succoth said, [h]"*Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that [i]we should give bread to your army?"

7 So Gideon said, "For this cause, when the LORD has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, [j]then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers!" **8** Then he went up from there [k]to Penuel and spoke to them in the same way. And the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. **9** So he also spoke to the men of Penuel, saying, "When I [l]come back in peace, [m]I will tear down this tower!"

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* at Karkor, and their armies with them, about fifteen thousand, all who were left of [n]all the army of the people of the East; for [o]one hundred and twenty thousand men who drew the sword had fallen. **11** Then Gideon went up by the road of those who dwell in tents on the east of [p]Nobah and Jogbehah; and he attacked the army while the camp felt [q]secure. **12** When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them; and he [r]took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.

13 Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle, from the Ascent of Heres. **14** And he caught a young man of the men of Succoth and interrogated him; and he wrote down for him the leaders of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men. **15** Then he came to the men of Succoth and said, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you [s]ridiculed me, saying, '*Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your weary men?'" **16** [t]And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth. **17** [u]Then he tore down the tower of [v]Penuel and killed the men of the city.

18 And he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "What kind of men *were they* whom you killed at [w]Tabor?"

So they answered, "As you *are,* so *were* they; each one resembled the son of a king."

19 Then he said, "They *were* my brothers, the sons of my mother. *As* the LORD lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you." **20** And he said to Jether his firstborn, "Rise, kill them!" But the youth would not draw his sword; for he was afraid, because he *was* still a youth.

21 So Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Rise yourself, and kill us; for as a man *is, so is* his strength." So Gideon arose and [x]killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments that *were* on their camels' necks.

* **7:22** Hebrew *Beth Shittah*

8:5 ***Succoth.*** Succoth was east of the Jordan, near the Jabbok River.

8:14 ***he wrote down for him the leaders of Succoth.*** Literacy in early civilizations was at first limited to the educated elite, as in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Their writing systems were complex and only a tiny portion of the population could read and write. However, the spread of alphabetic systems vastly simplified the task of reading and writing. Hundreds of potsherds from throughout Palestine have simple inscriptions on them, indicating that some degree of literacy had become widely accessible by Gideon's day.

7:22 [o] 1 Kin. 4:12 **7:23** [p] Judg. 6:35 **7:24** [q] Judg. 3:27 [r] Judg. 3:28 [s] John 1:28 **7:25** [t] Judg. 8:3 [u] Ps. 83:11 [v] Judg. 8:4 **8:1** [a] Judg. 12:1 **8:2** [b] Judg. 6:11 **8:3** [c] Judg. 7:24, 25 [d] Prov. 15:1 **8:4** [e] Judg. 7:25 [f] Judg. 7:6 **8:5** [g] Gen. 33:17 **8:6** [h] Judg. 8:15 [i] 1 Sam. 25:11 **8:7** [j] Judg. 8:16 **8:8** [k] Gen. 32:30, 31 **8:9** [l] 1 Kin. 22:27 [m] Judg. 8:17 **8:10** [n] Judg. 7:12 [o] Judg. 6:5 **8:11** [p] Num. 32:35, 42 [q] Judg. 18:27 **8:12** [r] Ps. 83:11 **8:15** [s] Judg. 8:6 **8:16** [t] Judg. 8:7 **8:17** [u] Judg. 8:9 [v] 1 Kin. 12:25 **8:18** [w] Judg. 4:6 **8:21** [x] Ps. 83:11

Gideon's Ephod

22 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon,
[y]"Rule over us, both you and your son, and
your grandson also; for you have [z]delivered us from the hand of Midian."
23 But Gideon said to them, "I will not
rule over you, nor shall my son rule over
you; [a]the LORD shall rule over you." 24 Then
Gideon said to them, "I would like to make
a request of you, that each of you would
give me the earrings from his plunder." For
they had golden earrings, [b]because they
were Ishmaelites.
25 So they answered, "We will gladly give
them." And they spread out a garment, and
each man threw into it the earrings from
his plunder. 26 Now the weight of the gold
earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred *shekels* of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, pendants,
and purple robes which *were* on the kings
of Midian, and besides the chains that *were*
around their camels' necks. 27 Then Gideon
[c]made it into an ephod and set it up in his
city, [d]Ophrah. And all Israel [e]played the
harlot with it there. It became [f]a snare to
Gideon and to his house.
28 Thus Midian was subdued before the
children of Israel, so that they lifted their
heads no more. [g]And the country was quiet
for forty years in the days of Gideon.

Death of Gideon

29 Then [h]Jerubbaal the son of Joash went
and dwelt in his own house. 30 Gideon had
[i]seventy sons who were his own offspring,
for he had many wives. 31[j]And his concubine who *was* in Shechem also bore him
a son, whose name he called Abimelech.
32 Now Gideon the son of Joash died [k]at a
good old age, and was buried in the tomb
of Joash his father, [l]in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.
33 So it was, [m]as soon as Gideon was
dead, that the children of Israel again
[n]played the harlot with the Baals, [o]and
made Baal-Berith their god. 34 Thus the
children of Israel [p]did not remember the
LORD their God, who had delivered them
from the hands of all their enemies on every side; 35[q]nor did they show kindness to
the house of Jerubbaal (Gideon) in accordance with the good he had done for Israel.

Abimelech's Conspiracy

9 Then Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal
went to Shechem, to [a]his mother's
brothers, and spoke with them and with all
the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, 2"Please speak in the hearing
of all the men of Shechem: 'Which is better for you, that all [b]seventy of the sons of
Jerubbaal reign over you, or that one reign
over you?' Remember that I *am* your own
flesh and [c]bone."
3 And his mother's brothers spoke all
these words concerning him in the hearing
of all the men of Shechem; and their heart
was inclined to follow Abimelech, for they
said, "He is our [d]brother." 4 So they gave
him seventy *shekels* of silver from the temple of [e]Baal-Berith, with which Abimelech
hired [f]worthless and reckless men; and
they followed him. 5 Then he went to his
father's house [g]at Ophrah and [h]killed his
brothers, the seventy sons of Jerubbaal, on
one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of
Jerubbaal was left, because he hid himself.
6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, all of Beth Millo, and they went and
made Abimelech king beside the terebinth
tree at the pillar that *was* in Shechem.

8:22–23 Self-Denial—In the initial flush of victory Gideon was offered hereditary rulership over Israel, which he wisely rejected. God the Lord was Judge with ultimate authority, and He would rule over the people. Gideon knew his place before God. In the same way, we are taught not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, but "as God has dealt" (Rom. 12:3).

8:22 *Rule over us.* This request, while understandable from a human perspective, failed to acknowledge that it was God, not Gideon, who had delivered the people.

8:23 *the LORD shall rule over you.* The word order of the Hebrew makes it clear that God's claim was exclusive; it might be paraphrased, "It is the Lord, and no one else, who shall rule over you." This statement is widely assumed to indicate that God intended that Israel should never have a king, but that He would be their only King. However, God had promised Abraham that he would count kings among his descendants (Gen. 17:6). The problem was not in the concept of having a king, but in their motivation. They wanted to have a visible, human leader, rather than trusting in God's leadership. The role of a true king would be to lead the people in devotion to God's rule.

8:27 *ephod.* The original ephod was an ornate ceremonial garment worn by the high priest (Ex. 29:5). Gideon's motivation for making this golden ephod is unclear, but his imitation of the sacred objects devoted to the worship of God ended up distracting the people and undermining the true worship of God.

8:31 *Abimelech.* This name means "my father is king." Some think that Gideon did become a king in practice if not in name, for he gave his son a royal name and acted as a leader of the people (vv. 24–27).

9:1–57 Conspiracy—The seeds of Abimelech's violent grab for power were sown in Israel's persistent infidelity to God, which led to another rejection of the Lord (8:22,24–27,33–35).

9:6 *terebinth tree at the pillar.* Sadly, this coronation took place at the same tree where Jacob had put away his foreign gods many years before (Gen. 35:4),

8:22 [y] [Judg. 9:8] [z] Judg. 3:9; 9:17 **8:23** [a] 1 Sam. 8:7; 10:19; 12:12 **8:24** [b] Gen. 37:25, 28 **8:27** [c] Judg. 17:5 [d] Judg. 6:11, 24 [e] [Ps. 106:39] [f] Deut. 7:16 **8:28** [g] Judg. 5:31 **8:29** [h] Judg. 6:32; 7:1 **8:30** [i] Judg. 9:2, 5 **8:31** [j] Judg. 9:1 **8:32** [k] Gen. 25:8 [l] Judg. 6:24; 8:27 **8:33** [m] Judg. 2:19 [n] Judg. 2:17 [o] Judg. 9:4, 46 **8:34** [p] Deut. 4:9 **8:35** [q] Judg. 9:16–18 **9:1** [a] Judg. 8:31, 35 **9:2** [b] Judg. 8:30; 9:5, 18 [c] Gen. 29:14 **9:3** [d] Gen. 29:15 **9:4** [e] Judg. 8:33 [f] Judg. 11:3 **9:5** [g] Judg. 6:24 [h] 2 Kin. 11:1, 2

The Parable of the Trees

7 Now when they told Jotham, he went
and stood on top of [i]Mount Gerizim, and
lifted his voice and cried out. And he said
to them:

"Listen to me, you men of Shechem,
That God may listen to you!

8 "The[j] trees once went forth to anoint a
king over them.
And they said to the olive tree,
[k]'Reign over us!'
9 But the olive tree said to them,
'Should I cease giving my oil,
[l]With which they honor God and men,
And go to sway over trees?'

10 "Then the trees said to the fig tree,
'You come *and* reign over us!'
11 But the fig tree said to them,
'Should I cease my sweetness and my
good fruit,
And go to sway over trees?'

12 "Then the trees said to the vine,
'You come *and* reign over us!'
13 But the vine said to them,
'Should I cease my new wine,
[m]Which cheers *both* God and men,
And go to sway over trees?'

14 "Then all the trees said to the bramble,
'You come *and* reign over us!'
15 And the bramble said to the trees,
'If in truth you anoint me as king over
you,
Then come *and* take shelter in my
[n]shade;
But if not, [o]let fire come out of the
bramble
And devour the [p]cedars of Lebanon!'

16 "Now therefore, if you have acted in
truth and sincerity in making Abimelech
king, and if you have dealt well with Jerub-
baal and his house, and have done to him
[q]as he deserves— 17 for my [r]father fought
for you, risked his life, and [s]delivered you
out of the hand of Midian; 18 [t]but you have
risen up against my father's house this day,
and killed his seventy sons on one stone,
and made Abimelech, the son of his [u]female
servant, king over the men of Shechem, be-
cause he is your brother— 19 if then you have
acted in truth and sincerity with Jerubbaal
and with his house this day, *then* [v]rejoice in
Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you.
20 But if not, [w]let fire come from Abimelech
and devour the men of Shechem and Beth
Millo; and let fire come from the men of
Shechem and from Beth Millo and devour
Abimelech!" 21 And Jotham ran away and
fled; and he went to [x]Beer and dwelt there,
for fear of Abimelech his brother.

Downfall of Abimelech

22 After Abimelech had reigned over Is-
rael three years, 23 [y]God sent a [z]spirit of ill
will between Abimelech and the men of
Shechem; and the men of Shechem [a]dealt
treacherously with Abimelech, 24 [b]that the
crime *done* to the seventy sons of Jerub-
baal might be settled and their [c]blood be
laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed
them, and on the men of Shechem, who aid-
ed him in the killing of his brothers. 25 And
the men of Shechem set men in ambush
against him on the tops of the mountains,
and they robbed all who passed by them
along that way; and it was told Abimelech.

26 Now Gaal the son of Ebed came with
his brothers and went over to Shechem; and
the men of Shechem put their confidence in
him. 27 So they went out into the fields, and
gathered *grapes* from their vineyards and
trod *them,* and made merry. And they went
into [d]the house of their god, and ate and
drank, and cursed Abimelech. 28 Then Gaal
the son of Ebed said, [e]"Who *is* Abimelech,
and who *is* Shechem, that we should serve
him? *Is he* not the son of Jerubbaal, and *is
not* Zebul his officer? Serve the men of [f]Ha-
mor the father of Shechem; but why should
we serve him? 29 [g]If only this people were
under my authority!* Then I would remove
Abimelech." So he* said to Abimelech, "In-
crease your army and come out!"

30 When Zebul, the ruler of the city,
heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed,
his anger was aroused. 31 And he sent mes-
sengers to Abimelech secretly, saying,
"Take note! Gaal the son of Ebed and his
brothers have come to Shechem; and here
they are, fortifying the city against you.

* **9:29** Literally *hand* • Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls read *they;* Septuagint reads *I.*

and where Joshua had commemorated his covenant with God (Josh. 24:26).

9:14–15 Pride—The pomp and ceremony that goes with royalty is a source of pride not only for the king but also for his subjects. The idea of having a man from their own tribe ruling the entire nation appealed to the pride of the men of Shechem. Pride led them to surrender their freedom and submit to the rule of man rather than God. It is the cause of many kinds of injustice in society: social, economic, and political. It often leads to war and violence, as it did in this case. Within a brief period of time after Abimelech was anointed king they realized their mistake. The prophecy of Jotham was fulfilled, since fire did come out of the bramble (from Abimelech) to consume the men of Shechem. Pride led to their destruction.

9:7 [i] Deut. 11:29; 27:12 **9:8** [j] 2 Kin. 14:9 [k] Judg. 8:22, 23 **9:9** [l] [John 5:23] **9:13** [m] Ps. 104:15 **9:15** [n] Is. 30:2 [o] Num. 21:28 [p] 2 Kin. 14:9 **9:16** [q] Judg. 8:35 **9:17** [r] Judg. 7 [s] Judg. 8:22 **9:18** [t] Judg. 8:30, 35; 9:2, 5, 6 [u] Judg. 8:31 **9:19** [v] Is. 8:6 **9:20** [w] Judg. 9:15, 45, 56, 57 **9:21** [x] Num. 21:16 **9:23** [y] Is. 19:14 [z] 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:9, 10 [a] Is. 33:1 **9:24** [b] 1 Kin. 2:32 [c] Num. 35:33 **9:27** [d] Judg. 9:4 **9:28** [e] 1 Sam. 25:10 [f] Gen. 34:2, 6 **9:29** [g] 2 Sam. 15:4

32Now therefore, get up by night, you and
the people who *are* with you, and lie in wait
in the field. 33And it shall be, as soon as the
sun is up in the morning, *that* you shall rise
early and rush upon the city; and *when* he
and the people who are with him come out
against you, you may then do to them as
you find opportunity."
34So Abimelech and all the people who
were with him rose by night, and lay in
wait against Shechem in four companies.
35When Gaal the son of Ebed went out and
stood in the entrance to the city gate, Abim-
elech and the people who *were* with him
rose from lying in wait. 36And when Gaal
saw the people, he said to Zebul, "Look,
people are coming down from the tops of
the mountains!"
But Zebul said to him, "You see the shad-
ows of the mountains as *if they were* men."
37So Gaal spoke again and said, "See,
people are coming down from the center of
the land, and another company is coming
from the Diviners'* Terebinth Tree."
38Then Zebul said to him, "Where in-
deed *is* your mouth now, with which you
[h]said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should
serve him?' *Are* not these the people whom
you despised? Go out, if you will, and fight
with them now."
39So Gaal went out, leading the men
of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.
40And Abimelech chased him, and he fled
from him; and many fell wounded, to the
very entrance of the gate. 41Then Abime-
lech dwelt at Arumah, and Zebul drove out
Gaal and his brothers, so that they would
not dwell in Shechem.
42And it came about on the next day that
the people went out into the field, and they
told Abimelech. 43So he took his people,
divided them into three companies, and
lay in wait in the field. And he looked, and
there were the people, coming out of the
city; and he rose against them and attacked
them. 44Then Abimelech and the company
that *was* with him rushed forward and
stood at the entrance of the gate of the city;
and the *other* two companies rushed upon
all who *were* in the fields and killed them.
45So Abimelech fought against the city all
that day; [i]he took the city and killed the
people who *were* in it; and he [j]demolished
the city and sowed it with salt.
46Now when all the men of the tower
of Shechem had heard *that*, they entered
the stronghold of the temple [k]of the god
Berith. 47And it was told Abimelech that
all the men of the tower of Shechem were
gathered together. 48Then Abimelech went
up to Mount [l]Zalmon, he and all the people
who *were* with him. And Abimelech took
an ax in his hand and cut down a bough
from the trees, and took it and laid *it* on
his shoulder; then he said to the people who
were with him, "What you have seen me
do, make haste *and* do as I *have done*." 49So
each of the people likewise cut down his
own bough and followed Abimelech, put
them against the stronghold, and set the
stronghold on fire above them, so that all
the people of the tower of Shechem died,
about a thousand men and women.
50Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and
he encamped against Thebez and took it.
51But there was a strong tower in the city,
and all the men and women—all the people
of the city—fled there and shut themselves
in; then they went up to the top of the tower.
52So Abimelech came as far as the tower
and fought against it; and he drew near the
door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53But
a certain woman [m]dropped an upper mill-
stone on Abimelech's head and crushed
his skull. 54Then [n]he called quickly to the
young man, his armorbearer, and said to
him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest
men say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" So
his young man thrust him through, and he
died. 55And when the men of Israel saw that
Abimelech was dead, they departed, every
man to his place.
56[o]Thus God repaid the wickedness of
Abimelech, which he had done to his father
by killing his seventy brothers. 57And all the
evil of the men of Shechem God returned
on their own heads, and on them came [p]the
curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

Tola

10 After Abimelech there [q]arose to save
Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of
Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in
Shamir in the mountains of Ephraim. 2He
judged Israel twenty-three years; and he
died and was buried in Shamir.

Jair

3After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he
judged Israel twenty-two years. 4Now he
had thirty sons who [b]rode on thirty don-
keys; they also had thirty towns, [c]which

* **9:37** Hebrew *Meonenim*

9:37 ***the Diviners' Terebinth Tree.*** This appears to have had some association with occult or magical practices, and this particular terebinth tree was certainly an important landmark (Gen. 35:4; Josh. 24:26).
9:45 ***sowed it with salt.*** Spreading salt on the land turned the area into a barren desert. Salt will kill most vegetation, and it takes a long time for the land to become good again.
9:56 ***God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech.*** Abimelech was not a true king; he had established his reign through murder and in no way sought to lead the people to the Lord. God did not allow this kind of rebellion to pass unnoticed.

9:38 [h] Judg. 9:28, 29 **9:45** [i] Judg. 9:20 [j] 2 Kin. 3:25
9:46 [k] Judg. 8:33 **9:48** [l] Ps. 68:14 **9:53** [m] 2 Sam. 11:21
9:54 [n] 1 Sam. 31:4 **9:56** [o] Job 31:3 **9:57** [p] Judg. 9:20
10:1 [q] Judg. 2:16 **10:4** [b] Judg. 5:10; 12:14 [c] Deut. 3:14

are called "Havoth Jair"* to this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead. 5And Jair died and was buried in Camon.

Israel Oppressed Again

6Then [d]the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [e]served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, [f]the gods of Syria, the gods of [g]Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him. 7So the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He [h]sold them into the hands of the [i]Philistines and into the hands of the people of [j]Ammon. 8From that year they harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen years—all the children of Israel who *were* on the other side of the Jordan in the [k]land of the Amorites, in Gilead. 9Moreover the people of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah also, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.

10[l]And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have [m]sinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Baals!"

11So the LORD said to the children of Israel, "*Did I* not *deliver you* [n]from the Egyptians and [o]from the Amorites and [p]from the people of Ammon and [q]from the Philistines? 12Also [r]the Sidonians [s]and Amalekites and Maonites* [t]oppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand. 13[u]Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods. Therefore I will deliver you no more. 14"Go and [v]cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress."

15And the children of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned! [w]Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray." 16[x]So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD. And [y]His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel.

17Then the people of Ammon gathered together and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled together and encamped in [z]Mizpah. 18And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, "Who *is* the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon? He shall [a]be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

Jephthah

11 Now [a]Jephthah the Gileadite was [b]a mighty man of valor, but he *was* the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah. 2Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, "You shall have [c]no inheritance in our father's house, for you *are* the son of another woman." 3Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of [d]Tob; and [e]worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out *raiding* with him.

4It came to pass after a time that the [f]people of Ammon made war against Israel. 5And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. 6Then they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon."

7So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, [g]"Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?"

8[h]And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we have [i]turned again to you now, that you may go with us

* **10:4** Literally *Towns of Jair* (compare Numbers 32:41 and Deuteronomy 3:14) * **10:12** Some Septuagint manuscripts read *Midianites.*

10:6–18 Mercy—A lengthy introduction precedes the story of Jephthah. These verses repeat the themes of apostasy and God's unfailing mercy. A new theme here is the emphasis on Israel's confession and repentance (vv. 10,15–16).

10:6 ***Baals and the Ashtoreths, the gods of Syria . . . Sidon . . . Moab . . . Ammon.*** This list demonstrates the extent of Israel's idolatry. Not only did the people worship the major Canaanite gods (Baal and Asherah), but they also absorbed the religions of other groups.

10:7–8 Suffering—Here and elsewhere the Book of Judges underscores the consequences of disobedience. Those consequences are always tragic. The Israelites were never oppressed because they did not have a big enough military, or a strong enough leader, or because God could not protect them. They were oppressed by God's permission because of their disobedience and sin. Defeat and miserable suffering do loom large whenever believers retreat from their exclusive commitment to God. They become their own worst enemy.

10:14 ***the gods which you have chosen.*** This is a response of confrontation. When Israel cried out to God, He reminded them again of their faithless ways.

10:16 ***His soul could no longer endure the misery.*** Not only is God a God of great justice, He is a God of great mercy and compassion. Despite their constant sinning and backsliding, God still loved the Israelites and shared their misery, much as parents are moved by their children's suffering.

11:8 ***you may go with us and fight.*** This is almost the same phrase that the Israelites used when they asked Samuel for a king (1 Sam. 8:20).

10:6 [d] Judg. 2:11; 3:7; 6:1; 13:1 [e] Judg. 2:13 [f] Judg. 2:12 [g] 1 Kin. 11:33 **10:7** [h] 1 Sam. 12:9 [i] Judg. 13:1 [j] Judg. 3:13 **10:8** [k] Num. 32:33 **10:10** [l] 1 Sam. 12:10 [m] Deut. 1:41 **10:11** [n] Ex. 14:30 [o] Num. 21:21, 24, 25 [p] Judg. 3:12, 13 [q] Judg. 3:31 **10:12** [r] Judg. 1:31; 5:19 [s] Judg. 6:3; 7:12 [t] Ps. 106:42, 43 **10:13** [u] Jer. 2:13] **10:14** [v] Deut. 32:37, 38 **10:15** [w] 1 Sam. 3:18 **10:16** [x] Jer. 18:7, 8 [y] Is. 63:9 **10:17** [z] Judg. 11:11, 29 **10:18** [a] Judg. 11:8, 11 **11:1** [a] Heb. 11:32 [b] 2 Kin. 5:1 **11:2** [c] Gen. 21:10 **11:3** [d] 2 Sam. 10:6, 8 [e] 1 Sam. 22:2 **11:4** [f] Judg. 10:9, 17 **11:7** [g] Gen. 26:27 **11:8** [h] Judg. 10:18 [i] [Luke 17:4]

and fight against the people of Ammon, and be [j]our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

9So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?"

10And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, [k]"The LORD will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words." **11**Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him [l]head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words [m]before the LORD in Mizpah.

12Now Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, saying, [n]"What do you have against me, that you have come to fight against me in my land?"

13And the king of the people of Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah, [o]"Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from [p]the Arnon as far as [q]the Jabbok, and to the Jordan. Now therefore, restore those *lands* peaceably."

14So Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, **15**and said to him, "Thus says Jephthah: [r]Israel did not take away the land of Moab, nor the land of the people of Ammon; **16**for when Israel came up from Egypt, they walked through the wilderness as far as the Red Sea and [s]came to Kadesh. **17**Then [t]Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, "Please let me pass through your land." [u]But the king of Edom would not heed. And in like manner they sent to the [v]king of Moab, but he would not *consent*. So Israel [w]remained in Kadesh. **18**And they [x]went along through the wilderness and [y]bypassed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, came to the east side of the land of Moab, and encamped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the border of Moab, for the Arnon *was* the border of Moab. **19**Then [z]Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel said to him, "Please [a]let us pass through your land into our place." **20***b*But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together, encamped in Jahaz, and fought against Israel. **21**And the LORD God of Israel [c]delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they [d]defeated them. Thus Israel gained possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. **22**They took possession of [e]all the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan.

23'And now the LORD God of Israel has dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; should you then possess it? **24**Will you not possess whatever [f]Chemosh your god gives you to possess? So whatever [g]the LORD our God takes possession of before us, we will possess. **25**And now, *are* you any better than [h]Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel? Did he ever fight against them? **26**While Israel dwelt in [i]Heshbon and its villages, in [j]Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred years, why did you not recover *them* within that time? **27**Therefore I have not sinned against you, but you wronged me by fighting against me. May the LORD, [k]the Judge, [l]render judgment this

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11:11 *words before the LORD.* Jephthah's "words before the LORD" are a strange mixture of faith and foolishness. While Jephthah did acknowledge God, his self-interest and foolishness often overruled his faith. The Book of Hebrews has a more positive view of him. Jephthah is one of those listed "who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises . . ." (Heb. 11:32–33).

11:21 *the LORD God of Israel.* Israel was not merely an aggressor, but the recipient of the Lord's generosity. The Ammonites had brought their misfortune on themselves by hindering Israel's advance into the Promised Land. Israel would not have taken Ammonite land, since God had expressly commanded them not to (Deut. 2:19). The Ammonites were only indirectly affected by Israel's expansion (Num. 21:25–26). In addition, the Ammonites never really had true claim to the land to begin with; it was in fact the land of the Amorites (vv. 19–22). The limits of the Amorite land in verse 22 are precisely what the Ammonites claimed as theirs in v. 13 (Num. 21:24 also rebuts the Ammonites' claim). Israel had occupied the land in dispute for at least three hundred years, long enough to make a legitimate claim on it (v. 26).

11:24 *whatever Chemosh your god gives you.* Usually the worship of Chemosh is associated with Moab; elsewhere the Ammonites' god was called Molech. However, Ammon and Moab lived side by side, and apparently shared culture and religion as well as their common descent from Lot (Gen. 19:37–38). Jephthah's comment was a derisive jab at the ineffectiveness of their gods.

11:27 *the LORD, the Judge.* God is the ultimate source of all justice. He has the right to judge every man and woman. With His divine authority and power, God always judges with justice, while at the same time He is loving, compassionate, and perfect.

11:27 Strife—Given the depravity of the human heart it is only expected that nation will declare war on nation. We also deal with "wars" and strife in our interpersonal relationships. When we are faced with unjust attacks, we can only do as Jephthah did and trust God to judge rightly between the two sides of the dispute.

11:8 *j* Judg. 10:18 **11:10** *k* Jer. 29:23; 42:5 **11:11** *l* Judg. 11:8 *m* Judg. 10:17; 20:1 **11:12** *n* 2 Sam. 16:10 **11:13** *o* Num. 21:24–26 *p* Josh. 13:9 *q* Gen. 32:22 **11:15** *r* Deut. 2:9, 19 **11:16** *s* Num. 13:26; 20:1 **11:17** *t* Num. 20:14 *u* Num. 20:14–21 *v* Josh. 24:9 *w* Num. 20:1 **11:18** *x* Deut. 2:9, 18, 19 *y* Num. 21:4 **11:19** *z* Num. 21:21 *a* Deut. 2:27 **11:20** *b* Deut. 2:27 **11:21** *c* Josh. 24:8 *d* Num. 21:24, 25 **11:22** *e* Deut. 2:36, 37 **11:24** *f* Num. 21:29 *g* [Deut. 9:4, 5] **11:25** *h* Num. 22:2 **11:26** *i* Num. 21:25, 26 *j* Deut. 2:36 **11:27** *k* Gen. 18:25 *l* Gen. 16:5; 31:53

day between the children of Israel and the people of Ammon.'" 28However, the king of the people of Ammon did not heed the words which Jephthah sent him.

Jephthah's Vow and Victory

29Then [m]the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he advanced *toward* the people of Ammon. 30And Jephthah [n]made a vow to the LORD, and said, "If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands, 31then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, [o]shall surely be the LORD's, [p]and I will offer it up as a burnt offering."

32So Jephthah advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands. 33And he defeated them from Aroer as far as [q]Minnith—twenty cities—and to Abel Keramim,* with a very great slaughter. Thus the people of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

Jephthah's Daughter

34When Jephthah came to his house at [r]Mizpah, there was [s]his daughter, coming out to meet him with timbrels and dancing; and she *was his* only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter. 35And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he [t]tore his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low! You are among those who trouble me! For I [u]have given my word to the LORD, and [v]I cannot go back on it."

36So she said to him, "My father, *if* you have given your word to the LORD, [w]do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, because [x]the LORD has avenged you of your enemies, the people of Ammon." 37Then she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me: let me alone for two months, that I may go and wander on the mountains and bewail my virginity, my friends and I."

38So he said, "Go." And he sent her away *for* two months; and she went with her friends, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains. 39And it was so at the end of two months that she returned to her father, and he [y]carried out his vow with her which he had vowed. She knew no man.

And it became a custom in Israel 40*that* the daughters of Israel went four days each year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

Jephthah's Conflict with Ephraim

12 Then [a]the men of Ephraim gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the people of Ammon, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down on you with fire!"

2And Jephthah said to them, "My people and I were in a great struggle with the

* **11:33** Literally *Plain of Vineyards*

11:31 ***whatever comes out of the doors of my house.*** Some have interpreted Jephthah's vow as a clear intention to offer a human sacrifice. The phrase "to meet me," coupled with coming out of the house seems to refer more appropriately to a human than an animal. Undoubtedly Jephthah knew that human sacrifice was strictly forbidden in Israel (Lev. 18:21; 20:2; Deut. 12:31; 18:10; Jer. 19:5; Ezek. 20:30–31; 23:37–39), but his foolishness and lack of faith impelled him to make a reckless vow in order to try to manipulate God.

11:35 ***I have given my word . . . I cannot go back.*** Did Jephthah have to follow through on his vow? Ordinarily the answer would be yes. Vows were made only to God, and they were solemn pledges that had to be kept (Deut. 23:21–23; Ps. 15:4; Eccl. 5:4–5). But if Jephthah intended his vow to include human sacrifice, he was vowing to sin, an action which could hardly please the Lord.

11:39 ***he carried out his vow.*** The text does not explicitly say that he killed his daughter, and some believe that instead he "sacrificed" her by dedicating her to a life of virginity. Human sacrifice was contrary to the law of Moses (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5; Deut. 12:31; 18:10). Until the wicked reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh centuries later (2 Kin. 16:3; 21:6), there is no record of human sacrifice in Israel, even by those who followed Baal. The great respect that Jephthah had for God would surely have prevented him from making such a perverse offering. The several references to her virginity seem to support the idea of lifelong celibacy, and the Bible provides evidence that such devoted service for women did exist at the central sanctuary (Ex. 38:8; 1 Sam. 2:22; Luke 2:36–37). Jephthah's vow in verse 31 could be translated "shall be the LORD's, *or* I will offer it up as a burnt offering." Thus his vow could be interpreted that if a person came out first, he would dedicate that person to the Lord, or if an animal came out first, he would offer the animal as a burnt sacrifice. As is frequently the case in the Book of Judges, we are given the bare facts of a puzzling story and no comment about what God thought of it.

12:2 Strife—Gilead and Ephraim grew so hostile that they came to blows, brother fighting against brother. Instead of putting their energy into fighting their common enemy, they were fighting each other. In the same way today, Christians often react with hurt feelings, pride, and resentment, and prefer to fight against flesh and blood rather than against principalities and powers. The constant infighting Christians indulge in is often a reason for the rest of the world to pass the church off as much ado about nothing.

11:29 [m] Judg. 3:10 **11:30** [n] Gen. 28:20 **11:31** [o] Lev. 27:2, 3, 28 [p] Ps. 66:13 **11:33** [q] Ezek. 27:17 **11:34** [r] Judg. 10:17; 11:11 [s] Ex. 15:20 **11:35** [t] Gen. 37:29, 34 [u] Eccl. 5:2, 4, 5 [v] Num. 30:2 **11:36** [w] Num. 30:2 [x] 2 Sam. 18:19, 31 **11:39** [y] Judg. 11:31 **12:1** [a] Judg. 8:1

people of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands. 3So when I saw that you would not deliver *me*, I [b]took my life in my hands and crossed over against the people of Ammon; and the LORD delivered them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?" 4Now Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, "You Gileadites [c]*are* fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites *and* among the Manassites." 5The Gileadites seized the [d]fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites *arrived*. And when *any* Ephraimite who escaped said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead would say to him, "*Are* you an Ephraimite?" If he said, "No," 6then they would say to him, "Then say, [e]'Shibboleth'!" And he would say, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce *it* right. Then they would take him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. There fell at that time forty-two thousand Ephraimites.

7And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried among the cities of Gilead.

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon

8After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. 9He had thirty sons. And he gave away thirty daughters in marriage, and brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He judged Israel seven years. 10Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

11After him, Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel. He judged Israel ten years. 12And Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.

13After him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. 14He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who [f]rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight years. 15Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, [g]in the mountains of the Amalekites.

The Birth of Samson

13 Again the children of Israel [a]did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them [b]into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

2Now there was a certain man from [c]Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name *was* Manoah; and his wife *was* barren and had no children. 3And the [d]Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. 4Now therefore, please be careful [e]not to drink wine or *similar* drink, and not to eat anything unclean. 5For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no [f]razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be [g]a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall [h]begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

6So the woman came and told her husband, saying, [i]"A Man of God came to me, and His [j]countenance *was* like the countenance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I [k]did not ask Him where He *was* from, and He did not tell me His name. 7And He said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or *similar* drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

8Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, and said, "O my Lord, please let the Man of God

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12:4 ***You . . . are fugitives of Ephraim.*** This insult may have its roots in the division of the nation into eastern and western groups (5:17; Josh. 1:12–15). Despite the emphasis in Joshua on the unity of all the tribes (Josh. 1:12–15; 22:1–34), the practical reality in the period of the judges was dramatically different.

12:6 ***Shibboleth . . . Sibboleth.*** This is the only significant reference to the linguistic differences which apparently existed between the tribes. Today the English word *shibboleth* means an otherwise minor difference that becomes a sticking point because it distinguishes one side from the other.

13:1—16:31 Samson—The last of the judges lived at the beginning of the eleventh century B.C. He was unusual among the judges in many ways. He did not lead an army, but carried on his campaign against the Philistines single-handed. He is mentioned in Hebrews 11:32 in the list of judges who accomplished great things through faith. The Book of Judges, in contrast, paints a darker picture. His checkered history of heroism and moral failure resembles Israel's troubles during the time of the judges.

13:3 ***the Angel of the LORD.*** The Angel of the Lord made a supernatural appearance, described here as "very awesome." Manoah's wife recognized him as "a Man of God." The essential character of the angel, embodied in his name, was not revealed to them (vv. 17–18). It seems that the Angel of the Lord was God Himself, in a form they could perceive (13:21–22; Gen. 22:11; Ex. 3:14–15).

13:5 ***Nazirite.*** The regulations of the Nazirite vows are found in Numbers 6:1–21. Samson's Nazirite service was remarkable in three ways. First, he did not take his vow voluntarily; it was his before birth. Second, his service was to be lifelong, not temporary. Third, he eventually broke every one of its stipulations.

13:6 ***Man of God.*** This was a term used to describe the prophets (Deut. 33:1; 1 Kin. 17:18). At first Samson's mother may have thought she was talking to a prophet, but His radiant appearance convinced her otherwise.

12:3 [b] 1 Sam. 19:5; 28:21 **12:4** [c] 1 Sam. 25:10 **12:5** [d] Josh. 22:11 **12:6** [e] Ps. 69:2, 15 **12:14** [f] Judg. 5:10; 10:4 **12:15** [g] Judg. 3:13, 27; 5:14 **13:1** [a] Judg. 2:11 [b] 1 Sam. 12:9 **13:2** [c] Josh. 19:41 **13:3** [d] Judg. 6:12 **13:4** [e] Num. 6:2, 3, 20 **13:5** [f] Num. 6:5 [g] Num. 6:2 [h] 1 Sam. 7:13 **13:6** [i] Gen. 32:24–30 [j] Matt. 28:3 [k] Judg. 13:17, 18

whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born."

9And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came to the woman again as she was sitting in the field; but Manoah her husband *was* not with her. 10Then the woman ran in haste and told her husband, and said to him, "Look, the Man who came to me the *other* day has just now appeared to me!"

11So Manoah arose and followed his wife. When he came to the Man, he said to Him, "Are You the Man who spoke to this woman?"

And He said, "I *am*."

12Manoah said, "Now let Your words come *to pass!* What will be the boy's rule of life, and his work?"

13So the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. 14She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, [l]nor may she drink wine or *similar* drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe."

15Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, "Please [m]let us detain You, and we will prepare a young goat for You."

16And the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Though you detain Me, I will not eat your food. But if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it to the LORD." (For Manoah did not know He *was* the Angel of the LORD.)

17Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, "What *is* Your name, that when Your words come *to pass* we may honor You?"

18And the Angel of the LORD said to him, [n]"Why do you ask My name, seeing it *is* wonderful?"

19So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, [o]and offered it upon the rock to the LORD. And He did a wondrous thing while Manoah and his wife looked on— 20it happened as the flame went up toward heaven from the altar—the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar! When Manoah and his wife saw *this,* they [p]fell on their faces to the ground. 21When the Angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and his wife, [q]then Manoah knew that He *was* the Angel of the LORD.

22And Manoah said to his wife, [r]"We shall surely die, because we have seen God!"

23But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these *things,* nor would He have told us *such things* as these at this time."

24So the woman bore a son and called his name [s]Samson; and [t]the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. 25[u]And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan* [v]between Zorah and [w]Eshtaol.

Samson's Philistine Wife

14 Now Samson went down [a]to Timnah, and [b]saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. 2So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, [c]get her for me as a wife."

3Then his father and mother said to him, "*Is there* no woman among the daughters of [d]your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the [e]uncircumcised Philistines?"

And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well."

4But his father and mother did not know that it was [f]of the LORD—that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time [g]the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

5So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah.

* **13:25** Literally *Camp of Dan* (compare 18:12)

13:21–22 *the Angel of the LORD.* Manoah's reaction is similar to the reaction Gideon had when he recognized the Angel of the Lord (6:22).

13:25 *the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him.* The Hebrew word translated *move* can also mean *impel.* The Spirit of the Lord was pushing Samson toward doing the work that God wanted him to do.

14:2 *get her for me as a wife.* Such marriages with foreigners were prohibited for Israelites (Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3).

14:3 *she pleases me well.* Samson's words reveal his self-centered attitude. Instead of seeking to serve God, he was seeking to please himself. Samson's comment here foreshadows the author's summary of the entire period of the judges (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25).

14:3 Unfaithfulness—The beginning of Samson's downfall was his disobedience to the Lord in his marriage. The theme of marriage within the covenant is common in the Old Testament. From earliest times the people of God were told not to contract marriages with unbelievers (Gen. 6:2). When the covenant was renewed prior to the people's entry into Canaanite territory, Joshua warned them not to intermarry; to do so would be evidence of their failure to cling to the Lord (Josh. 23:8,12). It is a tragic picture of the decadence of this period to see Samson's unfaithfulness to the Lord in taking a pagan wife. The New Covenant believer remains under the same divine command to marry only in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14).

14:4 *it was of the LORD.* God would use Samson's defiant wish as a way of defeating the Philistines and providing relief for His people.

13:14 [l] Num. 6:3, 4 **13:15** [m] Gen. 18:5 **13:18** [n] Gen. 32:29 **13:19** [o] Judg. 6:19–21 **13:20** [p] Ezek. 1:28 **13:21** [q] Judg. 6:22 **13:22** [r] Deut. 5:26 **13:24** [s] Heb. 11:32 [t] 1 Sam. 3:19 **13:25** [u] Judg. 3:10 [v] Judg. 18:11 [w] Judg. 16:31 **14:1** [a] Josh. 15:10, 57 [b] Gen. 34:2 **14:2** [c] Gen. 21:21 **14:3** [d] Gen. 24:3, 4 [e] Gen. 34:14 **14:4** [f] Josh. 11:20 [g] Deut. 28:48

Now *to his* surprise, a young lion *came* roaring against him. 6And [h]the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though *he had* nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

7Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. 8After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey *were* in the carcass of the lion. 9He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave *some* to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the [i]carcass of the lion.

10So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so. 11And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

12Then Samson said to them, "Let me [j]pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me [k]within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty [l]changes of clothing. 13But if you cannot explain *it* to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing."

And they said to him, [m]"Pose your riddle, that we may hear it."

14So he said to them:

"Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet."

Now for three days they could not explain the riddle.

15But it came to pass on the seventh* day that they said to Samson's wife, [n]"Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, [o]or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? *Is that* not *so*?"

16Then Samson's wife wept on him, and said, [p]"You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained *it* to me."

And he said to her, "Look, I have not explained *it* to my father or my mother; so should I explain *it* to you?" 17Now she had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people. 18So the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down:

"What *is* sweeter than honey?
And what *is* stronger than a lion?"

And he said to them:

"If you had not plowed with my heifer,
You would not have solved my riddle!"

19Then [q]the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes *of clothing* to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father's house. 20And Samson's wife [r]was *given* to his companion, who had been [s]his best man.

Samson Defeats the Philistines

15 After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a [a]young goat. And he said, "Let me go in to my wife, into *her* room." But her father would not permit him to go in.

2Her father said, "I really thought that you thoroughly [b]hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. *Is* not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead."

3And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!" 4Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned *the foxes* tail to tail,

* **14:15** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *fourth*.

14:6 ***the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him.*** The Old Testament speaks numerous times of God's Spirit coming mightily upon individuals, usually to empower them physically for great feats of strength (3:10; 6:34; 11:29). The Spirit empowered others for the important task of speaking God's word (Gen. 41:38; Num. 24:2; 1 Sam. 10:6; 19:20). It appears that the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was primarily a special anointing to accomplish a certain task, and was different from the indwelling Presence that believers enjoy today. Saul (1 Sam. 10:10; 16:23) and David (1 Sam. 16:13; Ps. 51:11) were both filled with the Holy Spirit when they were anointed as king, but this presence seems to have been directly linked to their obedience.

14:8–9 ***carcass of the lion.*** Touching the dead lion violated Samson's Nazirite vow (13:5).

14:10 ***feast.*** The word translated *feast* denotes a banquet with considerable drinking. The passage does not say so, but it is not unlikely that this occasioned another violation of Samson's Nazirite vow (13:5).

15:1 ***the time of wheat harvest.*** This would have been late May or early June. The wheat harvest was associated with the second of the three great feasts in Israel, the Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost (Lev. 23:15–22; Deut. 16:9–12).

14:6 [h] Judg. 3:10 **14:9** [i] Lev. 11:27 **14:12** [j] Ezek. 17:2 [k] Gen. 29:27 [l] 2 Kin. 5:22 **14:13** [m] Ezek. 17:2 **14:15** [n] Judg. 16:5 [o] Judg. 15:6 **14:16** [p] Judg. 16:15 **14:19** [q] Judg. 3:10; 13:25 **14:20** [r] Judg. 15:2 [s] John 3:29 **15:1** [a] Gen. 38:17 **15:2** [b] Judg. 14:20

and put a torch between each pair of tails.
5When he had set the torches on fire, he let
the foxes go into the standing grain of the
Philistines, and burned up both the shocks
and the standing grain, as well as the vine-
yards *and* olive groves.
6Then the Philistines said, "Who has
done this?"
And they answered, "Samson, the son-
in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken
his wife and given her to his companion."
[c]So the Philistines came up and burned her
and her father with fire.
7Samson said to them, "Since you would
do a thing like this, I will surely take re-
venge on you, and after that I will cease."
8So he attacked them hip and thigh with
a great slaughter; then he went down and
dwelt in the cleft of the rock of [d]Etam.
9Now the Philistines went up, en-
camped in Judah, and deployed themselves
[e]against Lehi. 10And the men of Judah said,
"Why have you come up against us?"
So they answered, "We have come up to
arrest Samson, to do to him as he has done
to us."
11Then three thousand men of Judah
went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam,
and said to Samson, "Do you not know that
the Philistines [f]rule over us? What *is* this
you have done to us?"
And he said to them, "As they did to me,
so I have done to them."
12But they said to him, "We have come
down to arrest you, that we may deliver
you into the hand of the Philistines."
Then Samson said to them, "Swear to me
that you will not kill me yourselves."
13So they spoke to him, saying, "No, but
we will tie you securely and deliver you
into their hand; but we will surely not kill
you." And they bound him with two [g]new
ropes and brought him up from the rock.
14When he came to Lehi, the Philistines
came shouting against him. Then [h]the
Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him;
and the ropes that *were* on his arms be-
came like flax that is burned with fire, and
his bonds broke loose from his hands. 15He
found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached
out his hand and took it, and [i]killed a thou-
sand men with it. 16Then Samson said:

"With the jawbone of a donkey,
Heaps upon heaps,
With the jawbone of a donkey
I have slain a thousand men!"

17And so it was, when he had finished
speaking, that he threw the jawbone from
his hand, and called that place Ramath
Lehi.*
18Then he became very thirsty; so he
cried out to the LORD and said, [j]"You have
given this great deliverance by the hand
of Your servant; and now shall I die of
thirst and fall into the hand of the uncir-
cumcised?" 19So God split the hollow place
that *is* in Lehi,* and water came out, and
he drank; and [k]his spirit returned, and he
revived. Therefore he called its name En
Hakkore,* which is in Lehi to this day.
20And [l]he judged Israel [m]twenty years [n]in
the days of the Philistines.

Samson and Delilah

16 Now Samson went to [a]Gaza and saw
a harlot there, and went in to her.
2*When* the Gazites *were told,* "Samson
has come here!" they [b]surrounded *the
place* and lay in wait for him all night at
the gate of the city. They were quiet all
night, saying, "In the morning, when it is
daylight, we will kill him." 3And Samson
lay *low* till midnight; then he arose at mid-
night, took hold of the doors of the gate of
the city and the two gateposts, pulled them
up, bar and all, put *them* on his shoulders,
and carried them to the top of the hill that
faces Hebron.
4Afterward it happened that he loved
a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose
name *was* Delilah. 5And the [c]lords of the
Philistines came up to her and said to her,
[d]"Entice him, and find out where his great
strength *lies,* and by what *means* we may
overpower him, that we may bind him to
afflict him; and every one of us will give
you eleven hundred *pieces* of silver."
6So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell
me where your great strength *lies,* and
with what you may be bound to afflict you."
7And Samson said to her, "If they bind
me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet
dried, then I shall become weak, and be
like any *other* man."

* **15:17** Literally *Jawbone Height* * **15:19** Literally *Jawbone* (compare verse 14) • Literally *Spring of the Caller*

15:13 ***two new ropes.*** Ropes were made of leather, hair, or plant fibers; one common fiber was flax (Josh. 2:6). Being new, these ropes were the strongest possible.

15:15 ***a fresh jawbone.*** A fresh jawbone would have been tough, resilient, and virtually unbreakable.

15:18 ***cried out to the LORD.*** This is the first record of Samson calling on the Lord.

16:2 ***at the gate.*** The gates of this time in history were at least two stories high, with guard rooms on either side of a narrow opening. The Philistines waited in the recesses of the gate, hoping to trap Samson.

16:3 ***carried them to the top of the hill.*** Given the large size of the doors of a city gate, Samson's feat was astounding. Hebron is 40 miles east of Gaza. Samson's trip would have taken the better part of a day.

15:6 [c] Judg. 14:15 **15:8** [d] 2 Chr. 11:6 **15:9** [e] Judg. 15:19 **15:11** [f] Judg. 13:1; 14:4 **15:13** [g] Judg. 16:11, 12 **15:14** [h] Judg. 3:10; 14:6 **15:15** [i] Lev. 26:8 **15:18** [j] Ps. 3:7 **15:19** [k] Is. 40:29 **15:20** [l] Judg. 10:2; 12:7–14 [m] Judg. 16:31 [n] Judg. 13:1 **16:1** [a] Josh. 15:47 **16:2** [b] 1 Sam. 23:26 **16:5** [c] Josh. 13:3 [d] Judg. 14:15

8 So the lords of the Philistines brought
up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet
dried, and she bound him with them. 9 Now
men were lying in wait, staying with her in
the room. And she said to him, "The Philis-
tines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he broke
the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks
when it touches fire. So the secret of his
strength was not known.
10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Look,
you have mocked me and told me lies. Now,
please tell me what you may be bound
with."
11 So he said to her, "If they bind me se-
curely with [e]new ropes that have never
been used, then I shall become weak, and
be like any *other* man."
12 Therefore Delilah took new ropes and
bound him with them, and said to him,
"The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!"
And *men were* lying in wait, staying in the
room. But he broke them off his arms like
a thread.
13 Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you
have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me
what you may be bound with."
And he said to her, "If you weave the
seven locks of my head into the web of the
loom"—
14 So she wove *it* tightly with the batten
of the loom, and said to him, "The Philis-
tines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he awoke
from his sleep, and pulled out the batten
and the web from the loom.
15 Then she said to him, [f]"How can you
say, 'I love you,' when your heart *is* not
with me? You have mocked me these three
times, and have not told me where your
great strength *lies*." 16 And it came to pass,
when she pestered him daily with her
words and pressed him, *so* that his soul
was vexed to death, 17 that he [g]told her all
his heart, and said to her, [h]"No razor has
ever come upon my head, for I *have been*
a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb.
If I am shaven, then my strength will leave
me, and I shall become weak, and be like
any *other* man."
18 When Delilah saw that he had told
her all his heart, she sent and called for
the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come
up once more, for he has told me all his
heart." So the lords of the Philistines came
up to her and brought the money in their
hand. 19 [i]Then she lulled him to sleep on
her knees, and called for a man and had
him shave off the seven locks of his head.
Then she began to torment him,* and his
strength left him. 20 And she said, "The
Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" So he
awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go
out as before, at other times, and shake
myself free!" But he did not know that the
LORD [j]had departed from him.
21 Then the Philistines took him and
put out his [k]eyes, and brought him down
to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fet-
ters, and he became a grinder in the prison.
22 However, the hair of his head began to
grow again after it had been shaven.

Samson Dies with the Philistines

23 Now the lords of the Philistines gath-
ered together to offer a great sacrifice to
[l]Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they
said:

"Our god has delivered into our hands
Samson our enemy!"

24 When the people saw him, they [m]praised
their god; for they said:

"Our god has delivered into our hands
our enemy,
The destroyer of our land,
And the one who multiplied our dead."

25 So it happened, when their hearts were
[n]merry, that they said, "Call for Samson,
that he may perform for us." So they called
for Samson from the prison, and he per-
formed for them. And they stationed him
between the pillars. 26 Then Samson said to
the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me
feel the pillars which support the temple, so
that I can lean on them." 27 Now the temple
was full of men and women. All the lords
of the Philistines *were* there—about three
thousand men and women on the [o]roof
watching while Samson performed.
28 Then Samson called to the LORD,

* **16:19** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *he began to be weak.*

16:16 ***pestered him.*** Delilah pestered him just as his wife had done earlier (14:17). Samson's foolishness prevented him from learning the lesson of his earlier experience.

16:19 ***and his strength left him.*** When he broke the final stipulation of the Nazirite vow by allowing his hair to be cut, the Lord left him and he was captured.

16:20 ***he did not know.*** This is one of the few editorial comments by the author.

16:23 ***Dagon.*** Dagon was the principal Philistine god. A Philistine temple for Dagon was at Beth Shan, in northern Israel, in the days of Saul (1 Sam. 31:9–10; 1 Chr. 10:10), and it was in another such temple that the Philistines stored the ark of the covenant for a time (1 Sam. 5:1–7). Dagon was once commonly thought to be a fish god, but modern excavations have shown that he was a god of grain. In fact, one of the Hebrew words for grain is *dagan.*

16:24 ***Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy.*** The Philistines viewed their success over Samson as a triumph for their god (Judg. 16:23–24). In reality it was the Lord who had delivered Samson into their hands, for "the LORD had departed from him" (v. 20).

16:11 [e] Judg. 15:13 **16:15** [f] Judg. 14:16 **16:17** [g] [Mic. 7:5] [h] Judg. 13:5 **16:19** [i] Prov. 7:26, 27 **16:20** [j] [Josh. 7:12] **16:21** [k] 2 Kin. 25:7 **16:23** [l] 1 Sam. 5:2 **16:24** [m] Dan. 5:4 **16:25** [n] Judg. 9:27 **16:27** [o] Deut. 22:8

saying, "O Lord GOD, [p]remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one *blow* take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" 29And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. 30Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with *all his* might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who *were* in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.

31And his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought *him* up and [q]buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel [r]twenty years.

Micah's Idolatry

17 Now there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name *was* [a]Micah. 2And he said to his mother, "The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver that were taken from you, and on which you [b]put a curse, even saying it in my ears—here *is* the silver with me; I took it."

And his mother said, [c]"*May you be* blessed by the LORD, my son!" 3So when he had returned the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, "I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the LORD for my son, to [d]make a carved image and a molded image; now therefore, I will return it to you." 4Thus he returned the silver to his mother. Then his mother [e]took two hundred *shekels* of silver and gave them to the silversmith, and he made it into a carved image and a molded image; and they were in the house of Micah.

5The man Micah had a [f]shrine, and made an [g]ephod and [h]household idols;* and he consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. 6[i]In those days *there was* no king in Israel; [j]everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes.

7Now there was a young man from [k]Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah; he *was* a Levite, and [l]was staying there. 8The man departed from the city of Bethlehem in Judah to stay wherever he could find *a place*. Then he came to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he journeyed. 9And Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?"

So he said to him, "I *am* a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am on my way to find *a place* to stay."

10Micah said to him, "Dwell with me, [m]and be a [n]father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten *shekels* of silver per year, a suit of clothes, and your sustenance." So the Levite went in. 11Then the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the

* **17:5** Hebrew *teraphim*

16:30 Zeal—The famous lament of David over Saul and Jonathan, "How the mighty have fallen!" (2 Sam. 1:19,27), could also be applied to Samson. He came from a godly home, but often was overcome by evil passion, pride, and violence. Yet at death his zeal for the Lord brought about a great victory over the Philistines and their god Dagon, and he is listed in Hebrews as a man of faith (Heb. 11:32). The plan and purpose of God overruled Samson's folly and the Philistines' arrogance.

16:31 *He had judged Israel twenty years.* The story of the judges concludes with final editorial comments. Samson, the last judge, had been empowered by God's Spirit, just as the first had been. Despite the manifold failings of the judges themselves, God had delivered Israel and caused other nations to bow before Him. Samson's life is ultimately a story about God's faithfulness in spite of human weakness.

17:1—21:25 Conclusion—The Book of Judges closes with two appendices (chs. 17–18; 19–21). They seem to be unrelated to the material preceding them, and to each other. While chapters 2–16 describe foreign threats to Israel, these last chapters show an internal breakdown of Israel's worship and unity. Furthermore, the events of these chapters appear to have taken place early in the period of the judges. These chapters may have been written independently of the book's earlier chapters, but there is a certain logic to placing them at the end of the book. The structure highlights the theme of the disintegration of Israel, with the last chapters emphasizing that "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (17:6; 21:25).

17:3 *I had wholly dedicated the silver . . . to the LORD.* Micah's mother approved of his action, claiming that these images would be offered on the Lord's behalf. Today the temptation to mix elements of true worship of God with practices unacceptable to Him remains with us, even though it is in different ways.

17:5 *shrine.* This is literally "a house of God." This was a perversion of the true sanctuary where all worship was to take place. At this time the true "house of God" was at Shiloh (18:31). Micah further violated the law by appointing his own son as his private priest. Micah sinned because his son had not descended from Aaron, nor was he even a Levite (Ex. 28:1; 40:12–15; Num. 16:39–40; 17:8).

17:6 *what was right in his own eyes.* This editorial comment is echoed in the last verse of the book (21:25). The author suggests that times were so bad that people did whatever they wanted, not what was right in the Lord's eyes (14:3). We may infer that a king who focused Israel's attention on the Lord would have prevented the outbreaks of sin and oppression so prevalent during the time of the judges.

17:10 *be a father and a priest to me.* To be called father was a title of honor. Micah wanted the Levite to be his priest, since his background would lend legitimacy to his service. Micah thought this would bring him God's favor (v. 13).

16:28 [p] Jer. 15:15 **16:31** [q] Judg. 13:25 [r] Judg. 15:20
17:1 [a] Judg. 18:2 **17:2** [b] Lev. 5:1 [c] Gen. 14:19 **17:3** [d] Ex. 20:4, 23; 34:17 **17:4** [e] Is. 46:6 **17:5** [f] Judg. 18:24 [g] Judg. 8:27; 18:14 [h] Gen. 31:19, 30 **17:6** [i] Judg. 18:1; 19:1 [j] Deut. 12:8 **17:7** [k] Matt. 2:1, 5, 6 [l] Deut. 18:6
17:10 [m] Judg. 18:19 [n] Gen. 45:8

young man became like one of his sons to him. 12So Micah [o]consecrated the Levite, and the young man [p]became his priest, and lived in the house of Micah. 13Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will be good to me, since I have a Levite as [q]priest!"

The Danites Adopt Micah's Idolatry

18 In [a]those days *there was* no king in Israel. And in those days [b]the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to dwell in; for until that day *their* inheritance among the tribes of Israel had not fallen to them. 2So the children of Dan sent five men of their family from their territory, men of valor from [c]Zorah and Eshtaol, [d]to spy out the land and search it. They said to them, "Go, search the land." So they went to the mountains of Ephraim, to the [e]house of Micah, and lodged there. 3While they *were* at the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite. They turned aside and said to him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this *place*? What do you have here?"

4He said to them, "Thus and so Micah did for me. He has [f]hired me, and I have become his priest."

5So they said to him, "Please [g]inquire of [h]God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous."

6And the priest said to them, [i]"Go in peace. The presence of the LORD *be* with you on your way."

7So the five men departed and went to [j]Laish. They saw the people who *were* there, [k]how they dwelt safely, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. *There were* no rulers in the land who might put *them* to shame for anything. They *were* far from the [l]Sidonians, and they had no ties with anyone.*

8Then *the spies* came back to their brethren at [m]Zorah and Eshtaol, and their brethren said to them, "What *is* your *report*?"

9So they said, [n]"Arise, let us go up against them. For we have seen the land, and indeed it *is* very good. *Would* you [o]*do* nothing? Do not hesitate to go, *and* enter to possess the land. 10When you go, you will come to a [p]secure people and a large land. For God has given it into your hands, [q]a place where *there is* no lack of anything that *is* on the earth."

11And six hundred men of the family of the Danites went from there, from Zorah and Eshtaol, armed with weapons of war. 12Then they went up and encamped in [r]Kirjath Jearim in Judah. (Therefore they call that place [s]Mahaneh Dan* to this day. There *it is*, west of Kirjath Jearim.) 13And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to [t]the house of Micah.

14[u]Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their brethren, "Do you know that [v]there are in these houses an ephod, household idols, a carved image, and a molded image? Now therefore, consider what you should do." 15So they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young Levite man—to the house of Micah—and greeted him. 16The [w]six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who *were* of the children of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate. 17Then [x]the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up. Entering there, they took [y]the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image. The priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men *who were* armed with weapons of war.

18When these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?"

19And they said to him, "Be quiet, [z]put your hand over your mouth, and come with us; [a]be a father and a priest to us. *Is it* better for you to be a priest to the household of one man, or that you be a priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?" 20So the priest's heart was glad; and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took his place among the people.

21Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them. 22When they were

* **18:7** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *with Syria*. * **18:12** Literally *Camp of Dan*

18:1 ***Danites.*** The Danites were looking for a place to settle because they had been unable to settle effectively in their allotted territory. Compare their allotment in Joshua 19:41–47 and their failure to capture it all (1:34–35). It seems clear that this story is not placed chronologically, but refers back to the first chapters of Judges. The Danites' migration in search of new land probably would have come soon after the events of 1:34, not some three centuries or more later.

18:7 ***Sidonians.*** Sidon was a port city northwest of Israel, in what today is Lebanon.

18:19 ***be a father and a priest to us.*** The Levite's cynical acceptance of this opportunity for greater prestige indicates further how debased conditions had become. Those who had been divinely appointed to minister before the Lord were selling false spiritual services to the highest bidder.

17:12 [o] Judg. 17:5 [p] Judg. 18:30 **17:13** [q] Judg. 18:4 **18:1** [a] Judg. 17:6; 19:1; 21:25 [b] Josh. 19:40–48 **18:2** [c] Judg. 13:25 [d] Num. 13:17 [e] Judg. 17:1 **18:4** [f] Judg. 17:10, 12 **18:5** [g] Hos. 4:12 [h] Judg. 1:1; 17:5; 18:14 **18:6** [i] 1 Kin. 22:6 **18:7** [j] Josh. 19:47 [k] Judg. 18:27–29 [l] Judg. 10:12 **18:8** [m] Judg. 18:2 **18:9** [n] Num. 13:30 [o] 1 Kin. 22:3 **18:10** [p] Judg. 18:7, 27 [q] Deut. 8:9 **18:12** [r] Josh. 15:60 [s] Judg. 13:25 **18:13** [t] Judg. 18:2 **18:14** [u] 1 Sam. 14:28 [v] Judg. 17:5 **18:16** [w] Judg. 18:11 **18:17** [x] Judg. 18:2, 14 [y] Judg. 17:4, 5 **18:19** [z] Job 21:5; 29:9; 40:4 [a] Judg. 17:10

a good way from the house of Micah, the men who *were* in the houses near Micah's house gathered together and overtook the children of Dan. 23And they called out to the children of Dan. So they turned around and said to Micah, [b]"What ails you, that you have gathered such a company?"

24So he said, "You have [c]taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and you have gone away. Now what more do I have? How can you say to me, 'What ails you?'"

25And the children of Dan said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry men fall upon you, and you lose your life, with the lives of your household!" 26Then the children of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they *were* too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

Danites Settle in Laish

27So they took *the things* Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him, and went to Laish, to a people quiet and secure; [d]and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire. 28*There was* no deliverer, because it *was* [e]far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs [f]to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. 29And [g]they called the name of the city [h]Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly *was* Laish.

30Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh,* and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan [i]until the day of the captivity of the land. 31So they set up for themselves Micah's carved image which he made, [j]all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

The Levite's Concubine

19 And it came to pass in those days, [a]when *there was* no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote mountains of Ephraim. He took for himself a concubine from [b]Bethlehem in Judah. 2But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four whole months. 3Then her husband arose and went after her, to [c]speak kindly to her *and* bring her back, having his servant and a couple of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was glad to meet him. 4Now his father-in-law, the young woman's father, detained him; and he stayed with him three days. So they ate and drank and lodged there.

5Then it came to pass on the fourth day that they arose early in the morning, and he stood to depart; but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, [d]"Refresh your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way."

6So they sat down, and the two of them ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry." 7And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again. 8Then he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the young woman's father said, "Please refresh your heart." So they delayed until afternoon; and both of them ate.

9And when the man stood to depart—he and his concubine and his servant—his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home."

10However, the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and departed, and came opposite [e]Jebus (that *is,* Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine *was* also with him. 11They *were* near Jebus, and the day was far spent; and the servant said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city [f]of the Jebusites and lodge in it."

12But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside here into a city of foreigners, who *are* not of the children of Israel; we will go on [g]to Gibeah." 13So he said to his servant, "Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in [h]Ramah." 14And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs

* **18:30** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Moses.*

18:31 ***all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.*** The true worship of God in the appointed place was available all this time—the Danites just did not want to bother with it.

19:1 ***a concubine.*** A concubine was a female servant regarded as a part of the family, often chosen to bear children. Several of the patriarchs had children with concubines: Abraham with Hagar (Gen. 16); Jacob with Bilhah and Zilpah (Gen. 30:4–13).

19:10 ***Jebus (that is, Jerusalem).*** The city of Jerusalem was at this time in the hands of the Jebusites, and it is called a "city of foreigners" in verse 12 (see Josh. 15:63).

18:23 [b] 2 Kin. 6:28 **18:24** [c] Gen. 31:30 **18:27** [d] Josh. 19:47 **18:28** [e] Judg. 18:7 [f] 2 Sam. 10:6 **18:29** [g] Josh. 19:47 [h] Judg. 20:1 **18:30** [i] 2 Kin. 15:29 **18:31** [j] Josh. 18:1, 8 **19:1** [a] Judg. 17:6; 18:1; 21:25 [b] Judg. 17:7 **19:3** [c] Gen. 34:3; 50:21 **19:5** [d] Gen. 18:5 **19:10** [e] 1 Chr. 11:4, 5 **19:11** [f] Josh. 15:8, 63 **19:12** [g] Josh. 18:28 **19:13** [h] Josh. 18:25

to Benjamin. 15They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would [i]take them into *his* house to spend the night.

16Just then an old man came in from [j]his work in the field at evening, who also *was* from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place *were* Benjamites. 17And when he raised his eyes, he saw the traveler in the open square of the city; and the old man said, "Where are you going, and where do you come from?"

18So he said to him, "We *are* passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim; I *am* from there. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; *now* I am going to [k]the house of the LORD. But there *is* no one who will take me into his house, 19although we have both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself, for your female servant, and for the young man *who is* with your servant; *there is* no lack of anything."

20And the old man said, [l]"Peace *be* with you! However, *let* all your needs *be* my responsibility; [m]only do not spend the night in the open square." 21[n]So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. [o]And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

Gibeah's Crime

22As they were [p]enjoying themselves, suddenly [q]certain men of the city, [r]perverted men,* surrounded the house *and* beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, [s]"Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him *carnally!*"

23But [t]the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brethren! I beg you, do not act *so* wickedly! Seeing this man has come into my house, [u]do not commit this outrage. 24[v]Look, *here is* my virgin daughter and *the man's** concubine; let me bring them out now. [w]Humble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing!" 25But the men would not heed him. So the man took his concubine and brought *her* out to them. And they [x]knew her and abused her all night until morning; and when the day began to break, they let her go.

26Then the woman came as the day was dawning, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master *was,* till it was light.

27When her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen *at* the door of the house with her hands on the threshold. 28And he said to her, "Get up and let us be going." But [y]there was no answer. So the man lifted her onto the donkey; and the man got up and went to his place.

29When he entered his house he took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and [z]divided her into twelve pieces, limb by limb,* and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. 30And so it was that all who saw it said, "No such deed has been done or seen from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until this day. Consider it, [a]confer, and speak up!"

Israel's War with the Benjamites

20 So [a]all the children of Israel came out, from [b]Dan to [c]Beersheba, as well as from the land of Gilead, and the congregation gathered together as one man before the LORD [d]at Mizpah. 2And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel,

* **19:22** Literally *sons of Belial* * **19:24** Literally *his* * **19:29** Literally *with her bones*

19:22–26 *men of the city.* This section closely resembles Genesis 19:4–9; indeed, the author may have written this story to make the comparison with Sodom unmistakable, as if to say, "Things were as bad as they were in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah."

19:22 *perverted men.* Literally "sons of Belial," this is a phrase describing wicked or worthless people. The name Belial came to designate Satan, as it is used in 2 Corinthians 6:15. ***may know him.*** This same expression is found in Genesis 19:5, where the men of Sodom wanted to force homosexual relations on Lot's guests.

19:22–30 Perversion—For a man to be raped by a group of town ruffians would be a terrible humiliation; the fact that offering the concubine and the virgin daughter could be considered a solution clearly illustrates the level of perversion and depravity to which the people had sunk. Women were no longer considered the companions and helpers that they were created to be (Gen. 2:22–24), but as property, to be enjoyed or disposed of at will. The author offers no comment upon the horror perpetrated here, merely stating the cold facts and leaving a strong impression of the heartless and conscienceless state of the people.

19:30 *No such deed has been done or seen.* This phrase is ambiguous. It is uncertain whether they were horrified by discovering the dismembered body or by learning about the cruel rape and murder.

20:1 *from Dan to Beersheba.* This is a common expression for the full extent of the land of Israel from north to south.

20:1–2,8 Unity—Both individually and corporately the Israelites of this period were functioning as a law unto themselves. "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25). One notable exception to this was the response to the loathsome rape and killing

19:15 [i] Matt. 25:43 **19:16** [j] Ps. 104:23 **19:18** [k] Josh. 18:1 **19:20** [l] Gen. 43:23 [m] Gen. 19:2 **19:21** [n] Gen. 24:32; 43:24 [o] John 13:5 **19:22** [p] Judg. 16:25; 19:6, 9 [q] Hos. 9:9; 10:9 [r] Deut. 13:13 [s] [Rom. 1:26, 27] **19:23** [t] Gen. 19:6, 7 [u] 2 Sam. 13:12 **19:24** [v] Gen. 19:8 [w] Gen. 34:2 **19:25** [x] Gen. 4:1 **19:28** [y] Judg. 20:5 **19:29** [z] 1 Sam. 11:7 **19:30** [a] Judg. 20:7 **20:1** [a] Josh. 22:12 [b] 2 Sam. 3:10; 24:2 [c] Josh. 19:2 [d] 1 Sam. 7:5

presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot soldiers [e]who drew the sword. 3(Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

Then the children of Israel said, "Tell *us,* how did this wicked deed happen?"

4So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "My concubine and [f]I went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to spend the night. 5[g]And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, [h]but instead they ravished my concubine so that she died. 6So [i]I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they [j]committed lewdness and outrage in Israel. 7Look! All of you *are* children of Israel; [k]give your advice and counsel here and now!"

8So all the people arose as one man, saying, "None *of us* will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; 9but now this *is* the thing which we will do to Gibeah: *We will go up* [l]against it by lot. 10We will take ten men out of *every* hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred out of *every* thousand, and a thousand out of *every* ten thousand, to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel." 11So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united together as one man.

12[m]Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What *is* this wickedness that has occurred among you? 13Now therefore, deliver up the men, [n]the perverted men* who *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and [o]remove the evil from Israel!" But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. 14Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. 15And from their cities at that time [p]the children of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred select men. 16Among all this people *were* seven hundred select men *who were* [q]left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's *breadth* and not miss. 17Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these *were* men of war.

18Then the children of Israel arose and [r]went up to the house of God* to [s]inquire of God. They said, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?"

The LORD said, [t]"Judah first!"

19So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. 20And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah. 21Then [u]the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites. 22And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the place where they had put themselves in array on the first day. 23[v]Then the children of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, "Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?"

And the LORD said, "Go up against him."

24So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day. 25And [w]Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.

26Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, [x]went up and came to the house of God* and wept. They sat there

* **20:13** Literally *sons of Belial* * **20:18** Or *Bethel*
* **20:26** Or *Bethel*

of a concubine in the Benjamite territory of Gibeah (19:11–30). The result of this outrageous covenant violation was that all Israel gathered together as one man, and decided that they would not rest until the crime was punished. The people were shocked into unity against sin. It is still true that crises in life often serve to bring people together to work for a common cause or fight against a common enemy. While this can be a good result of difficult times, it is important that God's people be united in serving Him in peace as well as crisis.

20:9 *by lot.* God's role is not mentioned here, but one can assume that the people were using lots to seek His will. To their credit, the Israelite tribes were united together as one man, a quality notably absent up to this point in the Book of Judges (v. 11).

20:18 *Judah first.* The book begins and ends with Judah in this prominent position (1:1–2). This is no accident, since the end of the book points toward the monarchy, whose true expression would come out of Judah.

20:23 *Go up against him.* The Lord graciously answered the Israelites twice when they called upon Him (v. 18).

20:26 *came to the house of God and wept.* The Israelites suffered a second major defeat (v. 25). The

20:2 [e] Judg. 8:10 **20:4** [f] Judg. 19:15 **20:5** [g] Judg. 19:22 [h] Judg. 19:25, 26 **20:6** [i] Judg. 19:29 [j] Josh. 7:15 **20:7** [k] Judg. 19:30 **20:9** [l] Judg. 1:3 **20:12** [m] Deut. 13:14 **20:13** [n] Deut. 13:13 [o] Deut. 17:12 **20:15** [p] Num. 1:36, 37; 2:23; 26:41 **20:16** [q] 1 Chr. 12:2 **20:18** [r] Judg. 20:23, 26 [s] Num. 27:21 [t] Judg. 1:1, 2 **20:21** [u] [Gen. 49:27] **20:23** [v] Judg. 20:26, 27 **20:25** [w] Judg. 20:21 **20:26** [x] Judg. 20:18, 23; 21:2

before the LORD and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 27So the children of Israel inquired of the LORD (ythe ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days, 28zand Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, astood before it in those days), saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?"

And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."

29Then Israel bset men in ambush all around Gibeah. 30And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times. 31So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down *and* kill some of the people, as at the other times, in the highways c(one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty men of Israel. 32And the children of Benjamin said, "They *are* defeated before us, as at first."

But the children of Israel said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways." 33So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Baal Tamar. Then Israel's men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba. 34And ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. dBut *the Benjamites** did not know that disaster *was* upon them. 35The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword.

36So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. eThe men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. 37fAnd the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword. 38Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of gsmoke rise up from the city, 39whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike *and* kill about thirty of the men of Israel. For they said, "Surely they are defeated before us, as *in* the first battle." 40But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites hlooked behind them, and there was the whole city going up *in smoke* to heaven. 41And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them. 42Therefore they turned *their backs* before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever *came* out of the cities they destroyed in their midst. 43They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, *and* easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east. 44And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these *were* men of valor. 45Then they* turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of iRimmon; and they cut down five thousand of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom, and killed two thousand of them. 46So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these *were* men of valor.

47jBut six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months. 48And the men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword—from *every* city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to.

Wives Provided for the Benjamites

21 Now athe men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, "None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife." 2Then the people came bto the house of God,* and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly, 3and said, "O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe *missing* in Israel?"

4So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and cbuilt an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 5The children of Israel said, "Who *is there* among all the tribes of Israel who

*20:34 Literally *they* *20:45 Septuagint reads *the rest.* *21:2 Or *Bethel*

result drove them to fasting and sacrificing at Bethel, something done very rarely in this period.

20:28 ***Phinehas.*** Phinehas was the grandson of Aaron who had stopped the plague at Peor (Num. 25:6–11). The fact that he was still alive shows that the organization of the Book of Judges is not strictly chronological. The author may have placed this account at the end of the book to make the point even more strongly about the spiritual deterioration of the nation.

20:48 ***and struck them down with the edge of the sword.*** The spiritual decay of Israel had resulted in the destruction of its own people with a vengeance once reserved for pagan people.

20:27 *y* Josh. 18:1 **20:28** *z* Josh. 24:33 *a* Deut. 10:8; 18:5 **20:29** *b* Josh. 8:4 **20:31** *c* Judg. 21:19 **20:34** *d* Josh. 8:14 **20:36** *e* Josh. 8:15 **20:37** *f* Josh. 8:19 **20:38** *g* Josh. 8:20 **20:40** *h* Josh. 8:20 **20:45** *i* Josh. 15:32 **20:47** *j* Judg. 21:13 **21:1** *a* Judg. 20:1 **21:2** *b* Judg. 20:18, 26 **21:4** *c* 2 Sam. 24:25

did not come up with the assembly to the LORD?" [d]For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death." 6And the children of Israel grieved for Benjamin their brother, and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel today. 7What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them our daughters as wives?"

8And they said, "What one *is there* from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the LORD?" And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from [e]Jabesh Gilead to the assembly. 9For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead *was* there. 10So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying, [f]"Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children. 11And this *is* the thing that you shall do: [g]You shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man intimately." 12So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at [h]Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

13Then the whole congregation sent *word* to the children of Benjamin [i]who *were* at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them. 14So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they had not found enough for them.

15And the people [j]grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a void in the tribes of Israel.

16Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?" 17And they said, "*There must be* an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel. 18However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, [k]for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, 'Cursed *be* the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.'" 19Then they said, "In fact, *there is* a yearly [l]feast of the LORD in [m]Shiloh, which *is* north of Bethel, on the east side of the [n]highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah."

20Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, "Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, 21and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out [o]to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin. 22Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, 'Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for *it is* not *as though* you have given the *women* to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.'"

23And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they [p]rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them. 24So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance.

25[q]In those days *there was* no king in Israel; [r]everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes.

21:6 Repentance—In the midst of this terrible account of great sin within the nation of Israel, we find that the people realized that it was important that none of the tribes should perish. The example set by the nation of Israel is important for believers today. The people of Israel felt sorry for their brothers after the brothers had been disciplined for their great sin. Restoration and continuance of fellowship are important for people who have fallen into sin (2 Cor. 2:6–8; Gal. 6:1–2).

21:11 *utterly destroy.* This phrase is found numerous times in the Book of Joshua in regard to the conquest of the Canaanites. However, there is no hint that God supported the bloodbath at Jabesh Gilead.

21:19 *feast of the LORD.* Because of the dancing association, some believe that the yearly feast mentioned here was the Passover. Others believe that it was the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated in the fall, since vineyards are mentioned (vv. 20–21). The grape harvest came in the early fall.

21:23 *took enough wives for their number.* No justification is given for this peculiar abduction except for the supposed needs of the Benjamites. This interesting episode was a way for the rest of Israel to sidestep their oath (v. 1), and try to preserve the tribe of Benjamin.

21:25 *what was right in his own eyes.* This statement sums up the whole Book of Judges. What happened was governed by whatever people happened to feel like, rather than by listening to God, and the stories at the end of the book clearly illustrate the results of this mindset.

21:5 [d] Judg. 20:1–3 **21:8** [e] 1 Sam. 11:1; 31:11
21:10 [f] Num. 31:17 **21:11** [g] Num. 31:17 **21:12** [h] Josh. 18:1 **21:13** [i] Judg. 20:47 **21:15** [j] Judg. 21:6
21:18 [k] Judg. 11:35; 21:1 **21:19** [l] Lev. 23:2 [m] 1 Sam. 1:3 [n] Judg. 20:31 **21:21** [o] Judg. 11:34 **21:23** [p] Judg. 20:48
21:25 [q] Judg. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1 [r] Judg. 17:6

THE BOOK OF
RUTH

▶ **AUTHOR:** The Book of Ruth provides a cameo to the other side of the biblical story—the godly remnant who remain true to the laws of God. Although the author of Ruth is not given anywhere in the book, the anonymity should not detract from its spiritual value or literary beauty. Tradition has attributed the writing of Ruth to Samuel, but this is difficult to reconcile with the mention of David when Samuel died before David was installed as king.

▶ **TIME:** During the Judges ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Ruth 1:16

▶ **THEME:** Ruth is a simple yet intriguing short story. Throughout the story, the characters develop and eventually exhibit wisdom, loyalty, and obedience to God and the customs of the day. We see an interesting romance bloom out of most unusual circumstances. It provides a platform for some profound understanding of God's covenant plans with His people, Israel. We see the details of His plan unfold in the lives of a widow, her foreign born daughter-in-law, and a distant relative. We also see the lineage of David and Christ established and blessed.

Elimelech's Family Goes to Moab

1 Now it came to pass, in the days when [a]the judges ruled, that there was [b]a famine in the land. And a certain man of [c]Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of [d]Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. **2**The name of the man *was* Elimelech, the name of his wife *was* Naomi, and the names of his two sons *were* Mahlon and Chilion—[e]Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went [f]to the country of Moab and remained there. **3**Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. **4**Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. **5**Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

Naomi Returns with Ruth

6Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had [g]visited His people by [h]giving them bread. **7**Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. **8**And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, [i]"Go, return each to her mother's house. [j]The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt [k]with the dead and with me. **9**The LORD grant that you may find [l]rest, each in the house of her husband."

So she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. **10**And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people."

11But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? *Are* there still sons in my womb, [m]that they may be your husbands? **12**Turn back, my daughters, go—for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, *if* I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, **13**would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that [n]the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

14Then they lifted up their voices and

1:4 *Ruth.* The name Ruth means "friend" or "compassionate friend." Throughout the account of her life it is easy to see that this name fittingly described Ruth's character.

1:8 *kindly.* The Hebrew word translated "kindly" is often used to describe God. It can also be interpreted as "loyal love."

1:13 *gone out against me.* Naomi felt that the Lord was disciplining her. To be a widow in such a time and also without children was very difficult indeed.

1:14 Perseverance—When we sacrifice what would seem to be our best interest for another's welfare, God may unexpectedly use it to uplift and reward us. Ruth's desire to stay with Naomi not only lightened

1:1 [a] Judg. 2:16–18 [b] Gen. 12:10; 26:1 [c] Judg. 17:8 [d] Gen. 19:37 **1:2** [e] Gen. 35:19 [f] Judg. 3:30 **1:6** [g] Ex. 3:16; 4:31 [h] Matt. 6:11 **1:8** [i] Josh. 24:15 [j] 2 Tim. 1:16–18 [k] Ruth 2:20 **1:9** [l] Ruth 3:1 **1:11** [m] Deut. 25:5 **1:13** [n] Judg. 2:15

wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth [o]clung to her.

15And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to [p]her people and to her gods; [q]return after your sister-in-law."

16But Ruth said:

[r]"Entreat me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
[s]Your people *shall be* my people,
And your God, my God.
17 Where you die, I will die,
And there will I be buried.
[t]The LORD do so to me, and more also,
If *anything but* death parts you and me."

18[u]When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.

19Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that [v]all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, [w]"*Is* this Naomi?"

20But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi;* call me Mara,* for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21I went out full, [x]and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

22So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem [y]at the beginning of barley harvest.

Ruth Meets Boaz

2 There was a [a]relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of [b]Elimelech. His name *was* [c]Boaz. 2So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the [d]field, and glean heads of grain after *him* in whose sight I may find favor."

And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

3Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field *belonging* to Boaz, who *was* of the family of Elimelech.

4Now behold, Boaz came from [e]Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, [f]"The LORD *be* with you!"

And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!"

5Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman *is* this?"

6So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It *is* the young Moabite woman [g]who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. 7And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house."

8Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. 9*Let* your eyes *be* on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."

10So she [h]fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found [i]favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I *am* a foreigner?"

11And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, [j]all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and *how* you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. 12[k]The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, [l]under whose wings you have come for refuge."

13Then she said, [m]"Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, [n]though I am not like one of your maidservants."

14Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So

* **1:20** Literally *Pleasant* • Literally *Bitter*

Naomi's lot, but it also brought Ruth into the Messiah's ancestral line.

1:16–17 *your God, my God.* Ruth is casting her lot with Naomi, turning her back on all she has known. Most important she is turning away from the many gods of Moab to the One True God of Israel.

1:22 *Moabitess.* God extended His protection to Ruth even though she was a foreigner and a member of a nation which had been the enemy of God and Israel (Num. 22–25).

2:1 *Boaz.* As a relative of Naomi's husband Elimelech, as well as a man of both wealth and good character, Boaz was the ideal person to stand up for the rights of the two widows. In the ancient Middle East, a woman without a husband or father was a woman unprotected and with no way to make a living.

2:2 *glean.* The law of Moses allowed the poor to glean in the fields of the farmers (Lev. 23:22), picking up the loose grain that fell from the sheaves as the reapers gathered them up.

2:14–16 *Come here, and eat of the bread.* Boaz not only let Ruth glean, he also amply provided her with

1:14 [o] [Prov. 17:17] **1:15** [p] Judg. 11:24 [q] Josh. 1:15 **1:16** [r] 2 Kin. 2:2, 4, 6 [s] Ruth 2:11, 12 **1:17** [t] 1 Sam. 3:17 **1:18** [u] Acts 21:14 **1:19** [v] Matt. 21:10 [w] Lam. 2:15 **1:21** [x] Job 1:21 **1:22** [y] 2 Sam. 21:9 **2:1** [a] Ruth 3:2, 12 [b] Ruth 1:2 [c] Ruth 4:21 **2:2** [d] Lev. 19:9, 10; 23:22 **2:4** [e] Ruth 1:1 [f] Ps. 129:7, 8 **2:6** [g] Ruth 1:22 **2:10** [h] 1 Sam. 25:23 [i] 1 Sam. 1:18 **2:11** [j] Ruth 1:14–18 **2:12** [k] 1 Sam. 24:19 [l] Ruth 1:16 **2:13** [m] Gen. 33:15 [n] 1 Sam. 25:41

she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched *grain* to her; and she ate and [o]was satisfied, and kept some back. 15And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16Also let *grain* from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave *it* that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."

17So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of [p]barley. 18Then she took *it* up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her [q]what she had kept back after she had been satisfied.

19And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who [r]took notice of you."

So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today *is* Boaz."

20Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, [s]"Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who [t]has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man *is* a relation of ours, [u]one of our close relatives."

21Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'"

22And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "*It is* good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field." 23So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

Ruth's Redemption Assured

3 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, [a]shall I not seek [b]security for you, that it may be well with you? 2Now Boaz, [c]whose young women you were with, *is he* not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. 3Therefore wash yourself and [d]anoint yourself, put on your *best* garment and go down to the threshing floor; *but* do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do."

5And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."

6So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. 7And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and [e]his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

8Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. 9And he said, "Who *are* you?"

So she answered, "I *am* Ruth, your maidservant. [f]Take your maidservant under your wing,* for you are [g]a close relative."

10Then he said, [h]"Blessed *are* you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than [i]at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. 11And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you *are* a [j]virtuous woman. 12Now it is true that I *am* a [k]close relative; however, [l]there is a relative closer than I. 13Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be *that* if he will [m]perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, [n]*as* the LORD lives! Lie down until morning."

14So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, [o]"Do not let it be known that the woman came to the

* **3:9** Or *Spread the corner of your garment over your maidservant*

food. He went beyond the letter of the law, demonstrating God's compassion and the concern that each believer ought to show for others.

3:4 *uncover his feet.* By uncovering Boaz's feet in this manner Ruth was showing her submission to him while also asking him to be her protector.

3:9 *close relative.* Ruth reminded Boaz that he was a close relative of her dead husband, and in keeping with the law a close relative was required to be a "kinsman redeemer." This meant that if a man was slain, his kinsman redeemer had to avenge his death. If a man was sold into slavery, his kinsman redeemer paid the price to release him. If a man died childless, his kinsman redeemer had the responsibility to marry his wife and father a child to bear his name (Deut. 15:5–10). Ruth was placing herself so that Boaz would know that she was willing for him to redeem her.

3:12 *closer than I.* Boaz remembers that there is yet a closer relative; that relative would have the responsibility and the right to redeem Ruth first. If, however, he did not wish to or was unable to, Boaz would be free to do it himself.

2:14 [o] Ruth 2:18 **2:17** [p] Ruth 1:22 **2:18** [q] Ruth 2:14 **2:19** [r] [Ps. 41:1] **2:20** [s] 2 Sam. 2:5 [t] Prov. 17:17 [u] Ruth 3:9; 4:4, 6 **3:1** [a] 1 Tim. 5:8 [b] Ruth 1:9 **3:2** [c] Ruth 2:3, 8 **3:3** [d] 2 Sam. 14:2 **3:7** [e] Judg. 19:6, 9, 22 **3:9** [f] Ezek. 16:8 [g] Ruth 2:20; 3:12 **3:10** [h] Ruth 2:20 [i] Ruth 1:8 **3:11** [j] Prov. 12:4; 31:10–31 **3:12** [k] Ruth 3:9 [l] Ruth 4:1 **3:13** [m] Deut. 25:5–10 [n] Jer. 4:2; 12:16 **3:14** [o] [1 Cor. 10:32]

threshing floor." 15Also he said, "Bring the shawl that *is* on you and hold it." And when she held it, he measured six *ephahs* of barley, and laid *it* on her. Then she* went into the city.

16When she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "*Is* that you, my daughter?"

Then she told her all that the man had done for her. 17And she said, "These six *ephahs* of barley he gave me; for he said to me, 'Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'"

18Then she said, [p]"Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day."

Boaz Redeems Ruth

4 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, [a]the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend,* sit down here." So he came aside and sat down. 2And he took ten men of [b]the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. 3Then he said to the close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land [c]which *belonged* to our brother Elimelech. 4And I thought to inform you, saying, [d]'Buy *it* back [e]in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem *it*, redeem *it;* but if you* will not redeem *it*, *then* tell me, that I may know; [f]for *there is* no one but you to redeem *it*, and I *am* next after you.'"

And he said, "I will redeem *it*."

5Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy *it* from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, [g]to perpetuate* the name of the dead through his inheritance."

6[h]And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem *it*."

7[i]Now this *was the custom* in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave *it* to the other, and this *was* a confirmation in Israel.

8Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy *it* for yourself." So he took off his sandal. 9And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You *are* witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. 10Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, [j]that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate.* You *are* witnesses this day."

11And all the people who *were* at the gate, and the elders, said, "*We are* witnesses. [k]The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who [l]built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in [m]Ephrathah and be famous in [n]Bethlehem. 12May your house be like the house of [o]Perez, [p]whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of [q]the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman."

Descendants of Boaz and Ruth

13So Boaz [r]took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, [s]the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. 14Then [t]the women said to Naomi, "Blessed *be* the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel! 15And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is [u]better to you than seven sons, has borne him." 16Then Naomi

* **3:15** Many Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, and Vulgate read *she;* Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Targum read *he*. * **4:1** Hebrew *peloni almoni;* literally *so and so* * **4:4** Following many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *he*. * **4:5** Literally *raise up* * **4:10** Probably his civic office

4:1–2 ***the gate.*** The gate of the city was the place where the men congregated and where the officials of a city were to be found. Legal business was typically carried on here where the elders of the city were present to be witnesses.

4:11 ***like Rachel and Leah.*** The people blessed Ruth and asked the Lord to bless her as He had the founding mothers of the twelve tribes of Israel. Even though she was a Moabitess, Ruth was accepted.

4:14–15 ***who loves you . . . is better to you than seven sons.*** Ruth, although not knowing the outcome, sowed kindness by staying with Naomi. Because of this she also reaped what she had sown: abundant blessing. She became the great-grandmother of King David, and had a place in the genealogy of Christ Jesus. Boaz, as the kinsman redeemer had to sacrifice his name—the son that was born would bear the family name of Mahlon—but he was also abundantly blessed. Boaz received the admiration of the people (4:11), the beautiful and faithful Ruth became his wife, and together they became ancestors of the great Redeemer, Jesus Christ. This story of Boaz's redemption of the foreign woman points to the wonderful redemption of Jesus for all those who believe in Him.

3:18 [p] [Ps. 37:3, 5] **4:1** [a] Ruth 3:12 **4:2** [b] 1 Kin. 21:8 **4:3** [c] Lev. 25:25 **4:4** [d] Jer. 32:7, 8 [e] Gen. 23:18 [f] Lev. 25:25 **4:5** [g] Matt. 22:24 **4:6** [h] Ruth 3:12, 13 **4:7** [i] Deut. 25:7–10 **4:10** [j] Deut. 25:6 **4:11** [k] Ps. 127:3; 128:3 [l] Gen. 29:25–30 [m] Gen. 35:16–18 [n] Mic. 5:2 **4:12** [o] Matt. 1:3 [p] Gen. 38:6–29 [q] 1 Sam. 2:20 **4:13** [r] Ruth 3:11 [s] Gen. 29:31; 33:5 **4:14** [t] Luke 1:58 **4:15** [u] 1 Sam. 1:8

took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him. 17 [v]Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 [w]Now this *is* the genealogy of Perez: [x]Perez begot Hezron; 19 Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; 20 Amminadab begot [y]Nahshon, and Nahshon begot [z]Salmon;* 21 Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; 22 Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot [a]David.

* **4:20** Hebrew *Salmah*

4:17 [v] Luke 1:58 **4:18** [w] 1 Chr. 2:4, 5 [x] Num. 26:20, 21

4:20 [y] Num. 1:7 [z] Matt. 1:4 **4:22** [a] Matt. 1:6

THE FIRST BOOK OF
SAMUEL

▶ **AUTHOR:** The author of 1 and 2 Samuel is anonymous. Samuel may have written the first portion of the book, but his death recorded in 1 Samuel 25:1 makes it clear that he did not write all of 1 or 2 Samuel. It is very possible that a single compiler, perhaps a member of the prophetic school mentioned in 1 Chronicles 29:29, used the various writings referenced as the chronicles of "Nathan the prophet," "Gad the seer," and "Samuel the seer."

▶ **TIME:** c. 1105–1011 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** 1 Sam. 13:14

▶ **THEME:** First Samuel tells the story of three characters: Samuel, Saul, and David. Saul's story begins the line of Israel's monarchy. His story ends with the end of 1 Samuel. David's starts in 1 Samuel, goes through 2 Samuel and ends in the first few chapters of 1 Kings. All three of the main characters in this book make mistakes that cost them dearly. Samuel has problems with his own sons. The result is the end of the rule of judges. Saul seems to be a classic study in what a poor self-image can do to a person. David's early violence prevents him from being able to build the temple later on when he is king.

The Family of Elkanah

1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the [a]mountains of Ephraim, and his name *was* [b]Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu,* the son of Tohu,* the son of Zuph, [c]an Ephraimite. **2**And he had [d]two wives: the name of one *was* Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. **3**This man went up from his city [e]yearly [f]to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of hosts in [g]Shiloh. Also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, *were* there. **4**And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an [h]offering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. **5**But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, [i]although the LORD had closed her womb. **6**And her rival also [j]provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the LORD had closed her womb. **7**So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, that she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat.

Hannah's Vow

8Then Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? *Am* I not [k]better to you than ten sons?"

9So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of [l]the tabernacle* of the LORD. **10**[m]And she *was* in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish. **11**Then she [n]made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed [o]look on the affliction of Your maidservant and [p]remember me, and not forget Your maidservant,

* **1:1** Spelled *Eliel* in 1 Chronicles 6:34 • Spelled *Toah* in 1 Chronicles 6:34 * **1:9** Hebrew *heykal*, palace or temple

1:1 *Elkanah.* Elkanah was a Levite (1 Chr. 6:26) who lived in a village about five miles north of Jerusalem. He is referred to as an Ephraimite because he lived in the territory of Ephraim.

1:3 *LORD of hosts.* The term "LORD of hosts" refers to God as the One who commands the angelic armies of heaven (1 Kin. 22:19; Rev. 19:14) and the armies of Israel (17:45). ***Shiloh.*** Shiloh, located twenty miles north of Jerusalem, was the religious center for the nation at this time and the location of the tabernacle (Josh. 18:1).

1:9 *Eli.* Eli, Israel's high priest and judge, was from the family of Ithamar, Aaron's fourth son (1 Chr. 24:1–3). The last high priest mentioned before him was Phinehas, the son of Eleazar (Judg. 20:28). It is not known why or how the office of high priest passed from the house of Eleazar to that of Ithamar.

1:11 *vow.* Hannah vowed that the child she would bear would be a servant to the Lord all of his life. Can a parent really make a vow that the child will carry

1:1 [a] Josh. 17:17, 18; 24:33 [b] 1 Chr. 6:27, 33–38 [c] Ruth 1:2 **1:2** [d] Deut. 21:15–17 **1:3** [e] Luke 2:41 [f] Deut. 12:5–7; 16:16 [g] Josh. 18:1 **1:4** [h] Deut. 12:17, 18 **1:5** [i] Gen. 16:1; 30:1, 2 **1:6** [j] Job 24:21 **1:8** [k] Ruth 4:15 **1:9** [l] 1 Sam. 3:3 **1:10** [m] Job 7:11 **1:11** [n] Num. 30:6–11 [o] Ps. 25:18 [p] Gen. 8:1

but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and [q]no razor shall come upon his head."

12And it happened, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli watched her mouth. 13Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. 14So Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!"

15But Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I *am* a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have [r]poured out my soul before the LORD. 16Do not consider your maidservant a [s]wicked woman,* for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now."

17Then Eli answered and said, [t]"Go in peace, and [u]the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him."

18And she said, [v]"Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." So the woman [w]went her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*.

Samuel Is Born and Dedicated

19Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah [x]knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD [y]remembered her. 20So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel,* *saying*, "Because I have asked for him from the LORD."

21Now the man Elkanah and all his house [z]went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. 22But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "*Not* until the child is weaned; then I will [a]take him, that he may appear before the LORD and [b]remain there [c]forever."

23So [d]Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD establish His* word." Then the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

24Now when she had weaned him, she [e]took him up with her, with three bulls,* one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to [f]the house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child *was* young. 25Then they slaughtered a bull, and [g]brought the child to Eli. 26And she said, "O my lord! [h]As your soul lives, my lord, I *am* the woman who stood by you here, praying to the LORD. 27[i]For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him. 28Therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the LORD." So they [j]worshiped the LORD there.

Hannah's Prayer

2 And Hannah [a]prayed and said:

[b]"My heart rejoices in the LORD;
[c]My horn* is exalted in the LORD.

* **1:16** Literally *daughter of Belial* * **1:20** Literally *Heard by God* * **1:23** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, and Syriac read *your.* * **1:24** Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, and Syriac read *a three-year-old bull.* * **2:1** That is, strength

out? Hannah surely both taught Samuel and prayed for him, but it was Samuel who said "yes" to the Lord and to the promise his mother had made. Every single relationship with the Lord is between that individual and the Lord. No one is a follower of God just because his parents are. But there is much that parents can do to encourage and teach their children about loving and serving the Lord, and a heartfelt enthusiastic example is the very best incentive that a parent can provide. ***no razor shall come upon his head.*** The Nazirite vow involved a designated period of time (usually a few weeks or months) during which there was a commitment to refrain completely from wine, from cutting the hair, and touching any dead body. Hannah promised that her son would be a Nazirite for life.

1:17 Petition—The Lord went to great lengths to ensure that Scripture records all the instances in which God heard and answered prayer; unlike the gods of Israel's surrounding nations. In the contest on Mount Carmel, Elijah's prayers were answered while the prayers of the prophets of Baal went nowhere (1 Kin. 18). The psalmist says "But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer (Ps. 66:19).

Petitions are requests that we pray by faith (James 1:6), in the name of Jesus (John 14:13). If we pray in this manner, we are assured that God hears us (1 John 5:14–15). We should pray for cleansing (1 John 1:9), wisdom (James 1:5), spiritual leaders (Col. 4:3), sick believers (James 5:14), rulers (1 Tim. 2:1–3), and even for our enemies (Matt. 5:44).

1:22 *until the child is weaned.* Hebrew children were normally weaned when they were two or three years old.

1:23 *Do what seems best to you.* According to law, Elkanah could have declared Hannah's vow a rash promise and prohibited her from fulfilling it (Num. 30:10–15). When he told her to "do what seems best to you" he was validating her promise to God.

2:1–10 Prayer—Hannah's prayer is one of praise to God. We often think of prayer as supplication or intercession, but this is a prayer of rejoicing in the Lord, His salvation, His power to raise up and to shatter,

1:11 [q] Num. 6:5 **1:15** [r] Ps. 42:4; 62:8 **1:16** [s] Deut. 13:13 **1:17** [t] Mark 5:34 [u] Ps. 20:3–5 **1:18** [v] Ruth 2:13 [w] Rom. 15:13 **1:19** [x] Gen. 4:1 [y] Gen. 21:1; 30:22 **1:21** [z] 1 Sam. 1:3 **1:22** [a] Luke 2:22 [b] 1 Sam. 1:11, 28 [c] Ex. 21:6 **1:23** [d] Num. 30:7, 10, 11 **1:24** [e] Num. 15:9, 10 [f] Josh. 18:1 **1:25** [g] Luke 2:22 **1:26** [h] 2 Kin. 2:2, 4, 6; 4:30 **1:27** [i] [Matt. 7:7] **1:28** [j] Gen. 24:26, 52 **2:1** [a] Phil. 4:6 [b] Luke 1:46–55 [c] Ps. 75:10; 89:17, 24; 92:10; 112:9

I smile at my enemies,
Because I [d]rejoice in Your salvation.

2 "No[e] one is holy like the LORD,
For *there is* [f]none besides You,
Nor *is there* any [g]rock like our God.

3 "Talk no more so very proudly;
[h]Let no arrogance come from your mouth,
For the LORD *is* the God of [i]knowledge;
And by Him actions are weighed.

4 "The[j] bows of the mighty men *are* broken,
And those who stumbled are girded with strength.

5 *Those who were* full have hired themselves out for bread,
And the hungry have ceased *to hunger.*
Even [k]the barren has borne seven,
And [l]she who has many children has become feeble.

6 "The[m] LORD kills and makes alive;
He brings down to the grave and brings up.

7 The LORD [n]makes poor and makes rich;
[o]He brings low and lifts up.

8 [p]He raises the poor from the dust
And lifts the beggar from the ash heap,
[q]To set *them* among princes
And make them inherit the throne of glory.

[r]"For the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's,
And He has set the world upon them.

9 [s]He will guard the feet of His saints,
But the [t]wicked shall be silent in darkness.

"For by strength no man shall prevail.

10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be [u]broken in pieces;
[v]From heaven He will thunder against them.
[w]The LORD will judge the ends of the earth.

[x]"He will give [y]strength to His king,
And [z]exalt the horn of His anointed."

11 Then Elkanah went to his house at Ramah. But the child ministered to the LORD before Eli the priest.

The Wicked Sons of Eli

12 Now the sons of Eli *were* [a]corrupt;*
[b]they did not know the LORD. 13 And the priests' custom with the people *was that* when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fleshhook in his hand while the meat was boiling. 14 Then he would thrust *it* into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; and the priest would take for himself all that the fleshhook brought up. So they did in [c]Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. 15 Also, before they [d]burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who sacrificed, "Give meat for roasting to the priest, for he will not take boiled meat from you, but raw."

16 And *if* the man said to him, "They should really burn the fat first; *then* you may take *as much* as your heart desires," he would then answer him, "*No,* but you must give *it* now; and if not, I will take *it* by force."

17 Therefore the sin of the young men was very great [e]before the LORD, for men [f]abhorred the offering of the LORD.

Samuel's Childhood Ministry

18 [g]But Samuel ministered before the LORD, *even as* a child, [h]wearing a linen ephod. 19 Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring *it* to him year by year when she [i]came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli [j]would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "The LORD give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was [k]given to the LORD." Then they would go to their own home.

21 And the LORD [l]visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel [m]grew before the LORD.

Prophecy Against Eli's Household

22 Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel,* and how they lay with [n]the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 23 So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings

* **2:12** Literally *sons of Belial* * **2:22** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint omit the rest of this verse.

His justice, and His strength. To pray like this requires focusing on who God is, thoughtful recollection of His attributes, and thanksgiving for His work in our lives.

2:13–15 ***take for himself.*** The priests' rightful share of a sacrifice was the breast and the right thigh of the animal (Lev. 7:34). Eli's sons sinned by taking any part they wanted and demanding the meat immediately, before the fat consecrated to God had been burned on the altar.

2:1 [d] Ps. 9:14; 13:5; 35:9 **2:2** [e] Ex. 15:11 [f] Deut. 4:35 [g] Deut. 32:4, 30, 31 **2:3** [h] Ps. 94:4 [i] 1 Sam. 16:7 **2:4** [j] Ps. 37:15; 46:9 **2:5** [k] Ps. 113:9 [l] Is. 54:1 **2:6** [m] Deut. 32:39 **2:7** [n] Deut. 8:17, 18 [o] Ps. 75:7 **2:8** [p] Luke 1:52 [q] Job 36:7 [r] Job 38:4–6 **2:9** [s] [1 Pet. 1:5] [t] [Rom. 3:19] **2:10** [u] Ps. 2:9 [v] Ps. 18:13, 14 [w] Ps. 96:13; 98:9 [x] [Matt. 28:18] [y] Ps. 21:1, 7 [z] Ps. 89:24 **2:12** [a] Deut. 13:13 [b] Judg. 2:10 **2:14** [c] 1 Sam. 1:3 **2:15** [d] Lev. 3:3–5, 16 **2:17** [e] Gen. 6:11 [f] [Mal. 2:7–9] **2:18** [g] 1 Sam. 2:11; 3:1 [h] Ex. 28:4 **2:19** [i] 1 Sam. 1:3, 21 **2:20** [j] Gen. 14:19 [k] 1 Sam. 1:11, 27, 28 **2:21** [l] Gen. 21:1 [m] 1 Sam. 2:26; 3:19–21 **2:22** [n] Ex. 38:8

from all the people. 24No, my sons! For *it is* not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD's people transgress. 25If one man sins against another, [o]God will judge him. But if a man [p]sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, [q]because the LORD desired to kill them.

26And the child Samuel [r]grew in stature, and [s]in favor both with the LORD and men.

27Then a [t]man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: [u]'Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? 28Did I not [v]choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And [w]did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire? 29Why do you [x]kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded *in My* [y]dwelling place, and honor your sons more than [z]Me, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?' 30Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: [a]'I said indeed *that* your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the LORD says: [b]'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and [c]those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. 31Behold, [d]the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. 32And you will see an enemy *in My* dwelling place, *despite* all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be [e]an old man in your house forever. 33But any of your men *whom* I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age. 34Now this *shall be* [f]a sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: [g]in one day they shall die, both of them. 35Then [h]I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest *who* shall do according to what *is* in My heart and in My mind. [i]I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before [j]My anointed forever. 36[k]And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left in your house will come *and* bow down to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and say, "Please, put me in one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a piece of bread."'"

Samuel's First Prophecy

3 Now [a]the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And [b]the word of the LORD was rare in those days; *there was* no widespread revelation. 2And it came to pass at that time, while Eli *was* lying down in his place, and when his eyes had begun to grow [c]so dim that he could not see, 3and before [d]the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle* of the LORD where the ark of God *was*, and while Samuel was lying down, 4that the LORD called Samuel. And he answered, "Here I am!" 5So he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me."

And he said, "I did not call; lie down again." And he went and lay down.

6Then the LORD called yet again, "Samuel!"

So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He answered, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." 7(Now Samuel [e]did not yet know the LORD, nor was the word of the LORD yet revealed to him.)

8And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. So he arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you did call me."

Then Eli perceived that the LORD had called the boy. 9Therefore Eli said to

* **3:3** Hebrew *heykal*, palace or temple

2:30 Godlessness—Whenever a priesthood or church or nation falls into apostasy, the people who should have been served suffer. Eli failed his people far more than his disgraceful sons did, because the Israelites trusted Eli's integrity and his discernment. He should have restrained his sons, and he did not. The price of disobedience is always high, and the spiritual cost to a community that has lost trust in one whom they thought was close to God is greater than most people are willing to calculate.

2:31–34 *will not be an old man in your house.* The judgment was partially fulfilled in the massacre of the priests of Nob (22:11–19), and was ultimately fulfilled when the priesthood was transferred to the family of Zadok in the time of Solomon (1 Kin. 2:26–27,35).

2:35 *faithful priest.* This term refers to Zadok, who was faithful to God and to the line of David (1 Kin. 1:7–8; 2:26–27,35).

3:1–19 Listening for God's Call—Samuel heard God's call in an audible voice. That experience is not a common one in the history of those who follow after God. While most of us get a sense of a call by some other means, Samuel's experience does help us to understand what our attitude and response should be.

Samuel's attitude was one of readiness and eager response with a desire to listen. It is that attitude of listening that was foundational to Samuel's whole life and ministry. Throughout his life we see him listening to God's word and following God's direction. He listened for the general will of God and also had an ear for the more specific directions that God gave him. Sometimes he raised questions about why he was doing a particular thing, but the word from God was paramount. He listened for it and responded to it.

2:25 [o] Deut. 1:17; 25:1, 2 [p] Num. 15:30 [q] Josh. 11:20 **2:26** [r] 1 Sam. 2:21 [s] Prov. 3:4 **2:27** [t] 1 Kin. 13:1 [u] Ex. 4:14–16; 12:1 **2:28** [v] Ex. 28:1, 4 [w] Num. 5:9 **2:29** [x] Deut. 32:15 [y] Deut. 12:5 [z] Matt. 10:37 **2:30** [a] Ex. 29:9 [b] Jer. 18:9, 10 [c] Mal. 2:9–12 **2:31** [d] 1 Kin. 2:27, 35 **2:32** [e] Zech. 8:4 **2:34** [f] 1 Kin. 13:3 [g] 1 Sam. 4:11, 17 **2:35** [h] 1 Kin. 2:35 [i] 1 Kin. 11:38 [j] Ps. 18:50 **2:36** [k] 1 Kin. 2:27 **3:1** [a] 1 Sam. 2:11, 18 [b] Ps. 74:9 **3:2** [c] 1 Sam. 4:15 **3:3** [d] Ex. 27:20, 21 **3:7** [e] 1 Sam. 2:12

Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, *f*'Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"

And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."

11Then the LORD said to Samuel: "Behold, I will do something in Israel *g*at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12In that day I will perform against Eli *h*all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13*i*For I have told him that I will *j*judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because *k*his sons made themselves vile, and he *l*did not restrain them. 14And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house *m*shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

15So Samuel lay down until morning,* and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision. 16Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son!"

He answered, "Here I am."

17And he said, "What *is* the word that *the* LORD spoke to you? Please do not hide *it* from me. *n*God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the things that He said to you." 18Then Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him. And he said, *o*"It *is* the LORD. Let Him do what seems good to Him."

19So Samuel *p*grew, and *q*the LORD was with him *r*and let none of his words fall to the ground. 20And all Israel *s*from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel *had been* established as a prophet of the LORD. 21Then the LORD appeared again in Shiloh. For the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by *t*the word of the LORD.

4 And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.*

The Ark of God Captured

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines, and encamped beside *a*Ebenezer; and the Philistines encamped in Aphek. 2Then the *b*Philistines put themselves in battle array against Israel. And when they joined battle, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men of the army in the field. 3And when the people had come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? *c*Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Shiloh to us, that when it comes among us it may save us from the hand of our enemies." 4So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, *d*who dwells *between* *e*the cherubim. And the *f*two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth shook. 6Now when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, "What *does* the sound of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews *mean*?" Then they understood that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp. 7So the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp!" And they said, *g*"Woe to us! For such a thing has never happened before. 8Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These *are* the gods who struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness. 9*h*Be strong and conduct yourselves like men, you Philistines, that you do not become servants of the Hebrews, *i*as they have been to you. Conduct yourselves like men, and fight!"

10So the Philistines fought, and *j*Israel was defeated, and every man fled to his tent. There was a very great slaughter, and there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. 11Also *k*the ark of God was captured; and *l*the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

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* **3:15** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint adds *and he arose in the morning.* * **4:1** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate add *And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight;* Septuagint adds further *against Israel.*

3:14 *shall not be atoned for.* Eli and his sons were guilty of presumptuous sin (Num. 15:30–31). For such sin, there was no atoning sacrifice.

3:20 *from Dan to Beersheba.* This expression denotes the whole territory of Israel, from its most northern point to its most southern (Judg. 20:1).

4:1 *the Philistines.* Abraham and Isaac had contact with the Philistines as early as the twentieth century B.C. With their aggressive invasions and fortress cities, the Philistines established strong political and military control of the southern coastal plain of Palestine. They had iron weapons, and were a significant threat to the Israelites.

4:4 *who dwells between the cherubim.* Cherubim are angels generally regarded as guardians of God's holiness (Gen. 3:24; Ps. 80:1; Ezek. 10:9).

4:6–7 *the ark of the LORD had come into the camp . . . the Philistines were afraid.* Apparently the Philistines viewed the ark as some sort of idol.

4:11 *the ark of God was captured.* The loss of the ark, symbolic of God's presence among His people, was a great tragedy for Israel—even worse than

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3:9 *f* 1 Kin. 2:17 **3:11** *g* 2 Kin. 21:12 **3:12** *h* 1 Sam. 2:27–36 **3:13** *i* 1 Sam. 2:29–31 *j* 1 Sam. 2:22 *k* 1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22 *l* 1 Sam. 2:23, 25 **3:14** *m* Num. 15:30, 31 **3:17** *n* Ruth 1:17 **3:18** *o* Is. 39:8 **3:19** *p* 1 Sam. 2:21 *q* Gen. 21:22; 28:15; 39:2, 21, 23 *r* 1 Sam. 9:6 **3:20** *s* Judg. 20:1 **3:21** *t* 1 Sam. 3:1, 4 **4:1** *a* 1 Sam. 7:12 **4:2** *b* 1 Sam. 12:9 **4:3** *c* Josh. 6:6–21 **4:4** *d* 1 Sam. 6:2 *e* Num. 7:89 *f* 1 Sam. 2:12 **4:7** *g* Ex. 15:14 **4:9** *h* 1 Cor. 16:13 *i* Judg. 13:1 **4:10** *j* Deut. 28:15, 25 **4:11** *k* Ps. 78:60, 61 *l* 1 Sam. 2:34

Death of Eli

12 Then a man of Benjamin ran from
the battle line the same day, and [m]came
to Shiloh with his clothes torn and [n]dirt
on his head. 13 Now when he came, there
was Eli, sitting on [o]a seat by the wayside
watching,* for his heart trembled for the
ark of God. And when the man came into
the city and told *it*, all the city cried out.
14 When Eli heard the noise of the outcry,
he said, "What *does* the sound of this tu-
mult *mean*?" And the man came quickly
and told Eli. 15 Eli was ninety-eight years
old, and [p]his eyes were so dim that he could
not see.

16 Then the man said to Eli, "I *am* he who
came from the battle. And I fled today from
the battle line."

And he said, [q]"What happened, my
son?"

17 So the messenger answered and said,
"Israel has fled before the Philistines, and
there has been a great slaughter among the
people. Also your two sons, Hophni and
Phinehas, are dead; and the ark of God has
been captured."

18 Then it happened, when he made men-
tion of the ark of God, that Eli fell off the
seat backward by the side of the gate; and
his neck was broken and he died, for the
man was old and heavy. And he had judged
Israel forty years.

Ichabod

19 Now his daughter-in-law, Phinehas'
wife, was with child, *due* to be delivered;
and when she heard the news that the ark
of God was captured, and that her father-
in-law and her husband were dead, she
bowed herself and gave birth, for her la-
bor pains came upon her. 20 And about the
time of her death [r]the women who stood
by her said to her, "Do not fear, for you
have borne a son." But she did not answer,
nor did she regard *it*. 21 Then she named
the child [s]Ichabod,* saying, [t]"The glory
has departed from Israel!" because the ark
of God had been captured and because of
her father-in-law and her husband. 22 And
she said, "The glory has departed from
Israel, for the ark of God has been cap-
tured."

The Philistines and the Ark

5 Then the Philistines took the ark of
God and brought it [a]from Ebenezer to
Ashdod. 2 When the Philistines took the
ark of God, they brought it into the house
of [b]Dagon* and set it by Dagon. 3 And
when the people of Ashdod arose early
in the morning, there was Dagon, [c]fallen
on its face to the earth before the ark of
the LORD. So they took Dagon and [d]set it
in its place again. 4 And when they arose
early the next morning, there was Dagon,
fallen on its face to the ground before the
ark of the LORD. [e]The head of Dagon and
both the palms of its hands *were* broken
off on the threshold; only Dagon's *torso**
was left of it. 5 Therefore neither the priests
of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon's
house [f]tread on the threshold of Dagon in
Ashdod to this day.

6 But the [g]hand of the LORD was heavy
on the people of Ashdod, and He [h]ravaged
them and struck them with [i]tumors,* *both*
Ashdod and its [j]territory. 7 And when the
men of Ashdod saw how *it was*, they said,
"The ark of the [k]God of Israel must not re-
main with us, for His hand is harsh toward
us and Dagon our god." 8 Therefore they
sent and gathered to themselves all the
[l]lords of the Philistines, and said, "What
shall we do with the ark of the God of Is-
rael?"

And they answered, "Let the ark of the
God of Israel be carried away to [m]Gath."
So they carried the ark of the God of Is-
rael away. 9 So it was, after they had car-
ried it away, that [n]the hand of the LORD was
against the city with a very great destruc-
tion; and He struck the men of the city, both
small and great, and tumors broke out on
them.

10 Therefore they sent the ark of God to
Ekron. So it was, as the ark of God came to
Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying,

* **4:13** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *beside the gate watching the road.*
* **4:21** Literally *Inglorious* * **5:2** A Philistine idol
* **5:4** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *Dagon.* * **5:6** Probably bubonic plague. Septuagint and Vulgate add here *And in the midst of their land rats sprang up, and there was a great death panic in the city.*

the loss of life. The ark probably never returned to Shiloh.

4:21 ***Ichabod.*** The name Ichabod, meaning "no glory," reflected Israel's circumstances. The loss of the ark meant the absence of God's glory in Israel.

5:2 ***Dagon.*** This god appears to be a Philistine adaptation of the Canaanite god Baal. Philistia was in an important grain producing area, and the worship of Dagon was thought to ensure a good crop.

5:6–7 Idolatry—The residents of Ashdod made one fatal mistake. They tried to place a false god alongside the true God. These ancient Philistines are not the only ones who have tried this sort of idolatry. People are quick to recognize that there is "something" about the living God, and they want Him. But they want to have God with qualifiers—"God and my career track," "God and my dedication to entertainment," "God and my secret sin," "God and my own way." But God will not share the throne of any man's heart. It has to be God, and God alone.

4:12 [m] 2 Sam. 1:2 [n] Josh. 7:6 **4:13** [o] 1 Sam. 1:9; 4:18 **4:15** [p] 1 Sam. 3:2 **4:16** [q] 2 Sam. 1:4 **4:20** [r] Gen. 35:16–19 **4:21** [s] 1 Sam. 14:3 [t] Ps. 26:8; 78:61 **5:1** [a] 1 Sam. 4:1; 7:12 **5:2** [b] 1 Chr. 10:8–10 **5:3** [c] Is. 19:1; 46:1, 2 [d] Is. 46:7 **5:4** [e] Mic. 1:7 **5:5** [f] Zeph. 1:9 **5:6** [g] Ex. 9:3 [h] 1 Sam. 6:5 [i] Deut. 28:27; Ps. 78:66 [j] Josh. 15:46, 47 **5:7** [k] 1 Sam. 6:5 **5:8** [l] 1 Sam. 6:4 [m] Josh. 11:22 **5:9** [n] Deut. 2:15

"They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, to kill us and our people!" 11So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go back to its own place, so that it does not kill us and our people." For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. 12And the men who did not die were stricken with the tumors, and the [o]cry of the city went up to heaven.

The Ark Returned to Israel

6 Now the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. 2And the Philistines [a]called for the priests and the diviners, saying, "What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us how we should send it to its place."

3So they said, "If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it [b]empty; but by all means return *it* to Him *with* [c]a trespass offering. Then you will be healed, and it will be known to you why His hand is not removed from you."

4Then they said, "What *is* the trespass offering which we shall return to Him?"

They answered, [d]"Five golden tumors and five golden rats, *according to* the number of the lords of the Philistines. For the same plague *was* on all of you and on your lords. 5Therefore you shall make images of your tumors and images of your rats that [e]ravage the land, and you shall [f]give glory to the God of Israel; perhaps He will [g]lighten His hand from you, from [h]your gods, and from your land. 6Why then do you harden your hearts [i]as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When He did mighty things among them, [j]did they not let the people go, that they might depart? 7Now therefore, make [k]a new cart, take two milk cows [l]which have never been yoked, and hitch the cows to the cart; and take their calves home, away from them. 8Then take the ark of the LORD and set it on the cart; and put [m]the articles of gold which you are returning to Him *as* a trespass offering in a chest by its side. Then send it away, and let it go. 9And watch: if it goes up the road to its own territory, to [n]Beth Shemesh, *then* He has done us this great evil. But if not, then [o]we shall know that *it is* not His hand *that* struck us—it happened to us by chance."

10Then the men did so; they took two milk cows and hitched them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. 11And they set the ark of the LORD on the cart, and the chest with the gold rats and the images of their tumors. 12Then the cows headed straight for the road to Beth Shemesh, *and* went along the [p]highway, lowing as they went, and did not turn aside to the right hand or the left. And the lords of the Philistines went after them to the border of Beth Shemesh.

13Now *the people of* Beth Shemesh *were* reaping their [q]wheat harvest in the valley; and they lifted their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see *it*. 14Then the cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh, and stood there; a large stone *was* there. So they split the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. 15The Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the chest that *was* with it, in which *were* the articles of gold, and put *them* on the large stone. Then the men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices the same day to the LORD. 16So when [r]the five lords of the Philistines had seen *it*, they returned to Ekron the same day.

17[s]These *are* the golden tumors which the Philistines returned *as* a trespass offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for [t]Gath, one for Ekron; 18and the golden rats, *according to* the number of all the cities of the Philistines *belonging* to the five lords, *both* fortified cities and country villages, even as far as the large *stone of* Abel on which they set the ark of the LORD, *which stone remains* to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh.

19Then [u]He struck the men of Beth Shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD. He [v]struck fifty thousand and seventy men* of the people, and the people lamented because the LORD had struck the people with a great slaughter.

* **6:19** Or *He struck seventy men of the people and fifty oxen of a man*

6:8 ***send it away, and let it go.*** This seemed like a good test to the Philistines. The natural inclination of the cows would be to return home to their calves. If the cows went against their normal instincts, it would show that God was causing them to walk away from their calves.

6:14 ***offered the cows as a burnt offering.*** The law required that sacrifices be offered only at the central sanctuary (Deut. 12:4–14). Apparently the people felt that special circumstances required an immediate offering of thanksgiving.

6:19 Presumption—The Israelites who looked into the ark were glad to have it back. Perhaps they thought that the Philistines had looked inside it, and certainly they had more right than the Philistines to gaze upon the holy objects contained in the ark. Their reasons may have seemed good at the moment, but they were ignoring God's specific commands and treating His holiness as unimportant. In the same way

5:12 [o] Jer. 14:2 **6:2** [a] Gen. 41:8 **6:3** [b] Deut. 16:16 [c] Lev. 5:15, 16 **6:4** [d] 1 Sam. 5:6, 9, 12; 6:17 **6:5** [e] 1 Sam. 5:6 [f] Josh. 7:19 [g] 1 Sam. 5:6, 11 [h] 1 Sam. 5:3, 4, 7 **6:6** [i] Ex. 7:13; 8:15; 9:34; 14:17 [j] Ex. 12:31 **6:7** [k] 2 Sam. 6:3 [l] Num. 19:2 **6:8** [m] 1 Sam. 6:4, 5 **6:9** [n] Josh. 15:10; 21:16 [o] 1 Sam. 6:3 **6:12** [p] Num. 20:19 **6:13** [q] 1 Sam. 12:17 **6:16** [r] Josh. 13:3 **6:17** [s] 1 Sam. 6:4 [t] 1 Sam. 5:8 **6:19** [u] Ex. 19:21 [v] 2 Sam. 6:7

The Ark at Kirjath Jearim

20 And the men of Beth Shemesh said,
[w]"Who is able to stand before this holy
LORD God? And to whom shall it go up from
us?" 21 So they sent messengers to the in-
habitants of [x]Kirjath Jearim, saying, "The
Philistines have brought back the ark of the
LORD; come down *and* take it up with you."
7 Then the men of [a]Kirjath Jearim came
and took the ark of the LORD, and
brought it into the house of [b]Abinadab on
the hill, and [c]consecrated Eleazar his son
to keep the ark of the LORD.

Samuel Judges Israel

2 So it was that the ark remained in Kir-
jath Jearim a long time; it was there twenty
years. And all the house of Israel lamented
after the LORD.

3 Then Samuel spoke to all the house of
Israel, saying, "If you [d]return to the LORD
with all your hearts, *then* [e]put away the
foreign gods and the [f]Ashtoreths* from
among you, and [g]prepare your hearts for
the LORD, and [h]serve Him only; and He
will deliver you from the hand of the Philis-
tines." 4 So the children of Israel put away
the [i]Baals and the Ashtoreths,* and served
the LORD only.

5 And Samuel said, [j]"Gather all Israel to
Mizpah, and [k]I will pray to the LORD for
you." 6 So they gathered together at Miz-
pah, [l]drew water, and poured *it* out before
the LORD. And they [m]fasted that day, and
said there, [n]"We have sinned against the
LORD." And Samuel judged the children of
Israel at Mizpah.

7 Now when the Philistines heard that
the children of Israel had gathered together
at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went
up against Israel. And when the children
of Israel heard *of it*, they were afraid of the
Philistines. 8 So the children of Israel said
to Samuel, [o]"Do not cease to cry out to the
LORD our God for us, that He may save us
from the hand of the Philistines."

9 And Samuel took a [p]suckling lamb and
offered *it as* a whole burnt offering to the
LORD. Then [q]Samuel cried out to the LORD
for Israel, and the LORD answered him.
10 Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt
offering, the Philistines drew near to bat-
tle against Israel. [r]But the LORD thundered
with a loud thunder upon the Philistines
that day, and so confused them that they
were overcome before Israel. 11 And the
men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pur-
sued the Philistines, and drove them back
as far as below Beth Car. 12 Then Samuel
[s]took a stone and set *it* up between Mizpah
and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer,*
saying, "Thus far the LORD has helped us."

13 [t]So the Philistines were subdued, and
they [u]did not come anymore into the ter-
ritory of Israel. And the hand of the LORD
was against the Philistines all the days of
Samuel. 14 Then the cities which the Philis-
tines had taken from Israel were restored
to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel re-
covered its territory from the hands of the
Philistines. Also there was peace between
Israel and the Amorites.

15 And Samuel [v]judged Israel all the days
of his life. 16 He went from year to year on a
circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and
judged Israel in all those places. 17 But [w]he
always returned to Ramah, for his home
was there. There he judged Israel, and
there he [x]built an altar to the LORD.

Israel Demands a King

8 Now it came to pass when Samuel was
[a]old that he [b]made his [c]sons judges over
Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn was Joel,
and the name of his second, Abijah; *they
were* judges in Beersheba. 3 But his sons
[d]did not walk in his ways; they turned
aside [e]after dishonest gain, [f]took bribes,
and perverted justice.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered to-
gether and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and
said to him, "Look, you are old, and your
sons do not walk in your ways. Now [g]make
us a king to judge us like all the nations."

* **7:3** Canaanite goddesses * **7:4** Canaanite god-
desses * **7:12** Literally *Stone of Help*

today, we can end up trivializing who God is. We can speak frivolously of the things of God, calling Him the "Man upstairs," or being "Sunday Christians." We can presume on our relationship with God without remembering what it cost Jesus to obtain it for us.

7:2 *twenty years.* It was probably twenty years before Samuel called the assembly at Mizpah (v. 5). The ark remained at Kirjath Jearim until David brought it to Jerusalem in the first year of his reign over all Israel.

7:6 *poured it out.* The pouring of water was symbolic of repentance (Lam. 2:19).

7:12 *Ebenezer.* The name Ebenezer means "stone of help." Samuel followed Joshua's practice of commemorating the victories of God for His people with stone markers. Some old gospel hymns refer to an "Ebenezer," meaning a particular notation of something special God has done.

7:14 *Amorites.* This name may refer to the original inhabitants of Canaan (Gen. 15:16).

7:17 *Ramah.* Samuel was back in the town where he was born.

8:5 *make us a king.* The reasons given for wanting a king were Samuel's age and his sons' unreliability. This is a sad commentary on Samuel's failure to raise

6:20 [w] Mal. 3:2 **6:21** [x] 1 Chr. 13:5, 6 **7:1** [a] 1 Sam. 6:21 [b] 2 Sam. 6:3, 4 [c] Lev. 21:8 **7:3** [d] Deut. 30:2–10 [e] Gen. 35:2 [f] Judg. 2:13 [g] Job 11:13 [h] Luke 4:8 **7:4** [i] Judg. 2:11; 10:16 **7:5** [j] Judg. 10:17; 20:1 [k] 1 Sam. 12:17–19 **7:6** [l] 2 Sam. 14:14 [m] Neh. 9:1, 2 [n] 1 Sam. 12:10 **7:8** [o] Is. 37:4 **7:9** [p] Lev. 22:27 [q] 1 Sam. 12:18 **7:10** [r] 2 Sam. 22:14, 15 **7:12** [s] Josh. 4:9; 24:26 **7:13** [t] Judg. 13:1 [u] 1 Sam. 13:5 **7:15** [v] 1 Sam. 12:11 **7:17** [w] 1 Sam. 8:4 [x] Judg. 21:4 **8:1** [a] 1 Sam. 12:2 [b] Deut. 16:18, 19 [c] Judg. 10:4 **8:3** [d] Jer. 22:15–17 [e] Ex. 18:21 [f] Ex. 23:6–8 **8:5** [g] Deut. 17:14, 15

6But the thing [h]displeased Samuel when
they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So
Samuel [i]prayed to the LORD. 7And the LORD
said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the peo-
ple in all that they say to you; for [j]they have
not rejected you, but [k]they have rejected
Me, that I should not reign over them. 8Ac-
cording to all the works which they have
done since the day that I brought them up
out of Egypt, even to this day—with which
they have forsaken Me and served other
gods—so they are doing to you also. 9Now
therefore, heed their voice. However, you
shall solemnly forewarn them, and [l]show
them the behavior of the king who will
reign over them."

10So Samuel told all the words of the
LORD to the people who asked him for a
king. 11And he said, [m]"This will be the
behavior of the king who will reign over
you: He will take your [n]sons and appoint
them for his own [o]chariots and *to be* his
horsemen, and *some* will run before his
chariots. 12He will [p]appoint captains over
his thousands and captains over his fifties,
will set some to plow his ground and reap
his harvest, and *some* to make his weapons
of war and equipment for his chariots. 13He
will take your daughters *to be* perfumers,
cooks, and bakers. 14And [q]he will take the
best of your fields, your vineyards, and
your olive groves, and give *them* to his ser-
vants. 15He will take a tenth of your grain
and your vintage, and give it to his officers
and servants. 16And he will take your male
servants, your female servants, your finest
young men,* and your donkeys, and put
them to his work. 17He will take a tenth of
your sheep. And you will be his servants.
18And you will cry out in that day because
of your king whom you have chosen for
yourselves, and the LORD [r]will not hear
you in that day."

19Nevertheless the people [s]refused to
obey the voice of Samuel; and they said,
"No, but we will have a king over us, 20that
we also may be [t]like all the nations, and
that our king may judge us and go out be-
fore us and fight our battles."

21And Samuel heard all the words of
the people, and he repeated them in the
hearing of the LORD. 22So the LORD said to
Samuel, [u]"Heed their voice, and make them
a king."

And Samuel said to the men of Israel,
"Every man go to his city."

Saul Chosen to Be King

9 There was a man of Benjamin whose
name *was* [a]Kish the son of Abiel, the
son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son
of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of
power. 2And he had a choice and handsome
son whose name *was* Saul. *There was* not a
more handsome person than he among the
children of Israel. [b]From his shoulders up-
ward *he was* taller than any of the people.

3Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father,
were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul,
"Please take one of the servants with you,
and arise, go and look for the donkeys."
4So he passed through the mountains of
Ephraim and through the land of [c]Sha-
lisha, but they did not find *them*. Then
they passed through the land of Shaalim,
and *they were* not *there*. Then he passed
through the land of the Benjamites, but
they did not find *them*.

5When they had come to the land of
[d]Zuph, Saul said to his servant who *was*
with him, "Come, let [e]us return, lest my fa-
ther cease *caring* about the donkeys and
become worried about us."

6And he said to him, "Look now, *there is*
in this city [f]a man of God, and *he is* an hon-
orable man; [g]all that he says surely comes
to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can
show us the way that we should go."

7Then Saul said to his servant, "But look,
if we go, [h]what shall we bring the man? For
the bread in our vessels is all gone, and
there is no present to bring to the man of
God. What do we have?"

8And the servant answered Saul again
and said, "Look, I have here at hand one-
fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give *that*
to the man of God, to tell us our way."
9(Formerly in Israel, when a man [i]went to
inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us
go to the seer"; for *he who is* now *called* a
prophet was formerly called [j]a seer.)

10Then Saul said to his servant, "Well

* **8:16** Septuagint reads *cattle*.

his sons to honor and obey the Lord, particularly considering the example of Eli's sons. But this was not really a reason to ask for a king. The Israelite judges had always been appointed by God, rather than gaining their position by inheritance. There was no reason to think that God would not appoint someone to succeed Samuel.

8:7 ***they have rejected Me.*** This actually fulfilled the prophecy in Deuteronomy 17:14–20. God knew long ago that the Israelites would chose to be like the other nations and have a king, instead of being ruled more directly by God through judges. He warned them of the pitfalls of having a king, and set out some guidelines for the kings to follow.

8:20 ***and fight our battles.*** The Israelites were looking for human leadership on the battlefield, instead of recognizing that God would lead them in battle, and win (Ex. 15:3; Judg. 7).

8:6 [h] 1 Sam. 12:17 [i] 1 Sam. 7:9 **8:7** [j] Ex. 16:8 [k] 1 Sam. 10:19 **8:9** [l] 1 Sam. 8:11–18 **8:11** [m] Deut. 17:14–20 [n] 1 Sam. 14:52 [o] 2 Sam. 15:1 **8:12** [p] 1 Sam. 22:7 **8:14** [q] 1 Kin. 21:7 **8:18** [r] Is. 1:15 **8:19** [s] Jer. 44:16 **8:20** [t] 1 Sam. 8:5 **8:22** [u] Hos. 13:11 **9:1** [a] 1 Chr. 8:33; 9:36–39 **9:2** [b] 1 Sam. 10:23 **9:4** [c] 2 Kin. 4:42 **9:5** [d] 1 Sam. 1:1 [e] 1 Sam. 10:2 **9:6** [f] Deut. 33:1 [g] 1 Sam. 3:19 **9:7** [h] Judg. 6:18; 13:17 **9:9** [i] Gen. 25:22 [j] 2 Kin. 17:13

said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God *was.*
11As they went up the hill to the city, [k]they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?"
12And they answered them and said, "Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because [l]there is a sacrifice of the people today [m]on the high place. 13As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him."
14So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.
15[n]Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying,
16"Tomorrow about this time [o]I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, [p]and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have [q]looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me."
17So when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, [r]"There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people." 18Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Please tell me, where *is* the seer's house?"
19Samuel answered Saul and said, "I *am* the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that *is* in your heart. 20But as for [s]your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found. And on whom [t]*is* all the desire of Israel? *Is it* not on you and on all your father's house?"
21And Saul answered and said, [u]"*Am* I not a Benjamite, of the [v]smallest of the tribes of Israel, and [w]my family the least of all the families of the tribe* of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?"
22Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there *were* about thirty persons. 23And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, 'Set it apart.'" 24So the cook took up [x]the thigh with its upper part and set *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, "Here it is, what was kept back. *It* was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people." So Saul ate with Samuel that day.
25When they had come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* spoke with Saul on [y]the top of the house.* 26They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, "Get up, that I may send you on your way." And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel.

Saul Anointed King

27As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." And he went on. "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God."
10 Then [a]Samuel took a flask of oil and poured *it* on his head, [b]and kissed him and said: "*Is it* not because [c]the LORD has anointed you commander over [d]His inheritance?* 2When you have departed from

* **9:21** Literally *tribes* * **9:25** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint omits *He spoke with Saul on the top of the house;* Septuagint and Vulgate add *And he prepared a bed for Saul on the top of the house, and he slept.* * **10:1** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *His people Israel; and you shall rule the people of the Lord;* Septuagint and Vulgate add *And you shall deliver His people from the hands of their enemies all around them. And this shall be a sign to you, that God has anointed you to be a prince.*

9:12 ***the high place.*** A hill that was used for worship was called "a high place." The Canaanites were known for building their places for worship on hills, and the Israelites apparently used similar sites for worship after the ark was taken from the tabernacle at Shiloh. They believed that the presence of the Lord had departed from the tabernacle, and it was apparently at that point that Shiloh ceased to be a gathering center for the nation.
9:20 Providence—God, in His providence, is directing our lives according to His plan and purpose. Hunting for livestock or having a vehicle break down are normal nuisances, something we can handle, but seldom think about as being the providence of God. Yet if we realize that God has His hand on all of our circumstances, everything that changes our plans puts us into a position to meet, pray for, help, or witness to someone else who would not normally come our way.
9:21 ***the smallest of the tribes.*** Benjamin was the second smallest tribe at the first census following the Exodus (Num. 1:36–37). The tribe was reduced to six hundred fighting men during the punishment of Benjamin for the atrocity at Gibeah (Judg. 19–20).
9:24 ***the thigh.*** Giving Saul the thigh was intended to honor him in the presence of the other guests.
10:1 ***the LORD has anointed you.*** The anointing of a ruler was a religious act. That is why David had such high regard for Saul, refusing to lift a hand against "the LORD's anointed." ***His inheritance.*** The land of Israel was God's gift to His people, but it would return

9:11 [k] Ex. 2:16 **9:12** [l] Gen. 31:54 [m] 1 Kin. 3:2 **9:15** [n] 1 Sam. 15:1 **9:16** [o] Deut. 17:15 [p] 1 Sam. 10:1 [q] Ex. 2:23–25; 3:7, 9 **9:17** [r] 1 Sam. 16:12 **9:20** [s] 1 Sam. 9:3 [t] 1 Sam. 8:5, 19; 12:13 **9:21** [u] 1 Sam. 15:17 [v] Judg. 20:46–48 [w] Judg. 6:15 **9:24** [x] Lev. 7:32, 33 **9:25** [y] Deut. 22:8 **10:1** [a] 2 Kin. 9:3, 6 [b] Ps. 2:12 [c] Acts 13:21 [d] Deut. 32:9

me today, you will find two men by [e]Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin [f]at Zelzah; and they will say to you, 'The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And now your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about [g]you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' 3Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up [h]to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. 4And they will greet you and give you two *loaves* of bread, which you shall receive from their hands. 5After that you shall come to the hill of God [i]where the Philistine garrison *is*. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down [j]from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; [k]and they will be prophesying. 6Then [l]the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and [m]you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. 7And let it be, when these [n]signs come to you, *that* you do as the occasion demands; for [o]God *is* with you. 8You shall go down before me [p]to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings *and* make sacrifices of peace offerings. [q]Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do."

9So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day. 10[r]When they came there to the hill, there was [s]a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. 11And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, "What *is* this *that* has come upon the son of Kish? [t]*Is* Saul also among the prophets?" 12Then a man from there answered and said, "But [u]who *is* their father?" Therefore it became a proverb: "*Is* Saul also among the prophets?" 13And when he had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

14Then Saul's [v]uncle said to him and his servant, "Where did you go?"

So he said, "To look for the donkeys. When we saw that *they were* nowhere *to be found*, we went to Samuel."

15And Saul's uncle said, "Tell me, please, what Samuel said to you."

16So Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been [w]found." But about the matter of the kingdom, he did not tell him what Samuel had said.

Saul Proclaimed King

17Then Samuel called the people together [x]to the LORD [y]at Mizpah, 18and said to the children of Israel, [z]"Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians *and* from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.' 19[a]But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, 'No, set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."*

20And when Samuel had [b]caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. 21When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found. 22Therefore they [c]inquired of the LORD further, "Has the man come here yet?"

* **10:19** Literally *thousands*

to God's direct control if the people did not manage it according to God's laws (Deut. 27–30).

10:4 ***two loaves of bread.*** The bread that the strangers would offer to Saul would have been bread prepared for use in the worship of God. Giving the bread to Saul was a sacred act, as well as a sign for Saul.

10:9 ***God gave him another heart.*** God's Spirit prepared Saul for the kingship. It probably was not spiritual regeneration in the way it is understood in New Testament times. Saul wanted to worship God, but he continually struggled with wanting to do things his own way.

10:19 Unfaithfulness—This was not the first time that the Israelites had been unfaithful. Sometimes they could see what God was doing and respond with thanksgiving, and sometimes they seemed to forget everything about Him and go headlong into the very sins He had warned them would bring nothing but disaster. Believers today have the incredible gift of the Holy Spirit to direct them and remind them of the ways of God. It is hard to imagine what it would be like to follow God without the help of the Holy Spirit, the comforter, the helper (John 14:25–26). It is important to remember that for humanity, unfaithfulness is our middle name, and to thank God for His mercy and grace which provided a way for us to belong to Him.

10:20 ***was chosen.*** Even though Samuel already knew that Saul was to be the king, the designation of Saul as Israel's first monarch was made by casting lots. The lots were cast like dice, and God's will was determined by asking yes and no questions. They believed that God controlled all events, including the lots when they were used to seek God.

10:2 [e] Gen. 35:16–20; 48:7 [f] Josh. 18:28 [g] 1 Sam. 9:3–5 **10:3** [h] Gen. 28:22; 35:1, 3, 7 **10:5** [i] 1 Sam. 13:2, 3 [j] 1 Sam. 19:12, 20 [k] 2 Kin. 3:15 **10:6** [l] Num. 11:25, 29 [m] 1 Sam. 10:10; 19:23, 24 **10:7** [n] Ex. 4:8 [o] Judg. 6:12 **10:8** [p] 1 Sam. 11:14, 15; 13:8 [q] 1 Sam. 13:8–10 **10:10** [r] 1 Sam. 10:5 [s] 1 Sam. 19:20 **10:11** [t] Matt. 13:54–57 **10:12** [u] John 5:30, 36 **10:14** [v] 1 Sam. 14:50 **10:16** [w] 1 Sam. 9:20 **10:17** [x] Judg. 20:1 [y] 1 Sam. 7:5, 6 **10:18** [z] Judg. 6:8, 9 **10:19** [a] 1 Sam. 8:7, 19; 12:12 **10:20** [b] Acts 1:24, 26 **10:22** [c] 1 Sam. 23:2, 4, 10, 11

And the LORD answered, "There he is, hidden among the equipment."

23So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, [d]he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. 24And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him [e]whom the LORD has chosen, that *there is* no one like him among all the people?"

So all the people shouted and said, [f]"Long live the king!"

25Then Samuel explained to the people [g]the behavior of royalty, and wrote *it* in a book and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. 26And Saul also went home [h]to Gibeah; and valiant *men* went with him, whose hearts God had touched. 27[i]But some [j]rebels said, "How can this man save us?" So they despised him, [k]and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

Saul Saves Jabesh Gilead

11 Then [a]Nahash the Ammonite came up and encamped against [b]Jabesh Gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, c"Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you."

2And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, "On this *condition* I will make *a covenant* with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and bring [d]reproach on all Israel."

3Then the elders of Jabesh said to him, "Hold off for seven days, that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. And then, if *there is* no one to save us, we will come out to you."

4So the messengers came [e]to Gibeah of Saul and told the news in the hearing of the people. And [f]all the people lifted up their voices and wept. 5Now there was Saul, coming behind the herd from the field; and Saul said, "What *troubles* the people, that they weep?" And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. 6[g]Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and his anger was greatly aroused. 7So he took a yoke of oxen and [h]cut them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, [i]"Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen."

And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. 8When he numbered them in [j]Bezek, the children [k]of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. 9And they said to the messengers who came, "Thus you shall say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: 'Tomorrow, by *the time* the sun is hot, you shall have help.'" Then the messengers came and reported *it* to the men of Jabesh, and they were glad. 10Therefore the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do with us whatever seems good to you."

11So it was, on the next day, that [l]Saul put the people [m]in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. And it happened that those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

12Then the people said to Samuel, [n]"Who *is* he who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' [o]Bring the men, that we may put them to death."

13But Saul said, [p]"Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today [q]the LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel."

14Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go [r]to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there." 15So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king [s]before the LORD in Gilgal. [t]There they made sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

Samuel's Address at Saul's Coronation

12 Now Samuel said to all Israel: "Indeed I have heeded [a]your voice in all that you said to me, and [b]have made a king over you. 2And now here is the king, [c]walking before you; [d]and I am old and grayheaded, and look, my sons *are* with you. I have walked before you from my childhood to this day. 3Here I am. Witness against me

10:24 ***whom the LORD has chosen.*** Long ago, before they crossed the Jordan, the Lord had told Moses that the Israelites would want a king. At that time the Lord laid out guidelines for the king, and one of them was that the king must be an Israelite chosen by the Lord (Deut. 17:14–20).

11:1 ***Ammonite.*** The Ammonites, who were descendants of Lot, occupied the fringes of the desert east of the territories of Gad and Manasseh.

11:5 ***from the field.*** Saul had been appointed king, but he did not assume governmental authority at once. He continued farming until he could answer Israel's expectations of him by delivering them from their enemies. This pattern was more in the style of the judges of Israel.

11:11 ***morning watch.*** The Israelites divided the night into three watches: nine to twelve, twelve to three, and three to six in the morning.

10:23 [d] 1 Sam. 9:2 **10:24** [e] 2 Sam. 21:6 [f] 1 Kin. 1:25, 39 **10:25** [g] 1 Sam. 8:11–18 **10:26** [h] Judg. 20:14 **10:27** [i] 1 Sam. 11:12 [j] Deut. 13:13 [k] 1 Kin. 4:21; 10:25 **11:1** [a] 1 Sam. 12:12 [b] Judg. 21:8 [c] Gen. 26:28 **11:2** [d] Gen. 34:14 **11:4** [e] 1 Sam. 10:26; 15:34 [f] Judg. 2:4; 20:23, 26; 21:2 **11:6** [g] Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6 **11:7** [h] Judg. 19:29 [i] Judg. 21:5, 8, 10 **11:8** [j] Judg. 1:5 [k] 2 Sam. 24:9 **11:11** [l] 1 Sam. 31:11 [m] Judg. 7:16, 20 **11:12** [n] 1 Sam. 10:27 [o] Luke 19:27 **11:13** [p] 2 Sam. 19:22 [q] Ex. 14:13, 30 **11:14** [r] 1 Sam. 7:16; 10:8 **11:15** [s] 1 Sam. 10:17 [t] 1 Sam. 10:8 **12:1** [a] 1 Sam. 8:5, 7, 9, 20, 22 [b] 1 Sam. 10:24; 11:14, 15 **12:2** [c] Num. 27:17 [d] 1 Sam. 8:1, 5

before the LORD and before [e]His anointed:
[f]Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey
have I taken, or whom have I cheated?
Whom have I oppressed, or from whose
hand have I received *any* [g]bribe with which
to [h]blind my eyes? I will restore *it* to you."

4And they said, [i]"You have not cheated
us or oppressed us, nor have you taken
anything from any man's hand."

5Then he said to them, "The LORD *is*
witness against you, and His anointed *is*
witness this day, [j]that you have not found
anything [k]in my hand."

And they answered, "*He is* witness."

6Then Samuel said to the people, [l]"*It is*
the LORD who raised up Moses and Aaron,
and who brought your fathers up from the
land of Egypt. 7Now therefore, stand still,
that I may [m]reason with you before the
LORD concerning all the [n]righteous acts of
the LORD which He did to you and your fa-
thers: 8[o]When Jacob had gone into Egypt,*
and your fathers [p]cried out to the LORD,
then the LORD [q]sent Moses and Aaron,
who brought your fathers out of Egypt and
made them dwell in this place. 9And when
they [r]forgot the LORD their God, He sold
them into the hand of [s]Sisera, commander
of the army of Hazor, into the hand of the
[t]Philistines, and into the hand of the king
of [u]Moab; and they fought against them.
10Then they cried out to the LORD, and
said, [v]'We have sinned, because we have
forsaken the LORD [w]and served the Baals
and Ashtoreths;* but now deliver us from
the hand of our enemies, and we will serve
You.' 11And the LORD sent Jerubbaal,* Be-
dan,* [x]Jephthah, and [y]Samuel,* and deliv-
ered you out of the hand of your enemies on
every side; and you dwelt in safety. 12And
when you saw that [z]Nahash king of the
Ammonites came against you, [a]you said
to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,'
when [b]the LORD your God *was* your king.

13"Now therefore, [c]here is the king
[d]whom you have chosen *and* whom you
have desired. And take note, [e]the LORD has
set a king over you. 14If you [f]fear the LORD
and serve Him and obey His voice, and
do not rebel against the commandment of
the LORD, then both you and the king who
reigns over you will continue following
the LORD your God. 15However, if you do
[g]not obey the voice of the LORD, but [h]re-
bel against the commandment of the LORD,
then the hand of the LORD will be against
you, as *it was* against your fathers.

16"Now therefore, [i]stand and see this
great thing which the LORD will do be-
fore your eyes: 17*Is* today not the [j]wheat
harvest? [k]I will call to the LORD, and He
will send thunder and [l]rain, that you may
perceive and see that [m]your wickedness *is*
great, which you have done in the sight of
the LORD, in asking a king for yourselves."

18So Samuel called to the LORD, and the
LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and
[n]all the people greatly feared the LORD and
Samuel.

19And all the people said to Samuel,
[o]"Pray for your servants to the LORD your
God, that we may not die; for we have add-
ed to all our sins the evil of asking a king
for ourselves."

20Then Samuel said to the people, "Do
not fear. You have done all this wicked-
ness; [p]yet do not turn aside from following
the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your
heart. 21And [q]do not turn aside; [r]for *then*
you would go after empty things which
cannot profit or deliver, for they *are* noth-
ing. 22For [s]the LORD will not forsake [t]His
people, [u]for His great name's sake, because
[v]it has pleased the LORD to make you His
people. 23Moreover, as for me, far be it from
me that I should sin against the LORD [w]in
ceasing to pray for you; but [x]I will teach
you the [y]good and the right way. 24[z]Only
fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with

* **12:8** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint adds *and the Egyptians afflicted them.* * **12:10** Canaanite goddesses * **12:11** Syriac reads *Deborah;* Targum reads *Gideon.* • Septuagint and Syriac read *Barak;* Targum reads *Simson.* • Syriac reads *Simson.*

12:9 *they forgot the LORD their God.* Samuel recounted the nation's apostasy and subsequent divine discipline. Israel was having problems because they had stopped obeying God. It was not because either God or Samuel was inadequate.

12:17 *wheat harvest.* The season for harvesting wheat in Israel is the months of May and June. ***thunder and rain.*** The land of Israel receives its rainfall during the winter season. For rain to fall during the wheat harvest would be both unusual and detrimental to the harvest.

12:22 *His people.* God's desire to raise up a people for His great name's sake is not based on pride, but on love. He is pleased to show His goodness to the world, and He is willing to reach out to us in spite of our rebellion and foolishness. The whole history of the human race is littered with mankind's failure to acknowledge and follow the living God who created us. But even if we are faithless, God will remain faithful (2 Tim. 2:13), and that is our great comfort. We cannot even be faithful without His help, but "if God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

12:3 [e] 1 Sam. 10:1; 24:6 [f] Num. 16:15 [g] Ex. 23:8 [h] Deut. 16:19 **12:4** [i] Lev. 19:13 **12:5** [j] Acts 23:9; 24:20 [k] Ex. 22:4 **12:6** [l] Mic. 6:4 **12:7** [m] Is. 1:18 [n] Judg. 5:11 **12:8** [o] Gen. 46:5, 6 [p] Ex. 2:23–25 [q] Ex. 3:10; 4:14–16 **12:9** [r] Judg. 3:7 [s] Judg. 4:2 [t] Judg. 3:31; 10:7; 13:1 [u] Judg. 3:12–30 **12:10** [v] Judg. 10:10 [w] Judg. 2:13; 3:7 **12:11** [x] Judg. 11:1 [y] 1 Sam. 7:13 **12:12** [z] 1 Sam. 11:1, 2 [a] 1 Sam. 8:5, 19, 20 [b] Judg. 8:23 **12:13** [c] 1 Sam. 10:24 [d] 1 Sam. 8:5; 12:17, 19 [e] Hos. 13:11 **12:14** [f] Josh. 24:14 **12:15** [g] Deut. 28:15 [h] Is. 1:20 **12:16** [i] Ex. 14:13, 31 **12:17** [j] Gen. 30:14 [k] [James 5:16–18] [l] Ezra 10:9 [m] 1 Sam. 8:7 **12:18** [n] Ex. 14:31 **12:19** [o] Ex. 9:28 **12:20** [p] Deut. 11:16 **12:21** [q] 2 Chr. 25:15 [r] Is. 41:29 **12:22** [s] Deut. 31:6 [t] Is. 43:21 [u] Jer. 14:21 [v] Deut. 7:6–11 **12:23** [w] Rom. 1:9 [x] Ps. 34:11 [y] 1 Kin. 8:36 **12:24** [z] Eccl. 12:13

all your heart; for [a]consider what [b]great things He has done for you. 25But if you still do wickedly, [c]you shall be swept away, [d]both you and your king."

Saul's Unlawful Sacrifice

13 Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,* 2Saul chose for himself three thousand *men* of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in [a]Michmash and in the mountains of Bethel, and a thousand were with [b]Jonathan in [c]Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent.

3And Jonathan attacked [d]the garrison of the Philistines that *was* in [e]Geba, and the Philistines heard *of it*. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!" 4Now all Israel heard it said *that* Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and *that* Israel had also become an abomination to the Philistines. And the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal.

5Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel, thirty* thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people [f]as the sand which *is* on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of [g]Beth Aven. 6When the men of Israel saw that they were in danger (for the people were distressed), then the people [h]hid in caves, in thickets, in rocks, in holes, and in pits. 7And *some of* the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the [i]land of Gad and Gilead.

As for Saul, he *was* still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. 8[j]Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. 9So Saul said, "Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me." And he offered the burnt offering. 10Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might greet him.

11And Samuel said, "What have you done?"

Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* you did not come within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, 12then I said, 'The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the LORD.' Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering."

13And Samuel said to Saul, [k]"You have done foolishly. [l]You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14[m]But now your kingdom shall not continue. [n]The LORD has sought for Himself a man [o]after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him *to be* commander over His people, because you have [p]not kept what the LORD commanded you."

15Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.* And Saul numbered the people present with him, [q]about six hundred men.

No Weapons for the Army

16Saul, Jonathan his son, and the people present with them remained in Gibeah of Benjamin. But the Philistines encamped in Michmash. 17Then raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned onto the road to [r]Ophrah, to the land of Shual, 18another company turned to the road *to* [s]Beth Horon, and another company turned *to* the road of the border that overlooks the Valley of [t]Zeboim toward the wilderness.

19Now [u]there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears." 20But all the Israelites would go down to the Philistines to sharpen each man's plowshare, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle; 21and the charge for a sharpening was a pim* for the

* **13:1** The Hebrew is difficult (compare 2 Samuel 5:4; 2 Kings 14:2; see also 2 Samuel 2:10; Acts 13:21). * **13:5** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate; Syriac and some manuscripts of the Septuagint read *three*. * **13:15** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate add *And the rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the people who fought against them, going from Gilgal to Gibeah in the hill of Benjamin.* * **13:21** About two-thirds shekel weight

13:8–9 Presumption—We will never know what would have happened if Saul had waited for Samuel. Whenever we assume we "know better" and take action on our own authority, we cannot know what would have happened if we had followed God's way. Some of the snarls that are the result of stubborn rebellion are often too difficult for us to set right. This is why we must pay such careful attention not only to the direct commandments in the Bible, but to the spirit behind them.

13:19 *no blacksmith.* The Canaanites and Philistines learned how to forge iron from the Hittites. Although they were not great in numerical strength, the Philistines were able to dominate Israel because of their superior weaponry. By the end of David's reign, the Israelites had also acquired iron technology.

12:24 [a] Is. 5:12 [b] Deut. 10:21 **12:25** [c] Josh. 24:20 [d] Deut. 28:36 **13:2** [a] 1 Sam. 14:5, 31 [b] 1 Sam. 14:1 [c] 1 Sam. 10:26 **13:3** [d] 1 Sam. 10:5 [e] 2 Sam. 5:25 **13:5** [f] Judg. 7:12 [g] Josh. 7:2 **13:6** [h] Judg. 6:2 **13:7** [i] Num. 32:1–42 **13:8** [j] 1 Sam. 10:8 **13:13** [k] 2 Chr. 16:9 [l] 1 Sam. 15:11, 22, 28 **13:14** [m] 1 Sam. 15:28; 31:6 [n] 1 Sam. 16:1 [o] Acts 7:46; 13:22 [p] 1 Sam. 15:11, 19 **13:15** [q] 1 Sam. 13:2, 6, 7; 14:2 **13:17** [r] Josh. 18:23 **13:18** [s] Josh. 16:3; 18:13, 14 [t] Neh. 11:34 **13:19** [u] Judg. 5:8

plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to set the points of the goads.
22So it came about, on the day of battle, that [v]there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who *were* with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son.
23[w]And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

Jonathan Defeats the Philistines

14 Now it happened one day that Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who bore his armor, "Come, let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that *is* on the other side." But he did not tell his father.
2And Saul was sitting in the outskirts of [a]Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which *is* in Migron. The people who *were* with him *were* about six hundred men. 3[b]Ahijah the son of Ahitub, [c]Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD's priest in Shiloh, was [d]wearing an ephod. But the people did not know that Jonathan had gone.
4Between the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over [e]to the Philistines' garrison, *there was* a sharp rock on one side and a sharp rock on the other side. And the name of one *was* Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. 5The front of one faced northward opposite Michmash, and the other southward opposite Gibeah.
6Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these [f]uncircumcised; it may be that the LORD will work for us. For nothing restrains the LORD [g]from saving by many or by few."
7So his armorbearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart. Go then; here I am with you, according to your heart."
8Then Jonathan said, "Very well, let us cross over to *these* men, and we will show ourselves to them. 9If they say thus to us, 'Wait until we come to you,' then we will stand still in our place and not go up to them. 10But if they say thus, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up. For the LORD has delivered them into our hand, and [h]this *will be* a sign to us."
11So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have [i]hidden." 12Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something."
Jonathan said to his armorbearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has delivered them into the hand of Israel." 13And Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees with his armorbearer after him; and they [j]fell before Jonathan. And as he came after him, his armorbearer killed them.
14That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armorbearer made was about twenty men within about half an acre of land.*
15And [k]there was trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and [l]the raiders also trembled; and the earth quaked, so that it was [m]a very great trembling. 16Now the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and *there* was the multitude, melting away; and they [n]went here and there. 17Then Saul said to the people who *were* with him, "Now call the roll and see who has gone from us." And when they had called the roll, surprisingly, Jonathan and his armorbearer *were* not *there*. 18And Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark* of God here" (for at that time the ark* of God was with the children of Israel). 19Now it happened, while Saul [o]talked to the priest, that the noise which *was* in the camp of the Philistines continued to increase; so Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." 20Then Saul and all the people who *were* with him assembled, and they went to the battle; and indeed [p]every man's sword was against his neighbor, *and there was* very great confusion. 21Moreover the Hebrews *who* were with the Philistines before that time, who went up with them into the camp *from the* surrounding *country,* they also joined the Israelites who *were* with Saul and Jonathan. 22Likewise all the men of Israel who [q]had hidden in the mountains of Ephraim, *when* they heard that the Philistines fled, they also followed hard after them in the battle. 23[r]So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle shifted [s]to Beth Aven.

Saul's Rash Oath

24And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had [t]placed the people under oath, saying, "Cursed *is* the man

* **14:14** Literally *half the area plowed by a yoke* (of oxen in a day) * **14:18** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *ephod.* • Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *ephod.*

13:22 ***neither sword nor spear.*** The weapons available to the Israelite soldiers would have included slings, bows and arrows, and numerous instruments made of bronze.
14:14 ***half an acre of land.*** This can also be translated "half a yoke of land." A yoke of land was the area a pair of oxen could plow in one day.
14:24 ***had placed the people under oath.*** This was not only an oath, but an oath with a curse. Yet food

13:22 [v] Judg. 5:8 **13:23** [w] 1 Sam. 14:1, 4 **14:2** [a] 1 Sam. 13:15, 16 **14:3** [b] 1 Sam. 22:9, 11, 20 [c] 1 Sam. 4:21 [d] 1 Sam. 2:28 **14:4** [e] 1 Sam. 13:23 **14:6** [f] 1 Sam. 17:26, 36 [g] Judg. 7:4, 7 **14:10** [h] Gen. 24:14 **14:11** [i] 1 Sam. 13:6; 14:22 **14:13** [j] Lev. 26:8 **14:15** [k] Job 18:11 [l] 1 Sam. 13:17 [m] Gen. 35:5 **14:16** [n] 1 Sam. 14:20 **14:19** [o] Num. 27:21 **14:20** [p] Judg. 7:22 **14:22** [q] 1 Sam. 13:6 **14:23** [r] Ex. 14:30 [s] 1 Sam. 13:5 **14:24** [t] Josh. 6:26

who eats *any* food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies." So none of the people tasted food. 25[u]Now all *the people* of the land came to a forest; and there was [v]honey on the ground. 26And when the people had come into the woods, there was the honey, dripping; but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. 27But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath; therefore he stretched out the end of the rod that *was* in his hand and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his countenance brightened. 28Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed *is* the man who eats food this day.'" And the people were faint.

29But Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. Look now, how my countenance has brightened because I tasted a little of this honey. 30How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found! For now would there not have been a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?"

31Now they had driven back the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. So the people were very faint. 32And the people rushed on the spoil, and took sheep, oxen, and calves, and slaughtered *them* on the ground; and the people ate *them* [w]with the blood. 33Then they told Saul, saying, "Look, the people are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood!"

So he said, "You have dealt treacherously; roll a large stone to me this day." 34Then Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people, and say to them, 'Bring me here every man's ox and every man's sheep, slaughter *them* here, and eat; and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.'" So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night, and slaughtered *it* there. 35Then Saul [x]built an altar to the LORD. This was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

36Now Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and plunder them until the morning light; and let us not leave a man of them."

And they said, "Do whatever seems good to you."

Then the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here."

37So Saul [y]asked counsel of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into the hand of Israel?" But [z]He did not answer him that day. 38And Saul said, [a]"Come over here, all you chiefs of the people, and know and see what this sin was today. 39For [b]*as* the LORD lives, who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." But not a man among all the people answered him. 40Then he said to all Israel, "You be on one side, and my son Jonathan and I will be on the other side."

And the people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you."

41Therefore Saul said to the LORD God of Israel, [c]"Give a perfect *lot*."* [d]So Saul and Jonathan were taken, but the people escaped. 42And Saul said, "Cast *lots* between my son Jonathan and me." So Jonathan was taken. 43Then Saul said to Jonathan, [e]"Tell me what you have done."

And Jonathan told him, and said, [f]"I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in my hand. So now I must die!"

44Saul answered, [g]"God do so and more also; [h]for you shall surely die, Jonathan."

45But the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not!

* **14:41** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *Why do You not answer Your servant today? If the injustice is with me or Jonathan my son, O LORD God of Israel, give proof; and if You say it is with Your people Israel, give holiness.*

would have helped the soldiers fight with better stamina. Keeping the oath was a matter of loyalty to Saul as he avenged his enemies. But the enemies were not Saul's personal enemies, they were the enemies of the whole nation, and the power in the vengeance came from God, not Saul. Saul should have focused the faith of the people on God, not on himself. This oath is an example of poor leadership, foolish vows, and misplaced loyalties. It is easy to get into trouble with an impulsive vow. It may sound very noble and wise in the heat of the moment, but it doesn't turn out to be practical. The kinds of vows that will never get us in trouble are the vows that echo the things that Scripture teaches. Such vows as determining to raise our children for the Lord, promising to stay away from habits that control us, or commitment to pray for certain people will never leave us entangled in promises that we should not have made.

14:32 *rushed on.* If the soldiers had not been fasting as they fought, they might have had the self-control to properly bleed the animals before they began eating.

14:37 *He did not answer him.* God's silence was taken by Saul as evidence of sin in the camp.

14:39 *he shall surely die.* This was Saul's second foolish oath. Saul is not the only one who found himself in trouble because of an impulsive oath. Jephthah made a tragic vow (Judg. 11:29–40), John the Baptist was beheaded because of Herod's thoughtless oath (Matt. 14:7–9), and a group of Jews bound themselves together with a curse, promising not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul (Acts 23:12). Jesus taught His followers not to swear to foolish vows, but to let their yes be yes, and their no be no (Matt. 5:37; James 5:12).

14:25 [u] Deut. 9:28 [v] Ex. 3:8 **14:32** [w] Deut. 12:16, 23, 24 **14:35** [x] 1 Sam. 7:12, 17 **14:37** [y] Judg. 20:18 [z] 1 Sam. 28:6 **14:38** [a] Josh. 7:14 **14:39** [b] 2 Sam. 12:5 **14:41** [c] Acts 1:24–26 [d] 1 Sam. 10:20, 21 **14:43** [e] Josh. 7:19 [f] 1 Sam. 14:27 **14:44** [g] Ruth 1:17 [h] 1 Sam. 14:39

[i]*As* the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked [j]with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan, and he did not die.

46Then Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

Saul's Continuing Wars

47So Saul established his sovereignty over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the people of [k]Ammon, against Edom, against the kings of [l]Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he harassed *them.** 48And he gathered an army and [m]attacked the Amalekites, and delivered Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.

49[n]The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Jishui,* and Malchishua. And the names of his two daughters *were these:* the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger [o]Michal. 50The name of Saul's wife *was* Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army *was* Abner the son of Ner, Saul's [p]uncle. 51[q]Kish *was* the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner *was* the son of Abiel.

52Now there was fierce war with the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man or any valiant man, [r]he took him for himself.

Saul Spares King Agag

15 Samuel also said to Saul, [a]"The LORD sent me to anoint you king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the LORD. 2Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek *for* what he did to Israel, [b]how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. 3Now go and [c]attack Amalek, and [d]utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"

4So Saul gathered the people together and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah. 5And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and lay in wait in the valley.

6Then Saul said to [e]the Kenites, [f]"Go, depart, get down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them. For [g]you showed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt." So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 7[h]And Saul attacked the Amalekites, from [i]Havilah all the way to [j]Shur, which is east of Egypt. 8[k]He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and [l]utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. 9But Saul and the people [m]spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all *that was* good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

Saul Rejected as King

10Now the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, 11[n]"I greatly regret that I have set up Saul *as* king, for he has [o]turned back from following Me, [p]and has not performed My commandments." And it [q]grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the LORD all night. 12So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, "Saul went to [r]Carmel, and indeed, he set up a monument for himself; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal." 13Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, [s]"Blessed *are* you of the LORD! I have performed the commandment of the LORD."

14But Samuel said, "What then *is* this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

15And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; [t]for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."

16Then Samuel said to Saul, "Be quiet! And I will tell you what the LORD said to me last night."

And he said to him, "Speak on."

17So Samuel said, [u]"When you *were* little in your own eyes, *were* you not head of

* **14:47** Septuagint and Vulgate read *prospered*.
* **14:49** Called *Abinadab* in 1 Chronicles 8:33 and 9:39

14:47 ***Moab . . . Ammon.*** The Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot (Gen. 19:30–38). They occupied regions east of the Jordan and Dead Sea. ***Edom.*** The Edomites were descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:8) who ruled over a region southeast of the Dead Sea. ***Zobah.*** This was the Aramean kingdom in the Bekaa valley. ***Philistines.*** The Philistines lived on the coastal plain west of the hill country.

14:48 ***Amalekites.*** These nomadic desert tribesmen lived south of the hill country.

15:6 ***Kenites.*** The Kenites were a nomadic offshoot of the Midianites (Num. 10:29). They had been loosely associated with the Israelites since Moses' marriage to the daughter of Jethro, a Kenite (Judg. 1:16; 4:11).

14:45 *i* 1 Kin. 1:52 *j* [2 Cor. 6:1] **14:47** *k* 1 Sam. 11:1–13 *l* 2 Sam. 10:6 **14:48** *m* 1 Sam. 15:3–7 **14:49** *n* 1 Sam. 31:2 *o* 1 Sam. 18:17–20, 27; 19:12 **14:50** *p* 1 Sam. 10:14 **14:51** *q* 1 Sam. 9:1, 21 **14:52** *r* 1 Sam. 8:11 **15:1** *a* 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1 **15:2** *b* Deut. 25:17–19 **15:3** *c* Deut. 25:19 *d* Num. 24:20 **15:6** *e* Num. 24:21 *f* Gen. 18:25; 19:12, 14 *g* Ex. 18:10, 19 **15:7** *h* 1 Sam. 14:48 *i* Gen. 2:11; 25:17, 18 *j* Gen. 16:7 **15:8** *k* 1 Sam. 15:32, 33 *l* 1 Sam. 27:8, 9 **15:9** *m* 1 Sam. 15:3, 15, 19 **15:11** *n* Gen. 6:6, 7 *o* 1 Kin. 9:6 *p* 1 Sam. 13:13; 15:3, 9 *q* 1 Sam. 15:35; 16:1 **15:12** *r* Josh. 15:55 **15:13** *s* Judg. 17:2 **15:15** *t* [Gen. 3:12, 13]; 1 Sam. 15:9, 21 **15:17** *u* 1 Sam. 9:21; 10:22

the tribes of Israel? And did not the LORD anoint you king over Israel? 18Now the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' 19Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD?"

20And Saul said to Samuel, [v]"But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21[w]But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal."

22So Samuel said:

[x]"Has the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, [y]to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.
23 For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft,
And stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
[z]He also has rejected you from *being* king."

24[a]Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I [b]feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD."

26But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, [c]for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel."

27And as Samuel turned around to go away, [d]*Saul* seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. 28So Samuel said to him, [e]"The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, *who is* better than you. 29And also the Strength of Israel [f]will not lie nor relent. For He *is* not a man, that He should relent."

30Then he said, "I have sinned; *yet* [g]honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD your God." 31So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

32Then Samuel said, "Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me." So Agag came to him cautiously.

And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past."

33But Samuel said, [h]"As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women." And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34Then Samuel went to [i]Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at [j]Gibeah of Saul. 35And [k]Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

David Anointed King

16 Now the LORD said to Samuel, [a]"How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? [b]Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to [c]Jesse the Bethlehemite. For [d]I have provided Myself a king among his sons."

2And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears *it*, he will kill me."

But the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, [e]'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' 3Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you."

4So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town [f]trembled at his coming, and said, [g]"Do you come peaceably?"

15:22 Obedience—If we love God we are commanded to keep His commandments (John 14:15). The problem is, we sometimes fool ourselves. Saul thought he was doing something good for God. He was partially obeying. He killed a lot of the Amalekites, and instead of killing the animals, he sacrificed them. They would still be dead, and it would honor God, too. But He was not pleased. Saul did what was "right in his own eyes" but this was not obedience.

15:23 *witchcraft.* Witchcraft, divination, idolatry, and other occult activities are an attempt to manipulate spiritual powers for our own ends. In his rebellion Saul was treating God as if He were a moody, cranky pagan god, who could be thwarted, and then appeased by sacrifices. ***He also has rejected you.*** Saul was rejected because he was still treating God as a force to be used. He was sorry he got caught, but he still thought he was right and could give a quick sacrifice and go on with the plan.

15:35 *see.* God was through with Saul as king, and so was Samuel.

16:2 *I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.* At this time Shiloh was still the designated central location for sacrifices (Deut. 12:4–14). But with the disruptions of the priesthood, the ark located at Kirjath Jearim (7:2), and the general belief that God had removed His presence from Shiloh, it would not be surprising if the sacrificial system had been interrupted as well. In

15:20 [v] 1 Sam. 15:13 **15:21** [w] 1 Sam. 15:15 **15:22** [x] [Is. 1:11–17] [y] [Hos. 6:6] **15:23** [z] 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:1 **15:24** [a] Josh. 7:20 [b] [Is. 51:12, 13] **15:26** [c] 1 Sam. 2:30 **15:27** [d] 1 Kin. 11:30, 31 **15:28** [e] 1 Kin. 11:31 **15:29** [f] Num. 23:19 **15:30** [g] [John 5:44; 12:43] **15:33** [h] [Gen. 9:6] **15:34** [i] 1 Sam. 7:17 [j] 1 Sam. 11:4 **15:35** [k] 1 Sam. 19:24 **16:1** [a] 1 Sam. 15:23, 35 [b] 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1 [c] Ruth 4:18–22 [d] Acts 13:22 **16:2** [e] 1 Sam. 9:12 **16:4** [f] 1 Sam. 21:1 [g] 1 Kin. 2:13

5And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to
sacrifice to the LORD. [h]Sanctify yourselves,
and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he
consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited
them to the sacrifice.
6So it was, when they came, that he
looked at [i]Eliab and [j]said, "Surely the
LORD's anointed *is* before Him!"
7But the LORD said to Samuel, [k]"Do not
look at his appearance or at his physical
stature, because I have refused him. [l]For
the LORD does not *see* as man sees;* for
man [m]looks at the outward appearance,
but the LORD looks at the [n]heart."
8So Jesse called Abinadab, and made
him pass before Samuel. And he said,
"Neither has the LORD chosen this one."
9Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And
he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this
one." 10Thus Jesse made seven of his sons
pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to
Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these."
11And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the
young men here?" Then he said, "There
remains yet the youngest, and there he is,
keeping the [o]sheep."
And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and
bring him. For we will not sit down* till
he comes here." 12So he sent and brought
him in. Now he *was* [p]ruddy, [q]with bright
eyes, and good-looking. [r]And the LORD
said, "Arise, anoint him; for this *is* the
one!" 13Then Samuel took the horn of oil
and anointed him in the midst of his broth-
ers; and [s]the Spirit of the LORD came upon
David from that day forward. So Samuel
arose and went to Ramah.

A Distressing Spirit Troubles Saul

14[t]But the Spirit of the LORD departed
from Saul, and [u]a distressing spirit from
the LORD troubled him. 15And Saul's ser-
vants said to him, "Surely, a distressing
spirit from God is troubling you. 16Let our
master now command your servants, *who
are* before you, to seek out a man *who is*
a skillful player on the harp. And it shall
be that he will [v]play it with his hand when
the distressing spirit from God is upon you,
and you shall be well."
17So Saul said to his servants, "Provide
me now a man who can play well, and
bring *him* to me."
18Then one of the servants answered
and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse
the Bethlehemite, *who is* skillful in play-
ing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war,
prudent in speech, and a handsome person;
and [w]the LORD *is* with him."
19Therefore Saul sent messengers to
Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David,
who *is* with the sheep." 20And Jesse [x]took a
donkey *loaded with* bread, a skin of wine,
and a young goat, and sent *them* by his son
David to Saul. 21So David came to Saul and
[y]stood before him. And he loved him great-
ly, and he became his armorbearer. 22Then
Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David
stand before me, for he has found favor in
my sight." 23And so it was, whenever the
spirit from God was upon Saul, that Da-
vid would take a harp and play *it* with his
hand. Then Saul would become refreshed
and well, and the distressing spirit would
depart from him.

David and Goliath

17 Now the Philistines gathered their
armies together to battle, and were

* **16:7** Septuagint reads *For God does not see as man sees;* Targum reads *It is not by the appearance of a man;* Vulgate reads *Nor do I judge according to the looks of a man.* * **16:11** Following Septuagint and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *turn around;* Targum and Syriac read *turn away.*

any case, God did direct Samuel to make this sacrifice at Bethlehem.

16:7 God—Our Creator knows His human creatures intimately, and He is able to discern our thoughts and purposes before we ourselves are aware of them. He always looks beyond appearance and stature to the heart.

16:12 *anoint him.* David was anointed with olive oil. This religious ritual consecrated him to the kingship, although he did not take the role of king for many years. The heart God saw in David is the one He wants to see in all of us. It has purposefulness, intelligence, and willingness to obey. If our heart is centered on God, He can use us to extend His kingdom.

16:14 *departed from Saul.* After the Spirit of God came upon David, Saul was no longer empowered by the Spirit to serve as king. In Old Testament times the Holy Spirit came upon people selectively, usually a king, prophet, or judge. It was only after the resurrection of Jesus that the Holy Spirit came to indwell all believers (John 16:5–11; Acts 2:4).

16:15 *distressing spirit from God.* This affliction is understood in various ways. Perhaps the spirit was a demon that God allowed to harass Saul, in the same way that God allowed Satan to tempt Job (Job 1:8–12). Perhaps Saul had a spirit of discontent in his heart, caused by the absence of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps pride, that same sin that caused Satan to fall, was allowed to grow in Saul's heart and dominate his thoughts and actions. Scripture is clear that God is always holy, just, and righteous, so this spirit was something that God allowed to come upon Saul, but it was not a part of God.

16:21 *David came to Saul.* David played for Saul, and was his armorbearer. It is unclear exactly how much time David spent with Saul. Probably David at this time continued to come and go from Saul's household to his father's.

17:1 *the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle.* The Philistine and Israelite armies were

16:5 [h] Ex. 19:10 **16:6** [i] 1 Sam. 17:13, 28 [j] 1 Kin. 12:26 **16:7** [k] Ps. 147:10 [l] Is. 55:8, 9 [m] 2 Cor. 10:7 [n] 1 Kin. 8:39 **16:11** [o] 2 Sam. 7:8 **16:12** [p] 1 Sam. 17:42 [q] Gen. 39:6 [r] 1 Sam. 9:17 **16:13** [s] Num. 27:18 **16:14** [t] Judg. 16:20 [u] Judg. 9:23 **16:16** [v] 1 Sam. 18:10; 19:9 **16:18** [w] 1 Sam. 3:19; 18:12, 14 **16:20** [x] 1 Sam. 10:4, 27 **16:21** [y] Gen. 41:46

gathered at [a]Sochoh, which *belongs* to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. 2And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. 3The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.

4And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named [b]Goliath, from [c]Gath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span. 5*He had* a bronze helmet on his head, and he *was* armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of bronze. 6And *he had* bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. 7Now the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam, and his iron spearhead *weighed* six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him. 8Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, "Why have you come out to line up for battle? *Am* I not a Philistine, and you the [d]servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 9If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and [e]serve us." 10And the Philistine said, [f]"I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." 11When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

12Now David *was* [g]the son of that [h]Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name *was* Jesse, and who had [i]eight sons. And the man was old, advanced *in years*, in the days of Saul. 13The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The [j]names of his three sons who went to the battle *were* Eliab the firstborn, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14David *was* the youngest. And the three oldest followed Saul. 15But David occasionally went and returned from Saul [k]to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

16And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

17Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried *grain* and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. 18And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of *their* thousand, and [l]see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them." 19Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel *were* in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

20So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took *the things* and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. 21For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. 22And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. 23Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke [m]according to the same words. So David heard *them.* 24And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. 25So the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be *that* the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, [n]will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption *from taxes* in Israel."

26Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away [o]the reproach from Israel? For

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gathered in the Elah valley, about 15 miles west of David's hometown of Bethlehem. The Philistines were camped on a hill, south of the valley, between the cities of Azekah and Sochoh.

17:2 *Valley of Elah.* The valley is an east-west valley, leading from the hill country of Judah toward the lowlands of the Philistines. It had a steep ravine that extended the length of the valley, making it unfit for the Philistines' chariots. Probably the ravine prevented a full-scale assault by the Philistines, causing the long delay before engaging in battle.

17:4 *champion.* The champion was a warrior who would fight in single combat as a stand-in for the entire army. The most likely person to take on this champion would be Saul, who, when he was chosen king, stood head and shoulders above his countrymen. ***six cubits and a span.*** The cubit was about 18 inches, and a span was 9 inches. Goliath stood approximately 9 feet, 9 inches tall.

17:5 *bronze helmet.* Ordinary troops had leather helmets. ***coat of mail.*** Goliath's coat of mail was made of overlapping plates of bronze sewn on leather. ***five thousand shekels.*** The coat of armor weighed about 125 pounds.

17:7 *six hundred shekels.* The spear was a weapon designed for hand-to-hand combat, like a long sword. The head of Goliath's spear weighed about 17 pounds. ***a shield-bearer.*** The soldier carried a small round shield, usually worn on the left arm. The shield-carrier bore the much larger, oblong shield.

17:12 *Ephrathite.* Ephrath was the early name for Bethlehem.

17:17 *Take now for your brothers.* In ancient times, soldiers usually lived off the land they conquered or depended on personal supplies that they or someone else brought from home.

17:1 [a] Josh. 15:35 **17:4** [b] 2 Sam. 21:19 [c] Josh. 11:21, 22 **17:8** [d] 1 Sam. 8:17 **17:9** [e] 1 Sam. 11:1 **17:10** [f] 1 Sam. 17:26, 36, 45 **17:12** [g] Ruth 4:22 [h] Gen. 35:19 [i] 1 Sam. 16:10, 11 **17:13** [j] 1 Sam. 16:6, 8, 9 **17:15** [k] 1 Sam. 16:11, 19 **17:18** [l] Gen. 37:13, 14 **17:23** [m] 1 Sam. 17:8–10 **17:25** [n] Josh. 15:16 **17:26** [o] 1 Sam. 11:2

who *is* this [p]uncircumcised Philistine, that he should [q]defy the armies of [r]the living God?"

27 And the people answered him in this manner, saying, [s]"So shall it be done for the man who kills him."

28 Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's [t]anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle."

29 And David said, "What have I done now? [u]*Is there* not a cause?" 30 Then he turned from him toward another and [v]said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones *did*.

31 Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported *them* to Saul; and he sent for him. 32 Then David said to Saul, [w]"Let no man's heart fail because of him; [x]your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

33 And Saul said to David, [y]"You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you *are* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a [z]lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35 I went out after it and struck it, and delivered *the lamb* from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught *it* by its beard, and struck and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 Moreover David said, [a]"The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, [b]"Go, and the LORD be with you!"

38 So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. 39 David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested *them*. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested *them*." So David took them off.

40 Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. 41 So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield *went* before him. 42 And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he [c]disdained him; for he was *only* a youth, [d]ruddy and good-looking. 43 So the Philistine [e]said to David, "*Am* I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine [f]said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. [g]But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have [h]defied. 46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give [i]the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, [j]that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD [k]does not save with sword and spear; for [l]the battle *is* the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands."

48 So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and [m]ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung *it* and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a [n]sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But *there was* no sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his [o]sword and drew it out

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17:39–40 Wisdom—David had embarked on a risky venture. It might seem smart to meet Goliath with the best armor, but David had wisdom enough to know that if he was going to attack the giant, it would have to be on his own terms. The years of solitary shepherding had given David the time to practice with his sling, and the opportunity to know that it was the Lord who gave him the strength and the will to kill the predators that threatened his flock. The insight and practices gained through difficult experiences blossom as wisdom. We can look back on these times with thankfulness because that is how God has equipped us for the next task.

17:40 *sling*. A sling was the typical equipment of the shepherd. It was a hollow pocket of leather attached to two cords. Putting a stone in the pouch, the slinger would whirl it around his head to build up momentum. Releasing one of the cords would hurl the stone at its target. It takes skill and practice to be expert with a sling. Slingers were a regular part of armies in the ancient Middle East.

17:26 [p] 1 Sam. 14:6; 17:36 [q] 1 Sam. 17:10 [r] Deut. 5:26 **17:27** [s] 1 Sam. 17:25 **17:28** [t] [Matt. 10:36] **17:29** [u] 1 Sam. 17:17 **17:30** [v] 1 Sam. 17:26, 27 **17:32** [w] Deut. 20:1–4 [x] 1 Sam. 16:18 **17:33** [y] Num. 13:31 **17:34** [z] Judg. 14:5 **17:37** [a] [2 Cor. 1:10] [b] 1 Chr. 22:11, 16 **17:42** [c] [Ps. 123:4] [d] 1 Sam. 16:12 **17:43** [e] 2 Kin. 8:13 **17:44** [f] 1 Kin. 20:10, 11 **17:45** [g] Heb. 11:33, 34 [h] 1 Sam. 17:10 **17:46** [i] Deut. 28:26 [j] Josh. 4:24 **17:47** [k] Hos. 1:7 [l] 2 Chr. 20:15 **17:48** [m] Ps. 27:3 **17:50** [n] Judg. 3:31; 15:15; 20:16 **17:51** [o] 1 Sam. 21:9

of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, [p]they fled. 52Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley* and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to [q]Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. 53Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. 54And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

55When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to [r]Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, [s]whose son *is* this youth?"

And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know."

56So the king said, "Inquire whose son this young man *is*."

57Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul [t]with the head of the Philistine in his hand. 58And Saul said to him, "Whose son *are* you, young man?"

So David answered, [u]"*I am* the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

Saul Resents David

18 Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, [a]the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, [b]and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. 2Saul took him that day, [c]and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. 3Then Jonathan and David made a [d]covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. 4And Jonathan took off the robe that *was* on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

5So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. 6Now it had happened as they were coming *home,* when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that [e]the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. 7So the women [f]sang as they danced, and said:

[g]"Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."

8Then Saul was very angry, and the saying [h]displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but [i]the kingdom?" 9So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

10And it happened on the next day that [j]the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, [k]and he prophesied inside the house. So David [l]played *music* with his hand, as at other times; [m]but *there was* a spear in Saul's hand. 11And Saul [n]cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.

12Now Saul was [o]afraid of David, because [p]the LORD was with him, but had [q]departed from Saul. 13Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and [r]he went out and came in before the people. 14And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and [s]the LORD *was* with him. 15Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. 16But [t]all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

David Marries Michal

17Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; [u]I will give her to you as a wife. Only be valiant for me, and fight [v]the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, [w]"Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him."

18So David said to Saul, [x]"Who *am* I, and what *is* my life *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" 19But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to [y]Adriel the [z]Meholathite as a wife.

20[a]Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved

* **17:52** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Gath*.

17:55 ***whose son is this youth.*** How does this question fit with the fact that David had been serving as a musician in Saul's court and as Saul's armorbearer, and that Saul "loved him greatly" (16:18–23)? Possibly in Saul's unstable mental condition he did not recall David, or perhaps he did not know his name, even if he did recognize him. David was not at court full time until after he had killed Goliath. It would not be unusual for the king to know nothing personal about a servant, even a servant he appreciated.

18:16 ***he went out and came in before them.*** David's military activities elevated him to prominence before the people.

17:51 [p] Heb. 11:34 **17:52** [q] Josh. 15:36 **17:55** [r] 1 Sam. 14:50 [s] 1 Sam. 16:21, 22 **17:57** [t] 1 Sam. 17:54 **17:58** [u] 1 Sam. 17:12 **18:1** [a] Gen. 44:30 [b] 1 Sam. 20:17 **18:2** [c] 1 Sam. 17:15 **18:3** [d] 1 Sam. 20:8–17 **18:6** [e] Ex. 15:20, 21 **18:7** [f] Ex. 15:21 [g] 1 Sam. 21:11; 29:5 **18:8** [h] Eccl. 4:4 [i] 1 Sam. 15:28 **18:10** [j] 1 Sam. 16:14 [k] 1 Sam. 19:24 [l] 1 Sam. 16:23 [m] 1 Sam. 19:9, 10 **18:11** [n] 1 Sam. 19:10; 20:33 **18:12** [o] 1 Sam. 18:15, 29 [p] 1 Sam. 16:13, 18 [q] 1 Sam. 16:14; 28:15 **18:13** [r] Num. 27:17 **18:14** [s] Josh. 6:27 **18:16** [t] 1 Sam. 18:5 **18:17** [u] 1 Sam. 14:49; 17:25 [v] Num. 32:20, 27, 29 [w] 1 Sam. 18:21, 25 **18:18** [x] 2 Sam. 7:18 **18:19** [y] 2 Sam. 21:8 [z] Judg. 7:22 **18:20** [a] 1 Sam. 18:28

David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 21So Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that [b]the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, [c]"You shall be my son-in-law today."

22And Saul commanded his servants, "Communicate with David secretly, and say, 'Look, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'"

23So Saul's servants spoke those words in the hearing of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you *a* light *thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I *am* a poor and lightly esteemed man?" 24And the servants of Saul told him, saying, "In this manner David spoke."

25Then Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king does not desire any [d]dowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take [e]vengeance on the king's enemies.'" But Saul [f]thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. 26So when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to become the king's son-in-law. Now [g]the days had not expired; 27therefore David arose and went, he and [h]his men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines. And [i]David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife.

28Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; 29and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. 30Then the princes of the Philistines [j]went out *to war.* And so it was, whenever they went out, *that* David [k]behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

Saul Persecutes David

19 Now Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill [a]David; but Jonathan, Saul's son, [b]delighted greatly in David. 2So Jonathan told David, saying, "My father Saul seeks to kill you. Therefore please be on your guard until morning, and stay in a secret *place* and hide. 3And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you *are,* and I will speak with my father about you. Then what I observe, I will tell [c]you."

4Thus Jonathan [d]spoke well of David to Saul his father, and said to him, "Let not the king [e]sin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works *have been* very good toward you. 5For he took his [f]life in his hands and [g]killed the Philistine, and [h]the LORD brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw *it* and rejoiced. [i]Why then will you [j]sin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause?"

6So Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, "*As* the LORD lives, he shall not be killed." 7Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. So Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence [k]as in times past.

8And there was war again; and David went out and fought with the Philistines, [l]and struck them with a mighty blow, and they fled from him.

9Now [m]the distressing spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing *music* with *his* hand. 10Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.

11[n]Saul also sent messengers to David's house to watch him and to kill him in the morning. And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." 12So Michal [o]let David down through a window. And he went and fled and escaped. 13And Michal took an image and laid *it* in the bed, put a cover of goats' *hair* for his head, and covered *it* with clothes. 14So when Saul

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18:25 ***dowry.*** A sum of money, about fifty shekels (Deut. 22:29), was paid by the bridegroom to the father of the bride as economic compensation for the loss of a daughter.

18:30 ***more wisely than all.*** David's wise actions contrast significantly with Saul's foolish actions (13:13).

18:30 Wisdom—David was popular, he had even been privately anointed to be the next king, and Saul had just thrown a spear at him. Yet David did nothing to take justice in his own hands. He remained calm and loyal. It is clear that David decided very early in the time after he was anointed that if he became king, it would have to be totally by the hand of God. He would do nothing to destroy the man that God had previously anointed king. Historically we can see what a very wise choice this was, but it must have been very difficult for David to choose the path of wisdom when he could have raised the power of the people to his side so easily.

19:11 ***tomorrow you will be killed.*** The story of David's escape is alluded to in the title of Psalm 59.

19:12 ***Michal let David down through a window.*** Saul had imagined that Michal would be loyal to him and a snare to David. But she loved David, and her loyalty was to her husband.

18:21 [b] 1 Sam. 18:17 [c] 1 Sam. 18:26 **18:25** [d] Ex. 22:17 [e] 1 Sam. 14:24 [f] 1 Sam. 18:17 **18:26** [g] 1 Sam. 18:21 **18:27** [h] 1 Sam. 18:13 [i] 2 Sam. 3:14 **18:30** [j] 2 Sam. 11:1 [k] 1 Sam. 18:5 **19:1** [a] 1 Sam. 8:8, 9 [b] 1 Sam. 18:1 **19:3** [c] 1 Sam. 20:8–13 **19:4** [d] [Prov. 31:8, 9] [e] [Prov. 17:13] **19:5** [f] Judg. 9:17; 12:3 [g] 1 Sam. 17:49, 50 [h] 1 Sam. 11:13 [i] 1 Sam. 20:32 [j] [Deut. 19:10–13] **19:7** [k] 1 Sam. 16:21; 18:2, 10, 13 **19:8** [l] 1 Sam. 18:27; 23:5 **19:9** [m] 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:10, 11 **19:11** [n] Ps. 59:title **19:12** [o] Josh. 2:15

sent messengers to take David, she said, "He *is* sick."

15Then Saul sent the messengers *back* to see David, saying, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." 16And when the messengers had come in, there was the image in the bed, with a cover of goats' *hair* for his head. 17Then Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and sent my enemy away, so that he has escaped?"

And Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go! [p]Why should I kill you?'"

18So David fled and escaped, and went to [q]Samuel at [r]Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. 19Now it was told Saul, saying, "Take note, David *is* at Naioth in Ramah!" 20Then [s]Saul sent messengers to take David. [t]And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing *as* leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also [u]prophesied. 21And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. 22Then he also went to Ramah, and came to the great well that *is* at Sechu. So he asked, and said, "Where *are* Samuel and David?"

And *someone* said, "Indeed *they are* at Naioth in Ramah." 23So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then [v]the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24[w]And he also stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down [x]naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, [y]"*Is* Saul also among the prophets?"*

Jonathan's Loyalty to David

20 Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and went and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What *is* my iniquity, and what *is* my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?"

2So Jonathan said to him, "By no means! You shall not die! Indeed, my father will do nothing either great or small without first telling me. And why should my father hide this thing from me? It *is* not *so!*"

3Then David took an oath again, and said, "Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.' But [a]truly, *as* the LORD lives and *as* your soul lives, *there is* but a step between me and death."

4So Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you yourself desire, I will do *it* for you."

5And David said to Jonathan, "Indeed tomorrow *is* the [b]New Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may [c]hide in the field until the third *day* at evening. 6If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked *permission* of me that he might run over [d]to Bethlehem, his city, for *there is* a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' 7[e]If he says thus: '*It is* well,' your servant will be safe. But if he is very angry, be sure that [f]evil is determined by him. 8Therefore you shall [g]deal kindly with your servant, for [h]you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. Nevertheless, [i]if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?"

9But Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you?"

10Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me, or what *if* your father answers you roughly?"

11And Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So both of them went out into the field. 12Then Jonathan said to David: "The LORD God of Israel *is witness!* When I have sounded out my father sometime tomorrow, *or* the third *day*, and indeed *there is* good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, 13may [j]the LORD do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it pleases my father *to do* you evil, then I will report it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And [k]the LORD be with you as He has [l]been with my father. 14And you shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live, that I may not die; 15but [m]you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." 16So Jonathan made *a covenant* with the house of David, *saying,*

* **19:24** Compare 1 Samuel 10:12

20:5 *tomorrow is the New Moon.* The first day of the month, the New Moon, was observed as a religious festival (Num. 10:10; 28:11–15). It was celebrated with a sacrificial meal and rest from work.

20:6 *yearly sacrifice.* Apparently Jesse's family gathered for a special time of worship during the New Moon celebration.

20:16–17 Love—The love and loyalty displayed by Jonathan to David is unparalleled among human relationships in the Bible. He was a living example of the New Testament phrase, "does not seek its own" (1 Cor. 13:5). In protecting David from the murderous plots of Saul, Jonathan was in reality closing the door

19:17 [p] 2 Sam. 2:22 **19:18** [q] 1 Sam. 16:13 [r] 1 Sam. 7:17 **19:20** [s] John 7:32 [t] 1 Sam. 10:5, 6, 10 [u] Joel 2:28 **19:23** [v] 1 Sam. 10:10 **19:24** [w] Is. 20:2 [x] Mic. 1:8 [y] 1 Sam. 10:10–12 **20:3** [a] 1 Sam. 27:1 **20:5** [b] Num. 10:10; 28:11–15 [c] 1 Sam. 19:2, 3 **20:6** [d] 1 Sam. 16:4; 17:12 **20:7** [e] 2 Sam. 17:4 [f] 1 Sam. 25:17 **20:8** [g] Josh. 2:14 [h] 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:16; 23:18 [i] 2 Sam. 14:32 **20:13** / Ruth 1:17 [k] Josh. 1:5 [l] 1 Sam. 10:7 **20:15** [m] 2 Sam. 9:1, 3, 7; 21:7

[n]"Let the LORD require *it* at the hand of David's enemies."

17Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; [o]for he loved him as he loved his own soul. 18Then Jonathan said to David, [p]"Tomorrow *is* the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. 19And *when* you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to [q]the place where you hid on the day of the deed; and remain by the stone Ezel. 20Then I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target; 21and there I will send a lad, *saying,* 'Go, find the arrows.' If I expressly say to the lad, 'Look, the arrows *are* on this side of you; get them and come'—then, [r]as the LORD lives, *there is* safety for you and no harm. 22But if I say thus to the young man, 'Look, the arrows *are* beyond you'—go your way, for the LORD has sent you away. 23And as for [s]the matter which you and I have spoken of, indeed the LORD *be* between you and me forever."

24Then David hid in the field. And when the New Moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. 25Now the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. And Jonathan arose,* and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty. 26Nevertheless Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, "Something has happened to him; he *is* unclean, surely he *is* [t]unclean." 27And it happened the next day, the second *day* of the month, that David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?"

28So Jonathan [u]answered Saul, "David earnestly asked *permission* of me *to go* to Bethlehem. 29And he said, 'Please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me *to be there.* And now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the king's table."

30Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious *woman!* Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die."

32And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said to him, [v]"Why should he be killed? What has he done?" 33Then Saul [w]cast a spear at him to kill him, [x]by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David.

34So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully.

35And so it was, in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad *was* with him. 36Then he said to his lad, "Now run, find the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37When the lad had come to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "*Is* not the arrow beyond you?" 38And Jonathan cried out after the lad, "Make haste, hurry, do not delay!" So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master. 39But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. 40Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry *them* to the city."

41As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from *a place* toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so. 42Then Jonathan said to David, [y]"Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.'" So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.

* **20:25** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *he sat across from Jonathan.*

to his own possible reign over Israel after his father's death. Jonathan knew this, but his faithfulness to David continued until his death on a battlefield (1 Sam. 31:2).

20:16 ***Let the LORD require it.*** Jonathan prayed that the Lord would hold David accountable to the obligations of the covenant.

20:30 ***to the shame of your mother's nakedness.*** This was a way of saying that Jonathan shamed his mother who conceived him by maintaining loyalty to David. It was a slur on Jonathan, and a slur on his mother.

20:31 Justice—If David had been taking matters into his own hands, and making moves to secure the kingdom for himself, perhaps Saul would have been justified in seeking David's life. But Saul could charge David with no wrongdoing. Saul was enraged at David, at Jonathan, and in rebellion against God. Because he was driven by anger, Saul could no longer see the injustice in his own thinking.

20:16 *n* 1 Sam. 25:22; 31:2 **20:17** *o* 1 Sam. 18:1 **20:18** *p* 1 Sam. 20:5, 24 **20:19** *q* 1 Sam. 19:2 **20:21** *r* Jer. 4:2 **20:23** *s* 1 Sam. 20:14, 15 **20:26** *t* Lev. 7:20, 21; 15:5 **20:28** *u* 1 Sam. 20:6 **20:32** *v* Gen. 31:36 **20:33** *w* 1 Sam. 18:11; 19:10 *x* 1 Sam. 20:7 **20:42** *y* 1 Sam. 1:17

David and the Holy Bread

21 Now David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And [a]Ahimelech was [b]afraid when he met David, and said to him, "Why *are* you alone, and no one is with you?"

2So David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has ordered me on some business, and said to me, 'Do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you, or what I have commanded you.' And I have directed *my* young men to such and such a place. 3Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give *me* five *loaves of* bread in my hand, or whatever can be found."

4And the priest answered David and said, "*There is* no common bread on hand; but there is [c]holy bread, [d]if the young men have at least kept themselves from women."

5Then David answered the priest, and said to him, "Truly, women *have been* kept from us about three days since I came out. And the [e]vessels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* in effect common, even though it was consecrated [f]in the vessel this day."

6So the priest [g]gave him holy *bread;* for there was no bread there but the showbread [h]which had been taken from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread *in its place* on the day when it was taken away.

7Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, detained before the LORD. And his name *was* [i]Doeg, an Edomite, the chief of the herdsmen who *belonged* to Saul.

8And David said to Ahimelech, "Is there not here on hand a spear or a sword? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste."

9So the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in [j]the Valley of Elah, [k]there it is, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take *it*. For *there is* no other except that one here."

And David said, "*There is* none like it; give it to me."

David Flees to Gath

10Then David arose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. 11And [l]the servants of Achish said to him, "*Is* this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of him to one another in dances, saying:

[m]'Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands'?"*

12Now David [n]took these words to heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13So [o]he changed his behavior before them, pretended madness in their hands, scratched on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva fall down on his beard. 14Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? 15Have I need of madmen, that you have brought this *fellow* to play the madman in my presence? Shall this *fellow* come into my house?"

David's Four Hundred Men

22 David therefore departed from there and [a]escaped [b]to the cave of Adullam. So when his brothers and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down there to him. 2[c]And everyone *who was* in distress, everyone who *was* in debt, and everyone *who was* discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them.

* **21:11** Compare 1 Samuel 18:7

21:1 ***Nob.*** Nob was a Levitical community in Benjamin where the tabernacle was located after it was in Shiloh. ***Ahimelech.*** Ahimelech, the great-grandson of Eli, was serving as high priest.

21:4 ***no common bread.*** Ahimelech explained that the only bread available was holy bread, sometimes called the "showbread," which had been displayed before the Lord in the tabernacle (Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5–9). According to God's law, this bread could be eaten only by priests.

21:6 ***gave him holy bread.*** This was the bread that had been displayed before the Lord for a week, and was removed for fresh bread. In giving the bread to David, Ahimelech broke the law, yet in his compassion he kept the spirit of the law. Jesus referred to this incident when He explained to the Pharisees that it was all right to pick grain to eat on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:2–4).

21:7 ***detained before the LORD.*** Apparently Doeg, although he was not an Israelite, was at the tabernacle under a spiritual vow.

21:10 ***Gath.*** Gath was one of the five major cities of the Philistines (6:17).

21:12–13 ***Achish the king of Gath.*** These verses provide the background for Psalms 34 and 56. In Psalm 34 Achish is referred to as Abimelech, which was apparently a dynastic title used by the Philistine rulers (Gen. 26:1).

22:1 ***cave of Adullam.*** The cave near the city of Adullam was about ten miles southeast of Gath and sixteen miles southwest of Jerusalem. It was here that David composed Psalm 142, and possibly Psalm 57.

22:2 ***everyone who was in distress . . . debt.*** The men who gathered around David were not so much taking sides with him as escaping Saul. The sense of desolation in Psalm 142:4 reflects David's feeling of being all alone. ***became captain over them.*** Nevertheless, David organized them, governed them, and made them into a loyal and obedient unit.

21:1 [a] 1 Sam. 14:3 [b] 1 Sam. 16:4 **21:4** [c] Lev. 24:5–9 [d] Ex. 19:15 **21:5** [e] 1 Thess. 4:4 [f] Lev. 8:26 **21:6** [g] Luke 6:3, 4 [h] Lev. 24:8, 9 **21:7** [i] 1 Sam. 14:47; 22:9 **21:9** [j] 1 Sam. 17:2, 50 [k] 1 Sam. 31:10 **21:11** [l] Ps. 56:title [m] 1 Sam. 18:6–8; 29:5 **21:12** [n] Luke 2:19 **21:13** [o] Ps. 34:title **22:1** [a] Ps. 57:title; 142:title [b] 2 Sam. 23:13 **22:2** [c] Judg. 11:3

And there were about [d]four hundred men with him.

3 Then David went from there to Mizpah of [e]Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come here with you, till I know what God will do for me." 4 So he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

5 Now the prophet [f]Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

Saul Murders the Priests

6 When Saul heard that David and the men who *were* with him had been discovered—now Saul was staying in [g]Gibeah under a tamarisk tree in Ramah, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants standing about him— 7 then Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, you Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse [h]give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds? 8 All of you have conspired against me, and *there is* no one who reveals to me that [i]my son has made a covenant with the son of Jesse; and *there is* not one of you who is sorry for me or reveals to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as *it is* this day."

9 Then answered [j]Doeg the Edomite, who was set over the servants of Saul, and said, "I saw the son of Jesse going to Nob, to [k]Ahimelech the son of [l]Ahitub. 10 [m]And he inquired of the LORD for him, [n]gave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

11 So the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests who *were* in Nob. And they all came to the king. 12 And Saul said, "Hear now, son of Ahitub!"

He answered, "Here I am, my lord."

13 Then Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread and a sword, and have inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as it is this day?"

14 So Ahimelech answered the king and said, "And who among all your servants *is as* [o]faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law, who goes at your bidding, and is honorable in your house? 15 Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? Far be it from me! Let not the king impute anything to his servant, *or* to any in the house of my father. For your servant knew nothing of all this, little or much."

16 And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all [p]your father's house!" 17 Then the king said to the guards who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me." But the servants of the king [q]would not lift their hands to strike the priests of the LORD. 18 And the king said to Doeg, "You turn and kill the priests!" So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck the priests, and [r]killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod. 19 [s]Also Nob, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep—with the edge of the sword.

20 [t]Now one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, [u]escaped and fled after David. 21 And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the LORD's priests. 22 So David said to Abiathar, "I knew that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have caused *the death* of all the persons of your father's house. 23 Stay with me; do not fear. [v]For he who seeks my life seeks your life, but with me you *shall be* safe."

David Saves the City of Keilah

23 Then they told David, saying, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against [a]Keilah, and they are robbing the threshing floors."

2 Therefore David [b]inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?"

And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines, and save Keilah."

3 But David's men said to him, "Look, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" 4 Then David inquired of the LORD once again.

And the LORD answered him and said, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will deliver the Philistines into your hand." 5 And David and his men went to Keilah and [c]fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 Now it happened, when Abiathar the

22:18 ***Doeg.*** Only Doeg, who was a descendant of Esau, but not an Israelite, was willing to kill the priests of the living God.

22:22 ***I have caused the death.*** David felt responsible for the death of the priests and their families because he knew that he was jeopardizing them by receiving help from them. He knew Doeg would betray him, and he felt that he should have done something to prevent this or to warn the priests.

22:2 [d] 1 Sam. 25:13 **22:3** [e] 2 Sam. 8:2 **22:5** [f] 2 Sam. 24:11 **22:6** [g] 1 Sam. 15:34 **22:7** [h] 1 Sam. 8:14 **22:8** [i] 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:16, 30 **22:9** [j] 1 Sam. 21:7; 22:22 [k] 1 Sam. 21:1 [l] 1 Sam. 14:3 **22:10** [m] Num. 27:21 [n] 1 Sam. 21:6, 9 **22:14** [o] 1 Sam. 19:4, 5; 20:32; 24:11 **22:16** [p] Deut. 24:16 **22:17** [q] Ex. 1:17 **22:18** [r] 1 Sam. 2:31 **22:19** [s] 1 Sam. 22:9, 11 **22:20** [t] 1 Sam. 23:6, 9; 30:7 [u] 1 Sam. 2:33 **22:23** [v] 1 Kin. 2:26 **23:1** [a] Josh. 15:44 **23:2** [b] 2 Sam. 5:19, 23 **23:5** [c] 1 Sam. 19:8

son of Ahimelech [d]fled to David at Keilah, *that* he went down *with* an ephod in his hand.

7And Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. So Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." 8Then Saul called all the people together for war, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men.

9When David knew that Saul plotted evil against him, [e]he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." 10Then David said, "O LORD God of Israel, Your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah [f]to destroy the city for my sake. 11Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O LORD God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant."

And the LORD said, "He will come down."

12Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?"

And the LORD said, "They will deliver *you*."

13So David and his men, [g]about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah and went wherever they could go. Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; so he halted the expedition.

David in Wilderness Strongholds

14And David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness, and remained in [h]the mountains in the Wilderness of [i]Ziph. Saul [j]sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand. 15So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David *was* in the Wilderness of Ziph in a forest.* 16Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God. 17And he said to him, [k]"Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. [l]Even my father Saul knows that." 18So the two of them [m]made a covenant before the LORD. And David stayed in the woods, and Jonathan went to his own house.

19Then the Ziphites [n]came up to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "Is David not hiding with us in strongholds in the woods, in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* on the south of Jeshimon? 20Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of your soul to come down; and [o]our part *shall be* to deliver him into the king's hand."

21And Saul said, "Blessed *are* you of the LORD, for you have compassion on me. 22Please go and find out for sure, and see the place where his hideout is, *and* who has seen him there. For I am told he is very crafty. 23See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hides; and come back to me with certainty, and I will go with you. And it shall be, if he is in the land, that I will search for him throughout all the clans* of Judah."

24So they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. But David and his men *were* in the Wilderness [p]of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon. 25When Saul and his men went to seek *him*, they told David. Therefore he went down to the rock, and stayed in the Wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard *that*, he pursued David in the Wilderness of Maon. 26Then Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. [q]So David made haste to get away from Saul, for Saul and his men [r]were encircling David and his men to take them.

27[s]But a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land!" 28Therefore Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines; so they called that place the Rock of Escape.* 29Then David went up from there and dwelt in strongholds at [t]En Gedi.

* **23:15** Or *in Horesh* * **23:23** Literally *thousands*
* **23:28** Hebrew *Sela Hammahlekoth*

23:14 ***Wilderness of Ziph.*** This barren region about four miles southeast of Hebron had many caves and ravines in which David and his men could hide.

23:16–18 ***strengthened his hand in God.*** Visiting David was risky, for Saul considered David his enemy. Jonathan was treading a narrow line between following his own convictions and obeying his father. He had a fervent love for God, and encouraged David to continue in his obedient walk with the Lord at a time when David must have been feeling very discouraged and alone.

23:17–18 Love—Love "rejoices in the truth" (1 Cor. 13:6). Jonathan had the happy faculty of delighting in the Lord's plan. He is never seen comparing his role with David's role, but he continually encouraged David to live up to the great responsibility that God had given him. Jonathan was the kind of friend that we all need and seldom find. If we want to put love into action, we can look at Jonathan and rejoice with our friends over the great favor God has shown them, encourage them to remain faithful to their calling, and remind them that we will be "next to them," if not in fact, then in prayer.

23:19 ***Jeshimon.*** Jeshimon is the barren wilderness of Judah.

23:19–29 ***Is David not hiding with us.*** The background for Psalm 54 is David's narrow escape from being captured by Saul.

23:6 [d] 1 Sam. 22:20 **23:9** [e] 1 Sam. 23:6; 30:7 **23:10** [f] 1 Sam. 22:19 **23:13** [g] 1 Sam. 22:2; 25:13 **23:14** [h] Ps. 11:1 [i] Josh. 15:55 [j] Ps. 32:7; 54:3, 4 **23:17** [k] [Heb. 13:6] [l] 1 Sam. 20:31; 24:20 **23:18** [m] 2 Sam. 9:1; 21:7 **23:19** [n] 1 Sam. 26:1 **23:20** [o] Ps. 54:3 **23:24** [p] 1 Sam. 25:2 **23:26** [q] Ps. 31:22 [r] Ps. 17:9 **23:27** [s] 2 Kin. 19:9 **23:29** [t] 2 Chr. 20:2

David Spares Saul

24 Now it happened, [a]when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, "Take note! David *is* in the Wilderness of En Gedi." **2**Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and [b]went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. **3**So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there *was* a cave; and [c]Saul went in to [d]attend to his needs. ([e]David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave.) **4**[f]Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe. **5**Now it happened afterward that [g]David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. **6**And he said to his men, [h]"The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD." **7**So David [i]restrained his servants with *these* words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul. And Saul got up from the cave and went on *his* way.

8David also arose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out to Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down. **9**And David said to Saul: [j]"Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Indeed David seeks your harm'? **10**Look, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD delivered you today into my hand in the cave, and *someone* urged *me* to kill you. But *my eye* spared you, and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he *is* the LORD's anointed.' **11**Moreover, my father, see! Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the corner of your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that *there is* [k]neither evil nor rebellion in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet you [l]hunt my life to take it. **12**[m]Let the LORD judge between you and me, and let the LORD avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you. **13**As the proverb of the ancients says, [n]'Wickedness proceeds from the wicked.' But my hand shall not be against you. **14**After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? [o]A dead dog? [p]A flea? **15**[q]Therefore let the LORD be judge, and judge between you and me, and [r]see and [s]plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand."

16So it was, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, [t]"*Is* this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. **17**[u]Then he said to David: "You *are* [v]more righteous than I; for [w]you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. **18**And you have shown this day how you have dealt well with me; for when [x]the LORD delivered me into your hand, you did not kill me. **19**For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him get away safely? Therefore may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. **20**And now [y]I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. **21**[z]Therefore swear now to me by the LORD [a]that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house."

22So David swore to Saul. And Saul went home, but David and his men went up to [b]the stronghold.

Death of Samuel

25 Then [a]Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and [b]lamented for him, and buried him at his home in Ramah. And David arose and went down [c]to the Wilderness of Paran.*

* **25:1** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Maon*.

24:3 ***sheepfolds.*** At night shepherds in the wild area would gather their sheep into a protective rock enclosure. A low stone wall would keep the sheep from wandering, and the shepherd would position himself at the entrance to keep guard. Often a cave with a wall built across its mouth served as a sheepcote.

24:10–12 Mercy—David does not say the words, "I forgive you," in this passage, but he speaks as one who has forgiven Saul for his foolish and violent acts against himself. A big part of forgiving an unrepentant individual is deliberately putting the whole situation in God's hands, knowing that it is only God who can judge rightly. God will vindicate the innocent, and punish the guilty, if necessary.

24:12 ***my hand shall not be against you.*** David knew that the Lord had anointed him to be the king to succeed Saul, and Saul knew it too. Saul, probably thinking of how he himself would have responded, was sure that David would seize power and oust him with trickery and violence. David had to prove to Saul that he was not going to harm him, and the only way to do this was to turn down every opportunity he had to kill the king. It was God's job, and His alone, to arrange the transfer of power from Saul to David.

24:22 ***David swore to Saul.*** David agreed to Saul's requests, and he kept his promise (2 Sam. 9:1–13; 21:1–14), as Saul knew he would. However, David had no great confidence in the lasting value of Saul's expressions of remorse, so David remained in hiding.

24:1 [a] 1 Sam. 23:19, 28, 29 **24:2** [b] 1 Sam. 26:2
24:3 [c] 1 Sam. 24:10 [d] Judg. 3:24 [e] Ps. 57:title; 142:title
24:4 [f] 1 Sam. 26:8–11 **24:5** [g] 2 Sam. 24:10 **24:6** [h] 1 Sam. 26:11 **24:7** [i] [Matt. 5:44] **24:9** [j] Ps. 141:6 **24:11** [k] Ps. 7:3; 35:7 [l] 1 Sam. 26:20 **24:12** [m] 1 Sam. 26:10–23
24:13 [n] [Matt. 7:16–20] **24:14** [o] 2 Sam. 9:8 [p] 1 Sam. 26:20
24:15 [q] 1 Sam. 24:12 [r] 2 Chr. 24:22 [s] Ps. 35:1; 43:1; 119:154
24:16 [t] 1 Sam. 26:17 **24:17** [u] 1 Sam. 26:21 [v] Gen. 38:26 [w] [Matt. 5:44] **24:18** [x] 1 Sam. 26:23 **24:20** [y] 1 Sam. 23:17
24:21 [z] Gen. 21:23 [a] 2 Sam. 21:6–8 **24:22** [b] 1 Sam. 23:29
25:1 [a] 1 Sam. 28:3 [b] Deut. 34:8 [c] Gen. 21:21

David and the Wife of Nabal

2 Now *there was* a man [d]in Maon whose
business *was* in [e]Carmel, and the man *was*
very rich. He had three thousand sheep
and a thousand goats. And he was shear-
ing his sheep in Carmel. 3 The name of
the man *was* Nabal, and the name of his wife
Abigail. And *she was* a woman of good un-
derstanding and beautiful appearance; but
the man *was* harsh and evil in *his* doings.
He *was of the house of* [f]Caleb.
4 When David heard in the wilderness
that Nabal was [g]shearing his sheep, 5 Da-
vid sent ten young men; and David said
to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go
to Nabal, and greet him in my name.
6 And thus you shall say to him who lives
in prosperity: [h]'Peace *be* to you, peace to
your house, and peace to all that you have!
7 Now I have heard that you have shearers.
Your shepherds were with us, and we did
not hurt them, [i]nor was there anything
missing from them all the while they were
in Carmel. 8 Ask your young men, and they
will tell you. Therefore let *my* young men
find favor in your eyes, for we come on [j]a
feast day. Please give whatever comes to
your hand to your servants and to your son
David.'"
9 So when David's young men came, they
spoke to Nabal according to all these words
in the name of David, and waited.
10 Then Nabal answered David's ser-
vants, and said, [k]"Who *is* David, and who *is*
the son of Jesse? There are many servants
nowadays who break away each one from
his master. 11 [l]Shall I then take my bread
and my water and my meat that I have
killed for my shearers, and give *it* to men
when I do not know where they *are* from?"
12 So David's young men turned on their
heels and went back; and they came and
told him all these words. 13 Then David said
to his men, "Every man gird on his sword."
So every man girded on his sword, and
David also girded on his sword. And about
four hundred men went with David, and
two hundred [m]stayed with the supplies.
14 Now one of the young men told Abigail,
Nabal's wife, saying, "Look, David sent
messengers from the wilderness to greet
our master; and he reviled them. 15 But the
men *were* very good to us, and [n]we were
not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long
as we accompanied them, when we were
in the fields. 16 They were [o]a wall to us both
by night and day, all the time we were with
them keeping the sheep. 17 Now therefore,
know and consider what you will do, for
[p]harm is determined against our master
and against all his household. For he *is*
such a [q]scoundrel* that *one* cannot speak
to him."
18 Then Abigail made haste and [r]took
two hundred *loaves* of bread, two skins
of wine, five sheep already dressed, five
seahs of roasted *grain,* one hundred clus-
ters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of
figs, and loaded *them* on donkeys. 19 And
she said to her servants, [s]"Go on before me;
see, I am coming after you." But she did not
tell her husband Nabal.
20 So it was, *as* she rode on the donkey,
that she went down under cover of the hill;
and there were David and his men, coming
down toward her, and she met them. 21 Now
David had said, "Surely in vain I have pro-
tected all that this *fellow* has in the wilder-
ness, so that nothing was missed of all that
belongs to him. And he has [t]repaid me evil
for good. 22 [u]May God do so, and more also,
to the enemies of David, if I [v]leave [w]one
male of all who *belong* to him by morning
light."
23 Now when Abigail saw David, she
[x]dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell
on her face before David, and bowed down
to the ground. 24 So she fell at his feet and
said: "On me, my lord, *on* me *let* this iniq-
uity *be!* And please let your maidservant
speak in your ears, and hear the words of
your maidservant. 25 Please, let not my lord
regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his
name *is,* so *is* he: Nabal* *is* his name, and
folly *is* with him! But I, your maidservant,
did not see the young men of my lord whom
you sent. 26 Now therefore, my lord, [y]*as* the
LORD lives and *as* your soul lives, since the
LORD has [z]held you back from coming to
bloodshed and from [a]avenging yourself
with your own hand, now then, [b]let your
enemies and those who seek harm for my
lord be as Nabal. 27 And now [c]this present
which your maidservant has brought to
my lord, let it be given to the young men
who follow my lord. 28 Please forgive the
trespass of your maidservant. For [d]the

* **25:17** Literally *son of Belial* * **25:25** Literally *Fool*

25:2 ***Maon.*** Located in the Judean hill country, Maon was about eight miles south of Hebron. ***Carmel.*** Carmel was located on the edge of the Judean wilderness, about a mile north of Maon. ***shearing his sheep.*** Like the times of harvest, sheep shearing was a festive occasion.

25:21 ***repaid me evil for good.*** Saul had returned David evil for good, and David refrained from retaliation. But Nabal's insult did not meet with such forbearance. David's fierce response is actually a response of the natural man, and as such gives an

25:2 [d] 1 Sam. 23:24 [e] Josh. 15:55 **25:3** [f] Josh. 15:13 **25:4** [g] Gen. 38:13 **25:6** [h] 1 Chr. 12:18 **25:7** [i] 1 Sam. 25:15, 21 **25:8** [j] Esth. 8:17; 9:19, 22 **25:10** [k] Judg. 9:28 **25:11** [l] Judg. 8:6, 15 **25:13** [m] 1 Sam. 30:24 **25:15** [n] 1 Sam. 25:7, 21 **25:16** [o] Ex. 14:22 **25:17** [p] 1 Sam. 20:7 [q] Deut. 13:13 **25:18** [r] Gen. 32:13 **25:19** [s] Gen. 32:16, 20 **25:21** [t] Ps. 109:5 **25:22** [u] 1 Sam. 3:17; 20:13, 16 [v] 1 Sam. 25:34 [w] 1 Kin. 14:10; 21:21 **25:23** [x] Judg. 1:14 **25:26** [y] 2 Kin. 2:2 [z] Gen. 20:6 [a] [Rom. 12:19] [b] 2 Sam. 18:32 **25:27** [c] Gen. 33:11 **25:28** [d] 2 Sam. 7:11–16, 27

LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord [e]fights the battles of the LORD, [f]and evil is not found in you throughout your days. 29Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be [g]bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall [h]sling out, *as from* the pocket of a sling. 30And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you [i]ruler over Israel, 31that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."

32Then David said to Abigail: [j]"Blessed *is* the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! 33And blessed *is* your advice and blessed *are* you, because you have [k]kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. 34For indeed, *as* the LORD God of Israel lives, who has [l]kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely [m]by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!" 35So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, [n]"Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and [o]respected your person."

36Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, [p]holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* very drunk; therefore she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light. 37So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became *like* a stone. 38Then it happened, *after* about ten days, that the LORD [q]struck Nabal, and he died.

39So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, [r]"Blessed *be* the LORD, who has [s]pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has [t]kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has [u]returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head."

And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. 40When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife."

41Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to [v]wash the feet of the servants of my lord." 42So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife. 43David also took Ahinoam [w]of Jezreel, [x]and so both of them were his wives.

44But Saul had given [y]Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti* the son of Laish, who *was* from [z]Gallim.

David Spares Saul a Second Time

26 Now the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, [a]"Is David not hiding in the hill of Hachilah, opposite Jeshimon?" 2Then Saul arose and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, having [b]three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. 3And Saul encamped in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* opposite Jeshimon, by the road. But David stayed in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. 4David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul had indeed come.

5So David arose and came to the place

* **25:44** Spelled *Paltiel* in 2 Samuel 3:15

even better understanding of the force of David's commitment to restrain his natural response to Saul for the sake of his Lord.

25:29 ***bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God.*** This metaphor reflects the custom of binding valuables in a bundle to protect them from injury. The point here is that God cares for His own as a man cares for his valuable treasure.

25:30–31 Prudence—Abigail's courageous and gracious intervention saved not only her own household, but all that David had worked so hard to maintain during the years he was a fugitive. It takes more strength of character to restrain oneself than to lash out and return sting for sting. But the bitterness of grief that follows a vicious tongue or a vicious deed is a far heavier burden than suffering an injustice.

25:33 ***blessed is your advice and blessed are you.*** David responds to the wisdom of Abigail's entreaty, and he also shows that he knows she came to him without regard to personal risk. Abigail laid out the facts and David responded to her godly counsel because he was accustomed to listening to the Lord, and recognized that she was representing God's point of view.

25:39 ***the LORD has returned the wickedness.*** David was very thankful that the Lord had kept him from taking revenge on Nabal, for that would have been evil. But David was also thankful that the Lord, in His justice, had seen fit to punish Nabal. For David this would have been a reminder of his situation with Saul. David was not to touch the Lord's anointed, and the Lord would indeed at some point deal with Saul for trying to take David's life.

26:2 ***Ziph.*** Ziph was 4 miles southeast of Hebron, which would have been about 4 or 5 miles from Maon, where Nabal lived.

25:28 [e] 1 Sam. 18:17 [f] 1 Sam. 24:11 **25:29** [g] [Col. 3:3] [h] Jer. 10:18 **25:30** [i] 1 Sam. 13:14; 15:28 **25:32** [j] Luke 1:68 **25:33** [k] 1 Sam. 25:26 **25:34** [l] 1 Sam. 25:26 [m] 1 Sam. 25:22 **25:35** [n] 2 Kin. 5:19 [o] Gen. 19:21 **25:36** [p] 2 Sam. 13:28 **25:38** [q] 1 Sam. 26:10 **25:39** [r] 1 Sam. 25:32 [s] Prov. 22:23 [t] 1 Sam. 25:26, 34 [u] 1 Kin. 2:44 **25:41** [v] Luke 7:38, 44 **25:43** [w] Josh. 15:56 [x] 1 Sam. 27:3; 30:5 **25:44** [y] 2 Sam. 3:14 [z] Is. 10:30 **26:1** [a] 1 Sam. 23:19 **26:2** [b] 1 Sam. 13:2; 24:2

where Saul had encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, and [c]Abner the son of Ner, the commander of his army. Now Saul lay within the camp, with the people encamped all around him. 6Then David answered, and said to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai [d]the son of Zeruiah, brother of [e]Joab, saying, "Who will [f]go down with me to Saul in the camp?"

And [g]Abishai said, "I will go down with you."

7So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and there Saul lay sleeping within the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. And Abner and the people lay all around him. 8Then Abishai said to David, [h]"God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not *have to strike* him a second time!"

9But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; [i]for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?" 10David said furthermore, "*As* the LORD lives, [j]the LORD shall strike him, or [k]his day shall come to die, or he shall [l]go out to battle and perish. 11[m]The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed. But please, take now the spear and the jug of water that *are* by his head, and let us go." 12So David took the spear and the jug of water *by* Saul's head, and they got away; and no man saw or knew *it* or awoke. For they *were* all asleep, because [n]a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen on them.

13Now David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off, a great distance *being* between them. 14And David called out to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, "Do you not answer, Abner?"

Then Abner answered and said, "Who *are* you, calling out to the king?"

15So David said to Abner, "*Are* you not a man? And who *is* like you in Israel? Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. 16This thing that you have done *is* not good. *As* the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear *is,* and the jug of water that *was* by his head."

17Then Saul knew David's voice, and said, [o]"*Is* that your voice, my son David?"

David said, "*It is* my voice, my lord, O king." 18And he said, [p]"Why does my lord thus pursue his servant? For what have I done, or what evil *is* in my hand? 19Now therefore, please, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant: If the LORD has [q]stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering. But if *it is* the children of men, *may* they *be* cursed before the LORD, [r]for they have driven me out this day from sharing in the [s]inheritance of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' 20So now, do not let my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD. For the king of Israel has come out to seek [t]a flea, as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains."

21Then Saul said, [u]"I have sinned. Return, my son David. For I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Indeed I have played the fool and erred exceedingly."

22And David answered and said, "Here is the king's spear. Let one of the young men come over and get it. 23[v]May the LORD [w]repay every man *for* his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the LORD delivered you into *my* hand today, but I would not stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed.

26:6 ***Abishai.*** Abishai was David's nephew (1 Chr. 2:16).

26:10 ***the LORD shall strike him, or . . . to die.*** David had just been reminded that the Lord could and would deal with his enemies, which strengthened him for his next encounter with Saul. David had not trusted in the value of Saul's expressions of remorse, but it must have been discouraging even so, to be faced with the same relentless pursuit, the same dogged determination to kill him, even though David repeatedly said he would not stretch out his hand against Saul, the king who had been anointed by God.

26:19 ***If the LORD has stirred you up.*** David knew that God could bring adverse events into someone's life to turn him to the Lord. If Saul was pursuing David because God wanted him to, God would accept a sin offering from David. But if men had stirred up Saul to kill David, that would be wicked injustice. In that case, David had no hesitation in asking God to curse them. For in driving David out of his homeland, he was effectively cut off from the inheritance of the Lord, which would include the land, the blessings on the land and people, and the special ways God had ordained for worship and sacrifice.

26:20 ***partridge.*** A partridge was known to flee for safety by running rather than fighting. David was reminding Saul that he was not fighting against the king.

26:23 Righteousness—One mark of a righteous person is that he can walk away from a situation where he has a golden chance to get in the last kick. And as he walks away, he says, "Father, forgive him, for he does not know what he is doing." David never lost sight of the fact that this business of being king was God's plan, not his own.

26:5 [c] 1 Sam. 14:50, 51; 17:55 **26:6** [d] 1 Chr. 2:16 [e] 2 Sam. 2:13 [f] Judg. 7:10, 11 [g] 2 Sam. 2:18, 24 **26:8** [h] 1 Sam. 24:4 **26:9** [i] 1 Sam. 24:6, 7 **26:10** [j] 1 Sam. 25:26, 38 [k] [Job 7:1; 14:5] [l] 1 Sam. 31:6 **26:11** [m] 1 Sam. 24:6–12 **26:12** [n] Gen. 2:21; 15:12 **26:17** [o] 1 Sam. 24:16 **26:18** [p] 1 Sam. 24:9, 11–14 **26:19** [q] 2 Sam. 16:11; 24:1 [r] Deut. 4:27, 28 [s] 2 Sam. 14:16; 20:19 **26:20** [t] 1 Sam. 24:14 **26:21** [u] 1 Sam. 15:24, 30; 24:17 **26:23** [v] Ps. 7:8; 18:20; 62:12 [w] 2 Sam. 22:21

24 And indeed, as your life was valued much
this day in my eyes, so let my life be valued
much in the eyes of the LORD, and let Him
deliver me out of all tribulation."
25 Then Saul said to David, "*May* you *be*
blessed, my son David! You shall both do
great things and also still [x]prevail."
So David went on his way, and Saul re-
turned to his place.

David Allied with the Philistines

27 And David said in his heart, "Now I
shall perish someday by the hand of
Saul. *There is* nothing better for me than
that I should speedily escape to the land
of the Philistines; and Saul will despair
of me, to seek me anymore in any part of
Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand."
2 Then David arose [a]and went over with the
six hundred men who *were* with him [b]to
Achish the son of Maoch, king of Gath. 3 So
David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and
his men, each man with his household, *and*
David [c]with his two wives, Ahinoam the
Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess,
Nabal's widow. 4 And it was told Saul that
David had fled to Gath; so he sought him
no more.
5 Then David said to Achish, "If I have
now found favor in your eyes, let them
give me a place in some town in the coun-
try, that I may dwell there. For why should
your servant dwell in the royal city with
you?" 6 So Achish gave him Ziklag that
day. Therefore [d]Ziklag has belonged to the
kings of Judah to this day. 7 Now the time
that David [e]dwelt in the country of the Phi-
listines was one full year and four months.
8 And David and his men went up and
raided [f]the Geshurites, [g]the Girzites,* and
the [h]Amalekites. For those *nations* were
the inhabitants of the land from of old,
[i]as you go to Shur, even as far as the land
of Egypt. 9 Whenever David attacked the
land, he left neither man nor woman alive,
but took away the sheep, the oxen, the don-
keys, the camels, and the apparel, and re-
turned and came to Achish. 10 Then Achish
would say, "Where have you made a raid
today?" And David would say, "Against
the southern *area* of Judah, or against the
southern *area* of [j]the Jerahmeelites, or
against the southern *area* of [k]the Kenites."
11 David would save neither man nor wom-
an alive, to bring *news* to Gath, saying,
"Lest they should inform on us, saying,
'Thus David did.'" And thus *was* his be-
havior all the time he dwelt in the country
of the Philistines. 12 So Achish believed Da-
vid, saying, "He has made his people Israel
utterly abhor him; therefore he will be my
servant forever."

28 Now [a]it happened in those days that
the Philistines gathered their armies
together for war, to fight with Israel. And
Achish said to David, "You assuredly know
that you will go out with me to battle, you
and your men."
2 So David said to Achish, "Surely you
know what your servant can do."
And Achish said to David, "Therefore I
will make you one of my chief guardians
forever."

Saul Consults a Medium

3 Now [b]Samuel had died, and all Israel
had lamented for him and buried him in
[c]Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put
[d]the mediums and the spiritists out of the
land.
4 Then the Philistines gathered together,
and came and encamped at [e]Shunem. So
Saul gathered all Israel together, and they
encamped at [f]Gilboa. 5 When Saul saw the
army of the Philistines, he was [g]afraid, and

* **27:8** Or *Gezrites*

27:5 ***give me a place in some town.*** David was probably wanting more independence of movement in his own city and freedom from daily involvement with Achish's household and religious practices. This request was also a good way to find out how much Achish trusted him. If Achish was willing for David to live independently, he was not likely to be treating David as a spy or enemy.

27:10 ***the southern area of Judah.*** The Negev was a dry pastoral region, south of Hebron.

27:12 ***he will be my servant forever.*** It seems that David was double dealing with Achish in a way that was dishonest, and indeed he was. But Achish was not David's friend. He was the sworn enemy of David's people and all that David held dear. Achish intended to use David's military expertise for his own ends. This account does not say what God, whose very character is truth, thought about David's strategy. It is clear that God continued to protect and bless David during this very vulnerable time, and the raiding that David had done was continuing the commission the Lord had given the Israelites when they first came into the land.

28:2 ***you know what your servant can do.*** In this case, David is purposely ambiguous. He states that his prowess is well known, without saying that he commits this skill to Achish. David could not refuse Achish's offer without risking his life. He trusted the Lord to rescue him from this compromising situation.

28:3 ***Samuel had died.*** No one could go to Samuel for advice or direction from the Lord. ***mediums and the spiritists.*** The term *mediums* refers to necromancers, those who presume to communicate with the dead. *Spiritists* is a general term for those who have contact with spirits. In keeping with God's law, persons associated with necromancy and spiritism had been expelled from the land (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9–14).

26:25 [x] Gen. 32:28 **27:2** [a] 1 Sam. 25:13 [b] 1 Sam. 21:10 **27:3** [c] 1 Sam. 25:42, 43 **27:6** [d] Josh. 15:31; 19:5 **27:7** [e] 1 Sam. 29:3 **27:8** [f] Josh. 13:2, 13 [g] Judg. 1:29 [h] Ex. 17:8, 16 [i] Gen. 25:18 **27:10** [j] 1 Chr. 2:9, 25 [k] Judg. 1:16 **28:1** [a] 1 Sam. 29:1, 2 **28:3** [b] 1 Sam. 25:1 [c] 1 Sam. 1:19 [d] Deut. 18:10, 11 **28:4** [e] Josh. 19:18 [f] 1 Sam. 31:1 **28:5** [g] Job 18:11

his heart trembled greatly. 6And when Saul inquired of the LORD, [h]the LORD did not answer him, either by [i]dreams or [j]by Urim or by the prophets.

7Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, [k]that I may go to her and inquire of her."

And his servants said to him, "In fact, *there is* a woman who is a medium at En Dor."

8So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And [l]he said, "Please conduct a séance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you."

9Then the woman said to him, "Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has [m]cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?"

10And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, "*As* the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing."

11Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?"

And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me."

12When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you *are* Saul!"

13And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?"

And the woman said to Saul, "I saw [n]a spirit* ascending out of the earth."

14So he said to her, "What *is* his form?"

And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he *is* covered with [o]a mantle." And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground and bowed down.

15Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you [p]disturbed me by bringing me up?"

And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and [q]God has departed from me and [r]does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do."

16Then Samuel said: "So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? 17And the LORD has done for Himself* [s]as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. 18[t]Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon [u]Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. 19Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons *will be* with [v]me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

20Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night.

21And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was severely troubled, and said to him, "Look, your maidservant has obeyed your voice, and I have [w]put my life in my hands and heeded the words which you spoke to me. 22Now therefore, please, heed also the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a piece of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on *your* way."

* **28:13** Hebrew *elohim* * **28:17** Or *him*, that is, David

28:6 ***when Saul inquired of the LORD.*** It sounds as if Saul was desperate to hear from the Lord. But he had never said, "Whatever You want, Lord, I will do it." Saul knew that he had been rejected by God as king, and if he wanted to repent, Saul could have admitted to God that he was not fit to be king, and asked God to turn the kingdom over to the man of His choice. But Saul wanted to be king, and to hear from God, and have David ejected, and have the Philistines leave him alone, none of which was possible for a man who had decided to deliberately disobey the Lord.

28:7–11 Unfaithfulness—It started with disobeying God's directions about fighting with the Amalekites, and it ended with a medium. Saul apparently never saw himself as a rebel. He knew that the Lord had rejected him, but he thought that it was unjust. Rejecting God is the beginning of a downward spiral, and finally the man who had hounded the mediums from the land, was asking one for guidance because he had no hope of hearing from God.

28:10 ***Saul swore to her by the LORD.*** While engaging in a practice that was essentially a denial of God's control of everything, Saul swore in God's name that he would protect the woman.

28:12 ***When the woman saw Samuel.*** The appearance of Samuel has been interpreted in various ways. Some think that a demon impersonated Samuel, and others think that Saul was tricked into believing it was Samuel. It seems best to follow the early view that this was a genuine appearance of Samuel, which God Himself brought about. Several points favor this interpretation. The medium herself was surprised and frightened by his appearance. Saul identified the figure as Samuel. The message Samuel spoke was clearly from God. The text says the figure was Samuel. There is no inherent difficulty with God bringing back the spirit of Samuel from heaven and allowing him to appear to Saul—in spite of the woman's evil profession.

28:19 ***with me.*** The words "with me" refer to the grave. This text is not intended to provide a final answer concerning Saul's spiritual status. At the very least, it does indicate the reality of life after death.

28:6 *h* 1 Sam. 14:37 *i* Num. 12:6 *j* Ex. 28:30 **28:7** *k* 1 Chr. 10:13 **28:8** *l* Deut. 18:10, 11 **28:9** *m* 1 Sam. 28:3 **28:13** *n* Ex. 22:28 **28:14** *o* 1 Sam. 15:27 **28:15** *p* Is. 14:9 *q* 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:12 *r* 1 Sam. 28:6 **28:17** *s* 1 Sam. 15:28 **28:18** *t* 1 Chr. 10:13 *u* 1 Sam. 15:3–9 **28:19** *v* Job 3:17–19 **28:21** *w* Job 13:14

23But he refused and said, "I will not eat."
So his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he heeded their voice. Then he arose from the ground and sat on the bed. 24Now the woman had a fatted calf in the house, and she hastened to kill it. And she took flour and kneaded *it,* and baked unleavened bread from it. 25So she brought *it* before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

The Philistines Reject David

29 Then [a]the Philistines gathered together all their armies [b]at Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which *is* in Jezreel. 2And the [c]lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but [d]David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. 3Then the princes of the Philistines said, "What *are* these Hebrews *doing here*?"
And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, "*Is* this not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me [e]these days, or these years? And to this day I have [f]found no fault in him since he defected *to me*."
4But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; so the princes of the Philistines said to him, [g]"Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to [h]battle, lest [i]in the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these [j]men? 5*Is* this not David, [k]of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying:

[l]'Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands'?"*

6Then Achish called David and said to him, "Surely, *as* the LORD lives, you have been upright, and [m]your going out and your coming in with me in the army *is* good in my sight. For to this day [n]I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless the lords do not favor you. 7Therefore return now, and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines."
8So David said to Achish, "But what have I done? And to this day what have you found in your servant as long as I have been with you, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"
9Then Achish answered and said to David, "I know that you *are* as good in my sight [o]as an angel of God; nevertheless [p]the princes of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.' 10Now therefore, rise early in the morning with your master's servants [q]who have come with you.* And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart."
11So David and his men rose early to depart in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. [r]And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

David's Conflict with the Amalekites

30 Now it happened, when David and his men came to [a]Ziklag, on the third day, that the [b]Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire, 2and had taken captive the [c]women and those who *were* there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried *them* away and went their way. 3So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. 4Then David and the people who *were* with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5And David's two [d]wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. 6Now David was greatly distressed, for [e]the people spoke

* **29:5** Compare 1 Samuel 18:7 * **29:10** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint adds *and go to the place which I have selected for you there; and set no bothersome word in your heart, for you are good before me. And rise on your way.*

29:6 ***you have been upright.*** David had not been honest with Achish, but he had not turned his hand against Achish personally.
29:7 ***return.*** This was the God-orchestrated escape from a compromising situation that David was confident God would provide. ***go in peace.*** This farewell was more than a courtesy. Achish was releasing David from any further obligation that he had incurred when Achish had made David his vassal in Ziklag.
29:9–10 Prudence—Achish saw David as an angel of God. There must have been something in the way that David conducted himself that showed even a pagan Philistine that David belonged to the God of Israel, and that this was a good place to be. David was being very careful in how he dealt with the Philistine. He could not endanger the people who depended on him, nor be unfaithful to his Lord. Only God can help us when we have to live in such a difficult situation.
30:1 ***Amalekites.*** The Amalekites were a nomadic people who roamed the dry land south of the hill country. For their attack on the Israelites after the exodus from Egypt (Ex. 17:8–13), they were placed under divine judgment (Deut. 25:19).

29:1 [a] 1 Sam. 28:1 [b] 1 Sam. 4:1 **29:2** [c] 1 Sam. 6:4; 7:7 [d] 1 Sam. 28:1, 2 **29:3** [e] 1 Sam. 27:7 [f] Dan. 6:5 **29:4** [g] 1 Sam. 27:6 [h] 1 Sam. 14:21 [i] 1 Sam. 29:9 [j] 1 Chr. 12:19, 20 **29:5** [k] 1 Sam. 21:11 [l] 1 Sam. 18:7 **29:6** [m] 2 Sam. 3:25 [n] 1 Sam. 29:3 **29:9** [o] 2 Sam. 14:17, 20; 19:27 [p] 1 Sam. 29:4 **29:10** [q] 1 Chr. 12:19, 22 **29:11** [r] 2 Sam. 4:4 **30:1** [a] 1 Sam. 27:6 [b] 1 Sam. 15:7; 27:8 **30:2** [c] 1 Sam. 27:2, 3 **30:5** [d] 1 Sam. 25:42, 43 **30:6** [e] Ex. 17:4

of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. [f]But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

[7][g]Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And [h]Abiathar brought the ephod to David. [8][i]So David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?"

And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake *them* and without fail recover *all*."

[9]So David went, he and the six hundred men who *were* with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where those stayed who were left behind. [10]But David pursued, he and four hundred men; [j]for two hundred stayed *behind,* who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Besor.

[11]Then they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David; and they gave him bread and he ate, and they let him drink water. [12]And they gave him a piece of [k]a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. So [l]when he had eaten, his strength came back to him; for he had eaten no bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. [13]Then David said to him, "To whom do you *belong,* and where *are* you from?"

And he said, "I *am* a young man from Egypt, servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind, because three days ago I fell sick. [14]We made an invasion of the southern *area* of [m]the Cherethites, in the *territory* which *belongs* to Judah, and of the southern *area* [n]of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire."

[15]And David said to him, "Can you take me down to this troop?"

So he said, "Swear to me by God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my [o]master, and I will take you down to this troop."

[16]And when he had brought him down, there they were, spread out over all the land, [p]eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil which they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. [17]Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. [18]So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. [19]And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; [q]David recovered all. [20]Then David took all the flocks and herds they had driven before those *other* livestock, and said, "This *is* David's spoil."

[21]Now David came to the [r]two hundred men who had been so weary that they could not follow David, whom they also had made to stay at the Brook Besor. So they went out to meet David and to meet the people who *were* with him. And when David came near the people, he greeted them. [22]Then all the wicked and [s]worthless men* of those who went with David answered and said, "Because they did not go with us, we will not give them *any* of the spoil that we have recovered, except for every man's wife and children, that they may lead *them* away and depart."

[23]But David said, "My brethren, you shall not do so with what the LORD has given us, who has preserved us and delivered into our hand the troop that came against us. [24]For who will heed you in this matter? But [t]as his part *is* who goes down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* who stays by the supplies; they shall share alike." [25]So it was, from that day forward; he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

[26]Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent *some* of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD"— [27]to *those* who *were* in Bethel, *those* who *were* in [u]Ramoth of the South, *those* who *were* in [v]Jattir, [28]*those* who *were* in [w]Aroer, *those* who *were* in [x]Siphmoth, *those* who *were* in [y]Eshtemoa, [29]*those* who *were* in Rachal, *those* who *were* in the cities of [z]the Jerahmeelites, *those* who *were* in the cities of the [a]Kenites, [30]*those* who *were* in [b]Hormah, *those* who *were* in Chorashan,* *those* who *were* in Athach, [31]*those* who *were* in [c]Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were accustomed to [d]rove.

* **30:22** Literally *men of Belial* * **30:30** Or *Borashan*

30:7 *ephod.* The Urim and Thumim were attached to the ephod. The Lord could be consulted by the means of the Urim and Thummim, but the Bible does not say how this worked.

30:10 *so weary.* The weariness of David's men was due to the fact that they had traveled about 80 miles from Aphek to Ziklag (29:1; 30:1), only to set off immediately in pursuit of the Amalekites.

30:26 *sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah.* This goodwill gesture helped David reestablish his relationships among the leaders of Judah after his stay in Philistine territory.

30:31 *Hebron.* Hebron was a Levitical city, and a city of refuge, and it was soon to become David's capital (2 Sam. 5:3).

30:6 [f] Hab. 3:17–19 **30:7** [g] 1 Sam. 23:2–9 [h] 1 Sam. 23:6 **30:8** [i] 1 Sam. 23:2, 4 **30:10** [j] 1 Sam. 30:9, 21 **30:12** [k] 1 Sam. 25:18 [l] Judg. 15:19 **30:14** [m] 2 Sam. 8:18 [n] Josh. 14:13; 15:13 **30:15** [o] Deut. 23:15 **30:16** [p] 1 Thess. 5:3 **30:19** [q] 1 Sam. 30:8 **30:21** [r] 1 Sam. 30:10 **30:22** [s] Deut. 13:13 **30:24** [t] Josh. 22:8 **30:27** [u] Josh. 19:8 [v] Josh. 15:48; 21:14 **30:28** [w] Josh. 13:16 [x] 1 Chr. 27:27 [y] Josh. 15:50 **30:29** [z] 1 Sam. 27:10 [a] Judg. 1:16 **30:30** [b] Judg. 1:17 **30:31** [c] 2 Sam. 2:1 [d] 1 Sam. 23:22

The Tragic End of Saul and His Sons

31 Now [a]the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount [b]Gilboa. **2**Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed [c]Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. **3**[d]The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers.

4[e]Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest [f]these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me."

But his armorbearer would not, [g]for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and [h]fell on it. **5**And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him. **6**So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day.

7And when the men of Israel who *were* on the other side of the valley, and *those* who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. **8**So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. **9**And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent *word* throughout the land of the Philistines, to [i]proclaim *it in* the temple of their idols and among the people. **10**[j]Then they put his armor in the temple of the [k]Ashtoreths, and [l]they fastened his body to the wall of [m]Beth Shan.*

11[n]Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, **12**[o]all the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and [p]burned them there. **13**Then they took their bones and [q]buried *them* under the tamarisk tree at [r]Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

* **31:10** Spelled *Beth Shean* in Joshua 17:11 and elsewhere

31:2 ***Saul and his sons.*** Saul's fourth son, Ishbosheth, was apparently not present at this battle, since Abner promoted him to king after Saul's death (2 Sam. 2:8–10).

31:6 ***all his men.*** This does not refer to the whole army, but rather to men who were particularly associated with Saul, such as his royal body guards.

31:11 ***inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead.*** The inhabitants of this town had been delivered from the threats of Nahash the Ammonite by Saul in his first military campaign as king of Israel (11:1–11).

31:13 ***and fasted seven days.*** In ancient Israel, fasting was a way of expressing sorrow in mourning. With their fasting, the men of Jabesh showed their respect for Israel's first king.

31:1 [a] 1 Chr. 10:1–12 [b] 1 Sam. 28:4 **31:2** [c] 1 Sam. 14:49 **31:3** [d] 2 Sam. 1:6 **31:4** [e] Judg. 9:54 [f] 1 Sam. 14:6; 17:26, 36 [g] 2 Sam. 1:14 [h] 2 Sam. 1:6, 10 **31:9** [i] 2 Sam. 1:20 **31:10** [j] 1 Sam. 21:9 [k] Judg. 2:13 [l] 2 Sam. 21:12 [m] Judg. 1:27 **31:11** [n] 1 Sam. 11:1–13 **31:12** [o] 2 Sam. 2:4–7 [p] 2 Chr. 16:14 **31:13** [q] 2 Sam. 2:4, 5; 21:12–14 [r] Gen. 50:10

THE SECOND BOOK OF
SAMUEL

▶ **AUTHOR:** No author is mentioned anywhere in this book. Although the traditional view is that Samuel wrote 2 Samuel, it was probably compiled by one man who combined the written chronicles of "Nathan the prophet" and "Gad the seer" (1 Chr. 29:29). In addition to these written sources, the compiler evidently used another source called the "Book of Jasher" (1:18).

▶ **TIME:** c. 1011–971 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 Sam. 7:12–13

▶ **THEME:** Second Samuel begins with Saul's death and David's ascension to the throne of Judah. A few years later he becomes the king of all of Israel. During his reign there were many problems, most of which can be traced back to David's own behavior. He abuses power and plays favorites with his sons. The result is much personal sorrow and the seeds of discord that follow in succeeding generations. Second Samuel gives us a full picture of a king, a poet, a soldier, and a sinner who yearns after God's own heart and follows where He leads.

The Report of Saul's Death

1 Now it came to pass after the [a]death of Saul, when David had returned from [b]the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, **2**on the third day, behold, it happened that [c]a man came from Saul's camp [d]with his clothes torn and dust on his head. So it was, when he came to David, that he [e]fell to the ground and prostrated himself.

3And David said to him, "Where have you come from?"

So he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel."

4Then David said to him, [f]"How did the matter go? Please tell me."

And he answered, "The people have fled from the battle, many of the people are fallen and dead, and Saul and [g]Jonathan his son are dead also."

5So David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?"

6Then the young man who told him said, "As I happened by chance *to be* on [h]Mount Gilboa, there was [i]Saul, leaning on his spear; and indeed the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. **7**Now when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' **8**And he said to me, 'Who *are* you?' So I answered him, 'I *am* an Amalekite.' **9**He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still *remains* in me.' **10**So I stood over him and [j]killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that *was* on his head and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord."

11Therefore David took hold of his own clothes and [k]tore them, and *so did* all the men who *were* with him. **12**And they [l]mourned and wept and [m]fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the [n]people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

13Then David said to the young man who told him, "Where *are* you from?"

And he answered, "I *am* the son of an alien, an Amalekite."

1:2 *clothes torn and dust on his head.* Dust or ashes on the head, torn clothing, and sackcloth were all signs of mourning.

1:12 *fasted.* Spiritual fasting is abstaining from food to devote time and energy to prayer. Sometimes people plan a time of fasting, and sometimes it just comes upon them because overwhelming spiritual needs supersede all thought of food. This was a time of true calamity for Israel, even though it solved a problem for David. He was personally very grieved, for he had known the man Saul as he could have been, and he had lost Jonathan, the best friend he would ever have. His future as king seemed assured, but the task of uniting the nation would be very difficult.

1:1 [a] 1 Sam. 31:6 [b] 1 Sam. 30:1, 17, 26 **1:2** [c] 2 Sam. 4:10 [d] 1 Sam. 4:12 [e] 1 Sam. 25:23 **1:4** [f] 1 Sam. 4:16; 31:3 [g] 1 Sam. 31:2 **1:6** [h] 1 Sam. 31:1 [i] 1 Sam. 31:2–4 **1:10** [j] Judg. 9:54 **1:11** [k] 2 Sam. 3:31; 13:31 **1:12** [l] 2 Sam. 3:31 [m] 1 Sam. 31:13 [n] 2 Sam. 6:21

14 So David said to him, "How [o]was it you
were not [p]afraid to [q]put forth your hand to
destroy the LORD's anointed?" 15 Then [r]Da-
vid called one of the young men and said,
"Go near, *and* execute him!" And he struck
him so that he died. 16 So David said to him,
[s]"Your blood *is* on your own head, for [t]your
own mouth has testified against you, say-
ing, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.'"

The Song of the Bow

17 Then David lamented with this lamen-
tation over Saul and over Jonathan his son,
18 [u]and he told *them* to teach the children
of Judah *the Song of* the Bow; indeed *it is*
written [v]in the Book of Jasher:

19 "The beauty of Israel is slain on your
high places!
[w]How the mighty have fallen!
20 [x]Tell *it* not in Gath,
Proclaim *it* not in the streets of
[y]Ashkelon—
Lest [z]the daughters of the Philistines
rejoice,
Lest the daughters of [a]the
uncircumcised triumph.

21 "O [b]mountains of Gilboa,
[c]*Let there be* no dew nor rain upon
you,
Nor fields of offerings.
For the shield of the mighty is cast
away there!
The shield of Saul, not [d]anointed with
oil.
22 From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
[e]The bow of Jonathan did not turn
back,
And the sword of Saul did not return
empty.

23 "Saul and Jonathan *were* beloved and
pleasant in their lives,
And in their [f]death they were not
divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were [g]stronger than lions.

24 "O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with
luxury;
Who put ornaments of gold on your
apparel.

25 "How the mighty have fallen in the
midst of the battle!
Jonathan *was* slain in your high
places.
26 I am distressed for you, my brother
Jonathan;
You have been very pleasant to me;
[h]Your love to me was wonderful,
Surpassing the love of women.

27 "How[i] the mighty have fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!"

David Anointed King of Judah

2 It happened after this that David [a]in-
quired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go
up to any of the cities of Judah?"
And the LORD said to him, "Go up."
David said, "Where shall I go up?"
And He said, "To [b]Hebron."
2 So David went up there, and his [c]two
wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and
Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite.
3 And David brought up [d]the men who *were*
with him, every man with his household.
So they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.
4 [e]Then the men of Judah came, and there
they [f]anointed David king over the house of
Judah. And they told David, saying, [g]"The
men of Jabesh Gilead *were the ones* who
buried Saul." 5 So David sent messengers to
the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them,
[h]"You *are* blessed of the LORD, for you have
shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul,
and have buried him. 6 And now may [i]the
LORD show kindness and truth to you. I
also will repay you this kindness, because
you have done this thing. 7 Now therefore,
let your hands be strengthened, and be val-
iant; for your master Saul is dead, and also
the house of Judah has anointed me king
over them."

Ishbosheth Made King of Israel

8 But [j]Abner the son of Ner, commander
of Saul's army, took Ishbosheth* the son of
Saul and brought him over to [k]Mahanaim;

* **2:8** Called *Esh-Baal* in 1 Chronicles 8:33 and 9:39

1:14 ***the LORD's anointed.*** David's use of the phrase "the LORD's anointed" indicates that even though Saul was his enemy, David honored the position that Saul had as God's representative. David repeatedly refused to harm Saul because of this (1 Sam. 24:6; 26:9).
1:15 ***struck him.*** The Amalekite had probably been hoping for a reward from David. His story was a lie (1 Sam. 31), and this lie cost him his life. David's execution of the Amalekite was a strong testimony to those under his command that he had no part in Saul's death and did not reward it in any way.
2:5 ***kindness.*** David was grateful to the men who had shown kindness to Saul. This acknowledgment was not an act of politeness, but came from David's own heart of compassion. Saul repeatedly demonstrated that he considered himself above correction, but David was careful to maintain an attitude of kindness and humility.

1:14 [o] Num. 12:8 [p] 1 Sam. 31:4 [q] 1 Sam. 24:6; 26:9
1:15 [r] 2 Sam. 4:10, 12 **1:16** [s] 1 Kin. 2:32–37 [t] Luke 19:22 **1:18** [u] 1 Sam. 31:3 [v] Josh. 10:13 **1:19** [w] 2 Sam. 1:27 **1:20** [x] Mic. 1:10 [y] Jer. 25:20 [z] Ex. 15:20 [a] 1 Sam. 31:4 **1:21** [b] 1 Sam. 31:1 [c] Ezek. 31:15 [d] 1 Sam. 10:1
1:22 [e] 1 Sam. 18:4 **1:23** [f] 1 Sam. 31:2–4 [g] Judg. 14:18
1:26 [h] 1 Sam. 18:1–4; 19:2; 20:17 **1:27** [i] 2 Sam. 1:19, 25
2:1 [a] Judg. 1:1 [b] 1 Sam. 30:31 **2:2** [c] 1 Sam. 25:42, 43; 30:5 **2:3** [d] 1 Chr. 12:1 **2:4** [e] 1 Sam. 30:26 [f] 1 Sam. 16:13 [g] 1 Sam. 31:11–13 **2:5** [h] Ruth 2:20; 3:10 **2:6** [i] 2 Tim. 1:16, 18 **2:8** [j] 1 Sam. 14:50 [k] 2 Sam. 17:24

9 and he made him king over [l]Gilead,
over the [m]Ashurites, over [n]Jezreel, over
Ephraim, over Benjamin, and over all Is-
rael. 10 Ishbosheth, Saul's son, *was* forty
years old when he began to reign over Is-
rael, and he reigned two years. Only the
house of Judah followed David. 11 And [o]the
time that David was king in Hebron over
the house of Judah was seven years and
six months.

Israel and Judah at War

12 Now Abner the son of Ner, and the ser-
vants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went
out from Mahanaim to [p]Gibeon. 13 And
[q]Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants
of David, went out and met them by [r]the
pool of Gibeon. So they sat down, one on
one side of the pool and the other on the
other side of the pool. 14 Then Abner said
to Joab, "Let the young men now arise and
compete before us."

And Joab said, "Let them arise."

15 So they arose and went over by num-
ber, twelve from Benjamin, *followers* of
Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve
from the servants of David. 16 And each
one grasped his opponent by the head
and *thrust* his sword in his opponent's
side; so they fell down together. Therefore
that place was called the Field of Sharp
Swords,* which *is* in Gibeon. 17 So there
was a very fierce battle that day, and Abner
and the men of Israel were beaten before
the servants of David.

18 Now the [s]three sons of Zeruiah were
there: Joab and Abishai and Asahel. And
Asahel *was* [t]*as* fleet of foot [u]as a wild ga-
zelle. 19 So Asahel pursued Abner, and in
going he did not turn to the right hand or
to the left from following Abner.

20 Then Abner looked behind him and
said, "*Are* you Asahel?"

He answered, "I *am*."

21 And Abner said to him, "Turn aside
to your right hand or to your left, and lay
hold on one of the young men and take his
armor for yourself." But Asahel would not
turn aside from following him. 22 So Abner
said again to Asahel, "Turn aside from fol-
lowing me. Why should I strike you to the
ground? How then could I face your brother
Joab?" 23 However, he refused to turn aside.
Therefore Abner struck him [v]in the stom-
ach with the blunt end of the spear, so that
the spear came out of his back; and he fell
down there and died on the spot. So it was
that as many as came to the place where
Asahel fell down and died, stood [w]still.

24 Joab and Abishai also pursued Ab-
ner. And the sun was going down when
they came to the hill of Ammah, which *is*
before Giah by the road to the Wilderness
of Gibeon. 25 Now the children of Benjamin
gathered together behind Abner and be-
came a unit, and took their stand on top of
a hill. 26 Then Abner called to Joab and said,
"Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not
know that it will be bitter in the latter end?
How long will it be then until you tell the peo-
ple to return from pursuing their brethren?"

27 And Joab said, "*As* God lives, unless
[x]you had spoken, surely then by morning
all the people would have given up pursu-
ing their brethren." 28 So Joab blew a trum-
pet; and all the people stood still and did
not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they
fight anymore. 29 Then Abner and his men
went on all that night through the plain,
crossed over the Jordan, and went through
all Bithron; and they came to Mahanaim.

30 So Joab returned from pursuing Ab-
ner. And when he had gathered all the peo-
ple together, there were missing of David's
servants nineteen men and Asahel. 31 But
the servants of David had struck down, of
Benjamin and Abner's men, three hundred
and sixty men who died. 32 Then they took
up Asahel and buried him in his father's
tomb, which *was in* [y]Bethlehem. And Joab
and his men went all night, and they came
to Hebron at daybreak.

3 Now there was a long [a]war between the
house of Saul and the house of David.
But David grew stronger and stronger, and
the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

Sons of David

2 Sons were born [b]to David in Hebron:
His firstborn was Amnon [c]by Ahinoam

* **2:16** Hebrew *Helkath Hazzurim*

2:18 ***Joab and Abishai and Asahel.*** The three brothers were David's nephews, children of his sister Zeruiah (1 Chr. 2:13–16).

2:19 ***Asahel pursued Abner.*** Asahel did not have a personal grudge against Abner. This was a military move. If Abner, the chief military leader, was dead, Ishbosheth's power base would dissolve.

3:1 Strife—Finally David was in a position to push to establish his kingdom. It was still a contest of power and loyalty. An important question had to be settled: Is the king chosen by God? Or is the one who seizes the power the king? David knew he had to establish himself both politically and militarily, but he wanted to show, even in battle, that he trusted God to establish his kingdom.

3:2 ***Sons were born to David.*** David began his reign in Judah with two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail. His wife Michal, the daughter of Saul, had been given to another when David fled from Saul. In Hebron David married four more wives, in spite of the warning from Moses that a king should not "multiply wives for himself" (Deut. 17:17).

2:9 [l] Josh. 22:9 [m] Judg. 1:32 [n] 1 Sam. 29:1 **2:11** [o] 2 Sam. 5:5 **2:12** [p] Josh. 10:2–12; 18:25 **2:13** [q] 1 Chr. 2:16; 11:6 [r] Jer. 41:12 **2:18** [s] 1 Chr. 2:16 [t] 1 Chr. 12:8 [u] Ps. 18:33 **2:23** [v] 2 Sam. 3:27; 4:6; 20:10 [w] 2 Sam. 20:12 **2:27** [x] 2 Sam. 2:14 **2:32** [y] 1 Sam. 20:6 **3:1** [a] 1 Kin. 14:30 **3:2** [b] 1 Chr. 3:1–4 [c] 1 Sam. 25:42, 43

the Jezreelitess; 3his second, Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; the third, [d]Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king [e]of Geshur; 4the fourth, [f]Adonijah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 5and the sixth, Ithream, by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

Abner Joins Forces with David

6Now it was so, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner was strengthening *his hold* on the house of Saul.

7And Saul had a concubine, whose name *was* [g]Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. So *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, "Why have you [h]gone in to my father's concubine?"

8Then Abner became very angry at the words of Ishbosheth, and said, "*Am* I [i]a dog's head that belongs to Judah? Today I show loyalty to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not delivered you into the hand of David; and you charge me today with a fault concerning this woman? 9[j]May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David [k]as the LORD has sworn to him—10to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, [l]from Dan to Beer-sheba." 11And he could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

12Then Abner sent messengers on his behalf to David, saying, "Whose *is* the land?" saying *also*, "Make your covenant with me, and indeed my hand *shall be* with you to bring all Israel to you."

13And *David* said, "Good, I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you: [m]you shall not see my face unless you first bring [n]Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see my face." 14So David sent messengers to [o]Ishbosheth, Saul's son, saying, "Give *me* my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself [p]for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines." 15And Ishbosheth sent and took her from *her* husband, from Paltiel* the son of Laish. 16Then her husband went along with her to [q]Bahurim, weeping behind her. So Abner said to him, "Go, return!" And he returned.

17Now Abner had communicated with the elders of Israel, saying, "In time past you were seeking for David *to be* king over you. 18Now then, do *it!* [r]For the LORD has spoken of David, saying, 'By the hand of My servant David, I* will save My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and the hand of all their enemies.'" 19And Abner also spoke in the hearing of [s]Benjamin. Then Abner also went to speak in the hearing of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel and the whole house of Benjamin.

20So Abner and twenty men with him came to David at Hebron. And David made a feast for Abner and the men who *were* with him. 21Then Abner said to David, "I will arise and go, and [t]gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may [u]reign over all that your heart desires." So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.

Joab Murders Abner

22At that moment the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much spoil with them. But Abner *was* not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace. 23When Joab and all the troops that *were* with him had come, they told Joab, saying, "Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he sent him away, and he has gone in peace."

* **3:15** Spelled *Palti* in 1 Samuel 25:44 * **3:18** Following many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum; Masoretic Text reads *he*.

3:3 *Chileab.* Chileab is also called Daniel (1 Chr. 3:1).

3:5 *born to David in Hebron.* These six sons, each from a different mother, constituted the royal family during David's reign over the house of Judah. The dynastic lists in Chronicles include four sons of David by Bathsheba (1 Chr. 3:5) and nine other sons whose mothers are not named (1 Chr. 3:6–8).

3:7 *gone in to my father's concubine.* The royal harem was the property of the king's successor. Taking a king's concubine was tantamount to claiming the throne.

3:8 *dog's head.* In the ancient Middle East dogs were scavengers, living off dead animals and garbage, and were viewed with contempt. ***Judah.*** The tribe of Judah was the enemy of Ishbosheth. In essence Abner was saying, "Do you think I am the scum of the enemy?"

3:13 *Michal.* David's first wife, Michal (1 Sam. 18:17–27) was left in Gibeah when David fled from Saul's court (1 Sam. 19:11–27). Saul then gave his daughter Michal, perhaps out of spite, to a man named Palti (1 Sam. 25:44). This request of David's was certainly in line with his rights as a husband who had given a proper dowry for his bride, and it was also a political statement. He was asserting his power over the house of Saul. (See note at 3:7.)

3:16 *her husband went along with her.* Michal's husband wept. Nothing is said of Michal's feelings, or of David's. A king did not leave his wife with another man, for that was in the same category as another man taking the king's concubines. How he, or anyone else felt about it, had no bearing on the situation. (See note at 3:7.)

3:22 *gone in peace.* The words "gone in peace" are repeated (v. 21), to emphasize that the hostilities between David and Abner had been resolved.

3:3 [d] 2 Sam. 15:1–10 [e] Josh. 13:13 **3:4** [f] 1 Kin. 1:5 **3:7** [g] 2 Sam. 21:8–11 [h] 2 Sam. 16:21 **3:8** [i] 1 Sam. 24:14 **3:9** [j] 1 Kin. 19:2 [k] 1 Chr. 12:23 **3:10** [l] 1 Sam. 3:20 **3:13** [m] Gen. 43:3 [n] 1 Sam. 18:20; 19:11; 25:44 **3:14** [o] 2 Sam. 2:10 [p] 1 Sam. 18:25–27 **3:16** [q] 2 Sam. 16:5; 19:16 **3:18** [r] 2 Sam. 3:9 **3:19** [s] 1 Chr. 12:29 **3:21** [t] 2 Sam. 3:10, 12 [u] 1 Kin. 11:37

24 Then Joab came to the king and said,
"What have you done? Look, Abner came
to you; why *is* it *that* you sent him away,
and he has already gone? 25 Surely you
realize that Abner the son of Ner came to
deceive you, to know [v]your going out and
your coming in, and to know all that you
are doing."
26 And when Joab had gone from David's
presence, he sent messengers after Abner,
who brought him back from the well of
Sirah. But David did not know *it*. 27 Now
when Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab
[w]took him aside in the gate to speak with
him privately, and there stabbed him [x]in
the stomach, so that he died for the blood
of [y]Asahel his brother.
28 Afterward, when David heard *it*, he
said, "My kingdom and I *are* guiltless be-
fore the LORD forever of the blood of Abner
the son of Ner. 29 [z]Let it rest on the head of
Joab and on all his father's house; and let
there never fail to be in the house of Joab
one [a]who has a discharge or is a leper, who
leans on a staff or falls by the sword, or
who lacks bread." 30 So Joab and Abishai
his brother killed Abner, because he had
killed their brother [b]Asahel at Gibeon in
the battle.

David's Mourning for Abner

31 Then David said to Joab and to all the
people who were with him, [c]"Tear your
clothes, [d]gird yourselves with sackcloth,
and mourn for Abner." And King David
followed the coffin. 32 So they buried Abner
in Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice
and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the
people wept. 33 And the king sang *a lament*
over Abner and said:

"Should Abner die as a [e]fool dies?
34 Your hands were not bound
Nor your feet put into fetters;
As a man falls before wicked men, *so*
you fell."

Then all the people wept over him again.
35 And when all the people came [f]to per-
suade David to eat food while it was still
day, David took an oath, saying, [g]"God do
so to me, and more also, if I taste bread
or anything else [h]till the sun goes down!"
36 Now all the people took note *of it*, and it
pleased them, since whatever the king did
pleased all the people. 37 For all the people
and all Israel understood that day that it
had not been the king's *intent* to kill Ab-
ner the son of Ner. 38 Then the king said
to his servants, "Do you not know that a
prince and a great man has fallen this day
in Israel? 39 And I *am* weak today, though
anointed king; and these men, the sons of
Zeruiah, [i]*are* too harsh for me. [j]The LORD
shall repay the evildoer according to his
wickedness."

Ishbosheth Is Murdered

4 When Saul's son* heard that Abner had
died in Hebron, [a]he lost heart, and all
Israel was [b]troubled. 2 Now Saul's son *had*
two men *who were* captains of troops. The
name of one *was* Baanah and the name of
the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the
Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin. (For
[c]Beeroth also was *part* of Benjamin, 3 be-
cause the Beerothites fled to [d]Gittaim and
have been sojourners there until this day.)
4 [e]Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *who*
was lame in *his* feet. He was five years old
when the news about Saul and Jonathan
came [f]from Jezreel; and his nurse took him
up and fled. And it happened, as she made
haste to flee, that he fell and became lame.
His name *was* [g]Mephibosheth.*
5 Then the sons of Rimmon the Beeroth-
ite, Rechab and Baanah, set out and came
at about the heat of the day to the [h]house
of Ishbosheth, who was lying on his bed at
noon. 6 And they came there, all the way
into the house, *as though* to get wheat, and
they stabbed him [i]in the stomach. Then
Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.
7 For when they came into the house, he
was lying on his bed in his bedroom; then
they struck him and killed him, beheaded
him and took his head, and were all night
escaping through the plain. 8 And they
brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at
Hebron, and said to the king, "Here is the
head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul your
enemy, [j]who sought your life; and the LORD

* **4:1** That is, Ishbosheth * **4:4** Called *Merib-Baal* in 1 Chronicles 8:34 and 9:40

4:8–10 ***brought the head of Ishbosheth to David.*** Ishbosheth was Jonathan's brother. Whether or not they looked alike, David had no desire to have the head of his beloved friend's brother brought to him as a prize. Once again, greed for a reward overcame prudence, and the plotters lost their lives on their own testimony.

4:9–12 Strife—Once again David was faced with the question: Who was going to establish his kingdom? In David's mind the answer could only be "God." David wanted to meet his adversary honestly on the field of battle or over a flag of truce, but he would have nothing to do with murder. There was another compelling reason for David to conduct himself honorably. David was closely associated with Ishbosheth as the brother of his wife and of his best friend, and he did not find it easy to be at war with him.

3:25 [v] 1 Sam. 29:6 **3:27** [w] 1 Kin. 2:5 [x] 2 Sam. 4:6 [y] 2 Sam. 2:23 **3:29** [z] 1 Kin. 2:32, 33 [a] Lev. 15:2 **3:30** [b] 2 Sam. 2:23 **3:31** [c] Josh. 7:6 [d] Gen. 37:34 **3:33** [e] 2 Sam. 13:12, 13 **3:35** [f] 2 Sam. 12:17 [g] Ruth 1:17 [h] 2 Sam. 1:12 **3:39** [i] 2 Sam. 19:5–7 [j] 1 Kin. 2:5, 6, 32–34 **4:1** [a] Ezra 4:4 [b] Matt. 2:3 **4:2** [c] Josh. 18:25 **4:3** [d] Neh. 11:33 **4:4** [e] 2 Sam. 9:3 [f] 1 Sam. 29:1, 11 [g] 2 Sam. 9:6 **4:5** [h] 2 Sam. 2:8, 9 **4:6** [i] 2 Sam. 2:23; 20:10 **4:8** [j] 1 Sam. 19:2, 10, 11; 23:15; 25:29

has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and his descendants."

9But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, "*As* the LORD lives, [k]who has redeemed my life from all adversity, 10when [l]someone told me, saying, 'Look, Saul is dead,' thinking to have brought good news, I arrested him and had him executed in Ziklag—the one who *thought* I would give him a reward for *his* news. 11How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous person in his own house on his bed? Therefore, shall I not now [m]require his blood at your hand and remove you from the earth?" 12So David [n]commanded his young men, and they executed them, cut off their hands and feet, and hanged *them* by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried *it* in the [o]tomb of Abner in Hebron.

David Reigns over All Israel

5 Then all the tribes of Israel [a]came to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, "Indeed [b]we *are* your bone and your flesh. 2Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, [c]you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD said to you, [d]'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.'" 3[e]Therefore all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, [f]and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron [g]before the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel. 4David *was* [h]thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* [i]he reigned forty years. 5In Hebron he reigned over Judah [j]seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

The Conquest of Jerusalem

6[k]And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against [l]the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot come in here." 7Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion [m](that *is*, the City of David).

8Now David said on that day, "Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites (the lame and the blind, *who are* hated by David's soul), [n]*he shall be chief and captain*."* Therefore they say, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house."

9Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it [o]the City of David. And David built all around from the Millo* and inward. 10So David went on and became great, and [p]the LORD God of hosts *was* with [q]him.

11Then [r]Hiram [s]king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters and masons. And they built David a house. 12So David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had [t]exalted His kingdom [u]for the sake of His people Israel.

13And [v]David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. 14Now [w]these *are*

*5:8 Compare 1 Chronicles 11:6 *5:9 Literally *The Landfill*

4:11 *righteous person.* Ishbosheth had accepted what he considered to be his rightful role as the next king after his father, Saul. Apparently, even in David's mind, Ishbosheth's supposition was reasonable.

5:3 *anointed David king over Israel.* This was the third time that David was anointed as king. The first time was in anticipation of his rule (1 Sam. 16:13), the second time was acknowledgment of his rule over Judah (2:4), and the third time acknowledged his rule over the entire nation.

5:6 *went to Jerusalem.* The city of Jerusalem was strategically located on a hill, just south of Mount Moriah, with steep cliffs on all sides except the north, making it a natural fortress. It was near the border of Judah and Benjamin. Jerusalem became the site of the temple, and the place, more than any other place on earth, which was identified with the Jewish people. It was there that Jesus was crucified, and it is there that He will come again (Zech. 14:4). ***the blind and the lame.*** Jerusalem was so strategically situated that the blind and the lame would be enough to defeat David.

5:7 *Zion.* The word Zion originally applied to the Jebusite stronghold, which became the City of David after its capture. As the city expanded to the north, encompassing Mount Moriah, the temple mount came to be called Zion (Ps. 78:68–69). Eventually the term was used as a synonym for Jerusalem (Is. 40:9).

5:8 *water shaft.* The water tunnel extended about 230 feet up from the Gihon spring to the top of the hill where the Jebusite fortress was situated (2 Chr. 32:30). The tunnel gave the city a secure water supply in the event of a siege.

5:11 *cedar trees.* Most buildings in Israel were made of stone. The use of cedar added elegance to David's palace.

5:13 *took more concubines and wives.* These marriages probably reflect David's involvement in international treaties and alliances which were sealed with the marriage of a king's daughter to the other participant in the treaty. Concubines, wives who did not have the legal rights of a true marriage, were a part of a royal harem. The status of kings in ancient times was often measured in part by the size of their harem. But Israel's kings had been warned not to acquire many wives (Deut. 17:17).

4:9 [k] Gen. 48:16 **4:10** [l] 2 Sam. 1:2–16 **4:11** [m] [Gen. 9:5, 6] **4:12** [n] 2 Sam. 1:15 [o] 2 Sam. 3:32 **5:1** [a] 1 Chr. 11:1–3 [b] 2 Sam. 19:12, 13 **5:2** [c] 1 Sam. 18:5, 13, 16 [d] 1 Sam. 16:1 **5:3** [e] 2 Sam. 3:17 [f] 2 Kin. 11:17 [g] 1 Sam. 23:18 **5:4** [h] Gen. 41:46 [i] 1 Chr. 26:31; 29:27 **5:5** [j] 2 Sam. 2:11 **5:6** [k] Judg. 1:21 [l] Josh. 15:63 **5:7** [m] 1 Kin. 2:10; 8:1; 9:24 **5:8** [n] 1 Chr. 11:6–9 **5:9** [o] 2 Sam. 5:7 **5:10** [p] 1 Sam. 17:45 [q] 1 Sam. 18:12, 28 **5:11** [r] 1 Kin. 5:1–18 [s] 1 Chr. 14:1 **5:12** [t] Num. 24:7 [u] Is. 45:4 **5:13** [v] [Deut. 17:17] **5:14** [w] 1 Chr. 3:5–8

the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua,* Shobab, Nathan, [x]Solomon, 15Ibhar, Elishua,* Nepheg, Japhia, 16Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

The Philistines Defeated

17[y]Now when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. And David heard *of it* [z]and went down to the stronghold. 18The Philistines also went and deployed themselves in [a]the Valley of Rephaim. 19So David [b]inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?"

And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand."

20So David went to [c]Baal Perazim, and David defeated them there; and he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me, like a breakthrough of water." Therefore he called the name of that place Baal Perazim.* 21And they left their images there, and David and his men [d]carried them away.

22[e]Then the Philistines went up once again and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. 23Therefore [f]David inquired of the LORD, and He said, "You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. 24And it shall be, when you [g]hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall advance quickly. For then [h]the LORD will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines." 25And David did so, as the LORD commanded him; and he drove back the Philistines from [i]Geba* as far as [j]Gezer.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

6 Again David gathered all *the* choice *men* of Israel, thirty thousand. 2And [a]David arose and went with all the people who *were* with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name,* the LORD of Hosts, [b]who dwells *between* the cherubim. 3So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which *was* on [c]the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.* 4And they brought it out of [d]the house of Abinadab, which *was* on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. 5Then David and all the house of Israel [e]played *music* before the LORD on all kinds of *instruments of* fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals.

6And when they came to [f]Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out *his* [g]*hand* to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. 7Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for *his* error; and he died there by the ark of God. 8And David became angry because of the

* **5:14** Spelled *Shimea* in 1 Chronicles 3:5
* **5:15** Spelled *Elishama* in 1 Chronicles 3:6
* **5:20** Literally *Master of Breakthroughs*
* **5:25** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Gibeon.* * **6:2** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate omit *by the Name;* many Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *there.*
* **6:3** Septuagint adds *with the ark.*

5:18 *Valley of Rephaim.* This valley extends southwest from Jerusalem toward the coastal plain, and is a strategic approach to the city.

5:21 *left their images.* The Philistines would have regarded their gods as being defeated by the God of Israel.

6:2 *Baale Judah.* The name means "masters of Judah," and the city was also called Baalah and Kirjath Jearim. It was here that the ark had been left after it was returned by the Philistines in the days when Samuel was a young man and there was no king (1 Sam. 7:1–2). ***cherubim.*** Cherubim are angelic beings generally regarded as guardians of God's holiness (Ex. 25:22).

6:3 *set the ark of God on a new cart.* The law was specific that the ark was to be carried by the sons of Kohath, not by a cart or any other vehicle (Ex. 25:14–15; Num. 7:8–9).

6:6–8 Respect for the Ark—It is easy to understand David's anger at God. Uzzah's death seems quite unnecessary. It looks like his motives were in fact good ones. Reading about this event elicits fear and questioning. Why? We can't see how the punishment fits the crime. This seems incredibly arbitrary. How can we possibly understand the mystery that's involved here? Why such tragedy in the midst of this celebration?

The instructions on handling the ark are found in Numbers 4:15,19–20. There it says if you touch the holy things you die. We still don't understand why, but obviously there was more to the ark than anybody could imagine and no human could control it or use it. It was God's, made to be representative of His holiness and glory. God placed such power in the ark that a human would be overwhelmed by it.

We have such a poor sense of the holiness of God that we only see this event from our perspective. Fear and awe must be a part of a healthy relationship with God. While God is love, He is also to be feared.

6:6 *threshing floor.* A threshing floor was a place for processing grain, separating kernels from the chaff (Ruth 3:2).

6:7 *for his error.* God had warned His people that not even the Kohathites of the tribe of Levi could touch the holy objects of the tabernacle. All of the holy objects were to be covered by the priests before the

5:14 [x] 2 Sam. 12:24 **5:17** [y] 1 Chr. 11:16 [z] 2 Sam. 23:14 **5:18** [a] 1 Chr. 11:15 **5:19** [b] 1 Sam. 23:2 **5:20** [c] Is. 28:21 **5:21** [d] Deut. 7:5, 25 **5:22** [e] 1 Chr. 14:13 **5:23** [f] 2 Sam. 5:19 **5:24** [g] 1 Chr. 14:15 [h] Judg. 4:14 **5:25** [i] 1 Chr. 14:16 [j] Josh. 16:10 **6:2** [a] 1 Chr. 13:5, 6 [b] Ps. 80:1 **6:3** [c] 1 Sam. 26:1 **6:4** [d] 1 Sam. 7:1 **6:5** [e] 1 Sam. 18:6, 7 **6:6** [f] 1 Chr. 13:9 [g] Num. 4:15, 19, 20

LORD's outbreak against Uzzah; and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah* to this day.

9 [h]David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" 10So David would not move the ark of the LORD with him into the [i]City of David; but David took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the [j]Gittite. 11[k]The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the LORD [l]blessed Obed-Edom and all his household.

12Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that *belongs* to him, because of the ark of God." [m]So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness. 13And so it was, when [n]those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed [o]oxen and fatted sheep. 14Then David [p]danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* wearing [q]a linen ephod. 15[r]So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

16Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, [s]Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. 17So [t]they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in [u]its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David [v]offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 18And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, [w]he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. 19[x]Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece *of meat,* and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house.

20[y]Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, [z]uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the [a]base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"

21So David said to Michal, "*It was* before the LORD, [b]who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the [c]people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play *music* before the LORD. 22And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor."

23Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children [d]to the day of her death.

God's Covenant with David

7 Now it came to pass [a]when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, 2that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in [b]a house of cedar, [c]but the ark of God dwells inside tent [d]curtains."

3Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that *is* in your [e]heart, for the LORD *is* with you."

* **6:8** Literally *Outburst Against Uzzah*

sons of Kohath came to carry them so they would not "touch any holy thing, lest they die" (Num. 4:15).

6:10 *Obed-Edom.* Obed-Edom was a Levite of the family of Korah, and later one of the doorkeepers for the tabernacle (1 Chr. 15:18,24; 26:4–8). ***the Gittite.*** He was called the Gittite because he was from the Levitical city of Gath Rimmon (Josh. 21:24).

6:14 *linen ephod.* The linen ephod was a short sleeveless garment worn by priests (1 Sam. 2:18). David wore it to honor the Lord because of his worshipful activities that day (v. 13).

6:17 *the tabernacle that David had erected for it.* There are no descriptive details of this tent. It is not clear exactly what happened to the tabernacle after it was moved from Shiloh to Nob (1 Sam. 5; 21:1–5). At the time that David bought the threshing floor from Araunah (2 Sam. 24:21–25), the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were in the high place of Gibeon (1 Chr. 21:29), which was about six miles northwest of Jerusalem.

6:18–19 *peace offerings.* A distinctive feature of the peace offering was that a portion of it would be eaten by the worshiper as a fellowship meal before the Lord.

6:20–23 *uncovering himself.* The love and respect that Michal once had for David was gone. She ridiculed his enthusiasm as he worshiped the Lord, and for David that was not an attitude he could overlook. It is difficult to comprehend the complexities of a marriage where multiple wives and concubines are a part of the picture, and the wife is viewed as chattel before she is viewed as a person. As in so many places in the Bible, the picture is drawn, but without comment on what God thought. Jesus clarifies this a little when He comments on the hardness of hearts, and says, "from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8).

7:2 *Nathan.* Nathan was a personal advisor to David. As a prophet, he spoke for God, advising David on religious matters. He also chronicled the reigns of David and Solomon (1 Chr. 29:29).

6:9 [h] Ps. 119:120 **6:10** [i] 2 Sam. 5:7 [j] 1 Chr. 13:13; 26:4–8 **6:11** [k] 1 Chr. 13:14 [l] Gen. 30:27; 39:5 **6:12** [m] 1 Chr. 15:25—16:3 **6:13** [n] Josh. 3:3 [o] 1 Kin. 8:5 **6:14** [p] Ps. 30:11; 149:3 [q] 1 Sam. 2:18, 28 **6:15** [r] 1 Chr. 15:28 **6:16** [s] 2 Sam. 3:14 **6:17** [t] 1 Chr. 16:1 [u] 1 Chr. 15:1 [v] 1 Kin. 8:5, 62, 63 **6:18** [w] 1 Kin. 8:14, 15, 55 **6:19** [x] 1 Chr. 16:3 **6:20** [y] Ps. 30:title [z] 2 Sam. 6:14, 16 [a] Judg. 9:4 **6:21** [b] 1 Sam. 13:14; 15:28 [c] 2 Kin. 11:17 **6:23** [d] Is. 22:14 **7:1** [a] 1 Chr. 17:1–27 **7:2** [b] 2 Sam. 5:11 [c] Acts 7:46 [d] Ex. 26:1 **7:3** [e] 1 Kin. 8:17, 18

4But it happened that night that the word
of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, 5"Go
and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the
LORD: [f]"Would you build a house for Me to
dwell in? 6For I have not dwelt in a house
[g]since the time that I brought the children
of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day,
but have moved about in [h]a tent and in
a tabernacle. 7Wherever I have [i]moved
about with all the children of Israel, have
I ever spoken a word to anyone from the
tribes of Israel, whom I commanded [j]to
shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why
have you not built Me a house of cedar?'"'
8Now therefore, thus shall you say to My
servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of
hosts: [k]"I took you from the sheepfold,
from following the sheep, to be ruler over
My people, over Israel. 9And [l]I have been
with you wherever you have gone, [m]and
have cut off all your enemies from before
you, and have made you a great name, like
the name of the great men who *are* on the
earth. 10Moreover I will appoint a place
for My people Israel, and will [n]plant them,
that they may dwell in a place of their own
and move no more; [o]nor shall the sons of
wickedness oppress them anymore, as pre-
viously, 11[p]since the time that I command-
ed judges *to be* over My people Israel, and
have caused you to rest from all your ene-
mies. Also the LORD tells you [q]that He will
make you a house.*
12[r]"When your days are fulfilled and you
[s]rest with your fathers, [t]I will set up your
seed after you, who will come from your
body, and I will establish his kingdom.
13[u]He shall build a house for My name, and
I will [v]establish the throne of his kingdom
forever. 14[w]I will be his Father, and he shall
be [x]My son. If he commits iniquity, I will
chasten him with the rod of men and with
the blows of the sons of men. 15But My mer-
cy shall not depart from him, [y]as I took *it*
from Saul, whom I removed from before
you. 16And [z]your house and your kingdom
shall be established forever before you.*
Your throne shall be established forever."'"
17According to all these words and ac-
cording to all this vision, so Nathan spoke
to David.

David's Thanksgiving to God

18Then King David went in and sat be-
fore the LORD; and he said: [a]"Who *am* I,
O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that
You have brought me this far? 19And yet
this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord
GOD; and You have also spoken of Your
servant's house for a great while to come.
[b]*Is* this the manner of man, O Lord GOD?
20Now what more can David say to You?
For You, Lord GOD, [c]know Your servant.
21For Your word's sake, and according to
Your own heart, You have done all these
great things, to make Your servant know
them. 22Therefore [d]You are great, O Lord
GOD.* For [e]*there is* none like You, nor *is*
there any God besides You, according to all
that we have heard with our [f]ears. 23And
who *is* like Your people, like Israel, [g]the
one nation on the earth whom God went
to redeem for Himself as a people, to make
for Himself a name—and to do for Yourself
great and awesome deeds for Your land—
before [h]Your people whom You redeemed
for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and
their gods? 24For [i]You have made Your
people Israel Your very own people forev-
er; [j]and You, LORD, have become their God.
25"Now, O LORD God, the word which
You have spoken concerning Your ser-
vant and concerning his house, establish
it forever and do as You have said. 26So let
Your name be magnified forever, saying,
'The LORD of hosts *is* the God over Israel.'
And let the house of Your servant David be
established before You. 27For You, O LORD
of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed *this*
to Your servant, saying, 'I will build you a
house.' Therefore Your servant has found
it in his heart to pray this prayer to You.

* **7:11** That is, a royal dynasty * **7:16** Septuagint reads *Me.* * **7:22** Targum and Syriac read *O LORD God.*

7:4–17 The Covenant with David—The Davidic covenant contains God's promise to Israel and to David. God promised Israel that Palestine would always be their place (v. 10). He also promised that David would have an unending dynasty and an everlasting kingdom. This promise is fulfilled in Christ. Both Matthew and Luke, in their Gospels, trace Jesus' ancestry back to David.

7:13 *the throne of his kingdom forever.* This is not to say that Solomon would rule forever. Rather, the right to rule, represented by the image of the throne, would always belong to his descendants. Further, there would always be a male heir who would be able to rule. Ultimately this promise is fulfilled in Christ (Matt. 1).

7:19 *for a great while to come.* God extended the promise concerning David's dynasty far into the future. All of human history leads inevitably to the rule of Christ on earth. This is its destiny, its prophetic fulfillment, the final meaning of all history.

7:27 *prayer.* David was a king for God, not for himself. It is not likely that he was totally without pride in his position, but he did not seem to be a man who was full of himself. His purpose in wanting to build the temple was to glorify God whom he loved, not to glorify himself. David's prayer of worship and thanksgiving is an intimate key that shows how he was able

7:5 [f] 1 Kin. 5:3, 4; 8:19 **7:6** [g] 1 Kin. 8:16 [h] Ex. 40:18, 34 **7:7** [i] Lev. 26:11, 12 [j] 2 Sam. 5:2 **7:8** [k] 1 Sam. 16:11, 12 **7:9** [l] 2 Sam. 5:10 [m] 1 Sam. 31:6 **7:10** [n] Ps. 44:2; 80:8 [o] Ps. 89:22, 23 **7:11** [p] Judg. 2:14–16 [q] 2 Sam. 7:27 **7:12** [r] 1 Kin. 2:1 [s] Deut. 31:16 [t] Ps. 132:11 **7:13** [u] 1 Kin. 5:5; 8:19 [v] [Is. 9:7; 49:8] **7:14** [w] [Heb. 1:5] [x] [Ps. 2:7; 89:26, 27, 30] **7:15** [y] 1 Sam. 15:23, 28; 16:14 **7:16** [z] 2 Sam. 7:13 **7:18** [a] Ex. 3:11 **7:19** [b] [Is. 55:8, 9] **7:20** [c] John 21:17 **7:22** [d] Deut. 10:17 [e] Ex. 15:11 [f] Ex. 10:2 **7:23** [g] Ps. 147:20 [h] Deut. 9:26; 33:29 **7:24** [i] [Deut. 26:18] [j] Ps. 48:14

28"And now, O Lord GOD, You are God,
and [k]Your words are true, and You have
promised this goodness to Your servant.
29Now therefore, let it please You to bless
the house of Your servant, that it may con-
tinue before You forever; for You, O Lord
GOD, have spoken *it,* and with Your bless-
ing let the house of Your servant be blessed
[l]forever."

David's Further Conquests

8 After this it came to pass that David
attacked the Philistines and subdued
them. And David took Metheg Ammah
from the hand of the Philistines.
2Then [a]he defeated Moab. Forcing them
down to the ground, he measured them off
with a line. With two lines he measured off
those to be put to death, and with one full
line those to be kept alive. So the Moabites
became David's [b]servants, *and* [c]brought
tribute.
3David also defeated Hadadezer the son
of Rehob, king of [d]Zobah, as he went to re-
cover [e]his territory at the River Euphrates.
4David took from him one thousand *chari-
ots,* seven hundred* horsemen, and twenty
thousand foot soldiers. Also David [f]ham-
strung all the chariot *horses,* except that
he spared *enough* of them for one hundred
chariots.
5[g]When the Syrians of Damascus came to
help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed
twenty-two thousand of the Syrians. 6Then
David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus;
and the Syrians became David's servants,
and brought tribute. So [h]the LORD pre-
served David wherever he went. 7And David
took [i]the shields of gold that had belonged
to the servants of Hadadezer, and brought
them to Jerusalem. 8Also from Betah*
and from [j]Berothai, cities of Hadadezer,
King David took a large amount of bronze.
9When Toi* king of [k]Hamath heard that
David had defeated all the army of Had-
adezer, 10then Toi sent Joram* his son to
King David, to greet him and bless him,
because he had fought against Hadadezer
and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been
at war with Toi); and *Joram* brought with
him articles of silver, articles of gold, and
articles of bronze. 11King David also [l]ded-
icated these to the LORD, along with the sil-
ver and gold that he had dedicated from all
the nations which he had subdued— 12from
Syria,* from Moab, from the people of Am-
mon, from the [m]Philistines, from Amalek,
and from the spoil of Hadadezer the son of
Rehob, king of Zobah.
13And David made *himself* a [n]name
when he returned from killing [o]eighteen
thousand Syrians* in [p]the Valley of Salt.
14He also put garrisons in Edom; through-
out all Edom he put garrisons, and [q]all the
Edomites became David's servants. And the
LORD preserved David wherever he went.

David's Administration

15So David reigned over all Israel; and
David administered judgment and justice
to all his people. 16[r]Joab the son of Zeruiah
was over the army; [s]Jehoshaphat the son
of Ahilud *was* recorder; 17[t]Zadok the son of
Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar
were the priests; Seraiah* *was* the scribe;
18[u]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was over*
both the [v]Cherethites and the Pelethites;
and David's sons were chief ministers.

David's Kindness to Mephibosheth

9 Now David said, "Is there still anyone
who is left of the house of Saul, that I
may [a]show him kindness for Jonathan's
sake?"
2And *there was* a servant of the house of

* **8:4** Or *seven thousand* (compare 1 Chronicles 18:4) * **8:8** Spelled *Tibhath* in 1 Chronicles 18:8 * **8:9** Spelled *Tou* in 1 Chronicles 18:9 * **8:10** Spelled *Hadoram* in 1 Chronicles 18:10 * **8:12** Septuagint, Syriac, and some Hebrew manuscripts read *Edom.* * **8:13** Septuagint, Syriac, and some Hebrew manuscripts read *Edomites* (compare 1 Chronicles 18:12). * **8:17** Spelled *Shavsha* in 1 Chronicles 18:16

to keep himself both willing and trusting as he followed God.

7:28 ***You are God, and Your words are true.*** This is David's theme, throughout his life, and this is why he was a man after God's heart (1 Sam. 13:14).

8:2 ***Moabites.*** The Moabites were descendants of the incestuous relationship between Lot and his older daughter (Gen. 19:36–37).

8:4 ***hamstrung.*** David disabled the horses by cutting the back sinews of the hind legs to prevent them from being used for military activity (Josh. 11:6,9).

8:5 ***Damascus.*** Damascus was located at an oasis near the foot of the Anti-Lebanon mountains and was one of the most strategically located cities of the ancient world. Damascus lay at the crossroads of the two main international highways: the Via Maris, leading south and west to Egypt, and the King's Highway, leading from the east side of the Jordan south to Arabia.

8:8 ***Berothai.*** This city was about 30 miles northwest of Damascus.

8:15 ***David reigned over all Israel.*** As a result of David's conquests, the sovereignty of Israel extended from the Gulf of Aqaba and the River of Egypt to the Euphrates River—the very region God had promised Abraham (Gen. 15:18).

9:1–13 ***kindness.*** David wrote in Psalm 23:5, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." And that is just what David did for Mephibosheth, for the sake of his father Jonathan. Jonathan and David had been separated by the hostility that

7:28 [k] John 17:17 **7:29** [l] 2 Sam. 22:51 **8:2** [a] Num. 24:17 [b] 2 Sam. 12:31 [c] 1 Kin. 4:21 **8:3** [d] 1 Sam. 14:47 [e] 2 Sam. 10:15–19 **8:4** [f] Josh. 11:6, 9 **8:5** [g] 1 Kin. 11:23–25 **8:6** [h] 2 Sam. 7:9; 8:14 **8:7** [i] 1 Kin. 10:16 **8:8** [j] Ezek. 47:16 **8:9** [k] 1 Kin. 8:65 **8:11** [l] 1 Kin. 7:51 **8:12** [m] 2 Sam. 5:17–25 **8:13** [n] 2 Sam. 7:9 [o] 2 Kin. 14:7 [p] 1 Chr. 18:12 **8:14** [q] Gen. 27:29, 37–40 **8:16** [r] 2 Sam. 19:13; 20:23 [s] 1 Kin. 4:3 **8:17** [t] 1 Chr. 6:4–8; 24:3 **8:18** [u] 1 Chr. 18:17 [v] 1 Sam. 30:14 **9:1** [a] 1 Sam. 18:3; 20:14–16

Saul whose name *was* [b]Ziba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "*Are* you Ziba?"

He said, "At your service!"

3Then the king said, "*Is* there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show [c]the kindness of God?"

And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan *who is* [d]lame in *his* feet."

4So the king said to him, "Where *is* he?"

And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he *is* in the house of [e]Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar."

5Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.

6Now when [f]Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, "Mephibosheth?"

And he answered, "Here is your servant!"

7So David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually."

8Then he bowed himself, and said, "What *is* your servant, that you should look upon such [g]a dead dog as I?"

9And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, [h]"I have given to your master's son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. 10You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in *the harvest,* that your master's son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's son [i]shall eat bread at my table always." Now Ziba had [j]fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do."

"As for Mephibosheth," *said the king,* "he shall eat at my table* like one of the king's sons." 12Mephibosheth had a young son [k]whose name *was* Micha. And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants of Mephibosheth. 13So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, [l]for he ate continually at the king's table. And he [m]was lame in both his feet.

The Ammonites and Syrians Defeated

10 It happened after this that the [a]king of the people of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his place. 2Then David said, "I will show [b]kindness to Hanun the son of [c]Nahash, as his father showed kindness to me."

So David sent by the hand of his servants to comfort him concerning his father. And David's servants came into the land of the people of Ammon. 3And the princes of the people of Ammon said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think that David really honors your father because he has sent comforters to you? Has David not *rather* sent his servants to you to search the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it?"

4Therefore Hanun took David's servants, shaved off half of their beards, cut off their garments in the middle, [d]at their buttocks, and sent them away. 5When they told David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and *then* return."

6When the people of Ammon saw that they [e]had made themselves repulsive to David, the people of Ammon sent and hired [f]the Syrians of [g]Beth Rehob and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand foot soldiers; and from the king of [h]Maacah one thousand men, and from [i]Ish-Tob twelve

* **9:11** Septuagint reads *David's table.*

Saul had for David, and as far as Mephibosheth would have understood, David was an enemy to the house of Saul. But the bond of love and friendship that David and Jonathan had was greater than the hostility of Saul, and David was faithful to honor those bonds.

9:4 ***Machir the son of Ammiel.*** Machir was a man, apparently of wealth and position, who extended hospitality to David during Absalom's revolt (17:27–29). He showed himself to be a man of kindness who was willing to help someone in need, even if it might not be politically expedient.

9:11 ***like one of the king's sons.*** David kept his promise to Jonathan. The two young men had vowed that the Lord would be between them, and between their descendants forever (1 Sam. 20:42). It was a way of saying that the Lord would always be in their relationships with each other, keeping them loyal, kind, honest, and willing to bear each other's burdens. Now Jonathan's son was provided for as one of David's sons.

10:1 ***the king of the people of Ammon.*** The king of Ammon was probably the same Nahash who was defeated by Saul at Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam. 11:1–11).

10:2 ***as his father showed kindness to me.*** The occasion of Nahash's kindness is not recorded. One possibility is that Nahash, an enemy of Saul, had given aid to David during his war with Ishbosheth (2:8—4:12).

10:6 ***Beth Rehob and . . . Zoba.*** These two Aramean city-states were located north of Israel. ***Maacah.*** The small Aramean kingdom east of the Jordan was part of the territory assigned to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 12:5; 13:11) ***Ish-Tob.*** Tob was also an area east of the Jordan, but not a part of Israel. (Judg. 11:3).

9:2 [b] 2 Sam. 16:1–4; 19:17, 29 **9:3** [c] 1 Sam. 20:14 [d] 2 Sam. 4:4 **9:4** [e] 2 Sam. 17:27–29 **9:6** [f] 2 Sam. 16:4; 19:24–30 **9:8** [g] 2 Sam. 16:9 **9:9** [h] 2 Sam. 16:4; 19:29 **9:10** [i] 2 Sam. 9:7, 11, 13; 19:28 [j] 2 Sam. 19:17 **9:12** [k] 1 Chr. 8:34 **9:13** [l] 2 Sam. 9:7, 10, 11 [m] 2 Sam. 9:3 **10:1** [a] 1 Chr. 19:1 **10:2** [b] 2 Sam. 9:1 [c] 1 Sam. 11:1 **10:4** [d] Is. 20:4; 47:2 **10:6** [e] Gen. 34:30 [f] 2 Sam. 8:3, 5 [g] Judg. 18:28 [h] Deut. 3:14 [i] Judg. 11:3, 5

thousand men. 7Now when David heard *of it,* he sent Joab and all the army of [j]the mighty men. 8Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array at the entrance of the gate. And [k]the Syrians of Zoba, Beth Rehob, Ish-Tob, and Maacah *were* by themselves in the field.

9When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best and put *them* in battle array against the Syrians. 10And the rest of the people he put under the command of [l]Abishai his brother, that he might set *them* in battle array against the people of Ammon. 11Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. 12[m]Be of good courage, and let us [n]be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may [o]the LORD do *what is* good in His sight."

13So Joab and the people who *were* with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. 14When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai, and entered the city. So Joab returned from the people of Ammon and went to [p]Jerusalem.

15When the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered together. 16Then Hadadezer* sent and brought out the Syrians who *were* beyond the River,* and they came to Helam. And Shobach the commander of Hadadezer's army *went* before them. 17When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in battle array against David and fought with him. 18Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed seven hundred charioteers and forty thousand [q]horsemen of the Syrians, and struck Shobach the commander of their army, who died there. 19And when all the kings *who were* servants to Hadadezer* saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and [r]served them. So the Syrians were afraid to help the people of Ammon anymore.

David, Bathsheba, and Uriah

11 It happened in the spring of the year, at the [a]time when kings go out *to battle,* that [b]David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged [c]Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed [d]and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he [e]saw a woman bathing, and the woman *was* very beautiful to behold. 3So David sent and inquired about the woman. And *someone* said, "*Is* this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife [f]of Uriah the [g]Hittite?" 4Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and [h]he lay with her, for she was [i]cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house. 5And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I *am* with child."

6Then David sent to Joab, *saying,* "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. 7When Uriah had come to him, David asked how Joab was doing, and how the people were doing, and how the war prospered. 8And David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and [j]wash your feet." So Uriah departed from the king's house, and a gift *of food* from the king followed him. 9But Uriah slept at the [k]door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. 10So when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Did you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

11And Uriah said to David, [l]"The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and [m]my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? *As* you live, and *as* your soul lives, I will not do this thing."

12Then David said to Uriah, "Wait here today also, and tomorrow I will let you depart." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem

* **10:16** Hebrew *Hadarezer* • That is, *the Euphrates* * **10:19** Hebrew *Hadarezer*

10:8 ***entrance of the gate.*** Some cities had multiple gates. If attackers broke through one gate, they would find another gate in front of them. The Ammonites fought near the entrance of the city so they could retreat behind the city gates if the battle turned against them. The mercenary soldiers were in more exposed positions in the field.

10:10 ***Abishai.*** Abishai was one of David's mighty men (23:18). He was a brave warrior (1 Sam. 26:6–9) and a successful commander (1 Chr. 18:12–13), but was impetuous and perhaps even bloodthirsty (16:9; 19:21). He had played a part in the murder of Abner.

11:1 ***in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle.*** Spring was a good time to mount a campaign. They could be assured of good weather and an abundance of food along the way.

11:2 ***from the roof he saw a woman bathing.*** She was probably in the enclosed courtyard of her home, a place of privacy, not visible from the street.

11:5 ***the woman conceived.*** The law commanded both parties in an adulterous relationship to be put to death (Lev. 20:10). In practice, a woman who became pregnant might be forced to bear the shame and guilt alone (John 8:1–11).

10:7 *j* 2 Sam. 23:8 **10:8** *k* 2 Sam. 10:6 **10:10** *l* 2 Sam. 3:30 **10:12** *m* Deut. 31:6 *n* 1 Cor. 16:13 *o* 1 Sam. 3:18 **10:14** *p* 2 Sam. 11:1 **10:18** *q* 1 Chr. 19:18 **10:19** *r* 2 Sam. 8:6 **11:1** *a* 1 Kin. 20:22–26 *b* 1 Chr. 20:1 *c* 2 Sam. 12:26 **11:2** *d* Deut. 22:8 *e* Gen. 34:2 **11:3** *f* 2 Sam. 23:39 *g* 1 Sam. 26:6 **11:4** *h* [James 1:14, 15] *i* Lev. 15:19, 28 **11:8** *j* Gen. 18:4; 19:2 **11:9** *k* 1 Kin. 14:27, 28 **11:11** *l* 2 Sam. 7:2, 6 *m* 2 Sam. 20:6–22

that day and the next. 13Now when David called him, he ate and drank before him; and he made him [n]drunk. And at evening he went out to lie on his bed [o]with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

14In the morning it happened that David [p]wrote a letter to Joab and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. 15And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may [q]be struck down and die." 16So it was, while Joab besieged the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there *were* valiant men. 17Then the men of the city came out and fought with Joab. And *some* of the people of the servants of David fell; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

18Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war, 19and charged the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling the matters of the war to the king, 20if it happens that the king's wrath rises, and he says to you: 'Why did you approach so near to the city when you fought? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? 21Who struck [r]Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth?* Was it not a woman who cast a piece of a millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you go near the wall?'—then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

22So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent by him. 23And the messenger said to David, "Surely the men prevailed against us and came out to us in the field; then we drove them back as far as the entrance of the gate. 24The archers shot from the wall at your servants; and *some* of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also."

25Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city, and overthrow it.' So encourage him."

26When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. 27And when her mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she [s]became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done [t]displeased the LORD.

Nathan's Parable and David's Confession

12 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And [a]he came to him, and [b]said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. 2The rich *man* had exceedingly many flocks and herds. 3But the poor *man* had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. 4And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

5So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "*As* the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! 6And he shall restore [c]fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

7Then Nathan said to David, "You *are* the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I [d]anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if *that had been* too little, I also would have given you much more! 9[e]Why have you [f]despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? [g]You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife *to be* your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. 10Now therefore, [h]the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 11Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will [i]take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.

* **11:21** Same as *Jerubbaal* (Gideon), Judges 6:32ff

11:21 ***Was it not a woman.*** The story referred to here is recorded in Judges 9:50–55. For a soldier to die at the hand of a woman was at best shameful, if not a point of ridicule (Judg. 4:17–24). It seems that Joab was letting David know that he knew David's real reasons for wanting Uriah dead.

12:7 ***You are the man.*** It took courage and a strong commitment to the Lord for Nathan to speak these words to the king. Nathan's rebuke was centered on who the Lord is, and what the Lord expects of His servants. It was the word of the Lord that convicted David, not the force of Nathan's character or rhetoric.

12:9 ***despised the commandment of the LORD.*** David had broken the commandments about coveting, adultery, and murder (Ex. 20:13–17). The word despised means "to think lightly of."

11:13 [n] Gen. 19:33, 35 [o] 2 Sam. 11:9 **11:14** [p] 1 Kin. 21:8, 9 **11:15** [q] 2 Sam. 12:9 **11:21** [r] Judg. 9:50–54 **11:27** [s] 2 Sam. 12:9 [t] 1 Chr. 21:7 **12:1** [a] Ps. 51:title [b] 1 Kin. 20:35–41 **12:6** [c] [Ex. 22:1] **12:7** [d] 1 Sam. 16:13 **12:9** [e] 1 Sam. 15:19 [f] Num. 15:31 [g] 2 Sam. 11:14–17, 27 **12:10** [h] [Amos 7:9] **12:11** [i] 2 Sam. 16:21, 22

12 For you did *it* secretly, [j]but I will do this
thing before all Israel, before the sun.'"
13 [k]So David said to Nathan, [l]"I have
sinned against the LORD."

And Nathan said to David, "The LORD
also has [m]put away your sin; you shall not
die. 14 However, because by this deed you
have given great occasion to the enemies
of the LORD [n]to blaspheme, the child also
who is born to you shall surely die." 15 Then
Nathan departed to his house.

The Death of David's Son

And the [o]LORD struck the child that Uri-
ah's wife bore to David, and it became ill.
16 David therefore pleaded with God for the
child, and David fasted and went in and
[p]lay all night on the ground. 17 So the elders
of his house arose *and went* to him, to raise
him up from the ground. But he would not,
nor did he eat food with them. 18 Then on
the seventh day it came to pass that the
child died. And the servants of David were
afraid to tell him that the child was dead.
For they said, "Indeed, while the child was
alive, we spoke to him, and he would not
heed our voice. How can we tell him that
the child is dead? He may do some harm!"

19 When David saw that his servants
were whispering, David perceived that the
child was dead. Therefore David said to his
servants, "Is the child dead?"

And they said, "He is dead."

20 So David arose from the ground,
washed and [q]anointed himself, and
changed his clothes; and he went into the
house of the LORD and [r]worshiped. Then
he went to his own house; and when he re-
quested, they set food before him, and he
ate. 21 Then his servants said to him, "What
is this that you have done? You fasted and
wept for the child *while he was* alive, but
when the child died, you arose and ate food."

22 And he said, "While the child was
alive, I fasted and wept; [s]for I said, 'Who
can tell *whether* the LORD* will be gracious
to me, that the child may live?' 23 But now he
is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him
back again? I shall go [t]to him, but [u]he shall
not return to me."

Solomon Is Born

24 Then David comforted Bathsheba his
wife, and went in to her and lay with her.
So [v]she bore a son, and [w]he* called his
name Solomon. Now the LORD loved him,
25 and He sent *word* by the hand of Nathan
the prophet: So he* called his name Jedi-
diah,* because of the LORD.

Rabbah Is Captured

26 Now [x]Joab fought against [y]Rabbah of
the people of Ammon, and took the royal
city. 27 And Joab sent messengers to David,
and said, "I have fought against Rabbah,
and I have taken the city's water *supply.*
28 Now therefore, gather the rest of the
people together and encamp against the
city and take it, lest I take the city and
it be called after my name." 29 So David
gathered all the people together and went
to Rabbah, fought against it, and took it.
30 [z]Then he took their king's crown from his
head. Its weight *was* a talent of gold, with
precious stones. And it was *set* on David's
head. Also he brought out the spoil of the
city in great abundance. 31 And he brought
out the people who *were* in it, and put *them
to work* with saws and iron picks and iron
axes, and made them cross over to the
brick works. So he did to all the cities of
the people of Ammon. Then David and all
the people returned to Jerusalem.

Amnon and Tamar

13 After this [a]Absalom the son of David
had a lovely sister, whose name *was*
[b]Tamar; and [c]Amnon the son of David

* **12:22** A few Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *God.* * **12:24** Following Kethib, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Qere, a few Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, and Targum read *she.* * **12:25** Qere, some Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, and Targum read *she.* • Literally *Beloved of the* LORD

12:13 ***I have sinned against the LORD.*** David did not attempt to rationalize his sin or make an excuse for himself. A fuller expression of David's confession is found in Psalm 51. ***you shall not die.*** David deserved death (Lev. 20:10; Num. 35:31–33), but God's grace is able to circumvent His own plan for punishment.

12:14 Adultery—Adultery is forbidden in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:14), and it is not difficult to think of a long list of the messy problems that accompany adultery. But adultery is not just a problem involving other people. It is also a problem with God. It is a direct and deliberate disobedience of a nonnegotiable command. This kind of disobedience is also a choice to stop listening to God in other areas—not because He won't communicate, but because we won't. We don't want to ask for help because we don't want to hear Him say, "And what about the affair with ____?" Adultery is more expensive than we can calculate.

12:24 ***Solomon.*** The name Solomon is related to the Hebrew word for *peace.*

12:25 ***Jedidiah.*** The name Jedidiah means "beloved of the Lord." The Hebrew name is related to David's name, meaning "beloved." This name, coming from the prophet Nathan, surely must have comforted David and Bathsheba with assurance of God's forgiveness.

12:30 ***a talent of gold.*** The crown weighed about 75 pounds.

13:1 Temptation—Not all temptation is equal. Some kinds of temptations are easily squelched,

12:12 *j* 2 Sam. 16:22 **12:13** *k* 1 Sam. 15:24 *l* 2 Sam. 24:10 *m* [Mic. 7:18] **12:14** *n* Is. 52:5 **12:15** *o* 1 Sam. 25:38 **12:16** *p* 2 Sam. 13:31 **12:20** *q* Ruth 3:3 *r* Job 1:20 **12:22** *s* Jon. 3:9 **12:23** *t* Gen. 37:35 *u* Job 7:8–10 **12:24** *v* Matt. 1:6 *w* 1 Chr. 22:9 **12:26** *x* 1 Chr. 20:1 *y* Deut. 3:11 **12:30** *z* 1 Chr. 20:2 **13:1** *a* 2 Sam. 3:2, 3 *b* 1 Chr. 3:9 *c* 2 Sam. 3:2

loved her. 2Amnon was so distressed over
his sister Tamar that he became sick; for
she *was* a virgin. And it was improper for
Amnon to do anything to her. 3But Amnon
had a friend whose name *was* Jonadab
[d]the son of Shimeah, David's brother. Now
Jonadab *was* a very crafty man. 4And he
said to him, "Why *are* you, the king's son,
becoming thinner day after day? Will you
not tell me?"

Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my
brother Absalom's sister."

5So Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on
your bed and pretend to be ill. And when
your father comes to see you, say to him,
'Please let my sister Tamar come and give
me food, and prepare the food in my sight,
that I may see *it* and eat it from her hand.'"
6Then Amnon lay down and pretended to
be ill; and when the king came to see him,
Amnon said to the king, "Please let Ta-
mar my sister come and [e]make a couple
of cakes for me in my sight, that I may eat
from her hand."

7And David sent home to Tamar, saying,
"Now go to your brother Amnon's house,
and prepare food for him." 8So Tamar
went to her brother Amnon's house; and
he was lying down. Then she took flour
and kneaded *it*, made cakes in his sight,
and baked the cakes. 9And she took the
pan and placed *them* out before him, but
he refused to eat. Then Amnon said, [f]"Have
everyone go out from me." And they all
went out from him. 10Then Amnon said to
Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom,
that I may eat from your hand." And Ta-
mar took the cakes which she had made,
and brought *them* to Amnon her brother in
the bedroom. 11Now when she had brought
them to him to eat, [g]he took hold of her and
said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister."

12But she answered him, "No, my broth-
er, do not force me, for [h]no such thing
should be done in Israel. Do not do this
[i]disgraceful thing! 13And I, where could I
take my shame? And as for you, you would
be like one of the fools in Israel. Now there-
fore, please speak to the king; [j]for he will
not withhold me from you." 14However, he
would not heed her voice; and being stron-
ger than she, he [k]forced her and lay with
her.

15Then Amnon hated her exceedingly,
so that the hatred with which he hated
her *was* greater than the love with which
he had loved her. And Amnon said to her,
"Arise, be gone!"

16So she said to him, "No, indeed! This
evil of sending me away *is* worse than the
other that you did to me."

But he would not listen to her. 17Then
he called his servant who attended him,
and said, "Here! Put this *woman* out, away
from me, and bolt the door behind her."
18Now she had on [l]a robe of many colors,
for the king's virgin daughters wore such
apparel. And his servant put her out and
bolted the door behind her.

19Then Tamar put [m]ashes on her head,
and tore her robe of many colors that *was*
on her, and [n]laid her hand on her head and
went away crying bitterly. 20And Absalom
her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your
brother been with you? But now hold your
peace, my sister. He *is* your brother; do
not take this thing to heart." So Tamar re-
mained desolate in her brother Absalom's
house.

21But when King David heard of all these
things, he was very angry. 22And Absalom
spoke to his brother Amnon [o]neither good
nor bad. For Absalom [p]hated Amnon, be-
cause he had forced his sister Tamar.

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and others must be fought with vigilance and every ounce of energy that we have. The battle begins in the mind, and one of the first steps in combating temptation is to make up one's mind that the answer must be "no." Once we begin thinking of how nice it would be to give in, the temptation has a foothold that can grow into full blown sin. God always provides a way out, but we have to want to take that way (1 Cor. 10:13).

13:4 ***I love . . . my brother Absalom's sister.*** Such relationships are clearly forbidden in the law (Lev. 18:9,29; 20:17). The lust that he conceived in his heart gave birth to sin, and that sin, when accomplished, brought death (James 1:15). Amnon did die, but even worse, his heart was hardened so that he did not care what he had done to Tamar. For her, the price of his wickedness was very high.

13:17 ***Put this woman out.*** It is difficult to translate the contempt which Amnon had for Tamar. His order to his servant suggests the words and tone used when asking a servant to dump trash. If she had not been his sister, Amnon would have been forced to marry her (Deut. 22:28–29).

13:19 ***ashes on her head . . . tore her robe . . . laid her hand on her head.*** All of these gestures, as well as her public weeping, were traditional signs of mourning. Amnon had wantonly destroyed her, and there was nothing anyone could do to set her life right. Women who have been raped often feel abandoned by society, and the very people who should have protected them are oblivious to their need for comfort. Rape is a private crime, and yet it is also a very public menace. It is difficult to redress the wrongs caused by rape without subjecting the victim to more publicity than is comfortable for someone who has already been severely traumatized.

13:21 ***very angry.*** David was angry, but he took no steps to discipline his son. Perhaps he felt he could not enforce exile on his son (Lev. 18:9,29; 20:17), when the Lord had forgiven him in a similar circumstance. The big difference between David and Amnon was that David acknowledged his sin and was remorseful and repentant.

13:3 [d] 1 Sam. 16:9 **13:6** [e] Gen. 18:6 **13:9** [f] Gen. 45:1 **13:11** [g] Gen. 39:12 **13:12** [h] [Lev. 18:9–11; 20:17] [i] Judg. 19:23; 20:6 **13:13** [j] Gen. 20:12 **13:14** [k] 2 Sam. 12:11 **13:18** [l] Gen. 37:3 **13:19** [m] Josh. 7:6 [n] Jer. 2:37 **13:22** [o] Gen. 24:50; 31:24 [p] [Lev. 19:17, 18]

Absalom Murders Amnon

23 And it came to pass, after two full
years, that Absalom [q]had sheepshearers
in Baal Hazor, which *is* near Ephraim; so
Absalom invited all the king's sons. 24 Then
Absalom came to the king and said, "Kind-
ly note, your servant has sheepshearers;
please, let the king and his servants go
with your servant."
25 But the king said to Absalom, "No,
my son, let us not all go now, lest we be a
burden to you." Then he urged him, but he
would not go; and he blessed him.
26 Then Absalom said, "If not, please let
my brother Amnon go with us."
And the king said to him, "Why should
he go with you?" 27 But Absalom urged him;
so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go
with him.
28 Now Absalom had commanded his ser-
vants, saying, "Watch now, when Amnon's
[r]heart is merry with wine, and when I say to
you, 'Strike Amnon!' then kill him. Do not
be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be
courageous and valiant." 29 So the servants
of Absalom [s]did to Amnon as Absalom had
commanded. Then all the king's sons arose,
and each one got on [t]his mule and fled.
30 And it came to pass, while they were
on the way, that news came to David, say-
ing, "Absalom has killed all the king's sons,
and not one of them is left!" 31 So the king
arose and [u]tore his garments and [v]lay on
the ground, and all his servants stood by
with their clothes torn. 32 Then [w]Jonadab
the son of Shimeah, David's brother, an-
swered and said, "Let not my lord suppose
they have killed all the young men, the
king's sons, for only Amnon is dead. For
by the command of Absalom this has been
determined from the day that he forced his
sister Tamar. 33 Now therefore, [x]let not my
lord the king take the thing to his heart, to
think that all the king's sons are dead. For
only Amnon is dead."

Absalom Flees to Geshur

34 [y]Then Absalom fled. And the young
man who was keeping watch lifted his eyes
and looked, and there, many people were
coming from the road on the hillside be-
hind him.* 35 And Jonadab said to the king,
"Look, the king's sons are coming; as your
servant said, so it is." 36 So it was, as soon
as he had finished speaking, that the king's
sons indeed came, and they lifted up their
voice and wept. Also the king and all his
servants wept very bitterly.
37 But Absalom fled and went to [z]Talmai
the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And
David mourned for his son every day. 38 So
Absalom fled and went to [a]Geshur, and
was there three years. 39 And King David*
longed to go to* Absalom. For he had been
[b]comforted concerning Amnon, because
he was dead.

Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

14 So Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived
that the king's heart *was* concerned
[a]about Absalom. 2 And Joab sent to [b]Tekoa
and brought from there a wise woman, and
said to her, "Please pretend to be a mourn-
er, [c]and put on mourning apparel; do not
anoint yourself with oil, but act like a wom-
an who has been mourning a long time for
the dead. 3 Go to the king and speak to him
in this manner." So Joab [d]put the words in
her mouth.
4 And when the woman of Tekoa spoke*
to the king, she [e]fell on her face to the
ground and prostrated herself, and said,
[f]"Help, O king!"
5 Then the king said to her, "What trou-
bles you?"
And she answered, [g]"Indeed I *am* a wid-
ow, my husband is dead. 6 Now your maid-
servant had two sons; and the two fought
with each other in the field, and *there was*
no one to part them, but the one struck the
other and killed him. 7 And now the whole
family has risen up against your maid-
servant, and they said, 'Deliver him who
struck his brother, that we may execute
him [h]for the life of his brother whom he

* **13:34** Septuagint adds *And the watchman went and told the king, and said, "I see men from the way of Horonaim, from the regions of the mountains."* * **13:39** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *the spirit of the king*; Targum reads *the soul of King David.* • Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *ceased to pursue after.* * **14:4** Many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *came.*

13:23 ***Ephraim.*** This does not refer to the tribal area, but to a city about 13 miles north of Jerusalem (John 11:54).

13:29 ***mule.*** The mule, the offspring of a donkey and a horse, combines the size and strength of a horse with the surefootedness and endurance of a donkey. Although the Israelites were forbidden to breed such hybrids (Lev. 19:19), mules were imported into Israel. They were the preferred mount of royalty during this period. (18:9; 1 Kin. 1:33).

13:37 ***Talmai.*** Talmai was Absalom's grandfather, the father of David's wife Maacah (3:3). He ruled as king of the territory of Geshur, northeast of the Sea of Galilee.

14:7 ***extinguish my ember which is left.*** The woman used a graphic picture of the extinction of her family. The demise of a family name and the end of a surviving remnant or family line were crucial matters to the Hebrew people.

13:23 [q] 1 Sam. 25:4 **13:28** [r] 1 Sam. 25:36 **13:29** [s] 2 Sam. 12:10 [t] 2 Sam. 18:9 **13:31** [u] 2 Sam. 1:11 [v] 2 Sam. 12:16 **13:32** [w] 2 Sam. 13:3–5 **13:33** [x] 2 Sam. 19:19 **13:34** [y] 2 Sam. 13:37, 38 **13:37** [z] 2 Sam. 3:3 **13:38** [a] 2 Sam. 14:23, 32; 15:8 **13:39** [b] 2 Sam. 12:19, 23 **14:1** [a] 2 Sam. 13:39 **14:2** [b] 2 Chr. 11:6 [c] Ruth 3:3 **14:3** [d] 2 Sam. 14:19 **14:4** [e] 1 Sam. 20:41; 25:23 [f] 2 Kin. 6:26, 28 **14:5** [g] [Zech. 7:10] **14:7** [h] Deut. 19:12, 13

killed; and we will destroy the heir also.' So they would extinguish my ember that is left, and leave to my husband *neither* name nor remnant on the earth."

8Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you."

9And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, "My lord, O king, *let* [i]the iniquity *be* on me and on my father's house, [j]and the king and his throne *be* guiltless."

10So the king said, "Whoever says *anything* to you, bring him to me, and he shall not touch you anymore."

11Then she said, "Please let the king remember the LORD your God, and do not permit [k]the avenger of blood to destroy anymore, lest they destroy my son."

And he said, [l]"*As* the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground."

12Therefore the woman said, "Please, let your maidservant speak *another* word to my lord the king."

And he said, "Say on."

13So the woman said: "Why then have you schemed such a thing against [m]the people of God? For the king speaks this thing as one who is guilty, *in that* the king does not bring [n]his banished one home again. **14**For we [o]will surely die and *become* like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not [p]take away a life; but He [q]devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled from Him. **15**Now therefore, I have come to speak of this thing to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid. And your maidservant said, 'I will now speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his maidservant. **16**For the king will hear and deliver his maidservant from the hand of the man *who would* destroy me and my son together from the [r]inheritance of God.' **17**Your maidservant said, 'The word of my lord the king will now be comforting; for [s]as the angel of God, so *is* my lord the king in [t]discerning good and evil. And may the LORD your God be with you.'"

18Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide from me anything that I ask you."

And the woman said, "Please, let my lord the king speak."

19So the king said, "*Is* the hand of Joab with you in all this?" And the woman answered and said, "*As* you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my lord the king has spoken. For your servant Joab commanded me, and [u]he put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant. **20**To bring about this change of affairs your servant Joab has done this thing; but my lord *is* wise, [v]according to the wisdom of the angel of God, to know everything that *is* in the earth."

21And the king said to Joab, "All right, I have granted this thing. Go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom."

22Then Joab fell to the ground on his face and bowed himself, and thanked the king. And Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord, O king, in that the king has fulfilled the request of his servant." **23**So Joab arose [w]and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. **24**And the king said, "Let him return to his own house, but [x]do not let him see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king's face.

14:11 ***avenger of blood.*** The Hebrew phrase, "avenger of blood" or "redeemer of blood" is closely related to the term "kinsman redeemer." The kinsman redeemer is the protector of family rights. Here, the protector of the family would be expected to bring vengeance on one who had taken the life of a family member. Cities of refuge had been established under Moses for protection from a blood avenger in cases where the killing was accidental (Num. 35:9–34).

14:14 Restoration—The wise woman from Tekoa spoke compellingly of Absalom's (the banished one's) need to make things right with God. David, whose heart was leaning toward his son, was touched, and he brought Absalom back. But no restoration took place. Neither Absalom nor David discussed how they had failed to seek justice according to law in the case of Amnon and Tamar. Restoration is only possible if we are willing to look sin in the face and acknowledge the need to repent before God and turn to new and righteous ways.

It is difficult to know exactly what the woman is saying to David, because she is speaking with double meanings. On the surface is her made-up story, which is supposed to speak allegorically to David. In this instance she is referring to the fact that because "her son" did not kill "his brother" in premeditated murder, he should have found safety in a city of refuge. Absalom, however, did kill his brother in premeditated murder. The mitigating factor is that Amnon should have been banished for his rape of Tamar, and the king, Tamar's first protector, had done nothing. Absalom was the next in line as near relative of Tamar, so there was some justice in his desire to bring Amnon to account.

14:19 ***hand of Joab.*** The exact extent of the game Joab was playing is not explained. Joab had been a difficult force in David's life (13:37–39). Joab had killed Abner in a way that David considered unjust, and it was Joab who arranged Uriah's death for David. These factors, and the fact that Joab was in some way sponsoring Absalom's return, made the relationship between David and Joab uneasy. The old trust was gone.

14:24 ***do not let him see my face.*** Absalom was allowed to return, but his position was not restored.

14:9 *i* 1 Sam. 25:24 *j* 1 Kin. 2:33 **14:11** *k* Num. 35:19, 21 *l* 1 Sam. 14:45 **14:13** *m* Judg. 20:2 *n* 2 Sam. 13:37, 38 **14:14** *o* [Heb. 9:27] *p* Job 34:19 *q* Num. 35:15 **14:16** *r* Deut. 32:9 **14:17** *s* 2 Sam. 19:27 *t* 1 Kin. 3:9 **14:19** *u* 2 Sam. 14:3 **14:20** *v* 2 Sam. 14:17; 19:27 **14:23** *w* 2 Sam. 13:37, 38 **14:24** *x* 2 Sam. 3:13

David Forgives Absalom

25 Now in all Israel there was no one who
was praised as much as Absalom for his
good looks. [y]From the sole of his foot to
the crown of his head there was no blem-
ish in him. 26 And when he cut the hair of
his head—at the end of every year he cut *it*
because it was heavy on him—when he cut
it, he weighed the hair of his head at two
hundred shekels according to the king's
standard. 27 [z]To Absalom were born three
sons, and one daughter whose name *was*
Tamar. She was a woman of beautiful ap-
pearance.

28 And Absalom dwelt two full years in
Jerusalem, [a]but did not see the king's face.
29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to send
him to the king, but he would not come to
him. And when he sent again the second
time, he would not come. 30 So he said to
his servants, "See, Joab's field is near mine,
and he has barley there; go and set it on
fire." And Absalom's servants set the field
on fire.

31 Then Joab arose and came to Absa-
lom's house, and said to him, "Why have
your servants set my field on fire?"

32 And Absalom answered Joab, "Look,
I sent to you, saying, 'Come here, so that
I may send you to the king, to say, "Why
have I come from Geshur? *It would be* bet-
ter for me *to be* there still." ' Now therefore,
let me see the king's face; but [b]if there is
iniquity in me, let him execute me."

33 So Joab went to the king and told him.
And when he had called for Absalom, he
came to the king and bowed himself on his
face to the ground before the king. Then
the king [c]kissed Absalom.

Absalom's Treason

15 After this [a]it happened that Absa-
lom [b]provided himself with chariots
and horses, and fifty men to run before
him. 2 Now Absalom would rise early and
stand beside the way to the gate. *So* it
was, whenever anyone who had a [c]lawsuit
came to the king for a decision, that Absa-
lom would call to him and say, "What city
are you from?" And he would say, "Your
servant *is* from such and such a tribe of
Israel." 3 Then Absalom would say to him,
"Look, your case *is* good and right; but
there is no deputy of the king to hear you."
4 Moreover Absalom would say, [d]"Oh, that I
were made judge in the land, and everyone
who has any suit or cause would come to
me; then I would give him justice." 5 And
so it was, whenever anyone came near to
bow down to him, that he would put out
his hand and take him and [e]kiss him. 6 In
this manner Absalom acted toward all Is-
rael who came to the king for judgment.
[f]So Absalom stole the hearts of the men
of Israel.

7 Now it came to pass [g]after forty* years
that Absalom said to the king, "Please, let
me go to [h]Hebron and pay the vow which I
made to the LORD. 8 [i]For your servant [j]took
a vow [k]while I dwelt at Geshur in Syria,
saying, 'If the LORD indeed brings me back
to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.' "

9 And the king said to him, "Go in peace."
So he arose and went to Hebron.

10 Then Absalom sent spies through-
out all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As
soon as you hear the sound of the trum-
pet, then you shall say, 'Absalom [l]reigns
in Hebron!' " 11 And with Absalom went
two hundred men [m]invited from Jeru-
salem, and they [n]went along innocently
and did not know anything. 12 Then Ab-
salom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite,
[o]David's counselor, from his city—from
[p]Giloh—while he offered sacrifices. And
the conspiracy grew strong, for the peo-
ple with Absalom [q]continually increased
in number.

* **15:7** Septuagint manuscripts, Syriac, and Josephus read *four.*

There were issues of justice that had not been settled. One was David's apparent indifference to the sin of Amnon, and the other was whether Amnon's death was an act of justice or an act of murder. It never pays to let matters of justice remain undecided for a long period of time. It creates bitterness and disrespect for the authorities whose job it is to decide matters of justice, and the people involved become set in their attitudes in a way that makes repentance and restitution virtually impossible.

14:26 ***two hundred shekels.*** The weight of Absalom's hair was about 5 pounds.

14:27 ***three sons.*** Apparently Absalom's sons did not live to maturity. When he set up a pillar in Jerusalem to memorialize his name, he said it was because he had no son.

14:32 ***Come here.*** Apparently Joab did not sponsor Absalom to the extent of acting as a go-between with his father. Absalom responded with the attitude of a superior to an inferior, not what one might expect from the king's son to his father's highest ranking officer. It seems from the fearless and high handed way in which he answered Joab that Absalom was already seeing himself as his father's successor.

15:4 ***I would give him justice.*** Administration of justice, the proper relationship between people in society according to God's standard of righteousness, was a major concern of the Old Testament rulers and prophets (8:15; 1 Kin. 3:28; Is. 1:17; Amos 5:24). Absalom is playing on the people's emotions, and perhaps justifying himself in his actions against Amnon as well.

14:25 [y] Is. 1:6 **14:27** [z] 2 Sam. 13:1; 18:18
14:28 [a] 2 Sam. 14:24 **14:32** [b] 1 Sam. 20:8 **14:33** [c] Luke 15:20 **15:1** [a] 2 Sam. 12:11 [b] 1 Kin. 1:5 **15:2** [c] Deut. 19:17 **15:4** [d] Judg. 9:29 **15:5** [e] 2 Sam. 14:33; 20:9 **15:6** [f] [Rom. 16:18] **15:7** [g] [Deut. 23:21] [h] 2 Sam. 3:2, 3 **15:8** [i] 1 Sam. 16:2 [j] Gen. 28:20, 21 [k] 2 Sam. 13:38 **15:10** [l] 1 Kin. 1:34 **15:11** [m] 1 Sam. 16:3, 5 [n] Gen. 20:5 **15:12** [o] 1 Chr. 27:33 [p] Josh. 15:51 [q] Ps. 3:1

David Escapes from Jerusalem

13 Now a messenger came to David, saying, [r]"The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."

14 So David said to all his servants who *were* with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us [s]flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

15 And the king's servants said to the king, "We *are* your servants, *ready to do* whatever my lord the king commands."

16 Then [t]the king went out with all his household after him. But the king left [u]ten women, concubines, to keep the house.

17 And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts.

18 Then all his servants passed before him; [v]and all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, [w]six hundred men who had followed him from Gath, passed before the king.

19 Then the king said to [x]Ittai the Gittite, "Why are you also going with us? Return and remain with the king. For you *are* a foreigner and also an exile from your own place.

20 In fact, you came *only* yesterday. Should I make you wander up and down with us today, since I go [y]I know not where? Return, and take your brethren back. Mercy and truth *be* with you."

21 But Ittai answered the king and said, [z]"*As* the LORD lives, and *as* my lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be."

22 So David said to Ittai, "Go, and cross over." Then Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little ones who *were* with him crossed over.

23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over. The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron, and all the people crossed over toward the way of the [a]wilderness.

24 There was [b]Zadok also, and all the Levites with him, bearing the [c]ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and [d]Abiathar went up until all the people had finished crossing over from the city.

25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, He [e]will bring me back and show me *both* it and [f]His dwelling place.

26 But if He says thus: 'I have no [g]delight in you,' here I am, [h]let Him do to me as seems good to Him."

27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "*Are* you *not* a [i]seer? Return to the city in peace, and [j]your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

28 See, [k]I will wait in the plains of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."

29 Therefore Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem. And they remained there.

30 So David went up by the Ascent of the *Mount of* Olives, and wept as he went up; and he [l]had his head covered and went [m]barefoot. And all the people who *were* with him [n]covered their heads and went up, [o]weeping as they went up.

31 Then *someone* told David, saying, [p]"Ahithophel *is* among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, I pray, [q]turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!"

15:13 ***The hearts of the men of Israel.*** When David's power in Judah was confined to Hebron (ch. 2) he was resented by the supporters of Saul in the rest of the country. Old suspicions and resentments can be stoked again by a person who knows how to use people to his own advantage—a disreputable quality in which Absalom excelled.

15:15 ***We are your servants.*** The loyalty of David's servants must have been a real encouragement in a time of such disloyalty from David's own family.

15:18 ***Cherethites . . . Pelethites.*** The Cherethites and Pelethites were elite units of David's army. These trusted troops of David were not Israelites, but mercenaries from a variety of nations, possibly Crete and Philistia. They had been with David for years, owed him their loyalty, and would defend him and his family to the death. ***Gittites.*** The Gittites were probably Philistine mercenary soldiers who were among David's original followers from Gath (1 Sam. 22:1–2).

15:19–21 Righteousness—Making the choice to stand with the right man, even when it looked like he might spend the rest of his life in exile was not practical, but it was right. We will all have to make choices to tell the truth, stand up for honorable actions, or support someone who is right but not powerful. Taking the right path does not mean it will be easy, but when we are on the right path, God is with us, "Yea . . . through the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps. 23:4)

15:21 ***whether in death or life.*** David rewarded Ittai's loyalty when he made Ittai commander of a third of the army (18:2).

15:23 ***Brook Kidron.*** The Brook Kidron is a small stream that flows through the valley separating Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives during the rainy season (October through March). ***way of the wilderness.*** The way of the wilderness refers to the road leading through the wilderness of Judah to Jericho and down to the fords of the Jordan.

15:25 ***He will bring me back.*** David committed the entire situation to the care and will of the Lord.

15:31 ***Ahithophel.*** Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather (11:3; 23:34). A wise counselor (16:23), he had been in David's service (v. 12) but had switched

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15:13 [r] Judg. 9:3 **15:14** [s] Ps. 3:title **15:16** [t] Ps. 3:title [u] 2 Sam. 12:11; 16:21, 22 **15:18** [v] 2 Sam. 8:18 [w] 1 Sam. 23:13; 25:13; 30:1, 9 **15:19** [x] 2 Sam. 18:2 **15:20** [y] 1 Sam. 23:13 **15:21** [z] Ruth 1:16, 17 **15:23** [a] 2 Sam. 15:28; 16:2 **15:24** [b] 2 Sam. 8:17 [c] Num. 4:15 [d] 1 Sam. 22:20 **15:25** [e] [Ps. 43:3] [f] Ex. 15:13 **15:26** [g] Num. 14:8 [h] 1 Sam. 3:18 **15:27** [i] 1 Sam. 9:6–9 [j] 2 Sam. 17:17–20 **15:28** [k] 2 Sam. 17:16 **15:30** [l] Esth. 6:12 [m] Is. 20:2–4 [n] Jer. 14:3, 4 [o] [Ps. 126:6] **15:31** [p] Ps. 3:1, 2; 55:12 [q] 2 Sam. 16:23; 17:14, 23

32 Now it happened when David had come
to the top *of the mountain,* where he wor-
shiped God—there was Hushai the [r]Archite
coming to meet him [s]with his robe torn and
dust on his head. 33 David said to him, "If
you go on with me, then you will become
[t]a burden to me. 34 But if you return to the
city, and say to Absalom, [u]'I will be your
servant, O king; *as* I *was* your father's ser-
vant previously, so I *will* now also *be* your
servant,' then you may defeat the counsel of
Ahithophel for me. 35 And *do* you not *have*
Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you
there? Therefore it will be *that* whatever
you hear from the king's house, you shall
tell to [v]Zadok and Abiathar the priests. 36 In-
deed *they have* there [w]with them their two
sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's *son,* and Jonathan,
Abiathar's *son;* and by them you shall send
me everything you hear."

37 So Hushai, [x]David's friend, went into
the city. [y]And Absalom came into Jerusa-
lem.

Mephibosheth's Servant

16 When[a] David was a little past the
top *of the mountain,* there was [b]Zi-
ba the servant of Mephibosheth, who met
him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and
on them two hundred *loaves* of bread, one
hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred
summer fruits, and a skin of wine. 2 And
the king said to Ziba, "What do you mean
to do with these?"

So Ziba said, "The donkeys *are* for the
king's household to ride on, the bread and
summer fruit for the young men to eat, and
the wine for [c]those who are faint in the wil-
derness to drink."

3 Then the king said, "And where *is* your
[d]master's son?"

[e]And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he
is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today
the house of Israel will restore the kingdom
of my father to me.'"

4 So the king said to Ziba, "Here, all that
belongs to Mephibosheth *is* yours."

And Ziba said, "I humbly bow before
you, *that* I may find favor in your sight,
my lord, O king!"

Shimei Curses David

5 Now when King David came to [f]Ba-
hurim, there was a man from the family of
the house of Saul, whose name *was* [g]Shim-
ei the son of Gera, coming from there. He
came out, cursing continuously as he came.
6 And he threw stones at David and at all the
servants of King David. And all the people
and all the mighty men *were* on his right
hand and on his left. 7 Also Shimei said thus
when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You
bloodthirsty man, [h]you rogue! 8 The LORD
has [i]brought upon you all [j]the blood of the
house of Saul, in whose place you have
reigned; and the LORD has delivered the
kingdom into the hand of Absalom your
son. So now you *are caught* in your own
evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"

9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said
to the king, "Why should this [k]dead dog
[l]curse my lord the king? Please, let me go
over and take off his head!"

10 But the king said, [m]"What have I to do
with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him
curse, because [n]the LORD has said to him,
'Curse David.' [o]Who then shall say, 'Why
have you done so?'"

11 And David said to Abishai and all his
servants, "See how [p]my son who [q]came
from my own body seeks my life. How
much more now *may this* Benjamite? Let
him alone, and let him curse; for so the
LORD has ordered him. 12 It may be that
the LORD will look on my affliction,* and
that the LORD will [r]repay me with [s]good for

* **16:12** Following Kethib, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Qere reads *my eyes;* Targum reads *tears of my eyes.*

his allegiance to Absalom. David's prayer was for his enemy to be confused. The name Ahithophel may mean "Brother of Folly."

15:34 ***defeat the counsel.*** David had committed the entire situation to the care and will of the Lord, but he was acting wisely to protect himself and to provide a source of information as well as an inside confederate to confound the enemy.

16:1 ***Ziba.*** A longtime servant of both Saul and Mephibosheth, Ziba was expressing his loyalty to King David.

16:5 ***Bahurim.*** Bahurim was near Jerusalem, east of the Mount of Olives (3:16). ***cursing continuously.*** These were not simple insults or the words of someone with a foul mouth. Shimei was asking God to destroy David (Num. 22:6).

16:6 ***threw stones.*** Throwing stones is a gesture of contempt, as if the fleeing king were merely a stray dog. Stones can also be deadly, as is shown by the fact that stoning was a normal means of capital punishment among the Hebrews (1 Kin. 21:13).

16:9–13 Forbearance—David was more aware of his failure as a father than his dignity as a king. David knew that both Moses and Saul had been disciplined by God, and he certainly did not rule out the idea that both Absalom's rebellion and Shimei's cursing might be part of a lesson that God had for him. He was willing to endure both while he waited to see how God would work things out.

16:10 ***What have I to do with you.*** This idiom means that David did not share the feelings and views of Abishai.

15:32 [r] Josh. 16:2 [s] 2 Sam. 1:2 **15:33** [t] 2 Sam. 19:35 **15:34** [u] 2 Sam. 16:19 **15:35** [v] 2 Sam. 17:15, 16 **15:36** [w] 2 Sam. 15:27 **15:37** [x] 1 Chr. 27:33 [y] 2 Sam. 16:15 **16:1** [a] 2 Sam. 15:30, 32 [b] 2 Sam. 9:2; 19:17, 29 **16:2** [c] 2 Sam. 15:23; 17:29 **16:3** [d] 2 Sam. 9:9, 10 [e] 2 Sam. 19:27 **16:5** [f] 2 Sam. 3:16 [g] 2 Sam. 19:21 **16:7** [h] Deut. 13:13 **16:8** [i] Judg. 9:24, 56, 57 [j] 2 Sam. 1:16; 3:28, 29; 4:11, 12 **16:9** [k] 2 Sam. 9:8 [l] Ex. 22:28 **16:10** [m] 2 Sam. 3:39; 19:22 [n] [Lam. 3:38] [o] [Rom. 9:20] **16:11** [p] 2 Sam. 12:11 [q] Gen. 15:4 **16:12** [r] Prov. 20:22 [s] [Rom. 8:28]

his cursing this day." 13And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and kicked up dust. 14Now the king and all the people who *were* with him became weary; so they refreshed themselves there.

The Advice of Ahithophel

15Meanwhile [t]Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel *was* with him. 16And so it was, when Hushai the Archite, [u]David's friend, came to Absalom, that [v]Hushai said to Absalom, "*Long* live the king! *Long* live the king!"

17So Absalom said to Hushai, "*Is* this your loyalty to your friend? [w]Why did you not go with your friend?"

18And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, but whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his I will be, and with him I will remain. 19Furthermore, [x]whom should I serve? *Should I* not *serve* in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, so will I be in your presence."

20Then Absalom said to [y]Ahithophel, "Give advice as to what we should do."

21And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's [z]concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you [a]are abhorred by your father. Then [b]the hands of all who are with you will be strong." 22So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines [c]in the sight of all Israel.

23Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, *was* as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So *was* all the advice of Ahithophel [d]both with David and with Absalom.

17 Moreover Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Now let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. 2I will come upon him while he *is* [a]weary and weak, and make him afraid. And all the people who *are* with him will flee, and I will [b]strike only the king. 3Then I will bring back all the people to you. When all return except the man whom you seek, all the people will be at peace." 4And the saying pleased Absalom and all the [c]elders of Israel.

The Advice of Hushai

5Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear what he [d]says too." 6And when Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him, saying, "Ahithophel has spoken in this manner. Shall we do as he says? If not, speak up."

7So Hushai said to Absalom: "The advice that Ahithophel has given *is* not good at this time. 8For," said Hushai, "you know your father and his men, that they *are* mighty men, and they *are* enraged in their minds, like [e]a bear robbed of her cubs in the field; and your father *is* a man of war, and will not camp with the people. 9Surely by now he is hidden in some pit, or in some *other* place. And it will be, when some of them are overthrown at the first, that whoever hears *it* will say, 'There is a slaughter among the people who follow Absalom.' 10And even he *who is* valiant, whose heart *is* like the heart of a lion, will [f]melt completely. For all Israel knows that your father *is* a mighty man, and *those* who *are* with him *are* valiant men. 11Therefore I advise that all Israel be fully gathered to you, [g]from Dan to Beersheba, [h]like the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. 12So we will come upon him in some place where he may be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground. And of him and all the men who *are* with him there shall not be left so much as one. 13Moreover, if he has withdrawn into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city; and we will [i]pull it into the river, until there is not one small stone found there."

14So Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Archite *is* better than the advice of Ahithophel." For [j]the LORD had purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring disaster on Absalom.

Hushai Warns David to Escape

15[k]Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and so Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel, and thus and so I have advised. 16Now therefore, send quickly and tell David, saying, 'Do not spend this night [l]in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily cross over, lest the king and all the people who *are*

16:21–22 ***concubines.*** In ancient times taking over a king's harem was a recognized means of claiming the throne. Once Absalom violated David's concubines, he was set on a course of sure and final alienation from his father. Putting his tent on the roof was a public and insolent act.

17:2 ***I will strike only the king.*** In a battle, it is a little rash to promise to kill only one person. Ahithophel was suggesting that David's companions and troops would switch their loyalty to Absalom if David were killed.

17:8 ***bear robbed of her cubs.*** There is no more dangerous foe in the woods than a mother bear who believes her cubs to be in danger.

16:15 [t] 2 Sam. 15:12, 37 **16:16** [u] 2 Sam. 15:37 [v] 2 Sam. 15:34 **16:17** [w] 2 Sam. 19:25 **16:19** [x] 2 Sam. 15:34 **16:20** [y] 2 Sam. 15:12 **16:21** [z] 2 Sam. 15:16; 20:3 [a] Gen. 34:30 [b] 2 Sam. 2:7 **16:22** [c] 2 Sam. 12:11, 12 **16:23** [d] 2 Sam. 15:12 **17:2** [a] 2 Sam. 16:14 [b] Zech. 13:7 **17:4** [c] 2 Sam. 5:3; 19:11 **17:5** [d] 2 Sam. 15:32–34 **17:8** [e] Hos. 13:8 **17:10** [f] Josh. 2:11 **17:11** [g] 2 Sam. 3:10 [h] Gen. 22:17 **17:13** [i] Mic. 1:6 **17:14** [j] 2 Sam. 15:31, 34 **17:15** [k] 2 Sam. 15:35, 36 **17:16** [l] 2 Sam. 15:28

with him be swallowed up.'" 17[m]Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz [n]stayed at [o]En Rogel, for they dared not be seen coming into the city; so a female servant would come and tell them, and they would go and tell King David. 18Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom. But both of them went away quickly and came to a man's house [p]in Bahurim, who had a well in his court; and they went down into it. 19[q]Then the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground grain on it; and the thing was not known. 20And when Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, "Where *are* Ahimaaz and Jonathan?"

So [r]the woman said to them, "They have gone over the water brook."

And when they had searched and could not find *them,* they returned to Jerusalem. 21Now it came to pass, after they had departed, that they came up out of the well and went and told King David, and said to David, [s]"Arise and cross over the water quickly. For thus has Ahithophel advised against you." 22So David and all the people who *were* with him arose and crossed over the Jordan. By morning light not one of them was left who had not gone over the Jordan.

23Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to [t]his house, to his city. Then he put his [u]household in order, and [v]hanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb.

24Then David went to [w]Mahanaim. And Absalom crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. 25And Absalom made [x]Amasa captain of the army instead of Joab. This Amasa *was* the son of a man whose name *was* Jithra,* an Israelite,* who had gone in to [y]Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. 26So Israel and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

27Now it happened, when David had come to Mahanaim, that [z]Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the people of Ammon, [a]Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and [b]Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, 28brought beds and basins, earthen vessels and wheat, barley and flour, parched *grain* and beans, lentils and parched *seeds,* 29honey and curds, sheep and cheese of the herd, for David and the people who *were* with him to eat. For they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty [c]in the wilderness."

Absalom's Defeat and Death

18 And David numbered the people who *were* with him, and [a]set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. 2Then David sent out one third of the people under the hand of Joab, [b]one third under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the hand of [c]Ittai the Gittite. And the king said to the people, "I also will surely go out with you myself."

3[d]But the people answered, "You shall not go out! For if we flee away, they will not care about us; nor if half of us die, will they care about us. But *you are* worth ten thousand of us now. For you are now more help to us in the city."

4Then the king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." So the king stood beside the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands. 5Now the king had commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, saying, "*Deal* gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." [e]And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains orders concerning Absalom.

6So the people went out into the field of battle against Israel. And the battle was in the [f]woods of Ephraim. 7The people of Israel were overthrown there before the servants of David, and a great slaughter of twenty thousand took place there that day. 8For the battle there was scattered over the face of the whole countryside, and the

* **17:25** Spelled *Jether* in 1 Chronicles 2:17 and elsewhere • Following Masoretic Text, some manuscripts of the Septuagint, and Targum; some manuscripts of the Septuagint read *Ishmaelite* (compare 1 Chronicles 2:17); Vulgate reads *of Jezrael.*

17:22 *crossed over the Jordan.* Although the Jordan was not a large river, crossing it provided a barrier between him and his enemies. The tribal allotments included land on both sides of the Jordan, but there was always an emotional understanding that the "real" land of Israel was west of the Jordan. David was truly an exile.

17:27 *Shobi . . . Barzillai.* The gifts of these three men showed a real understanding of the material needs of the exiles, and this act of kindness must have been very encouraging to them. ***Machir.*** Jonathan's son Mephibosheth was living with Machir when David found him (9:4).

18:3–4 Wisdom—One facet of good leadership is the ability to delegate authority to others and leave the results in the hands of God. Waiting in safety was not David's idea, but it seemed best to others, so David agreed. David's strength as a leader lay in having the hearts of his followers, and they in turn put his safety as a high priority. These loyal men did not think that God was done with David as king, and David needed their wisdom.

17:17 [m] 2 Sam. 15:27, 36 [n] Josh. 2:4–6 [o] Josh. 15:7; 18:16 **17:18** [p] 2 Sam. 3:16; 16:5 **17:19** [q] Josh. 2:4–6 **17:20** [r] Josh. 2:3–5 **17:21** [s] 2 Sam. 17:15, 16 **17:23** [t] 2 Sam. 15:12 [u] 2 Kin. 20:1 [v] Matt. 27:5 **17:24** [w] 2 Sam. 2:8; 19:32 **17:25** [x] 1 Kin. 2:5, 32 [y] 1 Chr. 2:16 **17:27** [z] 2 Sam. 10:1; 12:29 [a] 2 Sam. 9:4 [b] 2 Sam. 19:31, 32 **17:29** [c] 2 Sam. 16:2, 14 **18:1** [a] Ex. 18:25 **18:2** [b] Judg. 7:16 [c] 2 Sam. 15:19–22 **18:3** [d] 2 Sam. 21:17 **18:5** [e] 2 Sam. 18:12 **18:6** [f] Josh. 17:15, 18

woods devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

9 Then Absalom met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule. The mule went under the thick boughs of a great terebinth tree, and [g]his head caught in the terebinth; so he was left hanging between heaven and earth. And the mule which *was* under him went on. 10 Now a certain man saw *it* and told Joab, and said, "I just saw Absalom hanging in a terebinth tree!"

11 So Joab said to the man who told him, "You just saw *him!* And why did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have given you ten *shekels* of silver and a belt."

12 But the man said to Joab, "Though I were to receive a thousand *shekels* of silver in my hand, I would not raise my hand against the king's son. [h]For in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Beware lest anyone *touch* the young man Absalom!'* 13 Otherwise I would have dealt falsely against my own life. For there is nothing hidden from the king, and you yourself would have set yourself against *me*."

14 Then Joab said, "I cannot linger with you." And he took three spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom's heart, while he was *still* alive in the midst of the terebinth tree. 15 And ten young men who bore Joab's armor surrounded Absalom, and struck and killed him.

16 So Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing Israel. For Joab held back the people. 17 And they took Absalom and cast him into a large pit in the woods, and [i]laid a very large heap of stones over him. Then all Israel [j]fled, everyone to his tent.

18 Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up a pillar for himself, which *is* in [k]the King's Valley. For he said, [l]"I have no son to keep my name in remembrance." He called the pillar after his own name. And to this day it is called Absalom's Monument.

David Hears of Absalom's Death

19 Then [m]Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said, "Let me run now and take the news to the king, how the LORD has avenged him of his enemies."

20 And Joab said to him, "You shall not take the news this day, for you shall take the news another day. But today you shall take no news, because the king's son is dead." 21 Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." So the Cushite bowed himself to Joab and ran.

22 And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok said again to Joab, "But whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite."

So Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, since you have no news ready?"

23 "But whatever happens," *he said,* "let me run."

So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain, and outran the Cushite.

24 Now David was sitting between the [n]two gates. And the watchman went up to the roof over the gate, to the wall, lifted his eyes and looked, and there was a man, running alone. 25 Then the watchman cried out and told the king. And the king said, "If he *is* alone, *there is* news in his mouth." And he came rapidly and drew near.

26 Then the watchman saw *another* man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "There is *another* man, running alone!"

And the king said, "He also brings news."

27 So the watchman said, "I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok."

And the king said, "He *is* a good man, and comes with [o]good news."

28 So Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "All is well!" Then he bowed down with his face to the earth before the king, and said, [p]"Blessed *be* the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king!"

29 The king said, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent the king's servant and *me* your servant, I saw a great tumult, but I did not know what *it was about*."

30 And the king said, "Turn aside *and* stand here." So he turned aside and stood still.

31 Just then the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, "There is good news, my lord the king! For the LORD has avenged you this day of all those who rose against you."

32 And the king said to the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

So the Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise against you to do harm, be like *that* young man!"

* **18:12** The ancient versions read *'Protect the young man Absalom for me!'*

18:9 ***terebinth.*** The terebinth, sometimes called an oak, was native to the land of Israel and was a strong tree that grew to a height of about 35 feet.

18:23 ***by way of the plain.*** The plain was the floor of the Jordan valley. Ahimaaz took a longer route, but avoided the hilly terrain on the road taken by the Cushite.

18:9 *g* 2 Sam. 14:26 **18:12** *h* 2 Sam. 18:5 **18:17** *i* Josh. 7:26; 8:29 *j* 2 Sam. 19:8; 20:1, 22 **18:18** *k* Gen. 14:17 *l* 2 Sam. 14:27 **18:19** *m* 2 Sam. 15:36; 17:17 **18:24** *n* 2 Kin. 9:17 **18:27** *o* 1 Kin. 1:42 **18:28** *p* 2 Sam. 16:12

David's Mourning for Absalom

33 Then the king was deeply moved, and
went up to the chamber over the gate, and
wept. And as he went, he said thus: [a]"O my
son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—
if only I had died in your place! O Absalom
my son, [r]my son!"

19 And Joab was told, "Behold, the king
is weeping and [a]mourning for Absa-
lom." 2 So the victory that day was *turned*
into [b]mourning for all the people. For the
people heard it said that day, "The king is
grieved for his son." 3 And the people stole
back [c]into the city that day, as people who
are ashamed steal away when they flee in
battle. 4 But the king [d]covered his face, and
the king cried out with a loud voice, [e]"O my
son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"

5 Then [f]Joab came into the house to the
king, and said, "Today you have disgraced
all your servants who today have saved
your life, the lives of your sons and daugh-
ters, the lives of your wives and the lives
of your concubines, 6 in that you love your
enemies and hate your friends. For you
have declared today that you regard nei-
ther princes nor servants; for today I per-
ceive that if Absalom had lived and all of us
had died today, then it would have pleased
you well. 7 Now therefore, arise, go out and
speak comfort to your servants. For I swear
by the LORD, if you do not go out, not one
will stay with you this night. And that will
be worse for you than all the evil that has
befallen you from your youth until now."
8 Then the king arose and sat in the [g]gate.
And they told all the people, saying, "There
is the king, sitting in the gate." So all the
people came before the king.

For everyone of Israel had [h]fled to his
tent.

David Returns to Jerusalem

9 Now all the people were in a dispute
throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying,
"The king saved us from the hand of our
[i]enemies, he delivered us from the hand of
the [j]Philistines, and now he has [k]fled from
the land because of Absalom. 10 But Absa-
lom, whom we anointed over us, has died
in battle. Now therefore, why do you say
nothing about bringing back the king?"

11 So King David sent to [l]Zadok and Abi-
athar the priests, saying, "Speak to the
elders of Judah, saying, 'Why are you the
last to bring the king back to his house,
since the words of all Israel have come to
the king, to his *very* house? 12 You *are* my
brethren, you *are* [m]my bone and my flesh.
Why then are you the last to bring back the
king?' 13 [n]And say to Amasa, '*Are* you not
my bone and my flesh? [o]God do so to me,
and more also, if you are not commander
of the army before me continually in place
of Joab.'" 14 So he swayed the hearts of all
the men of Judah, [p]just as *the heart of* one
man, so that they sent *this word* to the
king: "Return, you and all your servants!"

15 Then the king returned and came to
the Jordan. And Judah came to [q]Gilgal,
to go to meet the king, to escort the king
[r]across the Jordan. 16 And [s]Shimei the son
of Gera, a Benjamite, who *was* from Ba-
hurim, hurried and came down with the
men of Judah to meet King David. 17 *There*
were a thousand men of [t]Benjamin with
him, and [u]Ziba the servant of the house of
Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty
servants with him; and they went over the
Jordan before the king. 18 Then a ferryboat
went across to carry over the king's house-
hold, and to do what he thought good.

David's Mercy to Shimei

Now Shimei the son of Gera fell down
before the king when he had crossed the
Jordan. 19 Then he said to the king, [v]"Do
not let my lord impute iniquity to me, or
remember what [w]wrong your servant did
on the day that my lord the king left Je-
rusalem, that the king should [x]take *it* to
heart. 20 For I, your servant, know that I
have sinned. Therefore here I am, the first

18:33 ***O my son Absalom.*** David's grief can be understood by any parent who has lost a child to vice or crime. Absalom was a rebel, but he had been a little boy born to David in the early years as king in Hebron, and for David he would always be that beloved son. Absalom deserved to die, and David knew it, but he still longed for things to have turned out differently. In a few short years the repercussions of his sin with Bathsheba had destroyed the lives of Amnon, Tamar, and Absalom.

18:33 Despondency—In many ways mental suffering is more intense and devastating than physical suffering. It was hard for David to even imagine taking up life again and going back to Jerusalem as king. It is only the Lord who can give courage in such moments, and He often does it by reminding us of who He is, what He has done in the past, and what He promises to do in the future. Sandwiched in these certainties, we can begin to see that His hand is on us even in our grief.

19:11 ***elders of Judah.*** David asked his friends the priests, to begin the movement to invite David back to his throne. Apparently he did not want to come into Jerusalem without public support for his rule.

19:13 ***Amasa.*** David's nephew Amasa had commanded the army of Absalom (17:25). When David offered him the position of commander it was probably intended to secure Amasa's allegiance as well as discipline Joab for killing Absalom against David's orders.

18:33 [q] 2 Sam. 12:10 [r] 2 Sam. 19:4 **19:1** [a] Jer. 14:2 **19:2** [b] Esth. 4:3 **19:3** [c] 2 Sam. 17:24, 27; 19:32 **19:4** [d] 2 Sam. 15:30 [e] 2 Sam. 18:33 **19:5** [f] 2 Sam. 18:14 **19:8** [g] 2 Sam. 15:2; 18:24 [h] 2 Sam. 18:17 **19:9** [i] 2 Sam. 8:1–14 [j] 2 Sam. 3:18 [k] 2 Sam. 15:14 **19:11** [l] 2 Sam. 15:24 **19:12** [m] 2 Sam. 5:1 **19:13** [n] 2 Sam. 17:25 [o] Ruth 1:17 **19:14** [p] Judg. 20:1 **19:15** [q] Josh. 5:9 [r] 2 Sam. 17:22 **19:16** [s] 2 Sam. 16:5 **19:17** [t] 1 Kin. 12:21 [u] 2 Sam. 9:2, 10; 16:1, 2 **19:19** [v] 1 Sam. 22:15 [w] 2 Sam. 16:5, 6 [x] 2 Sam. 13:33

to come today of all [y]the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king."

21But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, [z]because he [a]cursed the LORD's anointed?"

22And David said, [b]"What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should be adversaries to me today? [c]Shall any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I *am* king over Israel?" 23Therefore [d]the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king swore to him.

David and Mephibosheth Meet

24Now [e]Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he returned in peace. 25So it was, when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, [f]"Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"

26And he answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go to the king,' because your servant *is* lame. 27And [g]he has slandered your servant to my lord the king, [h]but my lord the king *is* like the angel of God. Therefore do *what is* good in your eyes. 28For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king. [i]Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your own table. Therefore what right have I still to cry out anymore to the king?"

29So the king said to him, "Why do you speak anymore of your matters? I have said, 'You and Ziba divide the land.'"

30Then Mephibosheth said to the king, "Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house."

David's Kindness to Barzillai

31And [j]Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim and went across the Jordan with the king, to escort him across the Jordan. 32Now Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. And [k]he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he *was* a very rich man. 33And the king said to Barzillai, "Come across with me, and I will provide for you while you are with me in Jerusalem."

34But Barzillai said to the king, "How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? 35I *am* today [l]eighty years old. Can I discern between the good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any longer the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a further burden to my lord the king? 36Your servant will go a little way across the Jordan with the king. And why should the king repay me *with* such a reward? 37Please let your servant turn back again, that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and mother. But here is your servant [m]Chimham; let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what seems good to you."

38And the king answered, "Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what seems good to you. Now whatever you request of me, I will do for you." 39Then all the people went over the Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king [n]kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own place.

The Quarrel About the King

40Now the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham* went on with him. And all the people of Judah escorted the king, and also half the people of Israel. 41Just then all the men of Israel came to the king, and said to the king, "Why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen you away and [o]brought the king, his household, and all David's men with him across the Jordan?"

42So all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king *is* [p]a close relative of ours. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we ever eaten at the king's *expense*? Or has he given us any gift?"

43And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, [q]"We have ten shares in the king; therefore we also have

* **19:40** Masoretic Text reads *Chimhan*.

19:23 *the king swore to him.* The king was willing to accept Shimei as a loyal subject if he continued in his loyalty, and he swore that he would not kill Shimei. Apparently David did not trust Shimei, for he later directed Solomon to kill him (1 Kin. 2:8) along with others that he considered dangerous to Solomon's reign. David could not put Shimei to death himself because of his oath, but his son could do it if there was just cause.

19:27 *do what is good in your eyes.* David did not try to decide whether it was Ziba or Mephibosheth who was telling the truth. He commanded that they divide the land. Each was provided for; neither was validated in his claims.

19:36 Love—Barzillai's acts of hospitality were acts of love: love for the Lord, and love for his king (Mark 9:41). Such true acts of kindness may bring a reward, but the real reward is the pleasure that comes with giving.

19:20 [y] Judg. 1:22 **19:21** [z] [Ex. 22:28] [a] [1 Sam. 26:9] **19:22** [b] 2 Sam. 3:39; 16:10 [c] 1 Sam. 11:13 **19:23** [d] 1 Kin. 2:8, 9, 37, 46 **19:24** [e] 2 Sam. 9:6; 21:7 **19:25** [f] 2 Sam. 16:17 **19:27** [g] 2 Sam. 16:3, 4 [h] 2 Sam. 14:17, 20 **19:28** [i] 2 Sam. 9:7–13 **19:31** [j] 1 Kin. 2:7 **19:32** [k] 2 Sam. 17:27–29 **19:35** [l] Ps. 90:10 **19:37** [m] Jer. 41:17 **19:39** [n] Gen. 31:55 **19:41** [o] 2 Sam. 19:15 **19:42** [p] 2 Sam. 19:12 **19:43** [q] 1 Kin. 11:30, 31

more *right* to David than you. Why then do you despise us—were we not the first to advise bringing back our king?"

Yet [r]the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

The Rebellion of Sheba

20 And there happened to be there a rebel,* whose name *was* Sheba the son of Bichri, a Benjamite. And he blew a trumpet, and said:

[a]"We have no share in David,
Nor do we have inheritance in the son of Jesse;
[b]Every man to his tents, O Israel!"

2So every man of Israel deserted David, *and* followed Sheba the son of Bichri. But the [c]men of Judah, from the Jordan as far as Jerusalem, remained loyal to their king.

3Now David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten women, [d]his concubines whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in seclusion and supported them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living in widowhood.

4And the king said to Amasa, [e]"Assemble the men of Judah for me within three days, and be present here yourself." 5So Amasa went to assemble *the men of* Judah. But he delayed longer than the set time which David had appointed him. 6And David said to [f]Abishai, "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. Take [g]your lord's servants and pursue him, lest he find for himself fortified cities, and escape us." 7So Joab's men, with the [h]Cherethites, the Pelethites, and [i]all the mighty men, went out after him. And they went out of Jerusalem to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri. 8When they *were* at the large stone which *is* in Gibeon, Amasa came before them. Now Joab was dressed in battle armor; on it was a belt *with* a sword fastened in its sheath at his hips; and as he was going forward, it fell out. 9Then Joab said to Amasa, "*Are* you in health, my brother?" [j]And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. 10But Amasa did not notice the sword that *was* in Joab's hand. And [k]he struck him with it [l]in the stomach, and his entrails poured out on the ground; and he did not *strike* him again. Thus he died.

Then Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba the son of Bichri. 11Meanwhile one of Joab's men stood near Amasa, and said, "Whoever favors Joab and whoever *is* for David—follow Joab!" 12But Amasa wallowed in *his* blood in the middle of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he moved Amasa from the highway to the field and threw a garment over him, when he saw that everyone who came upon him halted. 13When he was removed from the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba the son of Bichri.

14And he went through all the tribes of Israel to [m]Abel and Beth Maachah and all the Berites. So they were gathered together and also went after *Sheba*.* 15Then they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth Maachah; and they [n]cast up a siege mound against the city, and it stood by the rampart. And all the people who *were* with Joab battered the wall to throw it down.

16Then a wise woman cried out from the city, "Hear, hear! Please say to Joab, 'Come nearby, that I may speak with you.'" 17When he had come near to her, the woman said, "*Are* you Joab?"

He answered, "I *am*."

Then she said to him, "Hear the words of your maidservant."

And he answered, "I am listening."

18So she spoke, saying, "They used to talk in former times, saying, 'They shall surely seek *guidance* at Abel,' and so they would end *disputes*. 19I *am among the* peaceable *and* faithful in Israel. You seek to destroy a city and a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up [o]the inheritance of the LORD?"

20And Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy! 21That *is* not so. But a man from the mountains of Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, has raised his hand against the king, against David. Deliver him only, and I will depart from the city."

So the woman said to Joab, "Watch, his head will be thrown to you over the wall." 22Then the woman [p]in her wisdom went to all the people. And they cut off the head of

* **20:1** Literally *man of Belial* * **20:14** Literally *him*

20:6 ***do us more harm.*** Sheba's revolt had more potential for destroying David's reign than Absalom's revolt because it was based on long-standing tribal animosity between Judah and the tribe of Benjamin.
20:9 ***my brother.*** This was not the first time Joab had killed a man while pretending to have a friendly word with him (3:27). The text does not say whether he suspected Amasa of treachery in his delay, or if Joab was acting out of jealousy, protecting his own long-standing position of leader of David's army.
20:13–22 Strife—Once again David had an opportunity to demonstrate that it was God who had chosen him to be king. If a leader has to contend for his position he is sure to leave rebellion and destruction in his wake.

19:43 [r] Judg. 8:1; 12:1 **20:1** [a] 1 Kin. 12:16 [b] 2 Sam. 18:17 **20:2** [c] 2 Sam. 19:14 **20:3** [d] 2 Sam. 15:16; 16:21, 22 **20:4** [e] 2 Sam. 17:25; 19:13 **20:6** [f] 2 Sam. 21:17 [g] 2 Sam. 11:11 **20:7** [h] 1 Kin. 1:38, 44 [i] 2 Sam. 15:18 **20:9** [j] Matt. 26:49 **20:10** [k] 1 Kin. 2:5 [l] 2 Sam. 2:23 **20:14** [m] 2 Kin. 15:29 **20:15** [n] 2 Kin. 19:32 **20:19** [o] 1 Sam. 26:19 **20:22** [p] [Eccl. 9:13–16]

Sheba the son of Bichri, and threw *it* out to Joab. Then he blew a trumpet, and they withdrew from the city, every man to his tent. So Joab returned to the king at Jerusalem.

David's Government Officers

23 And [q]Joab *was* over all the army of Israel; Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites and the Pelethites;
24 Adoram *was* [r]in charge of revenue; [s]Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* recorder;
25 Sheva *was* scribe; [t]Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests; 26 [u]and Ira the Jairite was a chief minister under David.

David Avenges the Gibeonites

21 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David [a]inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, "*It is* because of Saul and *his* bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites." 2 So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites *were* not of the children of Israel, but [b]of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them [c]in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah.

3 Therefore David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement, that you may bless [d]the inheritance of the LORD?"

4 And the Gibeonites said to him, "We will have no silver or gold from Saul or from his house, nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us."

So he said, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

5 Then they answered the king, "As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us, *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the territories of Israel, 6 let seven men of his descendants be delivered [e]to us, and we will hang them before the LORD [f]in Gibeah of Saul, [g]*whom* the LORD chose."

And the king said, "I will give *them*."

7 But the king spared [h]Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of [i]the LORD's oath that *was* between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 8 So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of [j]Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, and the five sons of Michal* the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite; 9 and he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill [k]before the LORD. So they fell, *all* seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first *days*, in the beginning of barley harvest.

10 Now [l]Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, [m]from the beginning of harvest until the late rains poured on them from heaven. And she did not allow the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night.

11 And David was told what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. 12 Then David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of [n]Jabesh Gilead who had stolen them from the street of Beth Shan,* where the [o]Philistines had hung them up, after the Philistines had struck down Saul in Gilboa. 13 So he brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there; and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. 14 They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in [p]Zelah, in the tomb of Kish his father. So they performed all that the king commanded. And after that [q]God heeded the prayer for the land.

Philistine Giants Destroyed

15 When the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David and his servants with him went down and fought against the Philistines; and David grew faint.
16 Then Ishbi-Benob, who *was* one of the sons of the [r]giant, the weight of whose

* **21:8** Or *Merab* (compare 1 Samuel 18:19 and 25:44; 2 Samuel 3:14 and 6:23) * **21:12** Spelled *Beth Shean* in Joshua 17:11 and elsewhere

21:1 ***because he killed the Gibeonites.*** When the Israelites first came into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua, the Gibeonites had deceived them into making a treaty that guaranteed their protection and security (Josh. 9:3–27). Saul had broken that agreement.

21:10 ***Rizpah.*** Rizpah remained near the bodies, protecting them from scavengers, from the barley harvest to the early rains (late April to October). This heartbreaking devotion from the mother of two of the slain men commended her to David, and finally the bones of Saul and all of his sons were buried in the family grave site.

21:14 ***God heeded the prayer for the land.*** It is hard to understand why the death of the descendants of Saul as payment for his treachery was something that would be connected to God hearing prayers for famine. Saul was described as rebellious, and apparently his disobedience was more far reaching than is recorded in Scripture. Possibly the men who were killed had been implicated in killing the Gibeonites. Even if we do not understand, we can always be sure that God is just and God is righteous.

21:16 ***giant.*** The giants were the Rephaim, a people living in Canaan who were noted for their large size.

20:23 [q] 2 Sam. 8:16–18 **20:24** [r] 1 Kin. 4:6 [s] 2 Sam. 8:16 **20:25** [t] 1 Kin. 4:4 **20:26** [u] 2 Sam. 8:18 **21:1** [a] Num. 27:21 **21:2** [b] Josh. 9:3, 15–20 [c] [Ex. 34:11–16] **21:3** [d] 2 Sam. 20:19 **21:6** [e] Num. 25:4 [f] 1 Sam. 10:26 [g] 1 Sam. 10:24 **21:7** [h] 2 Sam. 4:4; 9:10 [i] 2 Sam. 9:1–7 **21:8** [j] 2 Sam. 3:7 **21:9** [k] 2 Sam. 6:17 **21:10** [l] 2 Sam. 3:7; 21:8 [m] Deut. 21:23 **21:12** [n] 1 Sam. 31:11–13 [o] 1 Sam. 31:8 **21:14** [p] Josh. 18:28 [q] 2 Sam. 24:25 **21:16** [r] 2 Sam. 21:18–22

bronze spear *was* three hundred *shekels*,
who was bearing a new *sword*, thought
he could kill David. 17But [s]Abishai the son
of Zeruiah came to his aid, and struck the
Philistine and killed him. Then the men of
David swore to him, saying, [t]"You shall
go out no more with us to battle, lest you
quench the [u]lamp of Israel."

18[v]Now it happened afterward that there
was again a battle with the Philistines at
Gob. Then [w]Sibbechai the Hushathite
killed Saph,* who *was* one of the sons of
the giant. 19Again there was war at Gob
with the Philistines, where [x]Elhanan the
son of Jaare-Oregim* the Bethlehemite
killed [y]*the brother of* Goliath the Gittite,
the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

20Yet again [z]there was war at Gath,
where there was a man of *great* stature,
who had six fingers on each hand and six
toes on each foot, twenty-four in number;
and he also was born to the giant. 21So
when he [a]defied Israel, Jonathan the son
of Shimea,* David's brother, killed him.

22[b]These four were born to the giant in
Gath, and fell by the hand of David and by
the hand of his servants.

Praise for God's Deliverance

22 Then David [a]spoke to the LORD the
words of this song, on the day when
the LORD had [b]delivered him from the hand
of all his enemies, and from the hand of
Saul. 2And he [c]said:*

[d]"The LORD *is* my rock and my [e]fortress
and my deliverer;
3 The God of my strength, [f]in whom I
will trust;
My [g]shield and the [h]horn of my
salvation,
My [i]stronghold and my [j]refuge;
My Savior, You save me from violence.
4 I will call upon the LORD, *who is*
worthy to be praised;
So shall I be saved from my enemies.
5 "When the waves of death surrounded
me,
The floods of ungodliness made me
afraid.
6 The [k]sorrows of Sheol surrounded me;
The snares of death confronted me.
7 In my distress [l]I called upon the LORD,
And cried out to my God;
He [m]heard my voice from His temple,
And my cry *entered* His ears.
8 "Then [n]the earth shook and trembled;
[o]The foundations of heaven* quaked
and were shaken,
Because He was angry.
9 Smoke went up from His nostrils,
And devouring [p]fire from His mouth;
Coals were kindled by it.
10 He [q]bowed the heavens also, and came
down
With [r]darkness under His feet.
11 He rode upon a cherub, and flew;
And He was seen* [s]upon the wings of
the wind.
12 He made [t]darkness canopies around
Him,
Dark waters *and* thick clouds of the
skies.
13 From the brightness before Him
Coals of fire were kindled.
14 "The LORD [u]thundered from heaven,
And the Most High uttered His voice.
15 He sent out [v]arrows and scattered
them;
Lightning bolts, and He vanquished
them.
16 Then the channels of the sea [w]were
seen,
The foundations of the world were
uncovered,
At the [x]rebuke of the LORD,
At the blast of the breath of His
nostrils.
17 "He[y] sent from above, He took me,
He drew me out of many waters.
18 He delivered me from my strong
enemy,
From those who hated me;
For they were too strong for me.

* **21:18** Spelled *Sippai* in 1 Chronicles 20:4
* **21:19** Spelled *Jair* in 1 Chronicles 20:5
* **21:21** Spelled *Shammah* in 1 Samuel 16:9 and elsewhere * **22:2** Compare Psalm 18 * **22:8** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Targum; Syriac and Vulgate read *hills* (compare Psalm 18:7). * **22:11** Following Masoretic Text and Septuagint; many Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, and Vulgate read *He flew* (compare Psalm 18:10); Targum reads *He spoke with power.*

three hundred shekels. The spear weighed approximately seven and a half pounds.

22:1 ***words of this song.*** This psalm later became part of the congregational worship of Israel (Ps. 18), but it began as David's personal and earnest expression of praise to the Lord.

22:3 ***the horn of my salvation.*** The horn of an animal is used for protection and defense, so it is a good word picture for a sign of might and power.

22:6 ***Sheol.*** This word is used in Hebrew poetry as a synonym for death. In the Old Testament, Sheol is described as a place of dust, referring to death (Job 17:16), a place of decay (Ps. 16:10), and as a pit (Is. 14:15).

21:17 [s] 2 Sam. 20:6–10 [t] 2 Sam. 18:3 [u] 1 Kin. 11:36
21:18 [v] 1 Chr. 20:4–8 [w] 1 Chr. 11:29; 27:11 **21:19** [x] 2 Sam. 23:24 [y] 1 Chr. 20:5 **21:20** [z] 1 Chr. 20:6 **21:21** [a] 1 Sam. 17:10 **21:22** [b] 1 Chr. 20:8 **22:1** [a] Ex. 15:1 [b] Ps. 18:title; 34:19 **22:2** [c] Ps. 18 [d] Deut. 32:4 [e] Ps. 91:2 **22:3** [f] Heb. 2:13 [g] Gen. 15:1 [h] Luke 1:69 [i] Prov. 18:10 [j] Ps. 9:9; 46:1, 7, 11 **22:6** [k] Ps. 116:3 **22:7** [l] Ps. 116:4; 120:1 [m] Ex. 3:7 **22:8** [n] Judg. 5:4 [o] Job 26:11 **22:9** [p] Heb. 12:29 **22:10** [q] Is. 64:1 [r] Ex. 20:21 **22:11** [s] Ps. 104:3 **22:12** [t] Job 36:29 **22:14** [u] Job 37:2–5 **22:15** [v] Deut. 32:23 **22:16** [w] Nah. 1:4 [x] Ex. 15:8 **22:17** [y] Ps. 144:7

19 They confronted me in the day of my
calamity,
But the LORD was my [z]support.
20 [a]He also brought me out into a broad
place;
He delivered me because He [b]delighted
in me.

21 "The[c] LORD rewarded me according to
my righteousness;
According to the [d]cleanness of my
hands
He has recompensed me.
22 For I have [e]kept the ways of the
LORD,
And have not wickedly departed from
my God.
23 For all His [f]judgments *were* before me;
And *as for* His statutes, I did not
depart from them.
24 I was also [g]blameless before Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.
25 Therefore [h]the LORD has recompensed
me according to my
righteousness,
According to my cleanness in His
eyes.*

26 "With [i]the merciful You will show
Yourself merciful;
With a blameless man You will show
Yourself blameless;
27 With the pure You will show Yourself
pure;
And [j]with the devious You will show
Yourself shrewd.
28 You will save the [k]humble people;
But Your eyes *are* on [l]the haughty,
that You may bring *them*
down.

29 "For You *are* my [m]lamp, O LORD;
The LORD shall enlighten my
darkness.
30 For by You I can run against a
troop;
By my God I can leap over a [n]wall.
31 *As for* God, [o]His way *is* perfect;
[p]The word of the LORD *is* proven;
He *is* a shield to all who trust in
Him.

32 "For [q]who *is* God, except the LORD?
And who *is* a rock, except our God?
33 God *is* my [r]strength *and* power,*
And He [s]makes my* way [t]perfect.

34 He makes my* feet [u]like the *feet* of
deer,
And [v]sets me on my high places.
35 He teaches my hands to make
war,
So that my arms can bend a bow of
bronze.

36 "You have also given me the shield of
Your salvation;
Your gentleness has made me great.
37 You [w]enlarged my path under me;
So my feet did not slip.

38 "I have pursued my enemies and
destroyed them;
Neither did I turn back again till they
were destroyed.
39 And I have destroyed them and
wounded them,
So that they could not rise;
They have fallen [x]under my feet.
40 For You have [y]armed me with strength
for the battle;
You have subdued under me [z]those
who rose against me.
41 You have also given me the [a]necks of
my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who
hated me.
42 They looked, but *there was* none to
save;
Even [b]to the LORD, but He did not
answer them.
43 Then I beat them as fine [c]as the dust of
the earth;
I trod them [d]like dirt in the streets,
And I spread them out.

44 "You[e] have also delivered me from the
strivings of my people;
You have kept me as the [f]head of the
nations.
[g]A people I have not known shall
serve me.

* **22:25** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *the cleanness of my hands in His sight* (compare Psalm 18:24); Targum reads *my cleanness before His word.* * **22:33** Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *It is God who arms me with strength* (compare Psalm 18:32); Targum reads *It is God who sustains me with strength.* • Following Qere, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate (compare Psalm 18:32); Kethib reads *His.* * **22:34** Following Qere, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate (compare Psalm 18:33); Kethib reads *His.*

22:22 ***I have kept the ways of the LORD.*** David did not keep the ways of the Lord perfectly. His sins have been written down for the whole world to know throughout the ages. But he never forgot the Lord, always knew that what he did mattered to God, and always turned his steps back to the Lord when he went astray. Like Paul, David ran the race in such a way as to get the prize (1 Cor. 9:24).
22:34 ***the feet of deer.*** The deer or hind is noted for its swiftness, agility, and surefootedness.
22:35 ***can bend a bow of bronze.*** It would take unusual strength to bend a steel bow (Job 20:24).

22:19 [z] Is. 10:20 **22:20** [a] Ps. 31:8; 118:5 [b] 2 Sam. 15:26 **22:21** [c] 1 Sam. 26:23 [d] Ps. 24:4 **22:22** [e] Ps. 119:3 **22:23** [f] [Deut. 6:6–9; 7:12] **22:24** [g] [Eph. 1:4] **22:25** [h] 2 Sam. 22:21 **22:26** [i] [Matt. 5:7] **22:27** [j] [Lev. 26:23, 24] **22:28** [k] Ps. 72:12 [l] Job 40:11 **22:29** [m] Ps. 119:105; 132:17 **22:30** [n] 2 Sam. 5:6–8 **22:31** [o] [Matt. 5:48] [p] Ps. 12:6 **22:32** [q] Is. 45:5, 6 **22:33** [r] Ps. 27:1 [s] [Heb. 13:21] [t] Ps. 101:2, 6 **22:34** [u] 2 Sam. 2:18 [v] Is. 33:16 **22:37** [w] Prov. 4:12 **22:39** [x] Mal. 4:3 **22:40** [y] [Ps. 18:32] [z] [Ps. 44:5] **22:41** [a] Gen. 49:8 **22:42** [b] 1 Sam. 28:6 **22:43** [c] Ps. 18:42 [d] Is. 10:6 **22:44** [e] 2 Sam. 3:1 [f] Deut. 28:13 [g] [Is. 55:5]

45 The foreigners submit to me;
As soon as they hear, they
obey me.
46 The foreigners fade away,
And come frightened* [h]from their
hideouts.

47 "The LORD lives!
Blessed *be* my Rock!
Let God be exalted,
The [i]Rock of my salvation!
48 *It is* God who avenges me,
And [j]subdues the peoples under me;
49 He delivers me from my enemies.
You also lift me up above those who
rise against me;
You have delivered me from the
[k]violent man.
50 Therefore I will give thanks to You,
O LORD, among [l]the Gentiles,
And sing praises to Your [m]name.

51 "*He*[n] *is* the tower of salvation to His
king,
And shows mercy to His [o]anointed,
To David and [p]his descendants
forevermore."

David's Last Words

23 Now these *are* the last words of David.

Thus says David the son of Jesse;
Thus says [a]the man raised up on
high,
[b]The anointed of the God of Jacob,
And the sweet psalmist of Israel:

2 "The[c] Spirit of the LORD spoke by me,
And His word *was* on my tongue.
3 The God of Israel said,
[d]The Rock of Israel spoke to me:
'He who rules over men *must be*
just,
Ruling [e]in the fear of God.
4 And [f]*he shall be* like the light
of the morning *when* the sun
rises,
A morning without clouds,
Like the tender grass *springing* out of
the earth,
By clear shining after rain.'

5 "Although my house *is* not so with
God,
[g]Yet He has made with me an
everlasting covenant,
Ordered in all *things* and secure.
For *this is* all my salvation and all *my*
desire;
Will He not make *it* increase?
6 But *the sons* of rebellion *shall* all *be* as
thorns thrust away,
Because they cannot be taken with
hands.
7 But the man *who* touches them
Must be armed with iron and the shaft
of a spear,
And they shall be utterly burned with
fire in *their* place."

David's Mighty Men

8 These *are* the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-Basshebeth* the Tachmonite, chief among the captains.* He was called Adino the Eznite, because he had killed eight hundred men at one time. 9 And after him *was* [h]Eleazar the son of Dodo,* the Ahohite, *one* of the

* **22:46** Following Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate (compare Psalm 18:45); Masoretic Text reads *gird themselves.* * **23:8** Literally *One Who Sits in the Seat* (compare 1 Chronicles 11:11) • Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *the three.* * **23:9** Spelled *Dodai* in 1 Chronicles 27:4

22:47 *The LORD lives.* This shout of exaltation is the heart cry of every follower of God. The difference between the Living God and the dead idols that entrapped so many in the countries around him stood out very strongly to David.

22:51 *His anointed.* David was anointed by God to be king of Israel. He was set aside for a certain job. Jesus is the ultimate Anointed One, which is the meaning of the Hebrew name Messiah and the Greek name Christ.

23:1 *sweet psalmist of Israel.* Of the 150 psalms in the Book of Psalms, 73 are attributed to David by the text. No person in Scriptures is more closely associated with music in the worship of the Lord than King David. He left behind a beautiful record of his heartfelt love of the Lord, his struggles, and his victories.

23:3–4 Fear of God—For centuries certain dynasties of rulers in Europe claimed the divine right to rule. Certainly the Bible teaches that government is ordained of God (Rom. 13). But it also teaches that rulers have a deep stewardship responsibility. They are to rule men in the fear of God. Over and over again it is shown that God sets rulers in place, and also deposes those who consistently rebel against Him.

23:5 *everlasting covenant.* David celebrates his everlasting covenant (7:12–16) here and in Psalm 89.

23:6–7 *the sons of rebellion.* The worthless, rebellious, or literally "the sons of Belial." This is a term of contempt and scorn, the word that Shimei hurled at David when David was fleeing from the rebellion of his son Absalom (16:7). The word was also used to describe Sheba, the scoundrel from the tribe of Benjamin (20:1). David anticipated God's judgment on the ungodly, who are likened to thorns fit only to be burned.

23:8 *mighty men.* The term "mighty men" suggests that these were the elite of David's troops, possibly his personal bodyguards. These men were heroes in the full sense of the word. Their listing must have inspired others to attain such accomplishments.

22:46 [h] [Mic. 7:17] **22:47** [i] Ps. 89:26 **22:48** [j] Ps. 144:2 **22:49** [k] Ps. 140:1, 4, 11 **22:50** [l] 2 Sam. 8:1–14 [m] Rom. 15:9 **22:51** [n] Ps. 144:10 [o] Ps. 89:20 [p] 2 Sam. 7:12–16 **23:1** [a] 2 Sam. 7:8, 9 [b] 1 Sam. 16:12, 13 **23:2** [c] [2 Pet. 1:21] **23:3** [d] [Deut. 32:4] [e] Ex. 18:21 **23:4** [f] Ps. 89:36 **23:5** [g] Ps. 89:29 **23:9** [h] 1 Chr. 11:12; 27:4

three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines *who* were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. 10He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was [i]weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to [j]plunder. 11And after him *was* [k]Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. [l]The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. 12But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

13Then [m]three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at [n]the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in [o]the Valley of Rephaim. 14David *was* then in [p]the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then *in* Bethlehem. 15And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which *is* by the gate!" 16So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that *was* by the gate, and took it and brought *it* to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. 17And he said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is *this not* [q]the blood of the men who went in *jeopardy of* their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it.

These things were done by the three mighty men.

18Now [r]Abishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of *another* three.* He lifted his spear against three hundred *men,* killed *them,* and won a name among *these* three. 19Was he not the most honored of three? Therefore he became their captain. However, he did not attain to the *first* three.

20Benaiah *was* the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man from [s]Kabzeel, who had done many deeds. [t]He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab. He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day. 21And he killed an Egyptian, a spectacular man. The Egyptian *had* a spear in his hand; so he went down to him with a staff, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. 22These *things* Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and won a name among three mighty men. 23He was more honored than the thirty, but he did not attain to the *first* three. And David appointed him [u]over his guard.

24[v]Asahel the brother of Joab *was* one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, 25[w]Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, 26Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, 27Abiezer the Anathothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, 28Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite, 29Heleb the son of Baanah (the Netophathite), Ittai the son of Ribai from Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, 30Benaiah a Pirathonite, Hiddai from the brooks of [x]Gaash, 31Abi-Albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, 32Eliahba the Shaalbonite (of the sons of Jashen), Jonathan, 33[y]Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, 34Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of [z]Ahithophel the Gilonite, 35Hezrai* the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, 36Igal the son of Nathan of [a]Zobah, Bani the Gadite, 37Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite (armorbearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah), 38[b]Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 39*and* [c]Uriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.

David's Census of Israel and Judah

24 Again [a]the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, [b]"Go, number Israel and Judah."

2So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who *was* with him, "Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, [c]from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that [d]I may know the number of the people."

* **23:18** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *thirty;* Targum reads *the mighty men.*
* **23:35** Spelled *Hezro* in 1 Chronicles 11:37

23:13–14 ***Valley of Rephaim.*** This valley was a route to Jerusalem. ***Bethlehem.*** David's hometown (1 Sam. 16:1–3) was about six miles south of Jerusalem.

23:15 ***give me drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem.*** Anyone who has grown up with an especially good well for drinking water can identify with David's craving. The taste of the water from the well at "home" seems more thirst-quenching, more heartening, than any other.

23:16 ***poured it out to the LORD.*** David was deeply moved by this act of loyalty. He could have let it make him feel important, but instead he dedicated the water to the Lord, knowing that no man's craving should be satisfied at the risk of another man's life.

23:10 [i] Judg. 8:4 [j] 1 Sam. 30:24, 25 **23:11** [k] 1 Chr. 11:27 [l] 1 Chr. 11:13, 14 **23:13** [m] 1 Chr. 11:15 [n] 1 Sam. 22:1 [o] 2 Sam. 5:18 **23:14** [p] 1 Sam. 22:4, 5 **23:17** [q] [Lev. 17:10] **23:18** [r] 1 Chr. 11:20 **23:20** [s] Josh. 15:21 [t] Ex. 15:15 **23:23** [u] 2 Sam. 8:18; 20:23 **23:24** [v] 2 Samv. 2:18 **23:25** [w] 1 Chr. 11:27 **23:30** [x] Judg. 2:9 **23:33** [y] 2 Sam. 23:11 **23:34** [z] 2 Sam. 15:12 **23:36** [a] 2 Sam. 8:3 **23:38** [b] 1 Chr. 2:53 **23:39** [c] 2 Sam. 11:3, 6 **24:1** [a] 2 Sam. 21:1, 2 [b] 1 Chr. 27:23, 24 **24:2** [c] Judg. 20:1 [d] [Jer. 17:5]

3And Joab said to the king, "Now may
the LORD your God [e]add to the people a
hundred times more than there are, and
may the eyes of my lord the king see *it*.
But why does my lord the king desire this
thing?" 4Nevertheless the king's word
prevailed against Joab and against the
captains of the army. Therefore Joab and
the captains of the army went out from the
presence of the king to count the people of
Israel.

5And they crossed over the Jordan and
camped in [f]Aroer, on the right side of the
town which *is* in the midst of the ravine of
Gad, and toward [g]Jazer. 6Then they came
to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hod-
shi; they came to [h]Dan Jaan and around to
[i]Sidon; 7and they came to the stronghold
of [j]Tyre and to all the cities of the [k]Hivites
and the Canaanites. Then they went out
to South Judah *as far as* Beersheba. 8So
when they had gone through all the land,
they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine
months and twenty days. 9Then Joab gave
the sum of the number of the people to the
king. [l]And there were in Israel eight hun-
dred thousand valiant men who drew the
sword, and the men of Judah were five hun-
dred thousand men.

The Judgment on David's Sin

10And [m]David's heart condemned him
after he had numbered the people. So [n]Da-
vid said to the LORD, [o]"I have sinned great-
ly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O
LORD, take away the iniquity of Your ser-
vant, for I have [p]done very foolishly."

11Now when David arose in the morn-
ing, the word of the LORD came to the
prophet [q]Gad, David's [r]seer, saying, 12"Go
and tell David, 'Thus says the LORD: "I of-
fer you three *things;* choose one of them
for yourself, that I may do *it* to you."'" 13So
Gad came to David and told him; and he
said to him, "Shall [s]seven* years of famine
come to you in your land? Or shall you flee
three months before your enemies, while
they pursue you? Or shall there be three
days' plague in your land? Now consider
and see what answer I should take back to
Him who sent me."

14And David said to Gad, "I am in
great distress. Please let us fall into the
hand of the LORD, [t]for His mercies *are*
great; but [u]do not let me fall into the hand
of man."

15So [v]the LORD sent a plague upon Is-
rael from the morning till the appointed
time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy
thousand men of the people died. 16[w]And
when the angel* stretched out His hand
over Jerusalem to destroy it, [x]the LORD
relented from the destruction, and said
to the angel who was destroying the
people, "It is enough; now restrain your
hand." And the angel of the LORD was
by the threshing floor of Araunah* the
Jebusite.

17Then David spoke to the LORD when
he saw the angel who was striking the
people, and said, "Surely [y]I have sinned,
and I have done wickedly; but these sheep,
what have they done? Let Your hand, I
pray, be against me and against my fa-
ther's house."

The Altar on the Threshing Floor

18And Gad came that day to David and
said to him, [z]"Go up, erect an altar to the
LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah
the Jebusite." 19So David, according to the
word of Gad, went up as the LORD com-
manded. 20Now Araunah looked, and
saw the king and his servants coming
toward him. So Araunah went out and
bowed before the king with his face to the
ground.

21Then Araunah said, "Why has my lord
the king come to his servant?"

[a]And David said, "To buy the thresh-
ing floor from you, to build an altar to the
LORD, that [b]the plague may be withdrawn
from the people."

22Now Araunah said to David, "Let
my lord the king take and offer up what-
ever *seems* good to him. [c]Look, *here are*
oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing

* **24:13** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *three* (compare 1 Chronicles 21:12). * **24:16** Or *Angel* • Spelled *Ornan* in 1 Chronicles 21:15

24:3 ***why does my lord the king desire this thing.*** God was angry with Israel, and the numbering and resulting pestilence were a part of His plan to deal with Israel in such a way that they did not become complacent. This incident is not well explained in Scripture. Joab knew that David was acting presumptuously, but at this point David could not see it. Perhaps the census showed a lack of trust in the Lord, and a sense that the might of the nation rested in its armed men.

24:9 ***men who drew the sword.*** The numbers given refer only to men of military age. It is impressive that the division of Israel and Judah was so well established. This division would in the end result in a divided kingdom.

24:10 ***David's heart condemned him.*** The text does not state precisely what David's sin was. His heart was always sensitive to God's will, and he quickly confessed his sin and sought restoration with the Lord.

24:3 [e] Deut. 1:11 **24:5** [f] Deut. 2:36 [g] Num. 32:1, 3 **24:6** [h] Judg. 18:29 [i] Josh. 19:28 **24:7** [j] Josh. 19:29 [k] Josh. 11:3 **24:9** [l] 1 Chr. 21:5 **24:10** [m] 1 Sam. 24:5 [n] 2 Sam. 23:1 [o] 2 Sam. 12:13 [p] 1 Sam. 13:13 **24:11** [q] 1 Sam. 22:5 [r] 1 Sam. 9:9 **24:13** [s] Ezek. 14:21 **24:14** [t] [Ps. 51:1; 103:8, 13, 14; 119:156; 130:4, 7] [u] [Is. 47:6] **24:15** [v] 1 Chr. 21:14 **24:16** [w] Ex. 12:23 [x] Gen. 6:6 **24:17** [y] Ps. 74:1 **24:18** [z] 1 Chr. 21:18 **24:21** [a] Gen. 23:8–16 [b] Num. 16:48, 50 **24:22** [c] 1 Kin. 19:21

implements and the yokes of the oxen for wood. **23**All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king."

And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God [d]accept you."

24Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy *it* from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." So [e]David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. **25**And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. [f]So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and [g]the plague was withdrawn from Israel.

24:24 ***threshing floor.*** The threshing floor was located on Mount Moriah, where Abraham had bound Isaac (Gen. 22:2). Later, Solomon would build the temple at this site (1 Kin. 6:1; 1 Chr. 21:27—22:1; 2 Chr. 3:1). ***fifty shekels of silver.*** The fifty shekels of silver paid only for the threshing floor, the oxen, and the implements. The land that surrounded the threshing floor would cost considerably more—six hundred shekels, or 15 pounds of gold (1 Chr. 21:25).

24:25 ***burnt offerings and peace offerings.*** The burnt offering was the principal atoning sacrifice for unintentional sins (Lev. 1:1–17; 6:8–13). It was completely consumed on the altar, except for the hide, which was given to the officiating priest. The peace offering was an optional sacrifice, which did not form any part of the regular offerings required in the tabernacle or temple. It was a voluntary expression of thanksgiving or worship (Lev. 3:1–17; 7:11–34).

24:23 [d] [Ezek. 20:40, 41] **24:24** [e] 1 Chr. 21:24, 25
24:25 [f] 2 Sam. 21:14 [g] 2 Sam. 24:21

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE
KINGS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Both 1 and 2 Kings emphasize God's righteous judgment on idolatry and immorality. The style of these books is similar to that found in Jeremiah. The author of 1 Kings is unknown, but evidence supports the Talmudic tradition that Kings was written by Jeremiah. Clearly, the author was a prophet/historian as evidenced in the prophetic exposé of apostasy.

▶ **TIME:** c. 971–851 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 1 Kin. 9:4–5

▶ **THEME:** First Kings continues the saga of the kings of Israel after David. Solomon's reign and the details of the building of the temple take up a major portion of 1 Kings. After Solomon, the kingdom divides, and we have parallel narratives of the northern kingdom, Israel, and the southern kingdom, Judah. The book covers a span of about 120 years. During these years, idolatry becomes the norm, and God is largely forgotten. After Solomon, the main character of the book is Elijah the prophet.

Adonijah Presumes to Be King

1 Now King David was [a]old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. **2**Therefore his servants said to him, "Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm." **3**So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found [b]Abishag the [c]Shunammite, and brought her to the king. **4**The young woman *was* very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her.

5Then [d]Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; and [e]he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. **6**(And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, "Why have you done so?" He *was* also very good-looking. [f]*His mother* had borne him after Absalom.) **7**Then he conferred with [g]Joab the son of Zeruiah and with [h]Abiathar the priest, and [i]they followed and helped Adonijah. **8**But [j]Zadok the priest, [k]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, [l]Nathan the prophet, [m]Shimei, Rei, and [n]the mighty men who *belonged* to David were not with Adonijah.

9And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which *is* by [o]En Rogel; he also invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. **10**But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or [p]Solomon his brother.

11So Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of [q]Haggith has become king, and David our lord does not know *it*? **12**Come, please, let me now give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.

1:1 ***King David was old.*** David was about seventy years old at the time of his death (2 Sam. 5:4; 1 Chr. 29:26–28), and the long years of warfare had doubtlessly taken their physical toll.

1:5 ***Adonijah.*** The name Adonijah means "the LORD is my Lord." Amnon and Absalom both experienced violent deaths (2 Sam. 13:28–29; 18:14). Chiliab, his second son, apparently died at an early age. Adonijah was David's oldest surviving son.

1:6 ***had not rebuked him.*** While David had been a most capable leader and a man of deep spiritual sensitivity, he had not exercised proper parental discipline of his children (2 Sam. 13:21–39; 14:18–24).

1:11 ***Nathan.*** It is a mark of David's integrity that Nathan, who had confronted him with his terrible sin with Bathsheba, was still welcome in the royal household (2 Sam. 12:1–15).

1:11–14 Wisdom—In Old Testament times, messages from God were often given through personal prophecy. Today, believers do not often receive messages through prophecy. God has given the higher privilege of direct access to His wisdom through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit in all who

1:1 [a] 1 Chr. 23:1 **1:3** [b] 1 Kin. 2:17 [c] Josh. 19:18 **1:5** [d] 2 Sam. 3:4 [e] 2 Sam. 15:1 **1:6** [f] 2 Sam. 3:3, 4 **1:7** [g] 1 Chr. 11:6 [h] 2 Sam. 20:25 [i] 1 Kin. 2:22, 28 **1:8** [j] 1 Kin. 2:35 [k] 1 Kin. 2:25 [l] 2 Sam. 12:1 [m] 1 Kin. 4:18 [n] 2 Sam. 23:8 **1:9** [o] Josh. 15:7; 18:16 **1:10** [p] 2 Sam. 12:24 **1:11** [q] 2 Sam. 3:4

13 Go immediately to King David and say to
him, 'Did you not, my lord, O king, swear
to your maidservant, saying, [r]"Assuredly
your son Solomon shall reign after me,
and he shall sit on my throne"? Why then
has Adonijah become king?' 14 Then, while
you are still talking there with the king,
I also will come in after you and confirm
your words."

15 So Bathsheba went into the chamber
to the king. (Now the king was very old,
and Abishag the Shunammite was serving
the king.) 16 And Bathsheba bowed and did
homage to the king. Then the king said,
"What is your wish?"

17 Then she said to him, "My lord, [s]you
swore by the LORD your God to your maid-
servant, *saying*, 'Assuredly Solomon your
son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on
my throne.' 18 So now, look! Adonijah has
become king; and now, my lord the king,
you do not know about *it*. 19 [t]He has sac-
rificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep
in abundance, and has invited all the sons
of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab
the commander of the army; but Solomon
your servant he has not invited. 20 And as
for you, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Is-
rael *are* on you, that you should tell them
who will sit on the throne of my lord the
king after him. 21 Otherwise it will happen,
when my lord the king [u]rests with his fa-
thers, that I and my son Solomon will be
counted as offenders."

22 And just then, while she was still
talking with the king, Nathan the proph-
et also came in. 23 So they told the king,
saying, "Here is Nathan the prophet." And
when he came in before the king, he bowed
down before the king with his face to the
ground. 24 And Nathan said, "My lord, O
king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign
after me, and he shall sit on my throne'?
25 [v]For he has gone down today, and has
sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and
sheep in abundance, and has invited all
the king's sons, and the commanders of
the army, and Abiathar the priest; and
look! They are eating and drinking before
him; and they say, [w]'*Long* live King Ado-
nijah!' 26 But he has not invited me—me
your servant—nor Zadok the priest, nor
Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your ser-
vant Solomon. 27 Has this thing been done
by my lord the king, and you have not told
your servant who should sit on the throne
of my lord the king after him?"

David Proclaims Solomon King

28 Then King David answered and said,
"Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into
the king's presence and stood before the
king. 29 And the king took an oath and said,
[x]"*As* the LORD lives, who has redeemed my
life from every distress, 30 [y]just as I swore
to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying,
'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king
after me, and he shall sit on my throne in
my place,' so I certainly will do this day."

31 Then Bathsheba bowed with *her* face
to the earth, and paid homage to the king,
and said, [z]"Let my lord King David live
forever!"

32 And King David said, "Call to me Za-
dok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Be-
naiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came
before the king. 33 The king also said to
them, [a]"Take with you the servants of your
lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my
own [b]mule, and take him down to [c]Gihon.
34 There let Zadok the priest and Nathan
the prophet [d]anoint him king over Israel;
and [e]blow the horn, and say, '*Long* live
King Solomon!' 35 Then you shall come up
after him, and he shall come and sit on my
throne, and he shall be king in my place.
For I have appointed him to be ruler over
Israel and Judah."

36 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered
the king and said, [f]"Amen! May the LORD
God of my lord the king say so *too*. 37 [g]As
the LORD has been with my lord the king,
even so may He be with Solomon, and
[h]make his throne greater than the throne
of my lord King David."

38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the proph-
et, [i]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the [j]Chere-
thites, and the Pelethites went down and
had Solomon ride on King David's mule,
and took him to Gihon. 39 Then Zadok the
priest took a horn of [k]oil from the tabernacle
and [l]anointed Solomon. And they blew the
horn, [m]and all the people said, "*Long* live
King Solomon!" 40 And all the people went

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believe. Today believers have access to God's wisdom through His Word, His indwelling Spirit, and counsel from mature Christians.

1:29 ***who has redeemed my life.*** In these words of praise, David celebrated the innumerable times that the Lord had acted on his behalf, to deliver him from his enemies and from his own sins. Some of David's psalms were written in connection with those times of God's deliverance (Ps. 40; 142).

1:38 ***the Cherethites, and the Pelethites.*** These two groups were part of David's bodyguard (2 Sam. 8:18; 15:18; 20:7). Their association with David stretched back to his days among the Philistines, with whom the Cherethites are usually identified (1 Sam. 30:13–14; Ezek. 25:16; Zeph. 2:5).

1:39 ***Zadok . . . anointed Solomon.*** Every priestly anointing would recall the words of Psalm 2, in accordance with the words of the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7. The anointing announced that the anointed one was now the adopted son of the living God.

1:13 *r* 1 Chr. 22:9–13 **1:17** *s* 1 Kin. 1:13, 30 **1:19** *t* 1 Kin. 1:7–9, 25 **1:21** *u* Deut. 31:16 **1:25** *v* 1 Kin. 1:9, 19 *w* 1 Sam. 10:24 **1:29** *x* 2 Sam. 4:9; 12:5 **1:30** *y* 1 Kin. 1:13, 17 **1:31** *z* Dan. 2:4; 3:9 **1:33** *a* 2 Sam. 20:6 *b* Esth. 6:8 *c* 2 Chr. 32:30; 33:14 **1:34** *d* 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:3, 12 *e* 2 Sam. 15:10 **1:36** *f* Jer. 28:6 **1:37** *g* 1 Sam. 20:13 *h* 1 Kin. 1:47 **1:38** *i* 2 Sam. 8:18; 23:20–23 *j* 2 Sam. 20:7 **1:39** *k* Ps. 89:20 *l* 1 Chr. 29:22 *m* 1 Sam. 10:24

up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth *seemed to* split with their sound.

41Now Adonijah and all the guests who *were* with him heard *it* as they finished eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, "Why *is* the city in such a noisy uproar?" 42While he was still speaking, there came [n]Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest. And Adonijah said to him, "Come in, for [o]you *are* a prominent man, and bring good news."

43Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. 44The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king's mule. 45So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This *is* the noise that you have heard. 46Also Solomon [p]sits on the throne of the kingdom. 47And moreover the king's servants have gone to bless our lord King David, saying, [q]'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.' [r]Then the king bowed himself on the bed. 48Also the king said thus, 'Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who has [s]given *one* to sit on my throne this day, while my eyes see [t]*it!*'"

49So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way.

50Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and [u]took hold of the horns of the altar. 51And it was told Solomon, saying, "Indeed Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; for look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'"

52Then Solomon said, "If he proves himself a worthy man, [v]not one hair of him shall fall to the earth; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die." 53So King Solomon sent them to bring him down from the altar. And he came and fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

David's Instructions to Solomon

2 Now [a]the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: 2[b]"I go the way of all the earth; [c]be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. 3And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may [d]prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; 4that the LORD may [e]fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, [f]'If your sons take heed to their way, to [g]walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, [h]'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

5"Moreover you know also what Joab the son of Zeruiah [i]did to me, *and* what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to [j]Abner the son of Ner and [k]Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed. And he shed the blood of war in peacetime, and put the blood of war on his belt that *was* around his waist, and on his sandals that *were* on his feet. 6Therefore do [l]according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace.

7"But show kindness to the sons of [m]Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who [n]eat at your table, for so [o]they came to me when I fled from Absalom your brother.

8"And see, *you have* with you [p]Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a malicious

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1:50 ***took hold of the horns of the altar.*** This action was in keeping with the traditional function of the altar as a haven of refuge for those who had committed unintentional crimes (Ex. 21:12–14).

1:53 Forgiveness—Solomon chose to forgive Adonijah for his attempted usurpation of the throne, realizing that Adonijah had legitimate reason to think that he should be the next king. Wiser than his years, young Solomon overlooked the offense of his brother rather than bring any reproach on his reign at this early stage. Sadly, Adonijah proved himself unworthy of his pardon, making another attempt to take the throne after his father David was dead.

2:4 ***shall not lack a man on the throne.*** God had made an unconditional covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:12–16; 1 Chr. 17:11–14; Ps. 89), granting him a continual posterity and a royal dynasty. Although the Davidic covenant was an everlasting sacred promise, individual kings through their evil behavior could fail to receive the benefits of the covenant. The line of promise would be preserved, but the time would come when the promised Ruler would not be on an earthly throne (Hos. 3:4). God's prophets predict that the heir to the throne of David will yet reign over a repentant, regathered, and restored Israel (Jer. 33:19–26; Ezek. 34:22–31) in fulfillment of the promises of the covenants (Ezek. 37:21–28; Mic. 7:18–20). The New Testament reveals that all this will be realized in Jesus Christ, the Savior King (Acts 3:25–26; 15:16–17; Gal. 3:26–29; Rev. 3:21), who is David's Heir in the ultimate sense (Acts 2:22–36).

2:5–8 ***Joab . . . Shimei.*** David knew that these two men would cause trouble for Solomon if they were not dealt with. Joab had murdered two generals (2 Sam.

1:42 [n] 2 Sam. 17:17, 20 [o] 2 Sam. 18:27 **1:46** [p] 1 Chr. 29:23 **1:47** [q] 1 Kin. 1:37 [r] Gen. 47:31 **1:48** [s] 1 Kin. 3:6 [t] 2 Sam. 7:12 **1:50** [u] 1 Kin. 2:28 **1:52** [v] 1 Sam. 14:45 **2:1** [a] Gen. 47:29 **2:2** [b] Josh. 23:14 [c] Deut. 31:7, 23 **2:3** [d] [Deut. 29:9] **2:4** [e] 2 Sam. 7:25 [f] [Ps. 132:12] [g] 2 Kin. 20:3 [h] 2 Sam. 7:12, 13 **2:5** [i] 2 Sam. 3:39; 18:5, 12, 14 [j] 2 Sam. 3:27 [k] 2 Sam. 20:10 **2:6** [l] 1 Kin. 2:9 **2:7** [m] 2 Sam. 19:31–39 [n] 2 Sam. 9:7, 10; 19:28 [o] 2 Sam. 17:17–29 **2:8** [p] 2 Sam. 16:5–13

curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim. But [q]he came down to meet me at the Jordan, and [r]I swore to him by the LORD, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.' 9Now therefore, [s]do not hold him guiltless, for you *are* a wise man and know what you ought to do to him; but [t]bring his gray hair down to the grave with blood."

Death of David

10So [u]David rested with his fathers, and was buried in [v]the City of David. 11The period that David [w]reigned over Israel *was* forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. 12[x]Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was [y]firmly established.

Solomon Executes Adonijah

13Now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. So she said, [z]"Do you come peaceably?"

And he said, "Peaceably." 14Moreover he said, "I have something *to say* to you."

And she said, "Say it."

15Then he said, "You know that the kingdom was [a]mine, and all Israel had set their expectations on me, that I should reign. However, the kingdom has been turned over, and has become my brother's; for [b]it was his from the LORD. 16Now I ask one petition of you; do not deny me."

And she said to him, "Say it."

17Then he said, "Please speak to King Solomon, for he will not refuse you, that he may give me [c]Abishag the Shunammite as wife."

18So Bathsheba said, "Very well, I will speak for you to the king."

19Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon, to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her and [d]bowed down to her, and sat down on his throne and had a throne set for the king's mother; [e]so she sat at his right hand. 20Then she said, "I desire one small petition of you; do not refuse me."

And the king said to her, "Ask it, my mother, for I will not refuse you."

21So she said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as wife."

22And King Solomon answered and said to his mother, "Now why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also—for he *is* my [f]older brother—for him, and for [g]Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah." 23Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, [h]"May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life! 24Now therefore, *as* the LORD lives, who has confirmed me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has established a house* for me, as He [i]promised, Adonijah shall be put to death today!"

25So King Solomon sent by the hand of [j]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he struck him down, and he died.

Abiathar Exiled, Joab Executed

26And to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to [k]Anathoth, to your own fields, for you *are* deserving of death; but I will not put you to death at this time, [l]because you carried the ark of the Lord GOD before my father David, and because you were afflicted every time my father was afflicted." 27So Solomon removed Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, that he might [m]fulfill the word of the LORD which He spoke concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

28Then news came to Joab, for Joab [n]had defected to Adonijah, though he had not defected to Absalom. So Joab fled to the tabernacle of the LORD, and [o]took hold of the horns of the altar. 29And King Solomon was told, "Joab has fled to the tabernacle of the LORD; there *he is,* by the altar." Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, [p]strike him down." 30So Benaiah went to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said to him, "Thus says the king, [q]'Come out!'"

And he said, "No, but I will die here." And Benaiah brought back word to the king, saying, "Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me."

31Then the king said to him, [r]"Do as he has said, and strike him down and bury him, [s]that you may take away from me and from the house of my father the innocent

* **2:24** That is, a royal dynasty

3:27; 20:10), killed David's son Absalom (2 Sam. 18:14), and joined Adonijah's conspiracy (1:7,19). Shimei had cursed the king and treated him shamefully as he was fleeing from Absalom (2 Sam. 16:5–13; 19:16–23).

2:27 ***Abiathar.*** This act fulfilled God's word to Eli, removing the last of his descendants from serving before the Lord (1 Sam. 2:30–33). When Abiathar was removed from office, his influence was greatly restricted. Solomon spared his life in recognition of his past service to God and David (2 Sam. 15:24,29; 1 Chr. 15:11–15).

2:28 ***horns of the altar.*** Because Joab was a murderer (2 Sam. 3:27; 18:14; 20:10), he could not claim the protective sanctity of the horns of the altar, and could not escape execution.

2:8 [q] 2 Sam. 19:18 [r] 2 Sam. 19:23 **2:9** [s] Ex. 20:7 [t] Gen. 42:38; 44:31 **2:10** [u] Acts 2:29; 13:36 [v] 2 Sam. 5:7 **2:11** [w] 2 Sam. 5:4, 5 **2:12** [x] 1 Chr. 29:23 [y] 2 Chr. 1:1 **2:13** [z] 1 Sam. 16:4, 5 **2:15** [a] 1 Kin. 1:11, 18 [b] [Dan. 2:21] **2:17** [c] 1 Kin. 1:3, 4 **2:19** [d] [Ex. 20:12] [e] Ps. 45:9 **2:22** [f] 1 Chr. 3:2, 5 [g] 1 Kin. 1:7 **2:23** [h] Ruth 1:17 **2:24** [i] 2 Sam. 7:11, 13 **2:25** [j] 2 Sam. 8:18 **2:26** [k] Josh. 21:18 [l] 2 Sam. 15:14, 29 **2:27** [m] 1 Sam. 2:31–35 **2:28** [n] 1 Kin. 1:7 [o] 1 Kin. 1:50 **2:29** [p] 1 Kin. 2:5, 6 **2:30** [q] [Ex. 21:14] **2:31** [r] [Ex. 21:14] [s] [Num. 35:33]

blood which Joab shed. 32So the LORD [t]will return his blood on his head, because he struck down two men more righteous [u]and better than he, and killed them with the sword—[v]Abner the son of Ner, the commander of the army of Israel, and [w]Amasa the son of Jether, the commander of the army of Judah—though my father David did not know *it*. 33Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab and [x]upon the head of his descendants forever. [y]But upon David and his descendants, upon his house and his throne, there shall be peace forever from the LORD."

34So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck and killed him; and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. 35The king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the army, and the king put [z]Zadok the priest in the place of [a]Abiathar.

Shimei Executed

36Then the king sent and called for [b]Shimei, and said to him, "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and dwell there, and do not go out from there anywhere. 37For it shall be, on the day you go out and cross [c]the Brook Kidron, know for certain you shall surely die; [d]your blood shall be on your own head."

38And Shimei said to the king, "The saying *is* good. As my lord the king has said, so your servant will do." So Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

39Now it happened at the end of three years, that two slaves of Shimei ran away to [e]Achish the son of Maachah, king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, "Look, your slaves *are* in Gath!" 40So Shimei arose, saddled his donkey, and went to Achish at Gath to seek his slaves. And Shimei went and brought his slaves from Gath. 41And Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had come back. 42Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by the LORD, and warn you, saying, 'Know for certain that on the day you go out and travel anywhere, you shall surely die'? And you said to me, 'The word I have heard *is* good.' 43Why then have you not kept the oath of the LORD and the commandment that I gave you?" 44The king said moreover to Shimei, "You know, as your heart acknowledges, [f]all the wickedness that you did to my father David; therefore the LORD will [g]return your wickedness on your own head. 45But King Solomon *shall be* blessed, and [h]the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever."

46So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he went out and struck him down, and he died. Thus the [i]kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

Solomon Requests Wisdom

3 Now [a]Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her [b]to the City of David until he had finished building his [c]own house, and [d]the house of the LORD, and [e]the wall all around Jerusalem. 2[f]Meanwhile the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. 3And Solomon [g]loved the LORD, [h]walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

4Now [i]the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, [j]for that *was* the great high place: Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5[k]At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon [l]in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

6[m]And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he [n]walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You [o]have given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day. 7Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I *am* a [p]little child; I do not know *how* [q]to go out or come in. 8And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You [r]have chosen, a great people, too [s]numerous to be numbered or counted. 9[t]Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart [u]to judge Your people, that I may [v]discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

2:35 ***Zadok.*** Zadok was a descendant of Eleazar, the son of Aaron (1 Chr. 6:4–8).

3:1 ***made a treaty.*** In the ancient Middle East, political alliances were often ratified by the marriage of the son of one king to the daughter of another. Except in unusual circumstances, the pharaohs of Egypt did not observe this custom. Therefore, the giving of Pharaoh's daughter to Solomon attested to the Israelite king's growing prestige and importance to the Egyptians.

3:7 ***but I am a little child.*** The term "child" often refers to a servant or to an inexperienced person still in training for a profession. With proper humility, Solomon stressed his relative youth and inexperience.

2:32 [t] Judg. 9:24, 57 [u] 2 Chr. 21:13, 14 [v] 2 Sam. 3:27 [w] 2 Sam. 20:9, 10 **2:33** [x] 2 Sam. 3:29 [y] [Prov. 25:5] **2:35** [z] 1 Sam. 2:35 [a] 1 Kin. 2:27 **2:36** [b] 1 Kin. 2:8 **2:37** [c] 2 Sam. 15:23 [d] Josh. 2:19 **2:39** [e] 1 Sam. 27:2 **2:44** [f] 2 Sam. 16:5–13 [g] 1 Sam. 25:39 **2:45** [h] [Prov. 25:5] **2:46** [i] 2 Chr. 1:1 **3:1** [a] 1 Kin. 7:8; 9:24 [b] 2 Sam. 5:7 [c] 1 Kin. 7:1 [d] 1 Kin. 6 [e] 1 Kin. 9:15, 19 **3:2** [f] [Deut. 12:2–5, 13, 14] **3:3** [g] [Rom. 8:28] [h] [1 Kin. 3:6, 14] **3:4** [i] 2 Chr. 1:3 [j] 1 Chr. 16:39; 21:29 **3:5** [k] 1 Kin. 9:2; 11:9 [l] Num. 12:6 **3:6** [m] 2 Chr. 1:8 [n] 1 Kin. 2:4; 9:4 [o] 1 Kin. 1:48 **3:7** [p] Jer. 1:6, 7 [q] Num. 27:17 **3:8** [r] [Deut. 7:6] [s] Gen. 13:6; 15:5; 22:17 **3:9** [t] 2 Chr. 1:10 [u] Ps. 72:1, 2 [v] [Heb. 5:14]

10 The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have [w]not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, 12 [x]behold, I have done according to your words; [y]see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. 13 And I have also [z]given you what you have not asked: both [a]riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. 14 So [b]if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, [c]as your father David walked, then I will [d]lengthen your days."

15 Then Solomon [e]awoke; and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and [f]made a feast for all his servants.

Solomon's Wise Judgment

16 Now two women *who were* harlots came to the king, and [g]stood before him. 17 And one woman said, "O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she *was* in the house. 18 Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we *were* together; no one *was* with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. 19 And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20 So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. 21 And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne."

22 Then the other woman said, "No! But the living one *is* my son, and the dead one *is* your son."

And the first woman said, "No! But the dead one *is* your son, and the living one *is* my son."

Thus they spoke before the king.

23 And the king said, "The one says, 'This *is* my son, who lives, and your son *is* the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! But your son *is* the dead one, and my son *is* the living one.'" 24 Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. 25 And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other."

26 Then the woman whose son *was* living spoke to the king, for [h]she yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!"

But the other said, "Let him be neither mine nor yours, *but* divide *him*."

27 So the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him; she *is* his mother."

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the [i]wisdom of God *was* in him to administer justice.

Solomon's Administration

4 So King Solomon was king over all Israel. 2 And these *were* his officials: Azariah the son of Zadok, the priest; 3 Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; [a]Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder; 4 [b]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, over the army; Zadok and [c]Abiathar, the priests; 5 Azariah the son of Nathan, over [d]the officers; Zabud the son of Nathan, [e]a priest *and* [f]the king's friend; 6 Ahishar, over the household; and [g]Adoniram the son of Abda, over the labor force.

3:14 Obedience—Because he loved God above all at this time of his life (v. 3), and chose wisdom and discernment for his office, Solomon received even more—riches and honor and distinction. Obedient in many ways, he was accordingly blessed by God. When commands are given by a loving, caring person, obedience must result in blessing. God repeatedly stated this principle (Deut. 5:29—6:24). Saul, David, and Solomon all lost blessing because of disobedience. This was not because of narrowness or rigidity on God's part. He does not give us commands to make our lives harder, or to be harsh and demanding. His commands have blessings built in—He is showing us the best way to live.

3:15 *ark of the covenant.* Although David had brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6) the tabernacle and its furnishings remained in Gibeon, which served as an important worship center (v. 4; 2 Chr. 1:3–5). After its capture by the Philistines (1 Sam. 5–6), the ark never returned to the tabernacle. The ark was not in the Most Holy Place again until it was placed in Solomon's temple.

3:28 *wisdom . . . justice.* These important qualities which marked Solomon's reign would characterize the rule of Israel's Messiah in a far greater way (Is. 11:1–5). David's final words to Solomon were, "do according to your wisdom" (2:6). Wisdom does not dwell as a recluse among books in the study. Rather, wisdom stands with confidence at the crossroads of life. Solomon's wisdom was decisive. Through God he was able to observe the actions of others and in this way have a revelation of the truth.

3:11 [w] [James 4:3] **3:12** [x] [1 John 5:14, 15] [y] Eccl. 1:16 **3:13** [z] [Matt. 6:33] [a] 1 Kin. 4:21, 24; 10:23 **3:14** [b] [1 Kin. 6:12] [c] 1 Kin. 15:5 [d] Ps. 91:16 **3:15** [e] Gen. 41:7 [f] 1 Kin. 8:65 **3:16** [g] Num. 27:2 **3:26** [h] Jer. 31:20 **3:28** [i] 1 Kin. 3:9, 11, 12 **4:3** [a] 2 Sam. 8:16; 20:24 **4:4** [b] 1 Kin. 2:35 [c] 1 Kin. 2:27 **4:5** [d] 1 Kin. 4:7 [e] 2 Sam. 8:18; 20:26 [f] 2 Sam. 15:37; 16:16 **4:6** [g] 1 Kin. 5:14

7And Solomon had twelve governors
over all Israel, who provided food for the
king and his household; each one made
provision for one month of the year.
8These *are* their names: Ben-Hur,* in the
mountains of Ephraim; 9Ben-Deker,* in
Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth Shemesh, and
Elon Beth Hanan; 10Ben-Hesed,* in Arub-
both; to him *belonged* Sochoh and all the
land of Hepher; 11Ben-Abinadab,* *in* all
the regions of Dor; he had Taphath the
daughter of Solomon as wife; 12Baana the
son of Ahilud, *in* Taanach, Megiddo, and
all Beth Shean, which *is* beside Zaretan
below Jezreel, from Beth Shean to Abel
Meholah, as far as the other side of Jok-
neam; 13Ben-Geber,* in Ramoth Gilead; to
him *belonged* [h]the towns of Jair the son of
Manasseh, in Gilead; to him *also belonged*
[i]the region of Argob in Bashan—sixty
large cities with walls and bronze gate-
bars; 14Ahinadab the son of Iddo, *in* Ma-
hanaim; 15[j]Ahimaaz, in Naphtali; he also
took Basemath the daughter of Solomon
as wife; 16Baanah the son of [k]Hushai, in
Asher and Aloth; 17Jehoshaphat the son of
Paruah, in Issachar; 18[l]Shimei the son of
Elah, in Benjamin; 19Geber the son of Uri,
in the land of Gilead, *in* [m]the country of
Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king
of Bashan. *He was* the only governor who
was in the land.

Prosperity and Wisdom of Solomon's Reign

20Judah and Israel *were* as numerous
[n]as the sand by the sea in multitude, [o]eat-
ing and drinking and rejoicing. 21So [p]Sol-
omon reigned over all kingdoms from [q]the
River* *to* the land of the Philistines, as far
as the border of Egypt. [r]*They* brought trib-
ute and served Solomon all the days of his
life.

22[s]Now Solomon's provision for one day
was thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of
meal, 23ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from
the pastures, and one hundred sheep,
besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted
fowl.

24For he had dominion over all *the re-
gion* on this side of the River* from Tiphsah
even to Gaza, namely over [t]all the kings on
this side of the River; and [u]he had peace
on every side all around him. 25And Judah
and Israel [v]dwelt safely, [w]each man under
his vine and his fig tree, [x]from Dan as far
as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

26[y]Solomon had forty* thousand stalls of
[z]horses for his chariots, and twelve thou-
sand horsemen. 27And [a]these governors,
each man in his month, provided food for
King Solomon and for all who came to
King Solomon's table. There was no lack
in their supply. 28They also brought barley
and straw to the proper place, for the hors-
es and steeds, each man according to his
charge.

29And [b]God gave Solomon wisdom and
exceedingly great understanding, and
largeness of heart like the sand on the sea-
shore. 30Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled
the wisdom of all the men [c]of the East and
all [d]the wisdom of Egypt. 31For he was
[e]wiser than all men—[f]than Ethan the Ez-
rahite, [g]and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda,
the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all
the surrounding nations. 32[h]He spoke three
thousand proverbs, and his [i]songs were
one thousand and five. 33Also he spoke of
trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even
to the hyssop that springs out of the wall;
he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creep-
ing things, and of fish. 34And men of all na-
tions, from all the kings of the earth who
had heard of his wisdom, [j]came to hear the
wisdom of Solomon.

* **4:8** Literally *Son of Hur* * **4:9** Literally *Son of Deker* * **4:10** Literally *Son of Hesed* * **4:11** Literally *Son of Abinadab* * **4:13** Literally *Son of Geber* * **4:21** That is, the Euphrates * **4:24** That is, the Euphrates * **4:26** Following Masoretic Text and most other authorities; some manuscripts of the Septuagint read *four* (compare 2 Chronicles 9:25).

4:7–19 *twelve governors.* These men were responsible for handling lesser administrative tasks and raising revenue for the crown. The districts did not follow tribal boundaries.

4:18 *Shimei.* This is not the same Shimei who cursed David (2 Sam. 16:5–13), but probably the man mentioned in 1:8 as a supporter of Solomon.

4:20 *numerous as the sand.* God fulfilled His promise to make Abraham's descendants numerous (Gen. 15:5,18). Solomon's empire extended far beyond the traditional boundaries of Israel. Through this greatly expanded empire, Hebrew people not only traveled to far-flung regions, but they took with them their knowledge of the living God.

4:21 *from the River.* This refers to the Euphrates.

4:22 *kors.* A kor was the same size as a homer (Ezek. 45:14); at between six and seven bushels, it was the normal load for a donkey.

4:29 *wisdom.* The three terms used in this verse underscore Solomon's depth of understanding. He was not merely intelligent, able to understand facts and logic; he was also given the ability to apply his intelligence to problems which defy logic, possessing a rare understanding of human beings with all their emotional and spiritual complexities.

4:32–34 *proverbs . . . songs.* Solomon was the author of a large part of the Book of Proverbs. He is also traditionally assigned the authorship of the Song of Solomon, Psalms 72 and 127, and Ecclesiastes.

4:13 [h] Num. 32:41 [i] Deut. 3:4 **4:15** [j] 2 Sam. 15:27 **4:16** [k] 1 Chr. 27:33 **4:18** [l] 1 Kin. 1:8 **4:19** [m] Deut. 3:8–10 **4:20** [n] Gen. 22:17; 32:12 [o] Mic. 4:4 **4:21** [p] Ps. 72:8 [q] Gen. 15:18 [r] Ps. 68:29 **4:22** [s] Neh. 5:18 **4:24** [t] Ps. 72:11 [u] 1 Chr. 22:9 **4:25** [v] [Jer. 23:6] [w] [Mic. 4:4] [x] Judg. 20:1 **4:26** [y] 1 Kin. 10:26 [z] [Deut. 17:16] **4:27** [a] 1 Kin. 4:7 **4:29** [b] 1 Kin. 3:12 **4:30** [c] Gen. 25:6 [d] Is. 19:11, 12 **4:31** [e] 1 Kin. 3:12 [f] 1 Chr. 15:19 [g] 1 Chr. 2:6 **4:32** [h] Eccl. 12:9 [i] Song 1:1 **4:34** [j] 1 Kin. 10:1

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple

5 Now [a]Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, because he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, [b]for Hiram had always loved David. **2** Then [c]Solomon sent to Hiram, saying:

3 [d]You know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God [e]because of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the LORD put *his foes** under the soles of his feet.
4 But now the LORD my God has given me [f]rest on every side; *there is* neither adversary nor evil occurrence.
5 [g]And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, [h]as the LORD spoke to my father David, saying, "Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name."
6 Now therefore, command that they cut down [i]cedars for me from Lebanon; and my servants will be with your servants, and I will pay you wages for your servants according to whatever you say. For you know *there is* none among us who has skill to cut timber like the Sidonians.

7 So it was, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly and said,

Blessed *be* the LORD this day, for He has given David a wise son over this great people!

8 Then Hiram sent to Solomon, saying:

I have considered *the message* which you sent me, *and* I will do all you desire concerning the cedar and cypress logs.
9 My servants shall bring *them* down [j]from Lebanon to the sea; I will float them in rafts by sea to the place you indicate to me, and will have them broken apart there; then you can take *them* away. And you shall fulfill my desire [k]by giving food for my household.

10 Then Hiram gave Solomon cedar and cypress logs *according to* all his desire. **11** [l]And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand kors of wheat *as* food for his household, and twenty* kors of pressed oil. Thus Solomon gave to Hiram year by year.
12 So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, [m]as He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together.
13 Then King Solomon raised up a labor force out of all Israel; and the labor force was thirty thousand men. **14** And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts: they were one month in Lebanon *and* two months at home; [n]Adoniram *was* in charge of the labor force. **15** [o]Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who quarried *stone* in the mountains, **16** besides three thousand three hundred* from the [p]chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work. **17** And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, *and* [q]hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the temple.* **18** So Solomon's builders, Hiram's builders, and the Gebalites quarried *them;* and they prepared timber and stones to build the temple.

Solomon Builds the Temple

6 And [a]it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth* year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which *is* the second month, [b]that he began to build the house of the LORD. **2** Now [c]the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length *was* sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits. **3** The vestibule in front

* **5:3** Literally *them* * **5:11** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *twenty thousand.* * **5:16** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *three thousand six hundred.* * **5:17** Literally *house*, and so frequently throughout this book * **6:1** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *fortieth.*

5:1 ***Hiram.*** This Phoenician king ruled over Tyre for 34 years (978–944 B.C.).
5:7 ***Blessed be the LORD.*** Acknowledging the deities of another people is well known in the Bible (Dan. 3:28) and other ancient Middle Eastern literature. It does not necessarily imply that Hiram was expressing faith in God.
5:13 ***raised up a labor force . . . thirty thousand men.*** Solomon's long and extensive use of this type of social conscription to accomplish his vast building projects became a source of considerable difficulty for his successor, Rehoboam (12:4).
6:1 ***four hundred and eightieth year.*** Many scholars take this date as the key date for establishing the time of the Exodus. The division of the kingdom at the death of Solomon can be dated at 930 B.C. (11:41–43). Allowing forty years for Solomon's rule (11:42), the fourth year of his reign would be 966 B.C. If the Exodus took place 480 years before 966 B.C., its date was 1446 B.C.
6:2 ***house . . . for the LORD.*** Solomon followed the floor plan of the tabernacle, but doubled its dimensions. Solomon's temple was constructed on Mount Moriah, the mountain where Abraham was told to offer Isaac as a sacrifice (Gen. 22:2; 2 Chr. 3:1), on the site of the threshing floor of Araunah where God had spoken to David (2 Sam. 24:24). ***cubits.*** The standard cubit was about 18 inches.

5:1 [a] 2 Chr. 2:3 [b] 2 Sam. 5:11 **5:2** [c] 2 Chr. 2:3 **5:3** [d] 1 Chr. 28:2, 3 [e] 1 Chr. 22:8; 28:3 **5:4** [f] 1 Kin. 4:24 **5:5** [g] 2 Chr. 2:4 [h] 2 Sam. 7:12, 13 **5:6** [i] 2 Chr. 2:8, 10 **5:9** [j] Ezra 3:7 [k] Ezek. 27:17 **5:11** [l] 2 Chr. 2:10 **5:12** [m] 1 Kin. 3:12 **5:14** [n] 1 Kin. 12:18 **5:15** [o] 2 Chr. 2:17, 18 **5:16** [p] 1 Kin. 9:23 **5:17** [q] 1 Kin. 6:7 **6:1** [a] 2 Chr. 3:1, 2 [b] Acts 7:47 **6:2** [c] Ezek. 41:1

of the sanctuary* of the house *was* twenty cubits long across the width of the house, *and* the width of *the vestibule* extended* ten cubits from the front of the house. 4And he made for the house [d]windows with beveled frames.

5Against the wall of the temple he built [e]chambers all around, *against* the walls of the temple, all around the sanctuary [f]and the inner sanctuary.* Thus he made side chambers all around it. 6The lowest chamber *was* five cubits wide, the middle *was* six cubits wide, and the third *was* seven cubits wide; for he made narrow ledges around the outside of the temple, so that *the support beams* would not be fastened into the walls of the temple. 7And [g]the temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel *or* any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built. 8The doorway for the middle story* *was* on the right side of the temple. They went up by stairs to the middle *story,* and from the middle to the third.

9[h]So he built the temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar. 10And he built side chambers against the entire temple, each five cubits high; they were attached to the temple with cedar beams.

11Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: 12"*Concerning* this temple which you are building, [i]if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, [j]which I spoke to your father David. 13And [k]I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not [l]forsake My people Israel."

14So Solomon built the temple and finished it. 15And he built the inside walls of the temple with cedar boards; from the floor of the temple to the ceiling he paneled the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the temple with planks of cypress. 16Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built *it* inside as the inner sanctuary, as the [m]Most Holy *Place*. 17And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits *long*. 18The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All *was* cedar; there was no stone *to be* seen.

19And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. 20The inner sanctuary *was* twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the altar of cedar. 21So Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold. He stretched gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. 22The whole temple he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the temple; also he overlaid with gold [n]the entire altar that *was* by the inner sanctuary.

23Inside the inner sanctuary [o]he made two cherubim *of* olive wood, *each* ten cubits high. 24One wing of the cherub *was* five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25And the other cherub *was* ten cubits; both cherubim *were* of the same size and shape. 26The height of one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was* the other cherub. 27Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room;* and [p]they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. 28Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

29Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*, with carved [q]figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. 30And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*.

31For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors *of* olive wood; the lintel *and* doorposts *were* one-fifth *of the wall*.

* **6:3** Hebrew *heykal;* here the main room of the temple, elsewhere called the holy place (compare Exodus 26:33 and Ezekiel 41:1) • Literally *it* * **6:5** Hebrew *debir;* here the inner room of the temple, elsewhere called the Most Holy Place (compare verse 16) * **6:8** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *upper story;* Targum reads *ground story.* * **6:27** Literally *house*

6:11 ***word of the LORD.*** This message to Solomon might have come by means of a prophet. On other occasions, Solomon had more personal encounters with the Lord (3:5; 9:2; 11:11).

6:19 ***ark of the covenant.*** The ark of the covenant (Deut. 10:8) was so named because it housed the two stone tablets of the covenant—the Ten Commandments (Deut. 10:1–5). The ark symbolized the presence of the sovereign God in the midst of His people (8:10–11; Josh. 3:13).

6:20 ***inner sanctuary.*** The Most Holy Place was a cube of thirty feet. ***gold.*** The amount of gold used in this room was about 21 tons or 600 talents (2 Chr. 3:8).

6:23 ***cherubim.*** Cherubim are mighty angelic beings, they were often depicted in the furnishings of the tabernacle and temple. Not a great deal is known about their nature. Cherubim were set to guard the entrance to the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24). The only extensive description of their appearance is in the Book of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:5–14; 10:1).

6:31 ***doors of olive wood.*** A veil or curtain was hung here as well (Ex. 26:31–36; 2 Chr. 3:14).

6:4 [d] Ezek. 40:16; 41:16 **6:5** [e] Ezek. 41:6 [f] 1 Kin. 6:16, 19–21, 31 **6:7** [g] Deut. 27:5, 6 **6:9** [h] 1 Kin. 6:14, 38 **6:12** [i] 1 Kin. 2:4; 9:4 [j] [2 Sam. 7:13] **6:13** [k] Ex. 25:8 [l] [Deut. 31:6] **6:16** [m] Ex. 26:33 **6:22** [n] Ex. 30:1, 3, 6 **6:23** [o] 2 Chr. 3:10–12 **6:27** [p] 2 Chr. 5:8 **6:29** [q] Ex. 36:8, 35

32 The two doors *were of* olive wood; and
he carved on them figures of cherubim,
palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid
them with gold; and he spread gold on the
cherubim and on the palm trees. 33 So for
the door of the sanctuary he also made
doorposts *of* olive wood, one-fourth *of the*
wall. 34 And the two doors *were of* cypress
wood; [r]two panels *comprised* one folding
door, and two panels *comprised* the other
folding door. 35 Then he carved cherubim,
palm trees, and open flowers *on them*, and
overlaid *them* with gold applied evenly on
the carved work.

36 And he built the [s]inner court with
three rows of hewn stone and a row of ce-
dar beams.

37 [t]In the fourth year the foundation
of the house of the LORD was laid, in the
month of Ziv. 38 And in the eleventh year,
in the month of Bul, which is the eighth
month, the house was finished in all its de-
tails and according to all its plans. So he
was [u]seven years in building it.

Solomon's Other Buildings

7 But Solomon took [a]thirteen years to
build his own house; so he finished all
his house.

2 He also built the [b]House of the Forest
of Lebanon; its length *was* one hundred
cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height
thirty cubits, with four rows of cedar pil-
lars, and cedar beams on the pillars. 3 And
it was paneled with cedar above the beams
that *were* on forty-five pillars, fifteen *to* a
row. 4 *There were* windows *with beveled*
frames in three rows, and window *was* op-
posite window *in* three tiers. 5 And all the
doorways and doorposts *had* rectangular
frames; and window *was* opposite window
in three tiers.

6 He also made the Hall of Pillars: its
length *was* fifty cubits, and its width thirty
cubits; and in front of them *was* a portico
with pillars, and a canopy *was* in front of
them.

7 Then he made a hall for the throne, the
Hall of Judgment, where he might judge;
and *it was* paneled with cedar from floor
to ceiling.*

8 And the house where he dwelt *had*
another court inside the hall, of like work-
manship. Solomon also made a house like
this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, [c]whom he
had taken *as wife*.

9 All these *were of* costly stones cut to
size, trimmed with saws, inside and out,
from the foundation to the eaves, and also
on the outside to the great court. 10 The
foundation *was of* costly stones, large
stones, some ten cubits and some eight cu-
bits. 11 And above *were* costly stones, hewn
to size, and cedar wood. 12 The great court
was enclosed with three rows of hewn
stones and a row of cedar beams. So were
the [d]inner court of the house of the LORD
[e]and the vestibule of the temple.

Hiram the Craftsman

13 Now King Solomon sent and brought
Huram* from Tyre. 14 [f]He *was* the son of a
widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and [g]his
father *was* a man of Tyre, a bronze work-
er; [h]he was filled with wisdom and un-
derstanding and skill in working with all
kinds of bronze work. So he came to King
Solomon and did all his work.

The Bronze Pillars for the Temple

15 And he cast [i]two pillars of bronze,
each one eighteen cubits high, and a line
of twelve cubits measured the circumfer-
ence of each. 16 Then he made two capitals
of cast bronze, to set on the tops of the
pillars. The height of one capital *was* five
cubits, and the height of the other capital
was five cubits. 17 *He made* a lattice net-
work, with wreaths of chainwork, for the
capitals which *were* on top of the pillars:
seven chains for one capital and seven for
the other capital. 18 So he made the pillars,
and two rows of pomegranates above the
network all around to cover the capitals
that *were* on top; and thus he did for the
other capital.

19 The capitals which *were* on top of the
pillars in the hall *were* in the shape of lil-
ies, four cubits. 20 The capitals on the two
pillars also *had pomegranates* above, by

* **7:7** Literally *floor*, that is, of the upper level
* **7:13** Hebrew *Hiram* (compare 2 Chronicles 2:13, 14)

6:38 Worship—in the midst of Solomon's building project he received a prophetic revelation from the Lord (vv. 11–14) in which a promise and a condition were prominent: the Lord would fulfill His promise to David if Solomon obeyed His laws. The temple was the external sign that the Lord would keep His covenant of grace and dwell among the people. Worship can never be divorced from obedience to God's laws in everyday life.

7:1–2 *House of the Forest of Lebanon.* This building was also apparently used as an armory (10:16–17; Is. 22:8).

7:13–14 *Huram.* Huram (also called Hiram) was of mixed parentage. His father was a Phoenician artisan who had married a widow from the tribe of Naphtali (2 Chr. 2:14). Like his father, Huram had become a master craftsman; his contributions to the work on the temple were extensive.

7:16 *five cubits.* Jeremiah 52:22 agrees with this measurement, but 2 Kings 25:17 records the height as three cubits. This apparent discrepancy may just be a difference in whether the capitals of the pillars were included in the measurement height.

6:34 [r] Ezek. 41:23–25 **6:36** [s] 1 Kin. 7:12 **6:37** [t] 1 Kin. 6:1 **6:38** [u] 1 Kin. 5:5; 6:1; 8:19 **7:1** [a] 2 Chr. 8:1 **7:2** [b] 2 Chr. 9:16 **7:8** [c] 2 Chr. 8:11 **7:12** [d] 1 Kin. 6:36 [e] John 10:23 **7:14** [f] 2 Chr. 2:14 [g] 2 Chr. 4:16 [h] Ex. 31:3; 36:1 **7:15** [i] Jer. 52:21

the convex surface which *was* next to the network; and there *were* [i]two hundred such pomegranates in rows on each of the capitals all around.

21[k]Then he set up the pillars by the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the right and called its name Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the left and called its name Boaz. 22The tops of the pillars were in the shape of lilies. So the work of the pillars was finished.

The Sea and the Oxen

23And he made [l]the Sea of cast bronze, ten cubits from one brim to the other; *it was* completely round. Its height *was* five cubits, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference.

24Below its brim *were* ornamental buds encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, [m]all the way around the Sea. The ornamental buds *were* cast in two rows when it was cast. 25It stood on [n]twelve oxen: three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; the Sea *was set* upon them, and all their back parts *pointed* inward. 26It *was* a handbreadth thick; and its brim was shaped like the brim of a cup, *like* a lily blossom. It contained two thousand* baths.

The Carts and the Lavers

27He also made ten carts of bronze; four cubits *was* the length of each cart, four cubits its width, and three cubits its height. 28And this *was* the design of the carts: They had panels, and the panels *were* between frames; 29on the panels that *were* between the frames *were* lions, oxen, and cherubim. And on the frames *was* a pedestal on top. Below the lions and oxen *were* wreaths of plaited work. 30Every cart had four bronze wheels and axles of bronze, and its four feet had supports. Under the laver *were* supports of cast *bronze* beside each wreath. 31Its opening inside the crown at the top *was* one cubit in diameter; and the opening *was* round, shaped *like* a pedestal, one and a half cubits in outside diameter; and also on the opening *were* engravings, but the panels were square, not round. 32Under the panels *were* the four wheels, and the axles of the wheels *were joined* to the cart. The height of a wheel *was* one and a half cubits. 33The workmanship of the wheels *was* like the workmanship of a chariot wheel; their axle pins, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs *were* all of cast *bronze*. 34And *there were* four supports at the four corners of each cart; its supports *were* part of the cart itself. 35On the top of the cart, at the height of half a cubit, *it was* perfectly round. And on the top of the cart, its flanges and its panels *were* of the same casting. 36On the plates of its flanges and on its panels he engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, wherever there was a clear space on each, with wreaths all around. 37Thus he made the ten carts. All of them were of the same mold, one measure, *and* one shape.

38Then [o]he made ten lavers of bronze; each laver contained forty baths, *and* each laver *was* four cubits. On each of the ten carts *was* a laver. 39And he put five carts on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house. He set the Sea on the right side of the house, toward the southeast.

Furnishings of the Temple

40[p]Huram* made the lavers and the shovels and the bowls. So Huram finished doing all the work that he was to do for King Solomon *for* the house of the LORD: 41the two pillars, the *two* bowl-shaped capitals that *were* on top of the two pillars; the two [q]networks covering the two bowl-shaped capitals which *were* on top of the pillars; 42[r]four hundred pomegranates for the two networks (two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that *were* on top of the pillars); 43the ten carts, and ten lavers on the carts; 44one Sea, and twelve oxen under the Sea; 45[s]the pots, the shovels, and the bowls.

All these articles which Huram* made for King Solomon *for* the house of the LORD *were of* burnished bronze. 46[t]In the plain of Jordan the king had them cast in clay molds, between [u]Succoth and [v]Zaretan. 47And Solomon did not weigh all the articles, because *there were* so many; the weight of the bronze was not [w]determined.

* **7:26** Or *three thousand* (compare 2 Chronicles 4:5) * **7:40** Hebrew *Hiram* (compare 2 Chronicles 2:13, 14) * **7:45** Hebrew *Hiram* (compare 2 Chronicles 2:13, 14)

7:21 ***Jachin . . . Boaz.*** Jachin means "He will establish." Boaz may mean "in Him is strength." Another possible meaning is "He is quick." These two pillars were placed near the porch in front of the temple (2 Chr. 3:17).

7:40–47 Service—When talents and skills are used in God's service, no work is insignificant. All is deserving of our best because it is done for God (Matt. 10:42). For this task Huram was filled with wisdom, understanding, and skill (v. 14). This description is similar to the description of Bezalel's work on the tabernacle (Ex. 31:2–6). The Holy Spirit is the source of natural gifts as well as the supernatural gifts used in the service of the Lord.

7:20 *j* Jer. 52:23 **7:21** *k* 2 Chr. 3:17 **7:23** *l* 2 Chr. 4:2 **7:24** *m* 2 Chr. 4:3 **7:25** *n* Jer. 52:20 **7:38** *o* 2 Chr. 4:6 **7:40** *p* 2 Chr. 4:11—5:1 **7:41** *q* 1 Kin. 7:17, 18 **7:42** *r* 1 Kin. 7:20 **7:45** *s* Ex. 27:3 **7:46** *t* 2 Chr. 4:17 *u* Gen. 33:17 *v* Josh. 3:16 **7:47** *w* 1 Chr. 22:3, 14

48 Thus Solomon had all the furnishings
made for the house of the LORD: [x]the altar
of gold, and [y]the table of gold on which *was*
[z]the showbread; 49 the lampstands of pure
gold, five on the right *side* and five on the
left in front of the inner sanctuary, with
the flowers and the lamps and the wick-
trimmers of gold; 50 the basins, the trim-
mers, the bowls, the ladles, and the censers
of pure gold; and the hinges of gold, *both*
for the doors of the inner room (the Most
Holy *Place*) *and* for the doors of the main
hall of the temple.

51 So all the work that King Solomon had
done for the house of the LORD was fin-
ished; and Solomon brought in the things
[a]which his father David had dedicated: the
silver and the gold and the furnishings. He
put them in the treasuries of the house of
the LORD.

The Ark Brought into the Temple

8 Now [a]Solomon assembled the elders
of Israel and all the heads of the tribes,
the chief fathers of the children of Israel,
to King Solomon in Jerusalem, [b]that they
might bring [c]up the ark of the covenant of
the LORD from the City of David, which
is Zion. 2 Therefore all the men of Israel
assembled with King Solomon at the
[d]feast in the month of Ethanim, which *is*
the seventh month. 3 So all the elders of
Israel came, [e]and the priests took up the
ark. 4 Then they brought up the ark of the
LORD, [f]the tabernacle of meeting, and all
the holy furnishings that *were* in the taber-
nacle. The priests and the Levites brought
them up. 5 Also King Solomon, and all the
congregation of Israel who were assem-
bled with him, *were* with him before the
ark, [g]sacrificing sheep and oxen that could
not be counted or numbered for multitude.
6 Then the priests [h]brought in the ark of
the covenant of the LORD to [i]its place, into
the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the
Most Holy *Place*, [j]under the wings of the
cherubim. 7 For the cherubim spread *their*
two wings over the place of the ark, and
the cherubim overshadowed the ark and
its poles. 8 The poles [k]extended so that the
ends of the poles could be seen from the
holy *place*, in front of the inner sanctuary;
but they could not be seen from outside.
And they are there to this day. 9 [l]Nothing
was in the ark [m]except the two tablets of
stone which Moses [n]put there at Horeb,
[o]when the LORD made *a covenant* with the
children of Israel, when they came out of
the land of Egypt.

10 And it came to pass, when the priests
came out of the holy *place*, that the cloud
[p]filled the house of the LORD, 11 so that the
priests could not continue ministering
because of the cloud; for the [q]glory of the
LORD filled the house of the LORD.

12 [r]Then Solomon spoke:

"The LORD said He would dwell [s]in the
dark cloud.
13 [t]I have surely built You an exalted
house,
[u]And a place for You to dwell in
forever."

Solomon's Speech at Completion of the Work

14 Then the king turned around and
[v]blessed the whole assembly of Israel,
while all the assembly of Israel was stand-
ing. 15 And he said: [w]"Blessed *be* the LORD
God of Israel, who [x]spoke with His mouth
to my father David, and with His hand has
fulfilled *it*, saying, 16 'Since the day that I
brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I
have chosen no city from any tribe of Is-
rael *in which* to build a house, that [y]My
name might be there; but I chose [z]David
to be over My people Israel.' 17 Now [a]it was
in the heart of my father David to build a
temple* for the name of the LORD God of Is-
rael. 18 [b]But the LORD said to my father Da-
vid, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build

* **8:17** Literally *house*, and so in verses 18–20

7:48 ***furnishings.*** The furnishings of the temple were designed to correspond with similar furnishings in the tabernacle (Ex. 25; 30). Although Solomon made ten tables and lampstands instead of one, their functions remained the same, all ten being considered one unit (2 Chr. 29:18).

7:51 ***David.*** David's personal example of giving (1 Chr. 29:1–9) provided a high model of godly concern in leadership.

8:1 ***ark of the covenant.*** The ark had been in Jerusalem for some time (2 Sam. 6), and now it was finally in its proper setting. With the erection of the temple and the placement of the ark, the division of spiritual activities between Gibeon, the location of the tabernacle, and Jerusalem, where the ark had resided in a temporary shelter, was now at an end. The pattern of central worship set up in the wilderness could once again be observed (Deut. 12:1–4).

8:9 ***two tablets of stone.*** The two tablets upon which the Ten Commandments were inscribed were known as the "tablets of the covenant" (Deut. 9:9) and were kept in the ark (Deut. 10:1–5,8) along with the jar of manna (Ex. 16:33–34) and Aaron's rod that budded (Num. 17:10).

8:10–11 ***the cloud.*** This visible presence of God's dwelling with His people—sometimes called the "shekinah glory"—had also covered the tabernacle when it was inaugurated (Ex. 40:34–35).

7:48 [x] Ex. 37:25, 26; 2 Chr. 4:8 [y] Ex. 37:10, 11 [z] Lev. 24:5–8
7:51 [a] 2 Sam. 8:11 **8:1** [a] 2 Chr. 5:2–14 [b] 2 Sam. 6:12–17
[c] 2 Sam. 5:7; 6:12, 16 **8:2** [d] Lev. 23:34 **8:3** [e] Num. 4:15; 7:9 **8:4** [f] 2 Chr. 1:3 **8:5** [g] 2 Sam. 6:13 **8:6** [h] 2 Sam. 6:17 [i] 1 Kin. 6:19 [j] 1 Kin. 6:27 **8:8** [k] Ex. 25:13–15; 37:4, 5 **8:9** [l] Ex. 25:21 [m] Deut. 10:5 [n] Ex. 24:7, 8; 40:20 [o] Ex. 34:27, 28 **8:10** [p] Ex. 40:34, 35 **8:11** [q] 2 Chr. 7:1, 2 **8:12** [r] 2 Chr. 6:1 [s] Ps. 18:11; 97:2 **8:13** [t] 2 Sam. 7:13 [u] Ps. 132:14 **8:14** [v] 2 Sam. 6:18 **8:15** [w] Luke 1:68 [x] 2 Sam. 7:2, 12, 13, 25 **8:16** [y] 1 Kin. 8:29 [z] 2 Sam. 7:8
8:17 [a] 2 Sam. 7:2, 3 **8:18** [b] 2 Chr. 6:8, 9

a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. 19Nevertheless [c]you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name.' 20So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; and I have filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, [d]as the LORD promised; and I have built a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 21And there I have made a place for the ark, in which *is* [e]the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

22Then Solomon stood before [f]the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and [g]spread out his hands toward heaven; 23and he said: "LORD God of Israel, [h]*there is* no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, [i]who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with Your servants who [j]walk before You with all their hearts. 24You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled *it* with Your hand, as *it is* this day. 25Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, [k]'You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as you have walked before Me.' 26[l]And now I pray, O God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David my father.

27"But [m]will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the [n]heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! 28Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today: 29that Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, [o]'My name shall be [p]there,' that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes [q]toward this place. 30[r]And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive.

31"When anyone sins against his neighbor, and is forced to take [s]an oath, and comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this temple, 32then hear in heaven, and act, and judge Your servants, [t]condemning the wicked, bringing his way on his head, and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

33[u]"When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and [v]when they turn back to You and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication to You in this temple, 34then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their [w]fathers.

35[x]"When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, 36then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that

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8:20 ***the LORD has fulfilled.*** Israel's God is a keeper of promises. His promise to give Abraham's descendants a land (Gen. 15:13–14,18–21; Josh. 14:12–15) had been provisionally realized (Josh. 21:43–45). Solomon also appropriated God's promise to David (2 Sam. 7:12–18). Subsequent kings in the Davidic line could likewise by faith enjoy the blessings of God promised in the Davidic covenant (Ps. 89:3–4,19–24,27–37).

8:27 ***God.*** God is infinite; no mere building, no matter how wonderful, can contain Him. God rules from heaven in a realm far superior to anything that man can imagine. Unlike the pagan gods who were thought to actually live in the temples built for them, He is not limited by time or space (Acts 7:48; 17:24). Yet God has committed Himself to fellowship with men, walking among them on the earth and being their God. Incredibly, He has chosen to dwell in the hearts of human beings. The true believer is the temple that God desires (1 Cor. 3:16–19).

8:29–30 The Temple in the Life of Israel—Once Solomon built the temple, it became the primary location for the ceremonial worship of Israel. But it was also to be a house of prayer (Is. 56:7), a special place where God's people could rightly maintain their individual relationships with God. The temple was a place for repentance and forgiveness (Luke 18:10–14). It was a place for petitions to be brought to God. The temple was the central point of worship and life for Israel. Even today in many European towns, beautiful church buildings stand in the town square as a testament to the centrality that the church once had in the life of the community.

Too often we fall into a practice that makes ceremony itself the central thing or in some cases the only thing. Here, we can see what mattered most was not the ritualistic practices but communication with God. This passage and others like it give clarity to many of the claims of the prophets mentioned later in Scripture. If the people had been praying and listening to God as a part of the act of worship, surely they would have been more obedient to His commands, especially in view of the fact that prophets continually rebuked them.

8:19 [c] 2 Sam. 7:5, 12, 13 **8:20** [d] 1 Chr. 28:5, 6 **8:21** [e] Deut. 31:26 **8:22** [f] 2 Chr. 6:12 [g] Ezra 9:5 **8:23** [h] Ex. 15:11 [i] [Neh. 1:5] [j] [Gen. 17:1] **8:25** [k] 1 Kin. 2:4; 9:5 **8:26** [l] 2 Sam. 7:25 **8:27** [m] [Acts 7:49; 17:24] [n] 2 Cor. 12:2 **8:29** [o] Deut. 12:11 [p] 1 Kin. 9:3 [q] Dan. 6:10 **8:30** [r] Neh. 1:6 **8:31** [s] Ex. 22:8–11 **8:32** [t] Deut. 25:1 **8:33** [u] Deut. 28:25 [v] Lev. 26:39, 40 **8:34** [w] [Lev. 26:40–42] **8:35** [x] Deut. 28:23

You may [y]teach them [z]the good way in
which they should walk; and send rain on
Your land which You have given to Your
people as an inheritance.
37[a]"When there is famine in the land,
pestilence *or* blight *or* mildew, locusts *or*
grasshoppers; when their enemy besieges
them in the land of their cities; whatever plague or whatever sickness *there is;*
38whatever prayer, whatever supplication
is made by anyone, *or* by all Your people
Israel, when each one knows the plague of
his own heart, and spreads out his hands
toward this temple: 39then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and
act, and give to everyone according to all
his ways, whose heart You know (for You
alone [b]know the hearts of all the sons of
men), 40[c]that they may fear You all the days
that they live in the land which You gave to
our fathers.
41"Moreover, concerning a foreigner,
who *is* not of Your people Israel, but has
come from a far country for Your name's
sake 42(for they will hear of Your great
name and Your [d]strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays
toward this temple, 43hear in heaven Your
dwelling place, and do according to all for
which the foreigner calls to You, [e]that all
peoples of the earth may know Your name
and [f]fear You, as *do* Your people Israel, and
that they may know that this temple which
I have built is called by Your name.
44"When Your people go out to battle
against their enemy, wherever You send
them, and when they pray to the LORD
toward the city which You have chosen
and the temple which I have built for Your
name, 45then hear in heaven their prayer
and their supplication, and maintain their
cause.
46"When they sin against You [g](for *there*
is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them
to the enemy, and they take them captive
[h]to the land of the enemy, far or near; 47[i]*yet*
when they come to themselves in the land
where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the
land of those who took them captive, [j]saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we
have committed wickedness'; 48and *when*
they [k]return to You with all their heart
and with all their soul in the land of their
enemies who led them away captive, and
[l]pray to You toward their land which You
gave to their fathers, the city which You
have chosen and the temple which I have
built for Your name: 49then hear in heaven
Your dwelling place their prayer and their
supplication, and maintain their cause,
50and forgive Your people who have sinned
against You, and all their transgressions
which they have transgressed against You;
and [m]grant them compassion before those
who took them captive, that they may have
compassion on them 51(for [n]they *are* Your
people and Your inheritance, whom You
brought out of Egypt, [o]out of the iron furnace), 52[p]that Your eyes may be open to the
supplication of Your servant and the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to
them whenever they call to You. 53For You
separated them from among all the peoples
of the earth *to be* Your inheritance, [q]as You
spoke by Your servant Moses, when You
brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord
GOD."

Solomon Blesses the Assembly

54[r]And so it was, when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, that he arose from before
the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his
knees with his hands spread up to heaven. 55Then he stood [s]and blessed all the
assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying: 56"Blessed *be* the LORD, who has given
[t]rest to His people Israel, according to all
that He promised. [u]There has not failed
one word of all His good promise, which
He promised through His servant Moses.
57May the LORD our God be with us, as He
was with our fathers. [v]May He not leave us
nor forsake us, 58that He may [w]incline our
hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways,
and to keep His commandments and His
statutes and His judgments, which He
commanded our fathers. 59And may these

8:41 *foreigner.* Unlike God's people or resident aliens within the commonwealth of Israel (Deut. 10:18–19), foreigners had no particular claim on the ear of God. But the Israelites expected foreigners to be drawn to God by the way His people worshiped Him.

8:54 *arose . . . from kneeling.* Chronicles adds that Solomon's prayer and blessing were accompanied by heavenly fire that consumed the sacrifice on the altar (2 Chr. 7:1–3).

8:58 Regeneration—Solomon prayed for an ability given by God that would allow the people to live according to the covenant which had been given at the time of Moses. Solomon was aware that the nation's history was full of examples of the people turning away from God and from His written revelation. Ultimately, the promise of God to the nation of Israel was that there would be a new covenant given to them which would be internalized and which would be brought about by the Holy Spirit (Jer. 31)—the new covenant which was ratified in Jesus' blood (1 Cor. 11:25). Believers today have a power which enables us to live according to God's word—the Holy Spirit who is the agent of our regeneration.

8:36 [y] Ps. 25:4; 27:11; 94:12 [z] 1 Sam. 12:23 **8:37** [a] Lev. 26:16, 25, 26 **8:39** [b] [1 Sam. 16:7] **8:40** [c] [Ps. 130:4] **8:42** [d] Deut. 3:24 **8:43** [e] [1 Sam. 17:46] [f] Ps. 102:15 **8:46** [g] Ps. 130:3 [h] Lev. 26:34, 44 **8:47** [i] [Lev. 26:40–42] [j] Dan. 9:5 **8:48** [k] Jer. 29:12–14 [l] Dan. 6:10 **8:50** [m] Ps. 106:46 **8:51** [n] Deut. 9:26–29 [o] Jer. 11:4 **8:52** [p] 1 Kin. 8:29 **8:53** [q] Ex. 19:5, 6 **8:54** [r] 2 Chr. 7:1 **8:55** [s] 2 Sam. 6:18 **8:56** [t] 1 Chr. 22:18 [u] Deut. 12:10 **8:57** [v] Deut. 31:6 **8:58** [w] Ps. 119:36

words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require, **60**[x]that all the peoples of the earth may know that [y]the LORD *is* God; *there is* no other. **61**Let your [z]heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day."

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

62Then [a]the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD. **63**And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the LORD, twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. **64**On [b]the same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that *was* in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings, grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the [c]bronze altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too small to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

65At that time Solomon held [d]a feast, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from [e]the entrance of Hamath to [f]the Brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, [g]seven days and seven *more* days—fourteen days. **66**[h]On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the LORD had done for His servant David, and for Israel His people.

God's Second Appearance to Solomon

9 And [a]it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD [b]and the king's house, and [c]all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do, **2**that the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, [d]as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. **3**And the LORD said to him: [e]"I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built [f]to put My name there forever, and [g]My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. **4**Now if you [h]walk before Me [i]as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, *and* if you [j]keep My statutes and My judgments, **5**then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, [k]as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.' **6**[l]*But* if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments *and* My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, **7**[m]then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated [n]for My name I will cast out of My sight. [o]Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. **8**And *as for* [p]this house, *which* is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, [q]'Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?' **9**Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the LORD has brought all this [r]calamity on them.'"

Solomon and Hiram Exchange Gifts

10Now [s]it happened at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king's house **11**[t](Hiram the king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress and gold, as much as he desired), *that* King Solomon then gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. **12**Then Hiram went from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, but they did not please him. **13**So he said, "What *kind of* cities *are* these which you have given me, my brother?" [u]And he called them the land of Cabul,* as they are to this day. **14**Then Hiram sent the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold.

* **9:13** Literally *Good for Nothing*

8:60 ***all the peoples of the earth.*** This verse does not limit God to the Jews but includes the Gentiles as well.

9:2 ***second time.*** God had appeared previously to Solomon in Gibeon (3:4–15). The Lord's warning was a necessary reminder for Solomon, who eventually did compromise the conditions required for enjoying God's blessing (11:1–11).

9:12 ***they did not please him.*** Hiram's displeasure with Solomon's gift would later result in Solomon's redeeming the towns by repaying the debt in another manner (2 Chr. 8:1–2).

9:14 ***one hundred and twenty talents.*** A talent was said to be the full load one man could easily carry. It was equal to three thousand shekels, or about 70 pounds.

8:60 [x] 1 Sam. 17:46 [y] Deut. 4:35, 39 **8:61** [z] Deut. 18:13 **8:62** [a] 2 Chr. 7:4–10 **8:64** [b] 2 Chr. 7:7 [c] 2 Chr. 4:1 **8:65** [d] Lev. 23:34 [e] Num. 34:8 [f] Gen. 15:18 [g] 2 Chr. 7:8 **8:66** [h] 2 Chr. 7:9 **9:1** [a] 2 Chr. 7:11 [b] 1 Kin. 7:1 [c] 2 Chr. 8:6 **9:2** [d] 1 Kin. 3:5; 11:9 **9:3** [e] Ps. 10:17 [f] 1 Kin. 8:29 [g] Deut. 11:12 **9:4** [h] Gen. 17:1 [i] 1 Kin. 11:4, 6; 15:5 [j] 1 Kin. 8:61 **9:5** [k] 2 Sam. 7:12, 16 **9:6** [l] 2 Sam. 7:14–16 **9:7** [m] [Lev. 18:24–29] [n] [Jer. 7:4–14] [o] Ps. 44:14 **9:8** [p] 2 Chr. 7:21 [q] [Deut. 29:24–26] **9:9** [r] [Deut. 29:25–28] **9:10** [s] 2 Chr. 8:1 **9:11** [t] 1 Kin. 5:1 **9:13** [u] Josh. 19:27

Solomon's Additional Achievements

15 And this *is* the reason for [v]the labor
force which King Solomon raised: to build
the house of the LORD, his own house, the
[w]Millo,* the wall of Jerusalem, [x]Hazor,
[y]Megiddo, and [z]Gezer. 16 (Pharaoh king of
Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer and
burned it with fire, [a]had killed the Canaan-
ites who dwelt in the city, and had given
it *as* a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's
wife.) 17 And Solomon built Gezer, Lower
[b]Beth Horon, 18 [c]Baalath, and Tadmor in
the wilderness, in the land *of Judah*, 19 all
the storage cities that Solomon had, cities
for [d]his chariots and cities for his [e]cavalry,
and whatever Solomon [f]desired to build in
Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land
of his dominion.

20 [g]All the people *who were* left of the
Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and
Jebusites, who *were* not of the children of
Israel— 21 that is, their descendants [h]who
were left in the land after them, [i]whom
the children of Israel had not been able
to destroy completely—[j]from these Sol-
omon raised [k]forced labor, as it is to this
day. 22 But of the children of Israel Sol-
omon [l]made no forced laborers, because
they *were* men of war and his servants: his
officers, his captains, commanders of his
chariots, and his cavalry.

23 Others *were* chiefs of the officials who
were over Solomon's work: [m]five hundred
and fifty, who ruled over the people who
did the work.

24 But [n]Pharaoh's daughter came up from
the City of David to [o]her house which *Sol-
omon** had built for her. [p]Then he built the
Millo.

25 [q]Now three times a year Solomon of-
fered burnt offerings and peace offerings
on the altar which he had built for the
LORD, and he burned incense with them
on the altar that *was* before the LORD. So
he finished the temple.

26 [r]King Solomon also built a fleet of
ships at [s]Ezion Geber, which *is* near Elath*
on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of
Edom. 27 [t]Then Hiram sent his servants
with the fleet, seamen who knew the sea, to
work with the servants of Solomon. 28 And
they went to [u]Ophir, and acquired four
hundred and twenty talents of gold from
there, and brought *it* to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba's Praise of Solomon

10 Now when the [a]queen of Sheba heard
of the fame of Solomon concerning
the name of the LORD, she came [b]to test
him with hard questions. 2 She came to
Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with
camels that bore spices, very much gold,
and precious stones; and when she came to
Solomon, she spoke with him about all that
was in her heart. 3 So Solomon answered
all her questions; there was nothing so dif-
ficult for the king that he could not explain
it to her. 4 And when the queen of Sheba had
seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house
that he had built, 5 the food on his table, the
seating of his servants, the service of his
waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers,
[c]and his entryway by which he went up to
the house of the LORD, there was no more
spirit in her. 6 Then she said to the king:
"It was a true report which I heard in my
own land about your words and your wis-
dom. 7 However I did not believe the words
until I came and saw with my own eyes;
and indeed the half was not told me. Your
wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of
which I heard. 8 [d]Happy *are* your men and
happy *are* these your servants, who stand
continually before you *and* hear your wis-
dom! 9 [e]Blessed be the LORD your God, who
[f]delighted in you, setting you on the throne
of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel
forever, therefore He made you king, [g]to do
justice and righteousness."

* **9:15** Literally *The Landfill* (compare 2 Chronicles 8:11)
* **9:24** Literally *he*
* **9:26** Hebrew *Eloth* (compare 2 Kings 14:22)

9:16 ***Gezer.*** Gezer had been a strong Canaanite city, a part of Ephraim's territorial assignment. Ephraim had never taken Gezer; however, Egypt had conquered the city. Its key location on the edge of the lowlands west of Jerusalem made it a splendid gift for Pharaoh to give on the occasion of his daughter's marriage to Solomon.

9:26 ***Ezion Geber.*** Ezion Geber was at the head of the modern Gulf of Aqaba. Its key location as an outlet to the Red Sea and the regions beyond made it commercially important to Solomon and to Hiram, his Phoenician trading partner (2 Chr. 8:17–18).

9:28 ***Ophir.*** The exact location of Ophir is a mystery. Some have speculated that it may have been in Africa, since it was reached by sea (1 Kin. 22:48). It was certainly a celebrated gold area, the source of much of the wealth David and Solomon used to pay for their vast building projects (1 Chr. 29:4).

10:1 ***Sheba.*** Located in southwestern Arabia (present-day Yemen), Sheba was the homeland of the Sabeans, a people whose far-flung commercial enterprises stretched from Syria to east Africa to distant India. The Sabeans dealt in such precious commodities as gold, gemstones, perfumes, and rare spices.

10:9 ***Blessed be the LORD your God.*** The queen's acknowledgment of Solomon's God and the Lord's

9:15 [v] 1 Kin. 5:13 [w] 2 Sam. 5:9 [x] Josh. 11:1; 19:36 [y] Josh. 17:11 [z] Josh. 16:10 **9:16** [a] Josh. 16:10 **9:17** [b] 2 Chr. 8:5 **9:18** [c] Josh. 19:44 **9:19** [d] 1 Kin. 10:26 [e] 1 Kin. 4:26 [f] 1 Kin. 9:1 **9:20** [g] 2 Chr. 8:7 **9:21** [h] Judg. 1:21–36; 3:1 [i] Josh. 15:63; 17:12, 13 [j] Judg. 1:28, 35 [k] Ezra 2:55, 58 **9:22** [l] [Lev. 25:39] **9:23** [m] 2 Chr. 8:10 **9:24** [n] 1 Kin. 3:1 [o] 1 Kin. 7:8 [p] 2 Sam. 5:9 **9:25** [q] Ex. 23:14–17 **9:26** [r] 2 Chr. 8:17, 18 [s] Num. 33:35 **9:27** [t] 1 Kin. 5:6, 9; 10:11 **9:28** [u] Job 22:24 **10:1** [a] Matt. 12:42 [b] Judg. 14:12 **10:5** [c] 1 Chr. 26:16 **10:8** [d] Prov. 8:34 **10:9** [e] 1 Kin. 5:7 [f] 2 Sam. 22:20 [g] Ps. 72:2

10 Then she [h]gave the king one hundred
and twenty talents of gold, spices in great
quantity, and precious stones. There never
again came such abundance of spices as
the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.
11 [i]Also, the ships of Hiram, which brought
gold from Ophir, brought great quantities
of almug* wood and precious stones from
Ophir. 12 [j]And the king made steps of the
almug wood for the house of the LORD
and for the king's house, also harps and
stringed instruments for singers. There
never again came such [k]almug wood, nor
has the like been seen to this day.
13 Now King Solomon gave the queen of
Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked,
besides what Solomon had given her ac-
cording to the royal generosity. So she
turned and went to her own country, she
and her servants.

Solomon's Great Wealth

14 The weight of gold that came to Solo-
mon yearly was six hundred and sixty-
six talents of gold, 15 besides *that* from the
[l]traveling merchants, from the income of
traders, [m]from all the kings of Arabia, and
from the governors of the country.
16 And King Solomon made two hundred
large shields *of* hammered gold; six hun-
dred *shekels* of gold went into each shield.
17 He also *made* [n]three hundred shields *of*
hammered gold; three minas of gold went
into each shield. The king put them in the
[o]House of the Forest of Lebanon.
18 [p]Moreover the king made a great
throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure
gold. 19 The throne had six steps, and the top
of the throne *was* round at the back; *there*
were armrests on either side of the place
of the seat, and two lions stood beside the
armrests. 20 Twelve lions stood there, one on
each side of the six steps; nothing like *this*
had been made for any *other* kingdom.
21 [q]All King Solomon's drinking vessels
were gold, and all the vessels of the House
of the Forest of Lebanon *were* pure gold.
Not *one was* silver, for this was accounted
as nothing in the days of Solomon. 22 For
the king had [r]merchant ships* at sea with
the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years
the merchant [s]ships came bringing gold,
silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.* 23 So
[t]King Solomon surpassed all the kings of
the earth in riches and wisdom.
24 Now all the earth sought the presence
of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God
had put in his heart. 25 Each man brought
his present: articles of silver and gold, gar-
ments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at
a set rate year by year.
26 [u]And Solomon [v]gathered chariots
and horsemen; he had one thousand four
hundred chariots and twelve thousand
horsemen, whom he stationed* in the char-
iot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.
27 [w]The king made silver *as common* in Je-
rusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees
as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in
the lowland.
28 [x]Also Solomon had horses imported
from Egypt and Keveh; the king's mer-
chants bought them in Keveh at the *current*
price. 29 Now a chariot that was imported
from Egypt cost six hundred *shekels* of
silver, and a horse one hundred and fifty;
[y]and thus, through their agents,* they ex-
ported *them* to all the kings of the Hittites
and the kings of Syria.

Solomon's Heart Turns from the LORD

11 But [a]King Solomon loved [b]many for-
eign women, as well as the daugh-
ter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites,

* **10:11** Or *algum* (compare 2 Chronicles 9:10, 11) * **10:22** Literally *ships of Tarshish,* deep-sea vessels • Or *peacocks* * **10:26** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate (compare 2 Chronicles 9:25); Masoretic Text reads *led.*
* **10:29** Literally *by their hands*

covenant faithfulness towards Israel does not necessarily mean that she made a commitment of personal faith in the Lord. She may simply have been expressing respect for Solomon's God (see 5:7).

10:26 *one thousand four hundred chariots.* Shalmaneser III of Assyria reported that at the battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.) he faced a combined enemy chariot force of 3,900, some two thousand of which were supplied by Israel.

10:27 *silver . . . cedar trees.* Under Solomon, Israel enjoyed its greatest period of prosperity. This time of prosperity and peace also must have allowed for the growth of scholarship and for arts and music.

11:1 *many foreign women.* Taking foreign wives violated the Lord's prohibitions against marrying Canaanite women (v. 2; Ex. 34:12–17; Deut. 7:1–3); taking many wives violated the standard of monogamy established at the beginning (Gen. 2:24–25), and resulted in rampant polygamy, something God had also forbidden to Israel's future kings (Deut. 17:17).

11:1–2 Materialism—Even before Israel crossed over the Jordan and entered the Promised Land, God had given special instructions for the nation's future kings, warning them against materialism: they were not to collect horses, women, or gold for themselves (Deut. 17:16–17). However, King Solomon did all three, resulting in his downfall. He owned many horses (4:26); he gathered hundreds of wives and concubines (v. 3); and he possessed much gold and silver (10:14–27). The gathering of material wealth, when gained honestly, is not prohibited in the Bible. Improper love of possessions, however, is idolatry. We can own things, but things must not own us.

10:10 [h] Ps. 72:10, 15 **10:11** [i] 1 Kin. 9:27, 28 **10:12** [j] 2 Chr. 9:11 [k] 2 Chr. 9:10 **10:15** [l] 2 Chr. 1:16 [m] Ps. 72:10 **10:17** [n] 1 Kin. 14:26 [o] 1 Kin. 7:2 **10:18** [p] 2 Chr. 9:17 **10:21** [q] 2 Chr. 9:20 **10:22** [r] Gen. 10:4 [s] 1 Kin. 9:26–28; 22:48 **10:23** [t] 1 Kin. 3:12, 13; 4:30 **10:26** [u] 1 Kin. 4:26 [v] 1 Kin. 9:19 **10:27** [w] 2 Chr. 1:15–17 **10:28** [x] [Deut. 17:16] **10:29** [y] 2 Kin. 7:6, 7 **11:1** [a] [Neh. 13:26] [b] [Deut. 17:17]

Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, *and* Hittites— 2from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, [c]"You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. 3And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. 4For it was so, when Solomon was old, [d]that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his [e]heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, [f]as *was* the heart of his father David. 5For Solomon went after [g]Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after [h]Milcom the abomination of the [i]Ammonites. 6Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as *did* his father David. 7[j]Then Solomon built a high place for [k]Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on [l]the hill that *is* east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. 8And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

9So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, [m]who had appeared to him twice, 10and [n]had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. 11Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, [o]I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your [p]servant. 12Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13[q]However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give [r]one tribe to your son [s]for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem [t]which I have chosen."

Adversaries of Solomon

14Now the LORD [u]raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he *was* a descendant of the king in Edom. 15[v]For it happened, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, [w]after he had killed every male in Edom 16(because for six months Joab remained there with all Israel, until he had cut down every male in Edom), 17that Hadad fled to go to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him. Hadad *was* still a little child. 18Then they arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, apportioned food for him, and gave him land. 19And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him as wife the sister of his own wife, that is, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. 20Then the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

21[x]So when Hadad heard in Egypt that David rested with his fathers, and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, that I may go to my own country."

22Then Pharaoh said to him, "But what have you lacked with me, that suddenly you seek to go to your own country?"

So he answered, "Nothing, but do let me go anyway."

23And God raised up *another* adversary against him, Rezon the son of Eliadah, who had fled from his lord, [y]Hadadezer king of Zobah. 24So he gathered men to him and became captain over a band *of raiders*, [z]when David killed those *of Zobah*. And they went to Damascus and dwelt there, and reigned in Damascus. 25He was an

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11:1–4 Unfaithfulness—Solomon was affected by the contemporary practices of the surrounding culture. Entering into a political marriage was a means to consolidate a relationship with a neighboring monarch, and Solomon followed this custom at the expense of obedience to God. Unfaithfulness creeps into our lives when our hearts are more closely attuned to contemporary culture and peer pressure than to the voice of God. The heinousness of Solomon's unfaithfulness stands in contrast with the abundance of God's favor and the plainness of His commands (vv. 9–10).

11:3 *seven hundred . . . three hundred.* If the reference to 60 queens and 80 concubines in Song of Solomon 6:8 is to Solomon's wives, it represents a much earlier period in Solomon's reign.

11:4 *not loyal.* Although it is true that David did not always live up to God's standards, he was loyal to God and trusted Him implicitly, even when he was rebuked for his sins (2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 32:1–5; 53:1–5).

11:7 *high place.* The use of high places in association with the worship of foreign gods shows the terrible danger that the high places presented to Israel (3:2–4; 14:23; Mic. 1:3). ***Molech.*** The worship of Molech was associated with Baal worship and with human sacrifice (Jer. 7:31–32; 19:5–6; 32:35).

11:13 *one tribe.* The one tribe left to the house of David was Judah, the principal tribe of the southern kingdom. By this time, Simeon had assimilated with Judah (12:17–21).

11:14 *Hadad the Edomite.* Hadad was one of the survivors who had escaped when David defeated the Edomite army (2 Sam. 8:13–14). Pharaoh's ready reception and favorable treatment of Hadad probably had political ramifications, the pharaoh seeing him as a potential future ally on Israel's border.

11:2 [c] [Deut. 7:3, 4] **11:4** [d] [Deut. 17:17] [e] 1 Kin. 8:61 [f] 1 Kin. 9:4 **11:5** [g] Judg. 2:13 [h] [Lev. 20:2–5] [i] 2 Kin. 23:13 **11:7** [j] Num. 33:52 [k] Judg. 11:24 [l] 2 Kin. 23:13 **11:9** [m] 1 Kin. 3:5; 9:2 **11:10** [n] 1 Kin. 6:12; 9:6, 7 **11:11** [o] 1 Kin. 11:31; 12:15, 16 [p] 1 Kin. 11:31, 37 **11:13** [q] 2 Sam. 7:15 [r] 1 Kin. 12:20 [s] 2 Sam. 7:15, 16 [t] Deut. 12:11 **11:14** [u] 1 Chr. 5:26 **11:15** [v] 2 Sam. 8:14 [w] Num. 24:18, 19 **11:21** [x] 1 Kin. 2:10, 34 **11:23** [y] 2 Sam. 8:3; 10:16 **11:24** [z] 2 Sam. 8:3; 10:8, 18

adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon (besides the trouble that Hadad *caused*); and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

Jeroboam's Rebellion

26Then Solomon's servant, [a]Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow, [b]also [c]rebelled against the king.

27And this *is* what caused him to rebel against the king: [d]Solomon had built the Millo *and* repaired the damages to the City of David his father. **28**The man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing that the young man was [e]industrious, made him the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph.

29Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet [f]Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two *were* alone in the field. **30**Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that *was* on him, and [g]tore it *into* twelve pieces. **31**And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for [h]thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you **32**(but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), **33**[i]because they have* forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do *what is* right in My eyes and *keep* My statutes and My judgments, as *did* his father David. **34**However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes. **35**But [j]I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and give it to you—ten tribes. **36**And to his son I will give one tribe, that [k]My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. **37**So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel. **38**Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do *what is* right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then [l]I will be with you and [m]build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you. **39**And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.'"

40Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to [n]Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

Death of Solomon

41Now [o]the rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? **42**[p]And the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty years. **43**[q]Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his [r]place.

The Revolt Against Rehoboam

12 And [a]Rehoboam went to [b]Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. **2**So it happened, when [c]Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard *it* (he was still in [d]Egypt, for he had fled from

* **11:33** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *he has*.

11:26 ***Jeroboam.*** At first a trusted official for Solomon (v. 28), Jeroboam came under his wrath and fled to Egypt. Eventually, Jeroboam was instrumental in bringing about the prophesied schism of the country (12:2–19). He became the first king of the northern kingdom (12:20).

11:31–32 ***ten tribes . . . one tribe.*** The twelfth tribe might be Simeon, which was absorbed by Judah; it is also possible that Benjamin existed for some time as a "buffer state" between Israel and Judah, linked at times with the southern kingdom (2 Chr. 11:3).

11:36 ***a lamp.*** This is an image of one of the divinely intended functions of the kings of ancient Israel. In the midst of the darkness of a pagan world, the Davidic kings were to be a lamp to the nations, in anticipation of the coming Messiah who would be the Light of the World (John 1:1–9; 2 Sam. 21:17; 2 Kin. 8:19; 2 Chr. 21:7).

11:40 ***Shishak.*** Shishak (or Sheshonq I, 945–924 B.C.) was the first pharaoh of Egypt's strong twenty-second dynasty. Ironically, this future destroyer of Israel appears here as a protector of one of its future kings.

11:41 ***the book of the acts of Solomon.*** This book is mentioned only here; compare the references to the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (14:19) and the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (14:29). It is likely that the author of the books of Kings drew on these sources.

12:1 ***Shechem.*** Shechem was an important center of Israelite activity. It was the first place mentioned in Canaan with reference to Abraham (Gen. 12:6). It was also one of the Levitical cities of refuge (Num. 35:6). By going for his coronation to a place with ancient ties to the history of his people, and which was situated in

11:26 [a] 1 Kin. 12:2 [b] 2 Chr. 13:6 [c] 2 Sam. 20:21 **11:27** [d] 1 Kin. 9:15, 24 **11:28** [e] [Prov. 22:29] **11:29** [f] 2 Chr. 9:29 **11:30** [g] 1 Sam. 15:27, 28; 24:5 **11:31** [h] 1 Kin. 11:11, 13 **11:33** [i] 1 Kin. 11:5–8 **11:35** [j] 1 Kin. 12:16, 17 **11:36** [k] [1 Kin. 15:4] **11:38** [l] Josh. 1:5 [m] 2 Sam. 7:11, 27 **11:40** [n] 2 Chr. 12:2–9 **11:41** [o] 2 Chr. 9:29 **11:42** [p] 2 Chr. 9:30 **11:43** [q] 2 Chr. 9:31 [r] 2 Chr. 10:1 **12:1** [a] 2 Chr. 10:1 [b] Judg. 9:6 **12:2** [c] 1 Kin. 11:26 [d] 1 Kin. 11:40

the presence of King Solomon and had
been dwelling in Egypt), 3that they sent
and called him. Then Jeroboam and the
whole assembly of Israel came and spoke
to Rehoboam, saying, 4"Your father made
our [e]yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the
burdensome service of your father, and his
heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will
serve you."

5So he said to them, "Depart *for* three
days, then come back to me." And the peo-
ple departed.

6Then King Rehoboam consulted the el-
ders who stood before his father Solomon
while he still lived, and he said, "How do
you advise *me* to answer these people?"

7And they spoke to him, saying, [f]"If you
will be a servant to these people today, and
serve them, and answer them, and speak
good words to them, then they will be your
servants forever."

8But he rejected the advice which the
elders had given him, and consulted the
young men who had grown up with him,
who stood before him. 9And he said to
them, "What advice do you give? How
should we answer this people who have
spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke
which your father put on us'?"

10Then the young men who had grown
up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus
you should speak to this people who have
spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made
our yoke heavy, but you make *it* lighter on
us'—thus you shall say to them: 'My little
finger shall be thicker than my father's
waist! 11And now, whereas my father put a
heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke;
my father chastised you with whips, but I
will chastise you with scourges!'"*

12So Jeroboam and all the people came
to Rehoboam the third day, as the king
had directed, saying, "Come back to me
the third day." 13Then the king answered
the people roughly, and rejected the advice
which the elders had given him; 14and he
spoke to them according to the advice of
the young men, saying, "My father made
your yoke heavy, but I will add to your
yoke; my father chastised you with whips,
but I will chastise you with scourges!"*
15So the king did not listen to the people;
for [g]the turn *of events* was from the LORD,
that He might fulfill His word, which the
LORD had [h]spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite
to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16Now when all Israel saw that the king
did not listen to them, the people answered
the king, saying:

[i]"What share have we in David?
We have no inheritance in the son of
Jesse.
To your tents, O Israel!
Now, see to your own house, O David!"

So Israel departed to their tents. 17But
Rehoboam reigned over [j]the children of Is-
rael who dwelt in the cities of Judah.

18Then King Rehoboam [k]sent Adoram,
who *was* in charge of the revenue; but all
Israel stoned him with stones, and he died.
Therefore King Rehoboam mounted his
chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. 19So
[l]Israel has been in rebellion against the
house of David to this day.

20Now it came to pass when all Israel
heard that Jeroboam had come back, they
sent for him and called him to the congre-
gation, and made him king over all [m]Israel.
There was none who followed the house of
David, but the tribe of Judah [n]only.

21And when [o]Rehoboam came to Jeru-
salem, he assembled all the house of Judah
with the tribe of [p]Benjamin, one hundred
and eighty thousand chosen *men* who were
warriors, to fight against the house of Is-
rael, that he might restore the kingdom to

* **12:11** Literally *scorpions* * **12:14** Literally *scorpions*

the region of the northern tribes, Rehoboam doubtless believed that he was making a strategic move.

12:15 ***from the LORD.*** Even at this crucial time of national schism, God was sovereignly working through human events to accomplish His will, which had been made known through earlier prophecy (11:29–39). ***might fulfill His word.*** All things derive their origin and destiny from God. They are determined, controlled, and directed from beginning to end by His wise and sovereign counsel. His plan encompasses everything that comes to pass, including all ends and all the ways and means to those ends. His plan also incorporates the folly of men in their deliberations, advice, and decisions, without compelling them to it by external constraint. In fact, God's Word reveals the solemn truth that His plan encompasses even the sin, ungodliness, and evil of men in their motivations and aspirations, their thoughts, words, and deeds, without eliminating their full responsibility for it (Acts 2:22–23; 4:27–28).

12:16 ***What share have we in David?*** The ancient rivalry felt by the northern tribes now came to a peak in resentment against the tribe of Judah and the house of David

12:17 ***cities of Judah.*** The southern section of the land also included the tribal allotment of Simeon. But Simeon by this time had been absorbed by Judah, their allotment was "within the inheritance of the children of Judah" (Josh. 19:1).

12:20 ***made him king.*** The coronation of Jeroboam had been prophesied by Ahijah the prophet of the Lord (11:29–31). Nonetheless, the actual coronation apparently was done apart from priest or prophet of the Lord; there was no divine anointing, no true religious ceremony. Only the kings of the southern kingdom would have the sanction of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7).

12:4 [e] 1 Sam. 8:11–18 **12:7** [f] 2 Chr. 10:7 **12:15** [g] Judg. 14:4 [h] 1 Kin. 11:11, 29, 31 **12:16** [i] 2 Sam. 20:1 **12:17** [j] 1 Kin. 11:13, 36 **12:18** [k] 1 Kin. 4:6; 5:14 **12:19** [l] 2 Kin. 17:21 **12:20** [m] 2 Kin. 17:21 [n] 1 Kin. 11:13, 32, 36 **12:21** [o] 2 Chr. 11:1–4 [p] 2 Sam. 19:17

Rehoboam the son of Solomon. 22But [q]the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, 23"Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying, 24'Thus says the LORD: "You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, [r]for this thing is from Me."'" Therefore they obeyed the word of the LORD, and turned back, according to the word of the LORD.

Jeroboam's Gold Calves

25Then Jeroboam [s]built Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Also he went out from there and built [t]Penuel. 26And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: 27If these people [u]go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah."

28Therefore the king asked advice, [v]made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. [w]Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" 29And he set up one in [x]Bethel, and the other he put in [y]Dan. 30Now this thing became [z]a sin, for the people went *to worship* before the one as far as Dan. 31He made shrines* on the high places, [a]and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.

32Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like [b]the feast that *was* in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. [c]And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. 33So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had [d]devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and [e]burned incense.

The Message of the Man of God

13 And behold, [a]a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, [b]and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. 2Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a child, [c]Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be [d]burned on you.'" 3And he gave [e]a sign the same day, saying, "This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out."

4So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. 5The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

* **12:31** Literally *a house*

12:22 ***Shemaiah.*** According to 2 Chronicles 12:15, Iddo the prophet and Shemaiah together wrote a history of Rehoboam's reign.

12:28 ***two calves of gold.*** Not only would they strike a familiar chord from Israel's history, but the two calves would arouse the interest of the remaining Canaanites in the northern kingdom. The result of Jeroboam's action was religious confusion and apostasy; this was the first time that a deliberate attempt had been made to establish a heterodox doctrine, an unauthorized variation of the true religion. It appears that Jeroboam was doing the same thing that Aaron did, presenting the calves as representations of God, and thus luring people away from true worship.

12:29 ***Bethel.*** Bethel was north of Jerusalem in Benjamite territory, it had enjoyed a prominent place in Israelite history throughout the earlier patriarchal period (Gen. 28:10–21). Dan was in the north; before its capture by the Danites it had a reputation as a center for pagan worship (Judg. 18:30). Jeroboam's choice of these two sites was a brilliant move. He had one site in the northernmost part of his kingdom and another in the southernmost part; both had long ties to Israel's past, and eliminated the need for long, tedious treks to Jerusalem.

12:31 ***not of the sons of Levi.*** Jeroboam's new religious institutions included starting a new religious order that did not include the Levites; setting up shrines at high places (3:2–3); and replacing the Feast of Tabernacles with a fall festival of the eighth month. His various attempts at religious innovation would quickly incur God's wrath and earn him a reputation that would live in infamy (13:33–34; 22:52).

13:4–5 ***Arrest him.*** The life and character of Jeroboam stands in stark contrast to that of King David. When David was told that he would become king, he never forgot that it was God who gave him the position, and God who would maintain it. Jeroboam, however, seemed to think that he would only stay in office by his own efforts. When David was confronted with his sin by Nathan the prophet, he humbly confessed (2 Sam. 12:13). The wicked Jeroboam sought to arrest his accuser.

12:22 [q] 2 Chr. 11:2; 12:5–7 **12:24** [r] 1 Kin. 12:15
12:25 [s] Judg. 9:45–49 [t] Judg. 8:8, 17 **12:27** [u] [Deut. 12:5–7, 14] **12:28** [v] 2 Kin. 10:29; 17:16 [w] Ex. 32:4, 8
12:29 [x] Gen. 28:19 [y] Judg. 18:26–31 **12:30** [z] 1 Kin. 13:34
12:31 [a] 2 Kin. 17:32 **12:32** [b] Lev. 23:33, 34 [c] Amos 7:10–13 **12:33** [d] Num. 15:39 [e] 1 Kin. 13:1 **13:1** [a] 2 Kin. 23:17 [b] 1 Kin. 12:32, 33 **13:2** [c] 2 Kin. 23:15, 16 [d] [Lev. 26:30] **13:3** [e] Is. 7:14; 38:7

6 Then the king answered and said to the
man of God, "Please [f]entreat the favor of
the LORD your God, and pray for me, that
my hand may be restored to me."

So the man of God entreated the LORD,
and the king's hand was restored to him,
and became as before. 7 Then the king said
to the man of God, "Come home with me
and refresh yourself, and [g]I will give you
a reward."

8 But the man of God said to the king,
[h]"If you were to give me half your house,
I would not go in with you; nor would I eat
bread nor drink water in this place. 9 For so
it was commanded me by the word of the
LORD, saying, [i]'You shall not eat bread, nor
drink water, nor return by the same way
you came.'" 10 So he went another way and
did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

Death of the Man of God

11 Now an [j]old prophet dwelt in Bethel,
and his sons came and told him all the
works that the man of God had done that
day in Bethel; they also told their father the
words which he had spoken to the king.
12 And their father said to them, "Which
way did he go?" For his sons had seen*
which way the man of God went who came
from Judah. 13 Then he said to his sons,
"Saddle the donkey for me." So they sad-
dled the donkey for him; and he rode on it,
14 and went after the man of God, and found
him sitting under an oak. Then he said to
him, "*Are* you the man of God who came
from Judah?"

And he said, "I *am*."

15 Then he said to him, "Come home with
me and eat bread."

16 And he said, [k]"I cannot return with
you nor go in with you; neither can I eat
bread nor drink water with you in this
place. 17 For I have been told [l]by the word
of the LORD, 'You shall not eat bread nor
drink water there, nor return by going the
way you came.'"

18 He said to him, "I too *am* a prophet
as you *are*, and an angel spoke to me by
the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him
back with you to your house, that he may
eat bread and drink water.'" (He was lying
to him.)

19 So he went back with him, and ate
bread in his house, and drank water.

20 Now it happened, as they sat at the
table, that the word of the LORD came to
the prophet who had brought him back;
21 and he cried out to the man of God who
came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the
LORD: 'Because you have disobeyed the
word of the LORD, and have not kept the
commandment which the LORD your God
commanded you, 22 but you came back, ate
bread, and drank water in the [m]place of
which *the LORD* said to you, "Eat no bread
and drink no water," your corpse shall not
come to the tomb of your fathers.'"

23 So it was, after he had eaten bread and
after he had drunk, that he saddled the
donkey for him, the prophet whom he had
brought back. 24 When he was gone, [n]a lion
met him on the road and killed him. And
his corpse was thrown on the road, and
the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood
by the corpse. 25 And there, men passed by
and saw the corpse thrown on the road,
and the lion standing by the corpse. Then
they went and told *it* in the city where the
old prophet dwelt.

26 Now when the prophet who had brought
him back from the way heard *it*, he said, "It
is the man of God who was disobedient to
the word of the LORD. Therefore the LORD
has delivered him to the lion, which has torn
him and killed him, according to the word
of the LORD which He spoke to him." 27 And
he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the
donkey for me." So they saddled *it*. 28 Then
he went and found his corpse thrown on the
road, and the donkey and the lion stand-
ing by the corpse. The lion had not eaten

* **13:12** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *showed him*.

13:6 ***the LORD your God.*** This language may be simply deferential to the prophet, but here it may indicate recognition by Jeroboam that he was no longer really serving the living God.

13:7–8 ***reward.*** The prophet was not just being ungracious, he was following a direct command from God. In biblical times, sharing a meal was more than just a social custom. It implied an intimate fellowship. Great religious ceremonies from the Passover to the Lord's Table center on people eating together. The prophet did not want his act of mercy to suggest that God accepted Jeroboam's deviant worship, or leave the impression that a touch from God could be bought and paid for. Giving a gift can be an easy way to avoid the really important matter of changing lives and lifestyles. If a person is convinced that by his giving he is rewarding a church or a pastor, then it becomes impossible for that church or pastor to have any kind of prophetic ministry to that individual. Instead, they become his debtor.

13:11 ***an old prophet.*** This prophet was clearly an apostate. He had not spoken against Jeroboam; instead, he boldly lied to the Lord's true prophet.

13:19 ***went back with him.*** The man of God had withstood Jeroboam's persuasions; he probably came expecting just such pressure. Sadly, he made the mistake of letting down his guard when he had passed the test he was expecting. There is never any excuse for violating God's clear instructions, and he paid a terrible price for his disobedience.

13:24 ***a lion.*** The way the lion stood by both the man of God and his donkey shows that the lion did not kill for food but was God's executioner (vv. 25–26,28).

13:6 *f* [James 5:16] **13:7** *g* 1 Sam. 9:7 **13:8** *h* Num. 22:18; 24:13 **13:9** *i* [1 Cor. 5:11] **13:11** *j* 1 Kin. 13:25 **13:16** *k* 1 Kin. 13:8, 9 **13:17** *l* 1 Kin. 20:35 **13:22** *m* 1 Kin. 13:9 **13:24** *n* 1 Kin. 20:36

the corpse nor torn the donkey. 29And the prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. So the old prophet came to the city to mourn, and to bury him. 30Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb; and they mourned over him, *saying*, [o]"Alas, my brother!" 31So it was, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I am dead, then bury me in the tomb where the man of God *is* buried; [p]lay my bones beside his bones. 32[q]For the saying which he cried out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the shrines* on the high places which *are* in the cities of [r]Samaria, will surely come to pass."

33[s]After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests from every class of people for the high places; whoever wished, he consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places. 34[t]And this thing was the sin of the house of Jeroboam, so as [u]to exterminate and destroy *it* from the face of the earth.

Judgment on the House of Jeroboam

14 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick. 2And Jeroboam said to his wife, "Please arise, and disguise yourself, that they may not recognize you as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Indeed, Ahijah the prophet *is* there, who told me that [a]*I would be* king over this people. 3[b]Also take with you ten loaves, *some* cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what will become of the child." 4And Jeroboam's wife did so; she arose [c]and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were glazed by reason of his age.

5Now the LORD had said to Ahijah, "Here is the wife of Jeroboam, coming to ask you something about her son, for he *is* sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her; for it will be, when she comes in, that she will pretend *to be* another *woman*."

6And so it was, when Ahijah heard the sound of her footsteps as she came through the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend *to be* another *person*? For I *have been* sent to you *with* bad *news*. 7Go, tell Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: [d]"Because I exalted you from among the people, and made you ruler over My people Israel, 8and [e]tore the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to you; and *yet* you have not been as My servant David, [f]who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only *what was* right in My eyes; 9but you have done more evil than all who were before you, [g]for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and [h]have cast Me behind your back— 10therefore behold! [i]I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and [j]will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, [k]bond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse until it is all gone. 11The dogs shall eat [l]whoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field; for the LORD has spoken!"' 12Arise therefore, go to your own house. [m]When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. 13And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he is the only one of Jeroboam who shall come to the grave, because in him [n]there is found something good toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

14[o]"Moreover the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam; this is the day. What? Even now! 15For the LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will [p]uproot Israel from this [q]good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them [r]beyond the River,* [s]because they have made their wooden images,*

* **13:32** Literally *houses* * **14:15** That is, the Euphrates • Hebrew *Asherim*, Canaanite deities

13:32 ***cities of Samaria.*** The city of Samaria did not, in fact, come into being for nearly half a century (16:24), but the author mentions it here from his own later perspective.

13:33 ***evil way.*** Rather than learning from the report of this incident, Jeroboam was even more set in his evil ways. His apostasy would earn for him his reputation as the one who "made Israel to sin" (16:26).

14:4 ***Shiloh.*** Located about twenty miles north of Jerusalem, Shiloh had been the religious center for the nation during the time of the judges and was the location of the tabernacle (Josh. 18:1; 1 Sam. 1:3). The city was destroyed by the Philistines after the loss of the ark (1 Sam. 4:1–11; Jer. 7:12–15). ***could not see.*** Although he was blind, Ahijah could "see" by means of the revelation of the living God.

14:11 ***dogs.*** Dogs were scavengers, and in the Middle East they came to symbolize the dregs of society (2 Kin. 8:13).

14:14 ***cut off the house.*** As prophesied here, the end of Jeroboam's reign would soon be accomplished (15:27—16:7).

14:15 ***wooden images.*** This refers to the wooden poles or images associated with the worship of the goddess Asherah (Judg. 3:7; 2 Kin. 23:4). Her worship would become one of the sins that would bring about the downfall of the northern kingdom (2 Kin. 17:9–11).

13:30 [o] Jer. 22:18 **13:31** [p] 2 Kin. 23:17, 18 **13:32** [q] 2 Kin. 23:16, 19 [r] 1 Kin. 16:24 **13:33** [s] 1 Kin. 12:31, 32 **13:34** [t] 1 Kin. 12:30 [u] [1 Kin. 14:10; 15:29, 30] **14:2** [a] 1 Kin. 11:29–31 **14:3** [b] 1 Sam. 9:7, 8 **14:4** [c] 1 Kin. 11:29 **14:7** [d] 1 Kin. 16:2 **14:8** [e] 1 Kin. 11:31 [f] 1 Kin. 11:33, 38; 15:5 **14:9** [g] 1 Kin. 12:28 [h] Ps. 50:17 **14:10** [i] 1 Kin. 15:29 [j] 1 Kin. 21:21 [k] Deut. 32:36 **14:11** [l] 1 Kin. 16:4; 21:24 **14:12** [m] 1 Kin. 14:17 **14:13** [n] 2 Chr. 12:12; 19:3 **14:14** [o] 1 Kin. 15:27–29 **14:15** [p] 2 Kin. 17:6 [q] [Josh. 23:15, 16] [r] 2 Kin. 15:29 [s] [Ex. 34:13, 14]

provoking the LORD to anger. 16And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, [t]who sinned and who made Israel sin."

17Then Jeroboam's wife arose and departed, and came to [u]Tirzah. [v]When she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. 18And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, [w]according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

Death of Jeroboam

19Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he [x]made war and how he reigned, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. 20The period that Jeroboam reigned *was* twenty-two years. So he rested with his fathers. [y]Then Nadab his son reigned in his place.

Rehoboam Reigns in Judah

21And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. [z]Rehoboam *was* forty-one years old when he became king. He reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city [a]which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. [b]His mother's name *was* Naamah, an Ammonitess. 22[c]Now Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they [d]provoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. 23For they also built for themselves [e]high places, [f]*sacred* pillars, and [g]wooden images on every high hill and [h]under every green tree. 24[i]And there were also perverted persons* in the land. They did according to all the [j]abominations of the nations which the LORD had cast out before the children of [k]Israel.

25[l]It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam *that* Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. 26[m]And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took away everything. He also took away all the gold shields [n]which Solomon had made. 27Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place, and committed *them* to the hands of the captains of the guard, who guarded the doorway of the king's house. 28And whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards carried them, then brought them back into the guardroom.

29[o]Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 30And there was [p]war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days. 31[q]So Rehoboam rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. [r]His mother's name *was* Naamah, an Ammonitess. Then [s]Abijam* his son reigned in his place.

Abijam Reigns in Judah

15 [a]In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah. 2He reigned three years in Jerusalem. [b]His mother's name *was* [c]Maachah the granddaughter of [d]Abishalom. 3And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; [e]his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. 4Nevertheless [f]for David's sake

* **14:24** Hebrew *qadesh*, that is, one practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals
* **14:31** Spelled *Abijah* in 2 Chronicles 12:16ff

14:17 ***Tirzah.*** Famed for its beauty (Song 6:4), Tirzah was a royal retreat and the capital of the northern kingdom's first two dynasties (15:33).

14:19 ***the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.*** This book is mentioned 15 times in Kings. Apparently it was an official record of events in the southern kingdom down to the days of Jehoiakim. This work should not be confused with the biblical books of Chronicles, which were written much later, after the exile.

14:20 ***Jeroboam.*** Each of the subsequent kings of Israel was judged against the example of the wickedness of Jeroboam (15:34). Only with Ahab was a worse pattern set (16:31).

14:23 ***high places.*** The high places were a problem throughout the history of Judah and Israel (Mic. 1:3). At times, the worship offered on them may have been done sincerely, in true worship of God (3:2–4; 2 Kin. 12:3). But these were also the places in which Canaanite worship rites were practiced, and images set up to honor Baal and Asherah. Even when the worship on the high places was not mixed with pagan rituals, it was not in accord with the law of Moses (see 2 Chr. 1:3).

14:24 ***abominations.*** This is an exceedingly strong term; it describes perverted activities that impelled God to dispossess the Canaanite peoples from their land (Deut. 18:9–12).

14:26 ***treasures of the house of the LORD.*** The sacking of the temple is particularly shocking when we think of the long and detailed description of Solomon's building and furnishing of the house of the Lord.

15:2 ***Maachah.*** Elsewhere she is described as "the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah" (2 Chr. 13:2), and "the daughter of Absalom" (2 Chr. 11:21). It is thought that she was the granddaughter of Absalom; the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah and Absalom's daughter Tamar (2 Sam. 14:27). She was the favorite of Rehoboam's many wives. The fact that she is mentioned in

14:16 [t] 1 Kin. 12:30; 13:34; 15:30, 34; 16:2 **14:17** [u] Song 6:4 [v] 1 Kin. 14:12 **14:18** [w] 1 Kin. 14:13 **14:19** [x] 2 Chr. 13:2–20 **14:20** [y] 1 Kin. 15:25 **14:21** [z] 2 Chr. 12:13 [a] 1 Kin. 11:32, 36 [b] 1 Kin. 14:31 **14:22** [c] 2 Chr. 12:1, 14 [d] Deut. 32:21 **14:23** [e] Deut. 12:2 [f] [Deut. 16:22] [g] [2 Kin. 17:9, 10] [h] Is. 57:5 **14:24** [i] Deut. 23:17 [j] Deut. 20:18 [k] [Deut. 9:4, 5] **14:25** [l] 1 Kin. 11:40 **14:26** [m] 2 Chr. 12:9–11 [n] 1 Kin. 10:17 **14:29** [o] 2 Chr. 12:15, 16 **14:30** [p] 1 Kin. 12:21–24; 15:6 **14:31** [q] 2 Chr. 12:16 [r] 1 Kin. 14:21 [s] 2 Chr. 12:16 **15:1** [a] 2 Chr. 13:1 **15:2** [b] 2 Chr. 11:20–22 [c] 2 Chr. 13:2 [d] 2 Chr. 11:21 **15:3** [e] Ps. 119:80 **15:4** [f] 2 Sam. 21:17

the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; 5because David [g]did *what was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, [h]except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. 6[i]And there was war between Rehoboam* and Jeroboam all the days of his life. 7[j]Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

8[k]So Abijam rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then Asa his son reigned in his place.

Asa Reigns in Judah

9In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa became king over Judah. 10And he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother's name *was* Maachah the granddaughter of Abishalom. 11[l]Asa did *what was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* his father David. 12[m]And he banished the perverted persons* from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. 13Also he removed [n]Maachah his grandmother from *being* queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah.* And Asa cut down her obscene image and [o]burned *it* by the Brook Kidron. 14[p]But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's [q]heart was loyal to the LORD all his days. 15He also brought into the house of the LORD the things which his father [r]had dedicated, and the things which he himself had dedicated: silver and gold and utensils.

16Now there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. 17And [s]Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built [t]Ramah, [u]that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 18Then Asa took all the silver and gold *that was* left in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the treasuries of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants. And King Asa sent them to [v]Ben-Hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who dwelt in [w]Damascus, saying, 19"*Let there be* a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you a present of silver and gold. Come and break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."

* **15:6** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *Abijam*. * **15:12** Hebrew *qedeshim*, that is, those practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals * **15:13** A Canaanite goddess

connection with both her son Abijam and her grandson Asa (vv. 10,12) makes it appear that she was an important figure, probably wielding a good deal of influence.

15:4 *for David's sake.* That is, because of God's love for David and the promise He had made to him (2 Sam. 7). ***lamp.*** This is one of the lovely images of God's intended blessing on the Davidic house.

15:5 Perseverance—The lamp of God was still shining in Jerusalem during the reign of Abijam, even though he was not wholly devoted to the Lord, nor was his father who reigned before him. In spite of the sins of Abijam and his father, God continued to let His light shine in Jerusalem for the sake of David, whose heart was all for the Lord. In a similar way, our actions will affect the generations which follow us. If we are committed to God's ways, and willing to stand for what is right, our children will benefit; if we selfishly follow our own pleasures, our children often are left picking up the pieces.

15:10 *His grandmother's name was Maachah.* Literally "mother's." It is apparent from verse 2 that Maachah was Asa's grandmother. It is important to remember that many times the Hebrews used the terms "father, mother, son, daughter" loosely, to indicate ancestry rather than exact generation (v. 3).

15:13 *he removed.* Asa's many spiritual activities (2 Chr. 14:2–5; 15:1–18) are telescoped into a few statements here. Although the reforms mentioned took place early in Asa's reign (2 Chr. 14:2–5), the chronicler indicates that the deposing of Maachah took place in the fifteenth year of his rule (895 B.C.). Maachah's removal came as a result of a time of covenant renewal (2 Chr. 15:1–16) and a consequent reaction against her vile idolatry.

15:14 *high places.* In some instances, the high places were places where the Lord was worshiped (1 Sam. 9:12); in other cases they were used for pagan purposes (2 Chr. 14:2–3).

15:17 *Ramah.* Ramah was about five and a half miles north of Jerusalem on the main north-south commercial route through the land, and it was therefore of great importance to both kingdoms. It gave east-west access to both the foothills of Ephraim and the Mediterranean coast, so it was of strategic military importance as well. Baasha was striking a blow for control of the center of the land.

15:18–19 Unfaithfulness—Asa's life was a mixture of good and evil, faithfulness and faithlessness. He took a stand against the rampant idolatry, removing male cult prostitutes and idolatrous worship, and even demoting his own grandmother to reduce her evil influence (v. 13). Yet later in his life, he signally failed to trust God for either safety or health. When Baasha, king of Israel, attacked him, he sought help from the Syrians (vv. 17–18) rather than from God, and resented and rejected the prophetic rebuke he received (2 Chr. 16:7–10). Near the end of his life, Asa suffered a crippling disease in his feet; yet even in this "he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians" (2 Chr. 16:12).

15:5 [g] 1 Kin. 9:4; 14:8 [h] 2 Sam. 11:3, 15–17; 12:9, 10
15:6 [i] 1 Kin. 14:30 **15:7** [j] 2 Chr. 13:2–22 **15:8** [k] 2 Chr. 14:1 **15:11** [l] 2 Chr. 14:2 **15:12** [m] 1 Kin. 14:24; 22:46
15:13 [n] 2 Chr. 15:16–18 [o] Ex. 32:20 **15:14** [p] 1 Kin. 3:2; 22:43 [q] 1 Kin. 8:61; 15:3 **15:15** [r] 1 Kin. 7:51
15:17 [s] 2 Chr. 16:1–6 [t] Josh. 18:25 [u] 1 Kin. 12:26–29
15:18 [v] 2 Chr. 16:2 [w] 1 Kin. 11:23, 24

20 So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and [x]sent the captains of his armies against
the cities of Israel. He attacked [y]Ijon, [z]Dan,
[a]Abel Beth Maachah, and all Chinneroth,
with all the land of Naphtali. 21 Now it
happened, when Baasha heard *it,* that he
stopped building Ramah, and remained in
[b]Tirzah.
22 [c]Then King Asa made a proclamation
throughout all Judah; none *was* exempt-
ed. And they took away the stones and
timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used
for building; and with them King Asa built
[d]Geba of Benjamin, and [e]Mizpah.
23 The rest of all the acts of Asa, all his
might, all that he did, and the cities which
he built, *are* they not written in the book of
the chronicles of the kings of Judah? But
[f]in the time of his old age he was diseased
in his feet. 24 So Asa rested with his fathers,
and was buried with his fathers in the City
of David his father. [g]Then [h]Jehoshaphat
his son reigned in his place.

Nadab Reigns in Israel

25 Now [i]Nadab the son of Jeroboam be-
came king over Israel in the second year
of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over
Israel two years. 26 And he did evil in the
sight of the LORD, and walked in the way
of his father, and in [j]his sin by which he had
made Israel sin.
27 [k]Then Baasha the son of Ahijah, of
the house of Issachar, conspired against
him. And Baasha killed him at [l]Gibbethon,
which *belonged* to the Philistines, while
Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbe-
thon. 28 Baasha killed him in the third year
of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his
place. 29 And it was so, when he became
king, *that* he killed all the house of Jero-
boam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any-
one that breathed, until he had destroyed
him, according to [m]the word of the LORD
which He had spoken by His servant Ahi-
jah the Shilonite, 30 [n]because of the sins of
Jeroboam, which he had sinned and by
which he had made Israel sin, because of
his provocation with which he had pro-
voked the LORD God of Israel to anger.
31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and
all that he did, *are* they not written in the
book of the chronicles of the kings of Is-
rael? 32 [o]And there was war between Asa
and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

Baasha Reigns in Israel

33 In the third year of Asa king of Ju-
dah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became
king over all Israel in Tirzah, and *reigned*
twenty-four years. 34 He did evil in the sight
of the LORD, and walked in [p]the way of
Jeroboam, and in his sin by which he had
made Israel sin.
16 Then the word of the LORD came to
[a]Jehu the son of [b]Hanani, against
[c]Baasha, saying: 2 [d]"Inasmuch as I lifted
you out of the dust and made you ruler over
My people Israel, and [e]you have walked in
the way of Jeroboam, and have made My
people Israel sin, to provoke Me to anger
with their sins, 3 surely I will [f]take away the
posterity of Baasha and the posterity of his
house, and I will make your house like [g]the
house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. 4 The
dogs shall eat [h]whoever belongs to Baasha
and dies in the city, and the birds of the air
shall eat whoever dies in the fields."
5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, what
he did, and his might, [i]*are* they not written
in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
Israel? 6 So Baasha rested with his fathers
and was buried in [j]Tirzah. Then Elah his
son reigned in his place.
7 And also the word of the LORD came
by the prophet [k]Jehu the son of Hanani
against Baasha and his house, because of
all the evil that he did in the sight of the
LORD in provoking Him to anger with the
work of his hands, in being like the house
of Jeroboam, and because [l]he killed them.

Elah Reigns in Israel

8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king
of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became
king over Israel, *and reigned* two years
in Tirzah. 9 [m]Now his servant Zimri, com-
mander of half *his* chariots, conspired
against him as he was in Tirzah drinking
himself drunk in the house of Arza, [n]stew-
ard of *his* house in Tirzah. 10 And Zimri
went in and struck him and killed him in

15:25 ***Nadab.*** His name means "generous" or "noble," but he did not live up to his name.

15:29 ***according to the word of the LORD.*** The death of Nadab was in line with the prophetic fulfillment of God's judgment on the house of Jeroboam (14:9,16). Nonetheless, the manner of his death was condemned by God through His prophet Jehu (16:7).

16:1–7 ***Jehu.*** This Jehu is not to be confused with Jehu the king of Israel (2 Kin. 9:2). Jehu the prophet came from the southern kingdom; his long prophetic ministry lasted into the days of Jehoshaphat. Like his father before him, he confronted sin fearlessly, even in the royal house (2 Chr. 16:7–10).

16:10 ***Zimri.*** Zimri's treacherous act was the prophesied judgment on Baasha and Elah for their wickedness.

15:20 [x] 1 Kin. 20:1 [y] 2 Kin. 15:29 [z] Judg. 18:29 [a] 2 Sam. 20:14, 15 **15:21** [b] 1 Kin. 14:17; 16:15–18 **15:22** [c] 2 Chr. 16:6 [d] Josh. 21:17 [e] Josh. 18:26 **15:23** [f] 2 Chr. 16:11–14 **15:24** [g] 2 Chr. 17:1 [h] Matt. 1:8 **15:25** [i] 1 Kin. 14:20 **15:26** [j] 1 Kin. 12:28–33; 14:16 **15:27** [k] 1 Kin. 14:14 [l] Josh. 19:44; 21:23 **15:29** [m] 1 Kin. 14:10–14 **15:30** [n] 1 Kin. 14:9, 16 **15:32** [o] 1 Kin. 15:16 **15:34** [p] 1 Kin. 13:33; 14:16 **16:1** [a] 2 Chr. 19:2; 20:34 [b] 2 Chr. 16:7–10 [c] 1 Kin. 15:27 **16:2** [d] 1 Kin. 14:7 [e] 1 Kin. 12:25–33; 15:34 **16:3** [f] 1 Kin. 16:11; 21:21 [g] 1 Kin. 14:10; 15:29 **16:4** [h] 1 Kin. 14:11; 21:24 **16:5** [i] 2 Chr. 16:11 **16:6** [j] 1 Kin. 14:17; 15:21 **16:7** [k] 1 Kin. 16:1 [l] 1 Kin. 15:27, 29 **16:9** [m] 2 Kin. 9:30–33 [n] 1 Kin. 18:3

the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his place.

11 Then it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he was seated on his throne, *that* he killed all the household of Baasha; he [o]did not leave him one male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends. 12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, [p]according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, 13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, by which they had sinned and by which they had made Israel sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger [q]with their idols.

14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Zimri Reigns in Israel

15 In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri had reigned in Tirzah seven days. And the people *were* encamped [r]against Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines. 16 Now the people *who were* encamped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired and also has killed the king." So all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. 17 Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon, and they besieged Tirzah. 18 And it happened, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house down upon himself with fire, and died, 19 because of the sins which he had committed in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, [s]in walking in the [t]way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he had committed to make Israel sin.

20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the treason he committed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Omri Reigns in Israel

21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. 22 But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri reigned. 23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel, *and reigned* twelve years. Six years he reigned in [u]Tirzah. 24 And he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; then he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, [v]Samaria, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill. 25 [w]Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who *were* before him. 26 For he [x]walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their [y]idols.

27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and the might that he showed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

28 So Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. Then Ahab his son reigned in his place.

Ahab Reigns in Israel

29 In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. 30 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who *were* before him. 31 And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, [z]that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the [a]Sidonians; [b]and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. 32 Then he set up an altar for Baal in [c]the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33 [d]And Ahab made a wooden image.* Ahab [e]did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. 34 In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest *son* Segub he set up its gates, [f]according to the word of

* **16:33** Hebrew *Asherah,* a Canaanite goddess

16:23 ***Omri.*** Omri's exploits are commemorated in the Moabite Stone and the Assyrian annals. Indeed, he was so important to the Assyrians that they called Israel "the House of Omri" long after his death. Yet the author of Kings describes little of Omri's achievements, because he did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

16:30 ***Ahab.*** In Ahab we come to the very lowest point in the degeneration of the spiritual life of the kings of Israel. Each of the kings of the northern kingdom had been guilty of walking in the steps of Jeroboam, but Ahab's sins made Jeroboam's look trivial. His greatest crime was his promotion of Baal worship as the state religion.

16:31 ***Jezebel.*** Ahab's marriage to Jezebel was politically important and demonstrated the rising prominence of Israel's third dynasty. Her father was both king and priest of Baal in Sidon; similarly, Jezebel was princess and priestess of Baal. Her Phoenician name was Abizebel, meaning "my father [Baal] is noble." The Hebrew scribes purposely dropped a letter from her name, calling her Jezebel, "lacking honor." ***went and served Baal and worshiped him.*** Ahab completely abandoned even a skewed worship of God, and became a full-fledged worshiper of Baal.

16:34 ***built Jericho.*** Jericho had been semi-occupied at various times (Judg. 3:13), but not as a permanently

16:11 [o] 1 Sam. 25:22 **16:12** [p] 1 Kin. 16:3 **16:13** [q] Deut. 32:21 **16:15** [r] 1 Kin. 15:27 **16:19** [s] 1 Kin. 15:26, 34 [t] 1 Kin. 12:25–33 **16:23** [u] 1 Kin. 15:21 **16:24** [v] 1 Kin. 13:32 **16:25** [w] Mic. 6:16 **16:26** [x] 1 Kin. 16:19 [y] 1 Kin. 16:13 **16:31** [z] Deut. 7:3 [a] Judg. 18:7 [b] 1 Kin. 21:25, 26 **16:32** [c] 2 Kin. 10:21, 26, 27 **16:33** [d] 2 Kin. 13:6 [e] 1 Kin. 14:9; 16:29, 30; 21:25 **16:34** [f] Josh. 6:26

the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.*

Elijah Proclaims a Drought

17 And Elijah the Tishbite, of the [a]inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, [b]"*As* the LORD God of Israel lives, [c]before whom I stand, [d]there shall not be dew nor rain [e]these years, except at my word."

2 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 3 "Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. 4 And it will be *that* you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the [f]ravens to feed you there."

5 So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook. 7 And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

Elijah and the Widow

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9 "Arise, go to [g]Zarephath, which *belongs* to [h]Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow *was* there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink." 11 And as she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."

12 So she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I *am* gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and [i]die."

13 And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go *and* do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring *it* to me; and afterward make *some* for yourself and your son. 14 For thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.'"

15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for *many* days. 16 The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah.

Elijah Revives the Widow's Son

17 Now it happened after these things *that* the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. 18 So she said to Elijah, [j]"What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"

19 And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. 20 Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" 21 [k]And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." 22 Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he [l]revived.

23 And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"

24 Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this [m]I know that you *are* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in your mouth *is* the truth."

* **16:34** Compare Joshua 6:26

occupied fortified city. Either Hiel offered his sons as foundation sacrifices, or they died in some mishap. However it happened, Joshua's curse was carried out.

17:1 ***Elijah.*** No prophet had arisen since Moses who was like Elijah. His name means "the LORD is God," a statement which was the core of his message to the unbelieving nation. ***dew nor rain.*** Elijah's pronouncement was an immediate challenge: Baal was supposed to govern the weather, but Elijah was declaring him powerless before the living God.

17:6 ***ravens.*** It is interesting to note that ravens were considered unclean birds (Lev. 11:15).

17:9 ***Zarephath.*** Zarephath was in Phoenician territory, seven miles south of Sidon, the stronghold of Baal. The Lord's sustaining Elijah first by a raven and then by a widow provided the prophet with a dramatic test of faith at the outset of his ministry. The widow, too, would be taught the value of trusting in God alone.

17:14 ***shall not be used up.*** While an apostate Israelite nation suffered because of the drought, God supplied the daily necessities to a non-Israelite who willingly took Him at His word. Both the prophet and the widow were reminded of the value of personal trust in Him who alone is sufficient to meet every need (Phil. 4:19).

17:17–23 Resurrection—Resurrection from the dead was not a miracle ordinary people expected to see, even from a prophet of God. This widow, however, would have had reason to hope for God's help. She had opened her home to Elijah, and she had seen firsthand His power and the results of complete trust in Him. Yet it was not until she had seen the miracle of her son brought back to life that she expressed faith in God.

17:1 [a] Judg. 12:4 [b] 2 Kin. 3:14; 5:20 [c] Deut. 10:8 [d] James 5:17 [e] Luke 4:25 **17:4** [f] Job 38:41 **17:9** [g] Obad. 20 [h] 2 Sam. 24:6 **17:12** [i] Deut. 28:23, 24 **17:18** [j] Luke 5:8 **17:21** [k] 2 Kin. 4:34, 35 **17:22** [l] Heb. 11:35 **17:24** [m] John 2:11; 3:2; 16:30

Elijah's Message to Ahab

18 And it came to pass *after* [a]many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab, and [b]I will send rain on the earth."

2So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab; and *there was* a severe famine in Samaria. **3**And Ahab had called Obadiah, who *was* in charge of *his* house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly. **4**For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water.) **5**And Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go into the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, so that we will not have to kill any livestock." **6**So they divided the land between them to explore it; Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he [c]recognized him, and fell on his face, and said, "*Is* that you, my lord Elijah?"

8And he answered him, "*It is* I. Go, tell your master, 'Elijah *is here*.'"

9So he said, "How have I sinned, that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me? **10***As* the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you; and when they said, '*He is* not *here*,' he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you. **11**And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, "Elijah *is here*"'! **12**And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from you, that [d]the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to a place I do not know; so when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth. **13**Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid one hundred men of the LORD's prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water? **14**And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, "Elijah *is here*."' He will kill me!"

15Then Elijah said, "*As* the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to him today."

16So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, [e]"*Is that* you, O [f]troubler of Israel?"

18And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house *have*, [g]in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals. **19**Now therefore, send *and* gather all Israel to me on [h]Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, [i]and the four hundred prophets of Asherah,* who eat at Jezebel's table."

Elijah's Mount Carmel Victory

20So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and [j]gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. **21**And Elijah came to all the people, and said, [k]"How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, [l]follow him." But the people answered him not a word. **22**Then Elijah said to the people, [m]"I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; [n]but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. **23**Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it;* and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*. **24**Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who [o]answers by fire, He is God."

So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."

25Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare *it* first, for you *are* many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*."

26So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But *there*

* **18:19** A Canaanite goddess

18:3 ***Obadiah.*** Although tradition has sometimes identified them, this Obadiah is probably not the author of the prophetic book of that name. It is clear that this Obadiah was a man of great faith, whose heroic actions give us a more balanced picture of the situation people of faith endured in Israel at this time.
18:18 ***Baals.*** The wording indicates that Ahab had a practice of attending services at various local shrines where this deity was worshiped.
18:19 ***Baal . . . Asherah.*** The worship of Baal and Asherah held a constant fascination for Israel from earliest times (Ex. 34:13; Num. 25; Judg. 2:13) and eventually caused Israel's demise (2 Kin. 17:16–18).
18:21 ***two opinions.*** We are confronted today with a choice no less momentous than the Israelites' choice between the Lord and Baal. Here is a broad road that leads down to destruction; there, a way narrow and difficult that leads upward to life (Matt. 7:13–14). God doesn't share devotion with anything or anyone. We have to make the choice to be on God's side—we cannot serve two masters. We will either gratify self, conforming to the corrupt pattern of this present age, or glorify Him who alone is worthy of worship.

18:1 [a] Luke 4:25 [b] Deut. 28:12 **18:7** [c] 2 Kin. 1:6–8
18:12 [d] Acts 8:39 **18:17** [e] 1 Kin. 21:20 [f] Josh. 7:25
18:18 [g] [2 Chr. 15:2] **18:19** [h] Josh. 19:26 [i] 1 Kin. 16:33
18:20 [j] 1 Kin. 22:6 **18:21** [k] [Matt. 6:24] [l] Josh. 24:15
18:22 [m] 1 Kin. 19:10, 14 [n] 1 Kin. 18:19 **18:24** [o] 1 Chr. 21:26

was [p]no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

27And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he *is* a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, *or* perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened." 28So they cried aloud, and [q]cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. 29And when midday was past, [r]they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice. But *there was* [s]no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

30Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. [t]And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down. 31And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, [u]"Israel shall be your name."* 32Then with the stones he built an altar [v]in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. 33And he [w]put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid *it* on the wood, and said, "Fill four waterpots with water, and [x]pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood." 34Then he said, "Do *it* a second time," and they did *it* a second time; and he said, "Do *it* a third time," and they did *it* a third time. 35So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled [y]the trench with water.

36And it came to pass, at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "LORD [z]God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, [a]let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* [b]I have done all these things at Your word. 37Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back *to You* again."

38Then [c]the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench. 39Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said, [d]"The LORD, He *is* God! The LORD, He *is* God!"

40And Elijah said to them, [e]"Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook [f]Kishon and [g]executed them there.

The Drought Ends

41Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for *there is* the sound of abundance of rain." 42So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; [h]then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, 43and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea."

So he went up and looked, and said, "*There is* nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again."

44Then it came to pass the seventh *time*, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare *your chariot*, and go down before the rain stops you.'"

45Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. 46Then the [i]hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he [j]girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Elijah Escapes from Jezebel

19 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had [a]executed all the prophets with the sword. 2Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, [b]"So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." 3And when he saw *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there.

* **18:31** Genesis 32:28

18:27 ***busy, or he is on a journey.*** "On a journey" is a euphemism with the same meaning as our euphemism "on a comfort break." Elijah was piling on the sarcasm—a god is not supposed to have embarrassing bodily functions.

18:30 ***repaired the altar.*** This was an earlier altar that had been used by the true people of God. Elijah avoided all contact with the altar that was associated with Baal.

18:36 ***LORD God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel.*** This phrase, so characteristic of worship in the early period (Gen. 50:24; Ex. 3:6), reminded Elijah's hearers that the God who had made the covenant with Abraham was still the God of the northern kingdom, and the nation's only hope of life, protection, and blessing (Deut. 30:20).

18:46 ***girded up his loins.*** Elijah tucked his garment into his sash, enabling him to run freely the 13 miles to Jezreel.

19:3 ***ran for his life.*** One may ask why a man who had seen God's mighty power should give way to fear, but we must realize that God did not criticize Elijah for his reaction. Elijah was not a superhero but a man with a nature like ours (James 5:17). He had seen a great

18:26 [p] Jer. 10:5 **18:28** [q] [Deut. 14:1] **18:29** [r] Ex. 29:39, 41 [s] 1 Kin. 18:26 **18:30** [t] 2 Chr. 33:16 **18:31** [u] Gen. 32:28; 35:10 **18:32** [v] [Col. 3:17] **18:33** [w] Lev. 1:6–8 [x] Judg. 6:20 **18:35** [y] 1 Kin. 18:32, 38 **18:36** [z] Ex. 3:6; 4:5 [a] 1 Kin. 8:43 [b] Num. 16:28 **18:38** [c] 1 Chr. 21:26 **18:39** [d] 1 Kin. 18:21, 24 **18:40** [e] 2 Kin. 10:25 [f] Judg. 4:7; 5:21 [g] [Deut. 13:5; 18:20] **18:42** [h] James 5:17, 18 **18:46** [i] 2 Kin. 3:15 [j] 2 Kin. 4:29; 9:1 **19:1** [a] 1 Kin. 18:40 **19:2** [b] Ruth 1:17

4 But he himself went a day's journey into
the wilderness, and came and sat down
under a broom tree. And he [c]prayed that
he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now,
LORD, take my life, for I *am* no better than
my fathers!"
5 Then as he lay and slept under a broom
tree, suddenly an angel* touched him,
and said to him, "Arise *and* eat." 6 Then he
looked, and there by his head *was* a cake
baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate
and drank, and lay down again. 7 And the
angel* of the LORD came back the second
time, and touched him, and said, "Arise
and eat, because the journey *is* too great for
you." 8 So he arose, and ate and drank; and
he went in the strength of that food forty
days and [d]forty nights as far as [e]Horeb, the
mountain of God.
9 And there he went into a cave, and
spent the night in that place; and behold,
the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He
said to him, "What are you doing here, Eli-
jah?"
10 So he said, [f]"I have been very [g]zealous
for the LORD God of hosts; for the children
of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn
down Your altars, and [h]killed Your proph-
ets with the sword. [i]I alone am left; and
they seek to take my life."

God's Revelation to Elijah

11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand [j]on
the mountain before the LORD." And be-
hold, the LORD [k]passed by, and [l]a great and
strong wind tore into the mountains and
broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD,
but the LORD *was* not in the wind; and af-
ter the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD
was not in the earthquake; 12 and after the
earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in
the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.
13 So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that he
[m]wrapped his face in his mantle and went
out and stood in the entrance of the cave.
[n]Suddenly a voice *came* to him, and said,
"What are you doing here, Elijah?"
14 [o]And he said, "I have been very zeal-
ous for the LORD God of hosts; because the
children of Israel have forsaken Your cov-
enant, torn down Your altars, and killed
Your prophets with the sword. I alone am
left; and they seek to take my life."
15 Then the LORD said to him: "Go, return
on your way to the Wilderness of Damas-
cus; [p]and when you arrive, anoint Hazael
as king over Syria. 16 Also you shall anoint
[q]Jehu the son of Nimshi *as* king over Israel.
And [r]Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Me-
holah you shall anoint *as* prophet in your
place. 17 [s]It shall be *that* whoever escapes
the sword of Hazael, Jehu will [t]kill; and
whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, [u]Eli-
sha will kill. 18 [v]Yet I have reserved seven
thousand in Israel, all whose knees have
not bowed to Baal, [w]and every mouth that
has not kissed him."

Elisha Follows Elijah

19 So he departed from there, and found
Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plow-
ing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him,
and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah
passed by him and threw his [x]mantle on
him. 20 And he left the oxen and ran after
Elijah, and said, [y]"Please let me kiss my
father and my mother, and *then* I will fol-
low you."
And he said to him, "Go back again, for
what have I done to you?"
21 So *Elisha* turned back from him, and
took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them
and [z]boiled their flesh, using the oxen's
equipment, and gave it to the people, and
they ate. Then he arose and followed Eli-
jah, and became his servant.

* **19:5** Or *Angel* * **19:7** Or *Angel*

victory on Mount Carmel, but he also knew that Jezebel was still in power, the faith of the people was still weak, at best, and his life truly was in danger. To run for his life did not necessarily indicate lack of trust; running is sometimes just the act of prudence.

19:5 ***Arise and eat.*** God's response to Elijah's fear and discouragement was to give him the very tangible, physical encouragement of food and rest.

19:7 ***the angel of the LORD.*** This term sometimes refers to God Himself (Ex. 3:2–6), and other times it seems to refer simply to a heavenly messenger (2 Kin. 1:3; 19:35).

19:8 ***Horeb.*** The name Horeb refers to Mount Sinai itself, "the mountain of God" (Ex. 3:1).

19:11 ***the LORD was not in the earthquake.*** Although each of the things mentioned in these verses could signal God's presence (Ex. 40:38; Zech. 14:4–5; Acts 2:2–3), Elijah learned that God is not just the God of the spectacular.

19:12 ***still small voice.*** Elijah had called for fire and national revival. What Elijah did not see was that God was already quietly at work in the lives of many people (v. 18).

19:18 ***have not bowed.*** In times of widespread drift and deliberate deviation from biblical standards of doctrine and ethics, it is easy to suffer from an "Elijah complex." We think that we alone have been on fire for God when everyone else has rejected His covenant, profaned His altars, and persecuted His prophets. Whenever we are tempted to imagine that we are the only ones left to represent the cause of the gospel, we are also open to the dangers of self-pity and self-righteousness. But we are not alone when we belong to the family of God. In every age, God has preserved faithful people who rejoice in Him and are on fire for the truth.

19:4 [c] Num. 11:15 **19:8** [d] Matt. 4:2 [e] Ex. 3:1; 4:27
19:10 [f] Rom. 11:3 [g] Ps. 69:9 [h] 1 Kin. 18:4 [i] 1 Kin. 18:22
19:11 [j] Ex. 19:20; 24:12, 18 [k] Ex. 33:21, 22 [l] Ezek. 1:4; 37:7 **19:13** [m] Ex. 3:6 [n] 1 Kin. 19:9 **19:14** [o] 1 Kin. 19:10 **19:15** [p] 2 Kin. 8:8–15 **19:16** [q] 2 Kin. 9:1–10 [r] 2 Kin. 2:9–15 **19:17** [s] 2 Kin. 8:12; 13:3, 22 [t] 2 Kin. 9:14—10:28 [u] [Hos. 6:5] **19:18** [v] Rom. 11:4 [w] Hos. 13:2 **19:19** [x] 2 Kin. 2:8, 13, 14 **19:20** [y] [Matt. 8:21, 22] **19:21** [z] 2 Sam. 24:22

Ahab Defeats the Syrians

20 Now [a]Ben-Hadad the king of Syria gathered all his forces together; thirty-two kings *were* with him, with horses and chariots. And he went up and besieged [b]Samaria, and made war against it. **2**Then he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, and said to him, "Thus says Ben-Hadad: **3**'Your silver and your gold *are* mine; your loveliest wives and children are mine.'"

4And the king of Israel answered and said, "My lord, O king, just as you say, I and all that I have *are* yours."

5Then the messengers came back and said, "Thus speaks Ben-Hadad, saying, 'Indeed I have sent to you, saying, "You shall deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children"; **6**but I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants. And it shall be, *that* whatever is pleasant in your eyes, they will put *it* in their hands and take *it*.'"

7So the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, "Notice, please, and see how this *man* seeks trouble, for he sent to me for my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold; and I did not deny him."

8And all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen or consent."

9Therefore he said to the messengers of Ben-Hadad, "Tell my lord the king, 'All that you sent for to your servant the first time I will do, but this thing I cannot do.'"

And the messengers departed and brought back word to him.

10Then Ben-Hadad sent to him and said, [c]"The gods do so to me, and more also, if enough dust is left of Samaria for a handful for each of the people who follow me."

11So the king of Israel answered and said, "Tell *him*, 'Let not the one who puts on *his armor* [d]boast like the one who takes *it off*.'"

12And it happened when *Ben-Hadad* heard this message, as he and the kings *were* [e]drinking at the command post, that he said to his servants, "Get ready." And they got ready to attack the city.

13Suddenly a prophet approached Ahab king of Israel, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, [f]I will deliver it into your hand today, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.'"

14So Ahab said, "By whom?"

And he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'By the young leaders of the provinces.'"

Then he said, "Who will set the battle in order?"

And he answered, "You."

15Then he mustered the young leaders of the provinces, and there were two hundred and thirty-two; and after them he mustered all the people, all the children of Israel—seven thousand.

16So they went out at noon. Meanwhile Ben-Hadad and the thirty-two kings helping him were [g]getting drunk at the command post. **17**The young leaders of the provinces went out first. And Ben-Hadad sent out *a patrol*, and they told him, saying, "Men are coming out of Samaria!" **18**So he said, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive; and if they have come out for war, take them alive."

19Then these young leaders of the provinces went out of the city with the army which followed them. **20**And each one killed his man; so the Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them; and Ben-Hadad the king of Syria escaped on a horse with the cavalry. **21**Then the king of Israel went out and attacked the horses and chariots, and killed the Syrians with a great slaughter.

22And the prophet came to the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself; take note, and see what you should do, [h]for in the spring of the year the king of Syria will come up against you."

The Syrians Again Defeated

23Then the servants of the king of Syria said to him, "Their gods *are* gods of the hills. Therefore they were stronger than we; but if we fight against them in the plain, surely we will be stronger than they. **24**So do this thing: Dismiss the kings, each from his position, and put captains in their places; **25**and you shall muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain; surely we will be stronger than they."

And he listened to their voice and did so.

26So it was, in the spring of the year, that Ben-Hadad mustered the Syrians and went up to [i]Aphek to fight against Israel. **27**And the children of Israel were mustered and given provisions, and they went against

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20:1 ***Ben-Hadad.*** Ben-Hadad II (860–842 B.C.) was king of Aram, the ancient name for the area which is Syria today.

20:2 ***Ahab.*** When he is associated with his wicked wife Jezebel, Ahab appears as thoroughly evil. But in this chapter he appears as a capable leader in a time of international turmoil, and as a person who had some sense of the power and presence of God (vv. 13–14).

20:13 ***a prophet.*** This prophet was not named, but his true message reminds us that there were still many prophets who were faithful to the Lord (18:13; 20:35).

20:23 ***gods of the hills.*** The Aramean advisors reflected traditional ancient Middle Eastern theological concepts. Their gods were limited to certain geographical locations.

20:26 ***Aphek.*** This is not the Philistine city where the ark was lost (1 Sam. 4:1), but another location just east

20:1 [a] 2 Kin. 6:24 [b] 1 Kin. 16:24 **20:10** [c] 1 Kin. 19:2 **20:11** [d] Prov. 27:1 **20:12** [e] 1 Kin. 20:16 **20:13** [f] 1 Kin. 20:28 **20:16** [g] 1 Kin. 16:9; 20:12 **20:22** [h] 2 Sam. 11:1 **20:26** [i] Josh. 13:4

them. Now the children of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of goats, while the Syrians filled the [j]countryside.

28 Then a [k]man of God came and spoke to the king of Israel, and said, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because the Syrians have said, "The LORD *is* God of the hills, but He *is* not God of the valleys," therefore [l]I will deliver all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD.'" 29 And they encamped opposite each other for seven days. So it was that on the seventh day the battle was joined; and the children of Israel killed one hundred thousand foot soldiers *of* the Syrians in one day. 30 But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; then a wall fell on twenty-seven thousand of the men *who were* left.

And Ben-Hadad fled and went into the city, into an inner chamber.

Ahab's Treaty with Ben-Hadad

31 Then his servants said to him, "Look now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel *are* merciful kings. Please, let us [m]put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life." 32 So they wore sackcloth around their waists and *put* ropes around their heads, and came to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-Hadad says, 'Please let me live.'"

And he said, "*Is* he still alive? He *is* my brother."

33 Now the men were watching closely to see whether *any sign of mercy would come* from him; and they quickly grasped *at this word* and said, "Your brother Ben-Hadad."

So he said, "Go, bring him." Then Ben-Hadad came out to him; and he had him come up into the chariot.

34 So *Ben-Hadad* said to him, [n]"The cities which my father took from your father I will restore; and you may set up marketplaces for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria."

Then *Ahab said,* "I will send you away with this treaty." So he made a treaty with him and sent him away.

Ahab Condemned

35 Now a certain man of [o]the sons of the prophets said to his neighbor [p]by the word of the LORD, "Strike me, please." And the man refused to strike him. 36 Then he said to him, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, surely, as soon as you depart from me, a lion shall kill you." And as soon as he left him, [q]a lion found him and killed him.

37 And he found another man, and said, "Strike me, please." So the man struck him, inflicting a wound. 38 Then the prophet departed and waited for the king by the road, and disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes. 39 Now [r]as the king passed by, he cried out to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the midst of the battle; and there, a man came over and brought a man to me, and said, 'Guard this man; if by any means he is missing, [s]your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.' 40 While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

Then the king of Israel said to him, "So *shall* your judgment *be;* you yourself have decided *it.*"

41 And he hastened to take the bandage away from his eyes; and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. 42 Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: [t]'Because you have let slip out of y*our* hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people for his people.'"

43 So the king of Israel [u]went to his house sullen and displeased, and came to Samaria.

Naboth Is Murdered for His Vineyard

21 And it came to pass after these things *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which *was* in [a]Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your [b]vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it *is* near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard

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of the Jordan in northern Gilead. They were launching their second campaign in the Jordan valley, but they would learn that the power of the living God is not limited to the mountains as they had hoped.

20:28 ***not God of the valleys.*** The God of Israel is Lord of the universe, and there is no limit to His power and authority. Not only are we responsible to Him as individuals, but so are the social, economic, and political institutions of the world. Just as it was presumption for the Arameans to think that God was bound by geography, it is also presumption to think that if we follow the laws of morality in our private lives, we can violate them in our social, economic, and political relationships. Separation of church and state should not mean separation of God and state. The nation that violates the moral laws of God will eventually suffer defeat.

20:43 ***sullen and displeased.*** Rather than repenting of his sin, Ahab felt ill used by God and resented his punishment, adamantly refusing to change his ways.

21:1 ***Samaria.*** Samaria was Ahab's capital city; sometimes its name is used to represent all Israel (2 Kin. 1:3; 2 Chr. 24:23; Jon. 3:6).

21:2 ***Give me your vineyard.*** All the land was the Lord's, who granted it to each Israelite tribe and family, and provisions were made so that the land could

20:27 *j* Judg. 6:3–5 **20:28** *k* 1 Kin. 17:18 *l* 1 Kin. 20:13 **20:31** *m* Gen. 37:34 **20:34** *n* 1 Kin. 15:20 **20:35** *o* 2 Kin. 2:3, 5, 7, 15 *p* 1 Kin. 13:17, 18 **20:36** *q* 1 Kin. 13:24 **20:39** *r* 2 Sam. 12:1 *s* 2 Kin. 10:24 **20:42** *t* 1 Kin. 22:31–37 **20:43** *u* 1 Kin. 21:4 **21:1** *a* 1 Kin. 18:45, 46 **21:2** *b* 1 Sam. 8:14

better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money."
3But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid [c]that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!"
4So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food. 5But [d]Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?"
6He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you *another* vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"
7Then Jezebel his wife said to him, "You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."
8And she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who *were* dwelling in the city with Naboth. 9She wrote in the letters, saying,

> Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people; 10and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, "You have [e]blasphemed God and the king." *Then* take him out, and [f]stone him, that he may die.

11So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had sent to them, as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent to them. 12[g]They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people. 13And two men, scoundrels, came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels [h]witnessed against him, against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth has blasphemed God and the king!" [i]Then they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, so that he died. 14Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."
15And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." 16So it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

The LORD Condemns Ahab

17[j]Then the word of the LORD came to [k]Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 18"Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, [l]who *lives* in Samaria. There *he is*, in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it. 19You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?"' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: [m]"In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours."'"
20So Ahab said to Elijah, [n]"Have you found me, O my enemy?"
And he answered, "I have found *you*, because [o]you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD: 21'Behold, [p]I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your [q]posterity, and will cut off from Ahab [r]every male in Israel, both [s]bond and free. 22I will make your house like the house of [t]Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of [u]Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked *Me* to anger, and made Israel sin.' 23And [v]concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall* of Jezreel.' 24The dogs shall eat [w]whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field."

* **21:23** Following Masoretic Text and Septuagint; some Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *plot of ground* (compare 2 Kings 9:36).

not be permanently sold out of the family to whom it had been given (Lev. 25:23–28; Num. 36:2–9). In this sense, the vineyard was not Naboth's to dispose of. It belonged to his descendants as much as it did to him.
21:13 ***outside the city.*** God's law was followed in the manner and place of his death (Lev. 24:14–16,23), although his execution was an outrage, based on false testimony, lies, greed, and refusal to honor the laws concerning the land.
21:19 ***Have you murdered.*** In Genesis 9:6 the principle was established that those who shed human blood must have their blood shed by other humans. Ahab had previously allowed his wicked wife Jezebel to plot the murder of an innocent landowner in order to obtain his vineyard. As a result, God determined that both Ahab and Jezebel would die bloody deaths, and this is exactly what happened (22:34–38; 2 Kin. 9:30–37). How tragic that these two brilliant, capable, and talented members of royalty, whose lives could have brought so much blessing to Israel, would instead bring about their own downfall by choosing the path of wickedness rather than the path of life.

21:3 [c] [Num. 36:7] **21:5** [d] 1 Kin. 19:1, 2 **21:10** [e] [Ex. 22:28] [f] [Lev. 24:14] **21:12** [g] Is. 58:4 **21:13** [h] [Ex. 20:16; 23:1, 7] [i] 2 Kin. 9:26 **21:17** [j] [Ps. 9:12] [k] 1 Kin. 19:1 **21:18** [l] 2 Chr. 22:9 **21:19** [m] 1 Kin. 22:38 **21:20** [n] 1 Kin. 18:17 [o] [Rom. 7:14] **21:21** [p] 1 Kin. 14:10 [q] 2 Kin. 10:10 [r] 1 Sam. 25:22 [s] 1 Kin. 14:10 **21:22** [t] 1 Kin. 15:29 [u] 1 Kin. 16:3, 11 **21:23** [v] 2 Kin. 9:10, 30–37 **21:24** [w] 1 Kin. 14:11; 16:4

25But [x]there was no one like Ahab who
sold himself to do wickedness in the sight
of the LORD, [y]because Jezebel his wife
stirred him up. 26And he behaved very
abominably in following idols, according
to all [z]*that* the Amorites had done, whom
the LORD had cast out before the children
of Israel.

27So it was, when Ahab heard those
words, that he tore his clothes and [a]put
sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay
in sackcloth, and went about mourning.

28And the word of the LORD came to Eli-
jah the Tishbite, saying, 29"See how Ahab
has humbled himself before Me? Because
he [b]has humbled himself before Me, I will
not bring the calamity in his days. [c]In the
days of his son I will bring the calamity on
his house."

Micaiah Warns Ahab

22 Now three years passed without war
between Syria and Israel. 2Then it
came to pass, in the third year, that [a]Je-
hoshaphat the king of Judah went down to
visit the king of Israel.

3And the king of Israel said to his ser-
vants, "Do you know that [b]Ramoth in Gil-
ead *is* ours, but we hesitate to take it out
of the hand of the king of Syria?" 4So he
said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me
to fight at Ramoth Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel,
[c]"I *am* as you *are*, my people as your
people, my horses as your horses." 5Also
Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel,
[d]"Please inquire for the word of the LORD
today."

6Then the king of Israel [e]gathered the
prophets together, about four hundred
men, and said to them, "Shall I go against
Ramoth Gilead to fight, or shall I refrain?"

So they said, "Go up, for the Lord will
deliver *it* into the hand of the king."

7And [f]Jehoshaphat said, "*Is there* not
still a prophet of the LORD here, that we
may inquire of Him?"*

8So the king of Israel said to Je-
hoshaphat, "*There is* still one man, Mi-
caiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may
inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because
he does not prophesy good concerning me,
but evil."

And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king
say such things!"

9Then the king of Israel called an officer
and said, "Bring Micaiah the son of Imlah
quickly!"

10The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the
king of Judah, having put on *their* robes,
sat each on his throne, at a threshing floor
at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and
all the prophets prophesied before them.
11Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah
had made [g]horns of iron for himself; and
he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these
you shall [h]gore the Syrians until they are
destroyed.'" 12And all the prophets proph-
esied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth Gilead
and prosper, for the LORD will deliver *it*
into the king's hand."

13Then the messenger who had gone to
call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Now
listen, the words of the prophets with one
accord encourage the king. Please, let your
word be like the word of one of them, and
speak encouragement."

14And Micaiah said, "*As* the LORD lives,
[i]whatever the LORD says to me, that I will
speak."

15Then he came to the king; and the
king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to
war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall we
refrain?"

And he answered him, "Go and prosper,
for the LORD will deliver *it* into the hand
of the king!"

16So the king said to him, "How many
times shall I make you swear that you tell
me nothing but the truth in the name of the
LORD?"

17Then he said, "I saw all Israel [j]scattered

* **22:7** Or *him*

21:27 ***when Ahab heard those words.*** The vacillating nature of Ahab's conduct is seen clearly in verses 25–29. He did great evil, under the influence of his evil wife. Nevertheless, he could at times display real courage (22:34–35) and even real humility before God (v. 29). His life is a sad picture of what happens when we are ruled by our own passions rather than by God.

22:4 ***Jehoshaphat.*** Jehoshaphat was the fourth king of the southern kingdom. He was related to Ahab through the marriage of his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah (2 Kin. 8:18–27).

22:9 ***Micaiah.*** The prophet Micaiah is not known except in connection with this incident (2 Chr. 18:8–27).

22:14 ***whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.*** Unless a prophecy is truly directed by God, it is valueless. Micaiah's response was what one would expect from a godly man, but his first statement to Ahab (v. 15) is a little puzzling. It seems that Micaiah was playing with Ahab a little, pointing out to him the futility of asking for favorable prophecy rather than true prophecy. It seems obvious that Micaiah (or God through Micaiah), was in no way deceiving Ahab, since Ahab was instantly aware that he had not been given a real prophecy.

22:16–17 ***truth.*** All of us wish to hear good news, not bad. We want to hear the favorable, the acceptable, the words that bring us happiness and do not condemn. It can be tempting to speak only what will

21:25 [x] 1 Kin. 16:30–33; 21:20 [y] 1 Kin. 16:31
21:26 [z] 2 Kin. 21:11 **21:27** [a] Gen. 37:34 **21:29** [b] [2 Kin. 22:19] [c] 2 Kin. 9:25; 10:11, 17 **22:2** [a] 2 Chr. 18:2
22:3 [b] Deut. 4:43 **22:4** [c] 2 Kin. 3:7 **22:5** [d] 2 Kin. 3:11
22:6 [e] 1 Kin. 18:19 **22:7** [f] 2 Kin. 3:11 **22:11** [g] Zech. 1:18–21 [h] Deut. 33:17 **22:14** [i] Num. 22:38; 24:13
22:17 [j] Matt. 9:36

on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.'"

18 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

19 Then *Micaiah* said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: [k]I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, [l]and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. 20 And the LORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. 21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' 22 The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LORD said, [m]'You shall persuade *him*, and also prevail. Go out and do so.' 23 [n]Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you."

24 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and [o]struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, [p]"Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?"

25 And Micaiah said, "Indeed, you shall see on that day when you go into an [q]inner chamber to hide!"

26 So the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; 27 and say, 'Thus says the king: "Put this *fellow* in [r]prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace."'"

28 But Micaiah said, "If you ever return in peace, [s]the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Take heed, all you people!"

Ahab Dies in Battle

29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. 30 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle; but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel [t]disguised himself and went into battle.

31 Now the [u]king of Syria had commanded the thirty-two [v]captains of his chariots, saying, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel." 32 So it was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, "Surely it *is* the king of Israel!" Therefore they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat [w]cried out. 33 And it happened, when the captains of the chariots saw that it *was* not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. 34 Now a *certain* man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded."

35 The battle increased that day; and the king was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and died at evening. The blood ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot. 36 Then, as the sun was going down, a shout went throughout the army, saying, "Every man to his city, and every man to his own country!"

37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. 38 Then *someone* washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood while the harlots bathed,* according [x]to the word of the LORD which He had spoken.

39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, [y]the ivory house which he built and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 40 So Ahab rested with his fathers. Then [z]Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah

41 [a]Jehoshaphat the son of Asa had become king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. 42 Jehoshaphat *was* thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 43 And [b]he walked in all the ways of his father Asa. He did not turn aside from them, doing *what was* right in the eyes of the LORD. Nevertheless [c]the high places were not taken away, *for* the people offered sacrifices and burned incense on

* **22:38** Syriac and Targum read *they washed his armor.*

be well-received even if it is not true, but neither God nor man is served by untruth. While the truth should always be spoken in love (Eph. 4:15), it must be the sole content of what we say. The prophet had to speak only the truth, or he would no longer have been a prophet—his words were the words of the Lord spoken in His name. Our words should be true because, if we are His people, we speak in His name.

22:38 *the dogs licked up his blood.* Elijah's grisly prophecy concerning the house of Ahab came to pass here (21:19–24).

22:39 *ivory house.* Archaeological excavations at Samaria have illustrated the nature of Ahab's palace, a house with luxurious decorations made of ivory.

22:19 [k] Is. 6:1 [l] Dan. 7:10 **22:22** [m] Judg. 9:23 **22:23** [n] [Ezek. 14:9] **22:24** [o] Jer. 20:2 [p] 2 Chr. 18:23 **22:25** [q] 1 Kin. 20:30 **22:27** [r] 2 Chr. 16:10; 18:25–27 **22:28** [s] Num. 16:29 **22:30** [t] 2 Chr. 35:22 **22:31** [u] 1 Kin. 20:1 [v] 1 Kin. 20:24 **22:32** [w] 2 Chr. 18:31 **22:38** [x] 1 Kin. 21:19 **22:39** [y] Amos 3:15 **22:40** [z] 2 Kin. 1:2, 18 **22:41** [a] 2 Chr. 20:31 **22:43** [b] 2 Chr. 17:3; 20:32, 33 [c] 2 Kin. 12:3

the high places. 44Also [d]Jehoshaphat made [e]peace with the king of Israel.

45Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, the might that he showed, and how he made war, *are* they not written [f]in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 46[g]And the rest of the perverted persons,* who remained in the days of his father Asa, he banished from the land. 47[h]*There was* then no king in Edom, only a deputy of the king.

48[i]Jehoshaphat [j]made merchant ships* to go to [k]Ophir for gold; [l]but they never sailed, for the ships were wrecked at [m]Ezion Geber. 49Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat would not.

50And [n]Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Jehoram his son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah Reigns in Israel

51[o]Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. 52He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [p]walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; 53for [q]he served Baal and worshiped him, and provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger, [r]according to all that his father had done.

* **22:46** Hebrew *qadesh*, that is, one practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals
* **22:48** Or *ships of Tarshish*

22:46 *perverted persons.* Apparently male prostitution was a part of the debased religious practices of Baal worship (14:24).

22:53 Conclusion—The story does not end here but is continued in 2 Kings. The division of the Book of Kings is not original, but was done for convenience when the Bible was translated into Greek in the second century B.C.

22:44 [d] 2 Chr. 19:2 [e] 2 Chr. 18:1 **22:45** [f] 2 Chr. 20:34 **22:46** [g] 1 Kin. 14:24; 15:12 **22:47** [h] 2 Sam. 8:14 **22:48** [i] 2 Chr. 20:35–37 [j] 1 Kin. 10:22 [k] 1 Kin. 9:28 [l] 2 Chr. 20:37 [m] 1 Kin. 9:26 **22:50** [n] 2 Chr. 21:1 **22:51** [o] 1 Kin. 22:40 **22:52** [p] 1 Kin. 15:26; 21:25 **22:53** [q] Judg. 2:11 [r] 1 Kin. 16:30–32

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE
KINGS

▶ **AUTHOR:** This book, thought to originally be part of 1 Kings, is similar to the Book of Jeremiah. It has been observed that the omission of Jeremiah's ministry in the account of King Josiah and his successors may indicate that Jeremiah himself was the recorder of the events. The last two chapters were evidently added to the book after the Babylonian captivity and written by someone other than Jeremiah.

▶ **TIME:** 853–560 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 Kin. 17:22–23

▶ **THEME:** Both Elijah in 1 Kings and Elisha in 2 Kings are prime examples of how prophets functioned in Israel. They fearlessly confronted kings. They were involved in miracles. Both seemed to always be involved in the middle of some political controversy. Most importantly, they called on God and got results. In 2 Kings, Israel's story begins with the reign of Ahab's son, Ahaziah, continues with the capture and deportation of Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C., and ends with Judah's fall in 587 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar burns the temple and palace in Jerusalem and deports many people back to Babylon.

God Judges Ahaziah

1 Moab [d]rebelled against Israel [b]after the death of Ahab.

2Now [c]Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria, and was injured; so he sent messengers and said to them, "Go, inquire of [d]Baal-Zebub, the god of [e]Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury." **3**But the angel* of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, '*Is it* because *there is* no God in Israel *that* you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?' **4**Now therefore, thus says the LORD: 'You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" So Elijah departed.

5And when the messengers returned to him, he said to them, "Why have you come back?"

6So they said to him, "A man came up to meet us, and said to us, 'Go, return to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Thus says the LORD: '*Is it* because *there is* no God in Israel *that* you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'"'"

7Then he said to them, "What kind of man *was it* who came up to meet you and told you these words?"

8So they answered him, [f]"A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist."

And he said, [g]"It *is* Elijah the Tishbite."

9Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: "Man of God, the king has said, 'Come down!'"

10So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I *am* a man of God, then [h]let fire come down from heaven and

* **1:3** Or *Angel*

1:2 *Ahaziah.* The account of his brief, wicked reign begins in 1 Kings 22:51. The division of the Book of Kings into two parts was for the convenience of the translators, as is indicated by the fact that Ahaziah's reign carries over from one book to the other without a break.

1:6 Unbelief—Just as in the days of Ahaziah, men and women today often will turn to everything but the one genuine source of truth. But because there is no help or life or power in man's gods, man's ideas and philosophies, belief in them will end only in wasted, ineffective lives, and eventually in eternal death. True joy and meaning in life can only be found through trust in God.

1:8 *A hairy man.* This may refer to Elijah's garments, but the usual translation of "hairy man" is supported by the ancient versions.

1:10 *fire . . . from heaven.* Heavenly fire could signal divine judgment (Gen. 19:24). Elijah had already called down such fire in his contest with the prophets of Baal (1 Kin. 18:36–38). If this fire was lightning, the episode would have been a particularly significant slap in the face of their religion, showing that Baal

1:1 [d] 2 Sam. 8:2 [b] 2 Kin. 3:5 **1:2** [c] 1 Kin. 22:40 [d] Matt. 10:25 [e] 1 Sam. 5:10 **1:8** [f] Zech. 13:4 [g] 1 Kin. 18:7 **1:10** [h] Luke 9:54

consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. 11 Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men.

And he answered and said to him: "Man of God, thus has the king said, 'Come down quickly!'"

12 So Elijah answered and said to them, "If I *am* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

13 Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: "Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours [i]be precious in your sight. 14 Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight."

15 And the angel* of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king. 16 Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, *is it* because *there is* no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'"

17 So *Ahaziah* died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. Because he had no son, [j]Jehoram* became king in his place, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.

18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Elijah Ascends to Heaven

2 And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to [a]take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with [b]Elisha from Gilgal. 2 Then Elijah said to Elisha, [c]"Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "*As* the LORD lives, and [d]*as* your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they went down to Bethel.

3 Now [e]the sons of the prophets who *were* at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

4 Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho."

But he said, "*As* the LORD lives, and *as* your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho.

5 Now the sons of the prophets who *were* at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan."

But he said, "*As* the LORD lives, and *as* your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on. 7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing *them* at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. 8 Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled *it* up, and struck the water; and [f]it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry [g]ground.

9 And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

10 So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. *Nevertheless*, if you see me *when I am* taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be *so*." 11 Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly [h]a chariot of fire *appeared* with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah [i]went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12 And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried out,

* **1:15** Or *Angel* * **1:17** The son of Ahab king of Israel (compare 3:1)

was not the god of the storm he was reputed to be. The God of Israel was—and is—the Lord of creation.

2:3 ***take away.*** The same Hebrew word is used for Enoch's entrance to heaven (Gen. 5:24). The work that God was about to do had been divinely revealed to many of God's servants (vv. 3,5). This widespread knowledge of God's purpose would protect against later denials by cynical persons that the event had ever taken place.

2:9 ***double portion.*** In material things, the principal heir received a double portion of his father's goods. Elisha wanted the principle of primary inheritance to apply to spiritual things. Far from being a selfish request, Elisha's petition reflects his humble acknowledgment that if Elijah's ministry were to continue through him, it would take special God-given spiritual power.

2:11 ***heaven.*** The Bible does not give very much information about exactly what happens to the believer after death. Elijah is described as being "caught up to heaven," and it is assumed that he went to the same place to which Enoch had been taken up (Heb. 11:5).

1:13 [i] 1 Sam. 26:21 **1:17** [j] 1 Kin. 22:50 **2:1** [a] Gen. 5:24 [b] 1 Kin. 19:16–21 **2:2** [c] Ruth 1:15, 16 [d] 1 Sam. 1:26 **2:3** [e] 1 Kin. 20:35 **2:8** [f] Ex. 14:21, 22 [g] Josh. 3:17 **2:11** [h] 2 Kin. 6:17 [i] Heb. 11:5

[j]"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. 13He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan. 14Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, [k]it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.

15Now when the sons of the prophets who *were* [l]from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him. 16Then they said to him, "Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master, [m]lest perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley."

And he said, "You shall not send anyone."

17But when they urged him till he was [n]ashamed, he said, "Send *them!*" Therefore they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days but did not find him. 18And when they came back to him, for he had stayed in Jericho, he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

Elisha Performs Miracles

19Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please notice, the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water *is* bad, and the ground barren."

20And he said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it." So they brought *it* to him. 21Then he went out to the source of the water, and [o]cast in the salt there, and said, "Thus says the LORD: 'I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.'" 22So the water remains [p]healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

23Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!"

24So he turned around and looked at them, and [q]pronounced a curse on them in the name of the LORD. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths.

25Then he went from there to [r]Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

Moab Rebels Against Israel

3 Now [a]Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. 2And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not like his father and mother; for he put away the *sacred* pillar of Baal [b]that his father had made. 3Nevertheless he persisted in [c]the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.

4Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepbreeder, and he [d]regularly paid the king of Israel one hundred thousand [e]lambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. 5But it happened, when [f]Ahab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

6So King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. 7Then he went and sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?"

Jesus assured the thief on the cross that he would be in "paradise" with Him (Luke 23:43), a place of which Paul also had a brief glimpse (2 Cor. 12:1–4). While we do not have a clear picture of what it is like, we know that God will provide a place of beauty and rest for all His children.

2:15 ***The spirit of Elijah.*** The prophets witnessed both the miracle of Elijah (v. 8) and the similar miracle of Elisha. In this way there would be common agreement that Elisha was the successor of Elijah. They bowed, not in worship, but in respect and submission to the will of God.

2:17 ***he was ashamed.*** Although these words may indicate Elisha's sense of shame on behalf of his disciples for their disbelief, the use of the phrase elsewhere indicates that it means Elisha was worn out, no longer willing to resist (8:11). He came to the point where he gave in to their request.

2:23 ***Go up, you baldhead.*** The words of these youths indicate their disbelief of Elijah's "going up" into heaven and their disrespect for God's prophet. God did not tolerate blasphemy against Himself by the demeaning of Elijah's departure, or the abuse of His prophet, whom He had called for an important task at a critical period in Israel's history.

3:2 ***sacred pillar of Baal.*** Probably this was a stone pillar or statue erected by Ahab and bearing an inscription and image of the god Baal. Although it was put away temporarily, it apparently was not destroyed, because it later became one of the objects of Jehu's purge (10:26–27).

3:4 ***Mesha king of Moab.*** The existence of this Moabite king is confirmed by an inscription on a pillar known as the Moabite Stone. The inscription indicates that Omri had conquered the plains of Moab north of the Arnon River, and that the area remained under Israelite control throughout Ahab's reign. Thus the events of this chapter probably took place after Jehoram's accession and shortly before Jehoshaphat's death in 847 B.C. ***sheepbreeder.*** This Hebrew word is used only of Mesha and of Amos, the prophet (Amos 1:1).

3:7 ***Will you go with me.*** Because Jehoshaphat

2:12 *j* 2 Kin. 13:14 **2:14** *k* 2 Kin. 2:8 **2:15** *l* 2 Kin. 2:7 **2:16** *m* 1 Kin. 18:12 **2:17** *n* 2 Kin. 8:11 **2:21** *o* Ex. 15:25, 26 **2:22** *p* Ezek. 47:8, 9 **2:24** *q* Deut. 27:13–26 **2:25** *r* 2 Kin. 4:25 **3:1** *a* 2 Kin. 1:17 **3:2** *b* 1 Kin. 16:31, 32 **3:3** *c* 1 Kin. 12:28–32 **3:4** *d* 2 Sam. 8:2 *e* Is. 16:1, 2 **3:5** *f* 2 Kin. 1:1

And he said, "I will go up; [g]I *am* as you *are*, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." 8Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?"

And he answered, "By way of the Wilderness of Edom."

9So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom, and they marched on that roundabout route seven days; and there was no water for the army, nor for the animals that followed them. 10And the king of Israel said, "Alas! For the LORD has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab."

11But [h]Jehoshaphat said, "*Is there* no prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD by him?"

So one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, "Elisha the son of Shaphat *is* here, who [i]poured water on the hands of Elijah."

12And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom [j]went down to him.

13Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, [k]"What have I to do with you? [l]Go to [m]the prophets of your father and the [n]prophets of your mother."

But the king of Israel said to him, "No, for the LORD has called these three kings *together* to deliver them into the hand of Moab."

14And Elisha said, [o]"*As* the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you, nor see you. 15But now bring me [p]a musician."

Then it happened, when the musician [q]played, that [r]the hand of the LORD came upon him. 16And he said, "Thus says the LORD: [s]'Make this valley full of ditches.' 17For thus says the LORD: 'You shall not see wind, nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink.' 18And this is a simple matter in the sight of the LORD; He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. 19Also you shall attack every fortified city and every choice city, and shall cut down every good tree, and stop up every spring of water, and ruin every good piece of land with stones."

20Now it happened in the morning, when [t]the grain offering was offered, that suddenly water came by way of Edom, and the land was filled with water.

21And when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to bear arms and older were gathered; and they stood at the border. 22Then they rose up early in the morning, and the sun was shining on the water; and the Moabites saw the water on the other side *as* red as blood. 23And they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!"

24So when they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they entered *their* land, killing the Moabites. 25Then they destroyed the cities, and each man threw a stone on every good piece of land and filled it; and they stopped up all the springs of water and cut down all the good trees. But they left the stones of [u]Kir Haraseth *intact*. However the slingers surrounded and attacked it.

26And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him seven hundred men who drew swords, to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not. 27Then [v]he took his eldest son who would have reigned in his place, and offered him *as* a burnt offering upon the wall; and there was great indignation against Israel. [w]So they departed from him and returned to *their own* land.

Elisha and the Widow's Oil

4 A certain woman of the wives of [a]the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD. And the creditor is coming [b]to take my two sons to be his slaves."

2So Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil."

3Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors—empty vessels; [c]do not gather just a few.

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was related to the throne of the northern kingdom through the marriage of his son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah, it could be presumed that he would be available as an ally.

3:14 ***I would not look at you.*** As a devotee of Baal, Jehoram had no claim on the favor of God. Nevertheless, he would enjoy the benefits of God's grace toward Jehoshaphat.

3:20 ***filled with water.*** The dry stream beds can easily overflow their banks in downpours of rain. Even distant areas can be flooded by water from faraway mountain streams swelled by heavy rains.

4:1 ***A certain woman.*** The fate of widows was perilous in the ancient Middle East. A practical test of biblical piety was to observe how those in power treated widows and orphans (Job 24:21; Ps. 146:9).

3:7 [g] 1 Kin. 22:4 **3:11** [h] 1 Kin. 22:7 [i] 1 Kin. 19:21 **3:12** [j] 2 Kin. 2:25 **3:13** [k] [Ezek. 14:3] [l] Judg. 10:14 [m] 1 Kin. 22:6–11 [n] 1 Kin. 18:19 **3:14** [o] 1 Kin. 17:1 **3:15** [p] 1 Sam. 10:5 [q] 1 Sam. 16:16, 23 [r] Ezek. 1:3; 3:14, 22; 8:1 **3:16** [s] Jer. 14:3 **3:20** [t] Ex. 29:39, 40 **3:25** [u] Is. 16:7, 11 **3:27** [v] [Amos 2:1] [w] 2 Kin. 8:20 **4:1** [a] 1 Kin. 20:35 [b] [Lev. 25:39–41, 48] **4:3** [c] 2 Kin. 3:16

4And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones."

5So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured *it* out. 6Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel."

And he said to her, "*There is* not another vessel." So the oil ceased. 7Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you *and* your sons live on the rest."

Elisha Raises the Shunammite's Son

8Now it happened one day that Elisha went to [d]Shunem, where there *was* a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. 9And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this *is* a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there."

11And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. 12Then he said to [e]Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What *can I* do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?'"

She answered, "I dwell among my own people."

14So he said, "What then *is* to be done for her?"

And Gehazi answered, "Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old."

15So he said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the doorway. 16Then he said, "About this time next year you shall embrace a son."

And she said, "No, my lord. Man of God, [f]do not lie to your maidservant!"

17But the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.

18And the child grew. Now it happened one day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. 19And he said to his father, "My head, my head!"

So he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and *then* died. 21And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut *the door* upon him, and went out. 22Then she called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back."

23So he said, "Why are you going to him today? *It is* neither the [g]New Moon nor the Sabbath."

And she said, "*It is* well." 24Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you." 25And so she departed, and went to the man of God [h]at Mount Carmel.

So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, the Shunammite woman! 26Please run now to meet her, and say to her, '*Is it* well with you? *Is it* well with your husband? *Is it* well with the child?'"

And she answered, "*It is* well." 27Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone; for her soul *is* in deep distress, and the LORD has hidden *it* from me, and has not told me."

28So she said, "Did I ask a son of my lord? [i]Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?"

29Then he said to Gehazi, [j]"Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, [k]do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but [l]lay my staff on the face of the child."

30And the mother of the child said, [m]"*As* the LORD lives, and *as* your soul lives, [n]I will not leave you." So he arose and followed her. 31Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but *there was* neither voice nor

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4:10 ***small upper room.*** The flat roofs of houses in this time were used as extra living space, and often a small room would be built on the roof which could be reached from outside. This accommodated a guest while providing privacy. Recognizing Elisha as one of God's chosen servants, the Shunammite woman was especially concerned that the normal measures of hospitality be applied even more fully.

4:12–13 Thankfulness—Both Elijah and the Shunammite woman illustrate the vitally important teaching of Scripture: Be thankful; be ready both to receive and to give; express your thankfulness always with words and deeds. Too many blessings, kind words, and thoughtful actions go thankless until it is too late. The kindness and love expressed to Elijah registered in his heart and mind. His loving question should be our question in response to kindness: "What can I do for you?"

4:23 ***New Moon . . . Sabbath.*** There was no work on these days, so they would be more suitable for going to see the prophet (Ex. 20:9–12; Amos 8:5).

4:27 ***the LORD has hidden it.*** The prophets did not know everything, but only what God made known to them (5:26).

4:8 [d] Josh. 19:18 **4:12** [e] 2 Kin. 4:29–31; 5:20–27; 8:4, 5 **4:16** [f] 2 Kin. 4:28 **4:23** [g] 1 Chr. 23:31 **4:25** [h] 2 Kin. 2:25 **4:28** [i] 2 Kin. 4:16 **4:29** [j] 1 Kin. 18:46 [k] Luke 10:4 [l] Ex. 7:19; 14:16 **4:30** [m] 2 Kin. 2:2 [n] 2 Kin. 2:4

hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has [o]not awakened."

32When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. 33He [p]went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, [q]and prayed to the LORD. 34And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and [r]he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. 35He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up [s]and stretched himself out on him; then [t]the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite woman." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Pick up your son." 37So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she [u]picked up her son and went out.

Elisha Purifies the Pot of Stew

38And Elisha returned to [v]Gilgal, and *there was* a [w]famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets *were* [x]sitting before him; and he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets." 39So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced *them* into the pot of stew, though they did not know *what they were*. 40Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, "Man of God, *there is* [y]death in the pot!" And they could not eat *it*.

41So he said, "Then bring some flour." And [z]he put *it* into the pot, and said, "Serve *it* to the people, that they may eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

Elisha Feeds One Hundred Men

42Then a man came from [a]Baal Shalisha, [b]and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, "Give *it* to the people, that they may eat."

43But his servant said, [c]"What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?"

He said again, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: [d]'They shall eat and have *some* left over.'" 44So he set *it* before them; and they ate [e]and had *some* left over, according to the word of the LORD.

Naaman's Leprosy Healed

5 Now [a]Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was [b]a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, *but* a leper. 2And the Syrians had gone out [c]on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. 3Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master *were* with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy." 4And *Naaman* went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who *is* from the land of Israel."

5Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel."

So he departed and [d]took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand *shekels* of gold, and ten changes of clothing. 6Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said,

> Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.

7And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "*Am* I [e]God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me."

4:33 *prayed to the LORD.* Elisha's actions demonstrate that his faith was in the person and power of God alone, and not in the staff that symbolized his prophetic office. The restoration of the boy's life is a demonstration that life itself is in the hands of God.

4:36 Resurrection—When the writer of Hebrews tells us about those "women [who] received their dead raised to life again" (Heb. 11:35), he is probably referring to the two women about whom we read in 1 Kings 17:8–24 and 2 Kings 4:8–37. Many similarities can be seen between these two resurrection miracles, but it is clear that neither prophet followed a "resurrection formula." God is not bound to follow certain procedures or respond to incantations. Instead, He heals whom He will, in what way He wills.

4:41 *flour.* The meal or flour had no magical properties. Elisha's faith in the living God effected the miraculous cure.

5:1 *king of Syria.* The king of Aram (or Syria) was Ben-Hadad II (860–842 B.C.). He was a constant threat against the northern kingdom and would lead an invasion against it later (6:24—7:20).

5:3 *the prophet who is in Samaria.* Although Elisha traveled frequently and may sometimes have lived at Mount Carmel (4:25), he apparently maintained a residence in the capital city of Samaria (2:25; 6:9—7:20).

5:7 *tore his clothes.* While such letters of introduction were common in the ancient Middle East, Ben-Hadad's frequent forays against Israel made the king suspicious that the Arameans were seeking a pretext for another attack. Tearing one's robes was a sign of grief or agitation.

4:31 [o] John 11:11 **4:33** [p] [Matt. 6:6] [q] 1 Kin. 17:20 **4:34** [r] 1 Kin. 17:21–23 **4:35** [s] 1 Kin. 17:21 [t] 2 Kin. 8:1, 5 **4:37** [u] [Heb. 11:35] **4:38** [v] 2 Kin. 2:1 [w] 2 Kin. 8:1 [x] Acts 22:3 **4:40** [y] Ex. 10:17 **4:41** [z] Ex. 15:25 **4:42** [a] 1 Sam. 9:4 [b] [1 Cor. 9:11] **4:43** [c] John 6:9 [d] Luke 9:17 **4:44** [e] John 6:13 **5:1** [a] Luke 4:27 [b] Ex. 11:3 **5:2** [c] 2 Kin. 6:23; 13:20 **5:5** [d] 1 Sam. 9:8 **5:7** [e] [Gen. 30:2]

8So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

9Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. 10And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and [f]wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and *you shall* be clean." 11But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out *to me*, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' 12*Are* not the Abanah* and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. 13And his [g]servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, *if* the prophet had told you *to do* something great, would you not have done *it?* How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?" 14So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his [h]flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and [i]he was clean.

15And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that *there is* [j]no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take [k]a gift from your servant."

16But he said, [l]"*As* the LORD lives, before whom I stand, [m]I will receive nothing." And he urged him to take *it*, but he refused.

17So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the LORD. 18Yet in this thing may the LORD pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and [n]he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD please pardon your servant in this thing."

19Then he said to him, "Go in peace." So he departed from him a short distance.

Gehazi's Greed

20But [o]Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but *as* the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him." 21So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw *him* running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "*Is* all well?"

22And he said, "All *is* [p]well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'"

23So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed *them* to two of his servants; and they carried *them* on ahead of him. 24When he came to the citadel, he took *them* from their hand, and stored *them* away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. 25Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where *did you go*, Gehazi?"

And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere."

26Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go *with you* when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? *Is it* [q]time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? 27Therefore the leprosy of Naaman [r]shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And he went out from his presence [s]leprous, *as white* as snow.

* **5:12** Following Kethib, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Qere, Syriac, and Targum read *Amanah*.

5:10 ***wash in the Jordan.*** Elisha's instructions illustrate the fact that simple obedience to God's will, even if it is not what we imagined, is the only road to receiving God's blessings.

5:15 ***no God . . . except in Israel.*** Naaman is an unusual example of a foreigner who came to faith in God.

5:17 ***earth.*** Naaman's unusual request may refer back to God's instructions to the Israelites in the desert (Ex. 20:24). Altars built for the worship of the Lord were to be made of earth or undressed stones, perhaps to avoid the possibility of the altar itself becoming an object of veneration.

5:23 ***talents.*** A talent was an enormous amount of silver—equal to 3,000 shekels, or about 75 pounds.

5:26 ***my heart go with you.*** The use of the term *heart* suggests not only Elisha's knowledge but also his strong feelings for Gehazi.

5:26–27 Worldliness—Naaman, in gratitude, urged Elisha to receive a gift, but Elisha steadfastly refused. The prophet wanted the new convert to understand clearly that the God of Israel cannot be bribed. His gifts are bestowed because of His gracious heart. Gehazi's sin was serious—it involved covetousness, lying, misrepresentation of the prophet and, more importantly, brought disgrace on the name of the God of Israel. Gehazi was acting in his own self-interest rather than for the cause of God. When we choose according to the values of unregenerate men, we are worldly and damage the interests of God's kingdom.

5:10 [f] John 9:7 **5:13** [g] 1 Sam. 28:23 **5:14** [h] Job 33:25 [i] Luke 4:27; 5:13 **5:15** [j] Dan. 2:47; 3:29; 6:26, 27 [k] Gen. 33:11 **5:16** [l] 2 Kin. 3:14 [m] Gen. 14:22, 23 **5:18** [n] 2 Kin. 7:2, 17 **5:20** [o] 2 Kin. 4:12; 8:4, 5 **5:22** [p] 2 Kin. 4:26 **5:26** [q] [Eccl. 3:1, 6] **5:27** [r] [1 Tim. 6:10] [s] Ex. 4:6

The Floating Ax Head

6 And [a]the sons of the prophets said to
Elisha, "See now, the place where we
dwell with you is too small for us. 2Please,
let us go to the Jordan, and let every man
take a beam from there, and let us make
there a place where we may dwell."

So he answered, "Go."

3Then one said, [b]"Please consent to go
with your servants."

And he answered, "I will go." 4So he went
with them. And when they came to the Jor-
dan, they cut down trees. 5But as one was
cutting down a tree, the iron *ax head* fell
into the water; and he cried out and said,
"Alas, master! For it was [c]borrowed."

6So the man of God said, "Where did it
fall?" And he showed him the place. So [d]he
cut off a stick, and threw *it* in there; and
he made the iron float. 7Therefore he said,
"Pick *it* up for yourself." So he reached out
his hand and took it.

The Blinded Syrians Captured

8Now the [e]king of Syria was making war
against Israel; and he consulted with his
servants, saying, "My camp *will be* in such
and such a place." 9And the man of God
sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware
that you do not pass this place, for the Syr-
ians are coming down there." 10Then the
king of Israel sent *someone* to the place of
which the man of God had told him. Thus
he warned him, and he was watchful there,
not just once or twice.

11Therefore the heart of the king of Syr-
ia was greatly troubled by this thing; and
he called his servants and said to them,
"Will you not show me which of us *is* for
the king of Israel?"

12And one of his servants said, "None,
my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet
who *is* in Israel, tells the king of Israel the
words that you speak in your bedroom."

13So he said, "Go and see where he *is*,
that I may send and get him."

And it was told him, saying, "Surely *he*
is in [f]Dothan."

14Therefore he sent horses and chariots
and a great army there, and they came by
night and surrounded the city. 15And when
the servant of the man of God arose ear-
ly and went out, there was an army, sur-
rounding the city with horses and chariots.
And his servant said to him, "Alas, my
master! What shall we do?"

16So he answered, [g]"Do not fear, for
[h]those who *are* with us *are* more than those
who *are* with them." 17And Elisha prayed,
and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that
he may see." Then the LORD [i]opened the
eyes of the young man, and he saw. And
behold, the mountain *was* full of [j]horses
and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 18So
when *the Syrians* came down to him, Eli-
sha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike
this people, I pray, with blindness." And
[k]He struck them with blindness according
to the word of Elisha.

19Now Elisha said to them, "This *is* not
the way, nor *is* this the city. Follow me,
and I will bring you to the man whom you
seek." But he led them to Samaria.

20So it was, when they had come to Sa-
maria, that Elisha said, "LORD, open the
eyes of these *men*, that they may see." And
the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw;
and there *they were*, inside Samaria!

21Now when the king of Israel saw them,
he said to Elisha, "My [l]father, shall I kill
them? Shall I kill *them*?"

22But he answered, "You shall not kill
them. Would you kill those whom you have
taken captive with your sword and your
bow? [m]Set food and water before them,
that they may eat and drink and go to their
master." 23Then he prepared a great feast
for them; and after they ate and drank,
he sent them away and they went to their

6:6 *made the iron float.* At a time when most tools were still made of bronze, an iron blade was valuable.

6:13 *Dothan.* Dothan was in the central highlands of Israel. It is mentioned only here and in Genesis 37:17, when Joseph was sold to the Midianites.

6:15 *servant of the man of God.* Since Gehazi had become a leper (5:27), this is probably another servant. However, Gehazi is mentioned again in 8:4 as one who was still faithfully representing the miracles done through Elisha.

6:16–17 Understanding the Big Picture—Spiritually, we don't often make the personal progress we should. We fall back into old patterns of behavior too easily. We feel like God has left us out there alone to fight with our internal weaknesses as well as external forces that often seem to overpower us.

We're like Elisha's servant who couldn't see the full reality. We don't have a big enough vision to see what God is doing around us and in us. We're too wrapped up in our own physical and emotional reality. We're so full of ourselves that there's no room for God and the new vision He can bring to our lives.

Curiously, this story doesn't contain any record of the servant's response to what he saw. Did that new vision dramatically change his life? Did he forever understand the extent of God's protective care? Maybe that happened, or maybe like most of us, he was only able to catch a glimpse. We must live by faith that the full reality is represented by those brief and beautiful glimpses of the bigger picture.

6:19 *I will bring you.* Elisha's words are technically true, although he was undoubtedly misleading and deceiving the Arameans. The fact that he did not use his unfair advantage to kill Israel's enemies is worthy of notice.

6:1 [a] 2 Kin. 4:38 **6:3** [b] 2 Kin. 5:23 **6:5** [c] [Ex. 22:14] **6:6** [d] 2 Kin. 2:21; 4:41 **6:8** [e] 2 Kin. 8:28, 29 **6:13** [f] Gen. 37:17 **6:16** [g] Ex. 14:13 [h] [Rom. 8:31] **6:17** [i] Num. 22:31 [j] 2 Kin. 2:11 **6:18** [k] Gen. 19:11 **6:21** [l] 2 Kin. 2:12; 5:13; 8:9 **6:22** [m] [Rom. 12:20]

master. So [n]the bands of Syrian *raiders* came no more into the land of Israel.

Syria Besieges Samaria in Famine

24 And it happened after this that [o]Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria. 25 And there was a great [p]famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was *sold* for eighty *shekels* of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five *shekels* of silver.

26 Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!"

27 And he said, "If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" 28 Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you?"

And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 So [q]we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son."

30 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he [r]tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath *he had* sackcloth on his body. 31 Then he said, [s]"God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today!"

32 But Elisha was sitting in his house, and [t]the elders were sitting with him. And *the king* sent a man ahead of him, but before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, [u]"Do you see how this son of [v]a murderer has sent someone to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door. *Is* not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" 33 And while he was still talking with them, there was the messenger, coming down to him; and then *the king* said, "Surely this calamity *is* from the LORD; [w]why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

7 Then Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the LORD: [a]"Tomorrow about this time a seah of fine flour *shall be sold* for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.'"

2 [b]So an officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God and said, "Look, [c]*if* the LORD would make windows in heaven, could this thing be?"

And he said, "In fact, you shall see *it* with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it."

The Syrians Flee

3 Now there were four leprous men [d]at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, "Why are we sitting here until we die? 4 If we say, 'We will enter the city,' the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the [e]army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die." 5 And they rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians; and when they had come to the outskirts of the Syrian camp, to their surprise no one *was* there. 6 For the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians [f]to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses—the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired against us [g]the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!" 7 Therefore they [h]arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact—their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—and they fled for their lives. 8 And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried from it silver and gold and clothing, and went and hid *them;* then they came back and entered another tent, and carried *some* from there *also*, and went and hid *it*.

9 Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right. This day *is* a day of good news, and we remain silent. If we wait until morning light, some punishment will come upon us. Now therefore, come, let us go and tell the king's household." 10 So they went and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and told them, saying, "We went to the Syrian camp, and surprisingly no one *was* there, not a human sound—only horses and donkeys tied, and the tents intact."

6:25 *donkey's head.* Donkeys were unclean for food (Lev. 11:3). ***dove droppings.*** It is not known whether this term is meant to refer to the actual manure of doves or pigeons, or whether it is a slang term for some kind of bean or seed (some translations say "seed pods" or "locust beans").

6:28 *eat him.* Israel had been warned that national disobedience could reduce the people to such a loathsome deed (Lev. 26:29; Deut. 28:53–57).

7:3 *leprous men.* Because lepers were excluded from the city (Lev. 13:4–6; Num. 5:2–3), and avoided by all, they probably were ignored by the invaders and had been left to their fate. If the ordinary people of the city were suffering from hunger, these men must have been in even worse plight. They concluded that they had nothing to lose by going to the other side.

7:9 *good news.* Good news and good fortune had to be shared (Prov. 15:27; 21:17), and the men feared that failure to do so might merit divine punishment.

6:23 [n] 2 Kin. 5:2; 6:8, 9 **6:24** [o] 1 Kin. 20:1 **6:25** [p] 2 Kin. 4:38; 8:1 **6:29** [q] Lev. 26:27–29 **6:30** [r] 1 Kin. 21:27 **6:31** [s] Ruth 1:17 **6:32** [t] Ezek. 8:1; 14:1; 20:1 [u] Luke 13:32 [v] 1 Kin. 18:4, 13, 14; 21:10, 13 **6:33** [w] Job 2:9 **7:1** [a] 2 Kin. 7:18, 19 **7:2** [b] 2 Kin. 5:18; 7:17, 19, 20 [c] Mal. 3:10 **7:3** [d] [Num. 5:2–4; 12:10–14] **7:4** [e] 2 Kin. 6:24 **7:6** [f] 2 Sam. 5:24 [g] 1 Kin. 10:29 **7:7** [h] Ps. 48:4–6

11 And the gatekeepers called out, and they
told *it* to the king's household inside.
12 So the king arose in the night and said
to his servants, "Let me now tell you what
the Syrians have done to us. They know
that we *are* [i]hungry; therefore they have
gone out of the camp to hide themselves in
the field, saying, 'When they come out of
the city, we shall catch them alive, and get
into the city.'"
13 And one of his servants answered and
said, "Please, let several *men* take five of
the remaining horses which are left in the
city. Look, they *may either become* like all
the multitude of Israel that are left in it; or
indeed, *I say*, they *may become* like all the
multitude of Israel left from those who are
consumed; so let us send them and see."
14 Therefore they took two chariots with
horses; and the king sent them in the direction of the Syrian army, saying, "Go and
see." 15 And they went after them to the Jordan; and indeed all the road *was* full of garments and weapons which the Syrians had
thrown away in their haste. So the messengers returned and told the king. 16 Then the
people went out and plundered the tents of
the Syrians. So a seah of fine flour was *sold*
for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a
shekel, [j]according to the word of the LORD.
17 Now the king had appointed the officer
on whose hand he leaned to have charge
of the gate. But the people trampled him
in the gate, and he died, just [k]as the man
of God had said, who spoke when the king
came down to him. 18 So it happened just
as the man of God had spoken to the king,
saying, [l]"Two seahs of barley for a shekel,
and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, shall
be *sold* tomorrow about this time in the
gate of Samaria."
19 Then that officer had answered the
man of God, and said, "Now look, *if* the
LORD would make windows in heaven,
could such a thing be?"
And he had said, "In fact, you shall see *it*
with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it."
20 And so it happened to him, for the people
trampled him in the gate, and he died.

The King Restores the Shunammite's Land

8 Then Elisha spoke to the woman
[a]whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go, you and your household,
and stay wherever you can; for the LORD
[b]has called for a [c]famine, and furthermore,
it will come upon the land for seven years."
2 So the woman arose and did according to
the saying of the man of God, and she went
with her household and dwelt in the land of
the Philistines seven years.
3 It came to pass, at the end of seven
years, that the woman returned from the
land of the Philistines; and she went to
make an appeal to the king for her house
and for her land. 4 Then the king talked
with [d]Gehazi, the servant of the man of
God, saying, "Tell me, please, all the great
things Elisha has done." 5 Now it happened,
as he was telling the king how he had restored the dead to life, that there was the
woman whose son he had [e]restored to life,
appealing to the king for her house and
for her land. And Gehazi said, "My lord, O
king, this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son
whom Elisha restored to life." 6 And when
the king asked the woman, she told him.
So the king appointed a certain officer
for her, saying, "Restore all that *was* hers,
and all the proceeds of the field from the
day that she left the land until now."

Death of Ben-Hadad

7 Then Elisha went to Damascus, and
[f]Ben-Hadad king of Syria was sick; and it
was told him, saying, "The man of God has
come here." 8 And the king said to [g]Hazael,
[h]"Take a present in your hand, and go to
meet the man of God, and [i]inquire of the
LORD by him, saying, 'Shall I recover from
this disease?'" 9 So [j]Hazael went to meet
him and took a present with him, of every good thing of Damascus, forty camel-
loads; and he came and stood before him,
and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of
Syria has sent me to you, saying, 'Shall I
recover from this disease?'"
10 And Elisha said to him, "Go, say to

8:1 Kindness—Performing an act of kindness can be compared to throwing sand in the wind. You can be sure some of it will come back to you. The woman mentioned here could give glowing testimony to this. She had been led to feed and house the prophet Elisha (4:8–10), and this act of kindness produced good fruit. Through Elisha's prayers, her child was born and restored (ch. 4), and now Elisha warned her of the coming famine. God always remembers our acts of kindness (Mal. 3:16). In fact, the only thing God "forgets" about us is our confessed sins (Jer. 31:34).

8:3 *she went to make an appeal.* The Shunammite woman had not renounced or sold her property, but merely had left during the previous famine. Moreover, she had returned within seven years (Deut. 15:1–6; Ruth 4:3–4). Since the property was still legally hers, she pressed her claim to the king himself.

8:4 *Gehazi.* At this point, Gehazi was still faithful to the ministry of Elisha.

8:6 *Restore all.* We get a complex picture of King Jehoram. At times he was so angry with Elisha that he wished him dead (6:31), yet even then he was in mourning for his people. In this section, his righteous judgment should be contrasted with the wretched behavior of the wicked Ahab (1 Kin. 21:1–16).

8:10 *You shall certainly recover.* Elisha was answering Ben-Hadad's exact question: his illness was not deadly, in the natural course of things he would have

7:12 [i] 2 Kin. 6:24–29 **7:16** [j] 2 Kin. 7:1 **7:17** [k] 2 Kin. 6:32; 7:2 **7:18** [l] 2 Kin. 7:1 **8:1** [a] 2 Kin. 4:18, 31–35 [b] Hag. 1:11 [c] 2 Sam. 21:1 **8:4** [d] 2 Kin. 4:12; 5:20–27 **8:5** [e] 2 Kin. 4:35 **8:7** [f] 2 Kin. 6:24 **8:8** [g] 1 Kin. 19:15 [h] 1 Sam. 9:7 [i] 2 Kin. 1:2 **8:9** [j] 1 Kin. 19:15

him, 'You shall certainly recover.' However the LORD has shown me that [k]he will really die." 11Then he set his countenance in a stare until he was ashamed; and the man of God [l]wept. 12And Hazael said, "Why is my lord weeping?"

He answered, "Because I know [m]the evil that you will do to the children of Israel: Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword; and you [n]will dash their children, and rip open their women with child."

13So Hazael said, "But what [o]*is* your servant—a dog, that he should do this gross thing?"

And Elisha answered, [p]"The LORD has shown me that you *will become* king over Syria."

14Then he departed from Elisha, and came to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he answered, "He told me you would surely recover." 15But it happened on the next day that he took a thick cloth and dipped *it* in water, and spread *it* over his face so that he died; and Hazael reigned in his place.

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

16Now [q]in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *having been* king of Judah, [r]Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as king of Judah. 17He was [s]thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for [t]the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. 19Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of His servant David, [u]as He promised him to give a lamp to him *and* his sons forever.

20In his days [v]Edom revolted against Judah's authority, [w]and made a king over themselves. 21So Joram* went to Zair, and all his chariots with him. Then he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; and the troops fled to their tents. 22Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah's authority to this day. [x]And Libnah revolted at that time.

23Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 24So Joram rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then [y]Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

25In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. 26Ahaziah *was* [z]twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. 27[a]And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab, for he *was* the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

28Now he went [b]with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at [c]Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. 29Then [d]King Joram went back to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. [e]And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

Jehu Anointed King of Israel

9 And Elisha the prophet called one of [a]the sons of the prophets, and said to him, [b]"Get yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, [c]and go to Ramoth Gilead. 2Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat,

* **8:21** Spelled *Jehoram* in verse 16

recovered. However, Elisha also knew that Ben-Hadad's life would be taken by his servant Hazael.

8:11 ***ashamed.*** Elisha had reached the end of his ability to resist his emotions and wept over the suffering that Hazael would bring.

8:13 ***dog.*** In the ancient Middle East, dogs were despised as scavengers and unclean animals. Shalmaneser III of Assyria noted Hazael's accession to the throne with the words: "Hazael, son of nobody, seizes the throne."

8:16 ***Joram . . . Jehoram.*** These are variant spellings of the same name; the two kings were brothers-in-law since Jehoram of Judah had married the sister of Joram of Israel.

8:16–19 Apostasy—The complete picture of Jehoram's shameful apostasy is presented by the chronicler (2 Chr. 21:2–26). There were two powerful influences in Jehoram's life, one good and one evil; sadly, the evil influence prevailed. His father, Jehoshaphat, was one of the few godly kings of Judah, but Jehoram's wife was Athaliah, daughter of Jezebel, who influenced him to worship Baal (v. 18). Jehoram's life of unfaithfulness earned God's judgment, and he died a lonely and miserable death. Nevertheless, the Lord remained committed to His covenant promise (v. 19). Human unfaithfulness cannot destroy God's purpose of salvation.

8:27 ***the way of the house of Ahab.*** The lowest point of Israel's religious apostasy was reached in the reign of Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel (1 Kin. 16:31).

9:2 ***Jehu.*** The name Jehu means "the Lord is He."

8:10 [k] 2 Kin. 8:15 **8:11** [l] Luke 19:41 **8:12** [m] Amos 1:3, 4 [n] Hos. 13:16 **8:13** [o] 1 Sam. 17:43 [p] 1 Kin. 19:15 **8:16** [q] 2 Kin. 1:17; 3:1 [r] 2 Chr. 21:3 **8:17** [s] 2 Chr. 21:5–10 **8:18** [t] 2 Kin. 8:26, 27 **8:19** [u] 2 Sam. 7:13 **8:20** [v] Gen. 27:40 [w] 1 Kin. 22:47 **8:22** [x] Josh. 21:13 **8:24** [y] 2 Chr. 22:1, 7 **8:26** [z] 2 Chr. 22:2 **8:27** [a] 2 Chr. 22:3, 4 **8:28** [b] 2 Chr. 22:5 [c] 1 Kin. 22:3, 29 **8:29** [d] 2 Kin. 9:15 [e] 2 Chr. 22:6, 7 **9:1** [a] 1 Kin. 20:35 [b] 2 Kin. 4:29 [c] 2 Kin. 8:28, 29

the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among [d]his associates, and take him to an inner room. 3Then [e]take the flask of oil, and pour *it* on his head, and say, 'Thus says the LORD: "I have anointed you king over Israel."' Then open the door and flee, and do not delay."

4So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. 5And when he arrived, there *were* the captains of the army sitting; and he said, "I have a message for you, Commander."

Jehu said, "For which *one* of us?"

And he said, "For you, Commander." 6Then he arose and went into the house. And he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, [f]"Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I have anointed you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. 7You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may [g]avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, [h]at the hand of Jezebel. 8For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and [i]I will cut off from Ahab all [j]the males in Israel, both [k]bond and free. 9So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of [l]Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of [m]Baasha the son of Ahijah. 10[n]The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot *of ground* at Jezreel, and *there shall be* none to bury *her*.'" And he opened the door and fled.

11Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and *one* said to him, "*Is* all well? Why did [o]this madman come to you?"

And he said to them, "You know the man and his babble."

12And they said, "A lie! Tell us now."

So he said, "Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I have anointed you king over Israel."'"

13Then each man hastened [p]to take his garment and put *it* under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, "Jehu is king!"

Joram of Israel Killed

14So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against [q]Joram. (Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, against Hazael king of Syria. 15But [r]King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, "If you are so minded, let no one leave *or* escape from the city to go and tell *it* in Jezreel." 16So Jehu rode in a chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram was laid up there; [s]and Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

17Now a watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came, and said, "I see a company of men."

And Joram said, "Get a horseman and send him to meet them, and let him say, '*Is it* peace?'"

18So the horseman went to meet him, and said, "Thus says the king: '*Is it* peace?'"

And Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Turn around and follow me."

So the watchman reported, saying, "The messenger went to them, but is not coming back."

19Then he sent out a second horseman who came to them, and said, "Thus says the king: '*Is it* peace?'"

And Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Turn around and follow me."

20So the watchman reported, saying, "He went up to them and is not coming back; and the driving *is* like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously!"

21Then Joram said, "Make ready." And his chariot was made ready. Then [t]Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot; and they went out to meet Jehu, and met him [u]on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. 22Now it happened, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, "*Is it* peace, Jehu?"

So he answered, "What peace, as long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcraft *are so* many?"

23Then Joram turned around and fled, and said to Ahaziah, "Treachery, Ahaziah!" 24Now Jehu drew his bow with full strength and shot Jehoram between his arms; and the arrow came out at his heart,

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9:6 ***poured the oil.*** The last part of the Lord's threefold command to Elijah had been carried out (1 Kin. 19:15–21; 2 Kin. 8:7–13). In the Old Testament, anointing was customarily reserved for a king (2 Sam. 2:4) or the high priest (Ex. 40:13).

9:13 ***garment.*** This action was a mark of homage fit for a king (Matt. 21:8). This scene is reminiscent of the anointing of King Solomon (1 Kin. 1:34).

9:21 ***the property of Naboth.*** Ahab's dynasty ended on the very stolen property that occasioned the divine sentence of judgment (1 Kin. 21:17–24). Ahab's unlawful seizure of the land of Naboth was regarded as one of his most heinous crimes.

9:22 ***harlotries of . . . Jezebel.*** Jezebel's spiritual adultery had brought vile demonic practices into the kingdom and sealed its doom (1 Kin. 21:25–26). As God had said, such activities would surely bring about the nation's demise (Deut. 28:25–26). Jehu justified his actions as a judgment on Jezebel's sins.

9:23 ***Treachery.*** In reality, Joram and Ahaziah were the true traitors, the ones who had led the people in

9:2 [d] 2 Kin. 9:5, 11 **9:3** [e] 1 Kin. 19:16 **9:6** [f] 2 Chr. 22:7 **9:7** [g] [Deut. 32:35, 41] [h] 1 Kin. 18:4; 21:15 **9:8** [i] 2 Kin. 10:17 [j] 1 Sam. 25:22 [k] Deut. 32:36 **9:9** [l] 1 Kin. 14:10; 15:29; 21:22 [m] 1 Kin. 16:3, 11 **9:10** [n] 1 Kin. 21:23 **9:11** [o] Jer. 29:26 **9:13** [p] Matt. 21:7, 8 **9:14** [q] 2 Kin. 8:28 **9:15** [r] 2 Kin. 8:29 **9:16** [s] 2 Kin. 8:29 **9:21** [t] 1 Kin. 19:17 [u] 1 Kin. 21:1–14

and he sank down in his chariot. 25Then *Jehu* said to Bidkar his captain, "Pick *him* up, *and* throw him into the tract of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, when you and I were riding together behind Ahab his father, that [v]the LORD laid this [w]burden upon him: 26'Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,' says the LORD, [x]'and I will repay you in this plot,' says the LORD. Now therefore, take *and* throw him on the plot *of ground*, according to the word of the LORD."

Ahaziah of Judah Killed

27But when Ahaziah king of Judah saw *this,* he fled by the road to Beth Haggan.* So Jehu pursued him, and said, "Shoot him also in the chariot." *And they shot him* at the Ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Then he fled to [y]Megiddo, and died there. 28And his servants carried him in the chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the City of David. 29In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah.

Jezebel's Violent Death

30Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it;* [z]and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. 31Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, [a]"*Is it* peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?"

32And he looked up at the window, and said, "Who *is* on my side? Who?" So two *or* three eunuchs looked out at him. 33Then he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and *some* of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. 34And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, "Go now, see to this accursed *woman,* and bury her, for [b]she was a king's daughter." 35So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of *her* hands. 36Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This *is* the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, [c]'On the plot *of ground* at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel;* 37and the corpse of Jezebel shall be [d]as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here *lies* Jezebel."'"

Ahab's Seventy Sons Killed

10 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote and sent letters to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel,* to the elders, and to those who reared Ahab's *sons,* saying:

2 Now as soon as this letter comes to you, since your master's sons *are* with you, and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city also, and weapons, 3choose the best qualified of your master's sons, set *him* on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.

4But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, "Look, [a]two kings could not stand up to him; how then can we stand?" 5And he who *was* in charge of the house, and he who *was* in charge of the city, the elders also, and those who reared *the sons,* sent to Jehu, saying, "We *are* your servants, we will do all you tell us; but we will not make anyone king. Do *what is* good in your sight." 6Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying:

> If you *are* for me and will obey my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow.

Now the king's sons, seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city, *who* were rearing them. 7So it was, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons and [b]slaughtered seventy persons, put their heads in baskets and sent *them* to him at Jezreel.

8Then a messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons."

And he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning."

9So it was, in the morning, that he went out and stood, and said to all the people,

* **9:27** Literally *The Garden House* * **9:36** 1 Kings 21:23 * **10:1** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Targum; Septuagint reads *Samaria;* Vulgate reads *city.*

rebellion against God and sealed their own doom by their disobedience.

10:1 *seventy sons.* Ahab's "seventy sons" probably included the children of his concubines, as well as grandchildren.

10:9 Righteousness—Jehu declared Ahab's "great men" (v. 6) innocent of the death of Ahab's seventy sons. The Hebrew word translates literally as "just" or "righteous." They were righteous in the same sense that Jehu himself was (v. 30), in that God had ordered the death of Ahab's family and they were actually carrying out God's orders. However, this did not mean that these men could be considered righteous in any other sense. They had already thrown in their lot with Ahab and his wicked ways, they were his "great men," and as such, they had to meet the same fate as the rest of his family (v. 11). They had almost accidentally been obedient to God's will, but their hearts were still for the enemy.

9:25 [v] 1 Kin. 21:19, 24–29 [w] Is. 13:1 **9:26** [x] 1 Kin. 21:13, 19 **9:27** [y] 2 Chr. 22:7, 9 **9:30** [z] Ezek. 23:40 **9:31** [a] 1 Kin. 16:9–20 **9:34** [b] 1 Kin. 16:31 **9:36** [c] 1 Kin. 21:23 **9:37** [d] Ps. 83:10 **10:4** [a] 2 Kin. 9:24, 27 **10:7** [b] 1 Kin. 21:21

"You *are* righteous. Indeed [c]I conspired against my master and killed him; but who killed all these? 10Know now that nothing shall [d]fall to the earth of the word of the LORD which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the LORD has done what He spoke [e]by His servant Elijah." 11So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his close acquaintances and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

Ahaziah's Forty-two Brothers Killed

12And he arose and departed and went to Samaria. On the way, at Beth Eked* of the Shepherds, 13[f]Jehu met with the brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, "Who *are* you?"

So they answered, "We *are* the brothers of Ahaziah; we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother."

14And he said, "Take them alive!" So they took them alive, and [g]killed them at the well of Beth Eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them.

The Rest of Ahab's Family Killed

15Now when he departed from there, he met [h]Jehonadab the son of [i]Rechab, *coming* to meet him; and he greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart right, as my heart *is* toward your heart?"

And Jehonadab answered, "It is."

Jehu said, "If it is, [j]give *me* your hand." So he gave *him* his hand, and he took him up to him into the chariot. 16Then he said, "Come with me, and see my [k]zeal for the LORD." So they had him ride in his chariot. 17And when he came to Samaria, [l]he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD [m]which He spoke to Elijah.

Worshipers of Baal Killed

18Then Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them, [n]"Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much. 19Now therefore, call to me all the [o]prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. Let no one be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal. Whoever is missing shall not live." But Jehu acted deceptively, with the intent of destroying the worshipers of Baal. 20And Jehu said, "Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed *it*. 21Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel; and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. So they came into the temple* of Baal, and the [p]temple of Baal was full from one end to the other. 22And he said to the one in charge of the wardrobe, "Bring out vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." So he brought out vestments for them. 23Then Jehu and Jehonadab the son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal, and said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and see that no servants of the LORD are here with you, but only the worshipers of Baal." 24So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed for himself eighty men on the outside, and had said, "*If* any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, *whoever lets him escape, it shall be* [q]his life for the life of the other."

25Now it happened, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, "Go in *and* kill them; let no one come out!" And they killed them with the edge of the sword; then the guards and the officers threw *them* out, and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal. 26And they brought the [r]*sacred* pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. 27Then they broke down the *sacred* pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal and [s]made it a refuse dump to this day. 28Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.

29However Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, *that is*, from [t]the golden calves that *were* at Bethel and Dan.

* **10:12** Or *The Shearing House* * **10:21** Literally *house,* and so elsewhere in this chapter

10:10 ***the LORD has done what He spoke.*** Evaluating Jehu is difficult. His praise for the ministry of the prophets of God and his stated respect for the word of God commend him to us, but later he did not exhibit faithfulness to the Lord (10:31).

10:15 ***Jehonadab.*** The name Jehonadab means "the LORD is noble." He was an ascetic, nomadic Rechabite. These people were known for their faithfulness to God and to the austere regulations laid down by Jehonadab (Jer. 35:1–16).

10:21 ***temple of Baal.*** This was the temple constructed by Ahab (1 Kin. 16:32).

10:21–24 Worship—At times Israel imported pagan ideas and practices into their worship and attempted to mix them with the worship of the Lord. The extremity of this apostasy was reached when Ahab erected an altar for Baal, the fertility god of the Canaanites, in a temple built for Baal in Samaria (1 Kin. 16:32). The participants in Baal worship engaged not only in immoral sexual orgies but in the detestable practice of child sacrifice (Num. 25:1–8; Jer. 19:5). God could not tolerate such behavior and Jehu's purge was the punishment that He had promised for disobedience.

10:29 ***the golden calves.*** Jehu's destruction of Baal worship was a political act. His continuing of the state

10:9 [c] 2 Kin. 9:14–24 **10:10** [d] 1 Sam. 3:19 [e] 1 Kin. 21:17–24, 29 **10:13** [f] 2 Chr. 22:8 **10:14** [g] 2 Chr. 22:8 **10:15** [h] Jer. 35:6 [i] 1 Chr. 2:55 [j] Ezra 10:19 **10:16** [k] 1 Kin. 19:10 **10:17** [l] 2 Kin. 9:8 [m] 1 Kin. 21:21, 29 **10:18** [n] 1 Kin. 16:31, 32 **10:19** [o] 1 Kin. 18:19; 22:6 **10:21** [p] 1 Kin. 16:32 **10:24** [q] 1 Kin. 20:39 **10:26** [r] [Deut. 7:5, 25] **10:27** [s] Ezra 6:11 **10:29** [t] 1 Kin. 12:28–30; 13:33, 34

30 And the LORD [u]said to Jehu, "Because you
have done well in doing *what is* right in My
sight, *and* have done to the house of Ahab
all that *was* in My heart, [v]your sons shall
sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth *gen-*
eration." 31 But Jehu took no heed to walk in
the law of the LORD God of Israel with all
his heart; for he did not depart from [w]the
sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.

Death of Jehu

32 In those days the LORD began to cut
off *parts* of Israel; and [x]Hazael conquered
them in all the territory of Israel 33 from the
Jordan eastward: all the land of Gilead—
Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh—from [y]Aro-
er, which *is* by the River Arnon, including
[z]Gilead and Bashan.

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all
that he did, and all his might, *are* they not
written in the book of the chronicles of the
kings of Israel? 35 So Jehu rested with his
fathers, and they buried him in Samaria.
Then [a]Jehoahaz his son reigned in his
place. 36 And the period that Jehu reigned
over Israel in Samaria *was* twenty-eight
years.

Athaliah Reigns in Judah

11 When [a]Athaliah [b]the mother of Aha-
ziah saw that her son was [c]dead, she
arose and destroyed all the royal heirs.
2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jo-
ram, sister of [d]Ahaziah, took Joash the
son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from
among the king's sons *who were* being
murdered; and they hid him and his nurse
in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he
was not killed. 3 So he was hidden with
her in the house of the LORD for six years,
while Athaliah reigned over the land.

Joash Crowned King of Judah

4 In [e]the seventh year Jehoiada sent
and brought the captains of hundreds—
of the bodyguards and the escorts—and
brought them into the house of the LORD
to him. And he made a covenant with them
and took an oath from them in the house
of the LORD, and showed them the king's
son. 5 Then he commanded them, saying,
"This *is* what you shall do: One-third of you
who come on duty [f]on the Sabbath shall be
keeping watch over the king's house, 6 one-
third *shall be* at the gate of Sur, and one-
third at the gate behind the escorts. You
shall keep the watch of the house, lest it
be broken down. 7 The two contingents of
you who go off duty on the Sabbath shall
keep the watch of the house of the LORD for
the king. 8 But you shall surround the king
on all sides, every man with his weapons
in his hand; and whoever comes within
range, let him be put to death. You are to
be with the king as he goes out and as he
comes in."

9 [g]So the captains of the hundreds did
according to all that Jehoiada the priest
commanded. Each of them took his men
who were to be on duty on the Sabbath,
with those who were going off duty on
the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the
priest. 10 And the priest gave the captains
of hundreds the spears and shields which
had belonged to King David, [h]that were in
the temple of the LORD. 11 Then the escorts
stood, every man with his weapons in his
hand, all around the king, from the right
side of the temple to the left side of the tem-
ple, by the altar and the house. 12 And he
brought out the king's son, put the crown
on him, and *gave him* the [i]Testimony;* they
made him king and anointed him, and they
clapped their hands and said, [j]"Long live
the king!"

Death of Athaliah

13 [k]Now when Athaliah heard the noise
of the escorts *and* the people, she came
to the people *in* the temple of the LORD.

* **11:12** That is, the Law (compare Exodus 25:16, 21 and Deuteronomy 31:9)

worship policies established by Jeroboam clearly shows his disregard for true spiritual revival in Israel.

10:32 ***the LORD began to cut off parts of Israel.*** The attacks of Hazael were part of God's judgment on Israel.

11:1 ***Athaliah.*** This name means "the LORD is exalted." Sadly, she did not live up to her name, and instead exalted herself.

11:2 ***Jehosheba.*** Josephus says that Jehosheba was Ahaziah's half sister. As the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, her marriage and her relation to the royal house made it possible for her to rescue and hide her nephew Joash.

11:3 ***hidden . . . in the house of the LORD.*** Joash was to inherit the promises of the Davidic covenant. His righteous reign may be attributed in part to his early years spent in the house of the Lord and to the godly instruction and protection of his aunt Jehosheba and her husband.

11:9 ***did according to all . . . the priest commanded.*** The remarkably willing obedience of the royal guard would seem to indicate that even her own followers were disgusted by Athaliah's wickedness.

11:12 ***gave him the Testimony.*** Deuteronomy prescribed the duties of the king with regard to the preservation of God's law (Deut. 17:18). By putting a copy of the Law in Joash's hand and the crown on his head, Jehoiada presented him as the rightful heir to the throne. The term "Testimony" recalls the covenant, emphasizing that Joash's coronation was given both its scriptural warrant and its rightful connection to the Davidic covenant.

10:30 [u] 2 Kin. 9:6, 7 [v] 2 Kin. 13:1, 10; 14:23; 15:8, 12 **10:31** [w] 1 Kin. 14:16 **10:32** [x] 2 Kin. 8:12; 13:22 **10:33** [y] Deut. 2:36 [z] Amos 1:3–5 **10:35** [a] 2 Kin. 13:1 **11:1** [a] 2 Chr. 22:10 [b] 2 Kin. 8:26 [c] 2 Kin. 9:27 **11:2** [d] 2 Kin. 8:25 **11:4** [e] 2 Chr. 23:1 **11:5** [f] 1 Ch. 9:25 **11:9** [g] 2 Chr. 23:8 **11:10** [h] 2 Sam. 8:7 **11:12** [i] Ex. 25:16; 31:18 [j] 1 Sam. 10:24 **11:13** [k] 2 Chr. 23:12

14 When she looked, there was the king
standing by [l]a pillar according to custom;
and the leaders and the trumpeters were
by the king. All the people of the land were
rejoicing and blowing trumpets. So Atha-
liah tore her clothes and cried out, "Trea-
son! Treason!"
15 And Jehoiada the priest commanded
the captains of the hundreds, the officers of
the army, and said to them, "Take her out-
side under guard, and slay with the sword
whoever follows her." For the priest had
said, "Do not let her be killed in the house
of the LORD." 16 So they seized her; and she
went by way of the horses' entrance *into*
the king's house, and there she was killed.
17 [m]Then Jehoiada [n]made a covenant
between the LORD, the king, and the peo-
ple, that they should be the LORD's people,
and *also* [o]between the king and the peo-
ple. 18 And all the people of the land went
to the [p]temple of Baal, and tore it down.
They thoroughly [q]broke in pieces its altars
and images, and [r]killed Mattan the priest
of Baal before the altars. And [s]the priest
appointed officers over the house of the
LORD. 19 Then he took the captains of hun-
dreds, the bodyguards, the escorts, and all
the people of the land; and they brought the
king down from the house of the LORD, and
went by way of the gate of the escorts to the
king's house. Then he sat on the throne of
the kings. 20 So all the people of the land
rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they
had slain Athaliah with the sword *in* the
king's house. 21 Jehoash *was* [t]seven years
old when he became king.

Jehoash Repairs the Temple

12 In the seventh year of Jehu, [a]Jehoash*
became king, and he reigned forty
years in Jerusalem. His mother's name
was Zibiah of Beersheba. 2 Jehoash did
what was right in the sight of the LORD
all the days in which [b]Jehoiada the priest
instructed him. 3 But [c]the high places were
not taken away; the people still sacrificed
and burned incense on the high places.
4 And Jehoash said to the priests, [d]"All
the money of the dedicated gifts that are
brought into the house of the LORD—
each man's [e]census money, each man's
[f]assessment money*—*and* all the money
that a man [g]purposes in his heart to bring
into the house of the LORD, 5 let the priests
take *it* themselves, each from his constitu-
ency; and let them repair the damages of
the temple, wherever any dilapidation is
found."
6 Now it was so, by the twenty-third year
of King Jehoash, [h]*that* the priests had not
repaired the damages of the temple. 7 [i]So
King Jehoash called Jehoiada the priest
and the *other* priests, and said to them,
"Why have you not repaired the damages
of the temple? Now therefore, do not take
more money from your constituency, but
deliver it for repairing the damages of the
temple." 8 And the priests agreed that they
would neither receive *more* money from
the people, nor repair the damages of the
temple.
9 Then Jehoiada the priest took [j]a chest,
bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the
altar, on the right side as one comes into
the house of the LORD; and the priests who
kept the door put [k]there all the money
brought into the house of the LORD. 10 So
it was, whenever they saw that *there was*
much money in the chest, that the king's
[l]scribe and the high priest came up and
put it in bags, and counted the money that
was found in the house of the LORD. 11 Then
they gave the money, which had been ap-
portioned, into the hands of those who
did the work, who had the oversight of the
house of the LORD; and they paid it out to
the carpenters and builders who worked on
the house of the LORD, 12 and to masons and
stonecutters, and for buying timber and
hewn stone, to [m]repair the damage of the
house of the LORD, and for all that was paid
out to repair the temple. 13 However [n]there
were not made for the house of the LORD
basins of silver, trimmers, sprinkling-
bowls, trumpets, any articles of gold or
articles of silver, from the money brought
into the house of the LORD. 14 But they gave
that to the workmen, and they repaired the
house of the LORD with it. 15 Moreover [o]they
did not require an account from the men

* **12:1** Spelled *Joash* in 11:2ff * **12:4** Compare Leviticus 27:2ff

11:17 ***covenant.*** Covenant renewal was particularly necessary after the usurpation by the wicked Athaliah.

11:20 ***rejoiced . . . quiet.*** The joy of the people and the peacefulness of the land were marks of God's blessing to the restored Davidic dynasty.

11:21 ***Jehoash.*** This variant spelling is used interchangeably with Joash.

12:2 ***all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.*** Sadly, after Jehoiada's death Joash's reign took a different turn; nonetheless, he was one of the few kings of Judah who showed some signs of righteousness.

12:3 ***high places.*** Although the high places seem to have been used at times for the worship of the true God, they were also strongly associated with Canaanite religious rites (1 Kin. 3:2–4; 14:23). Apostasy would become a besetting sin later in Joash's reign (2 Chr. 24:17–19,24).

11:14 [l] 2 Chr. 34:31 **11:17** [m] 2 Chr. 23:16 [n] Josh. 24:24, 25 [o] 2 Sam. 5:3 **11:18** [p] 2 Kin. 10:26, 27 [q] [Deut. 12:3] [r] 1 Kin. 18:40 [s] 2 Chr. 23:18 **11:21** [t] 2 Chr. 24:1–14 **12:1** [a] 2 Chr. 24:1 **12:2** [b] 2 Kin. 11:4 **12:3** [c] 2 Kin. 14:4; 15:35 **12:4** [d] 2 Kin. 22:4 [e] Ex. 30:13–16 [f] Lev. 27:2–28 [g] Ex. 35:5 **12:6** [h] 2 Chr. 24:5 **12:7** [i] 2 Chr. 24:6 **12:9** [j] 2 Chr. 23:1; 24:8 [k] Mark 12:41 **12:10** [l] 2 Sam. 8:17 **12:12** [m] 2 Kin. 22:5, 6 **12:13** [n] 2 Chr. 24:14 **12:15** [o] 2 Kin. 22:7

into whose hand they delivered the money to be paid to workmen, for they dealt faithfully. 16[p]The money from the trespass offerings and the money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the LORD. [q]It belonged to the priests.

Hazael Threatens Jerusalem

17[r]Hazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath, and took it; then [s]Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. 18And Jehoash king of Judah [t]took all the sacred things that his fathers, Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred things, and all the gold found in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and in the king's house, and sent *them* to Hazael king of Syria. Then he went away from Jerusalem.

Death of Joash

19Now the rest of the acts of Joash,* and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20And [u]his servants arose and formed a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of the Millo,* which goes down to Silla. 21For Jozachar* the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer,* his servants, struck him. So he died, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then [v]Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

Jehoahaz Reigns in Israel

13 In the twenty-third year of [a]Joash* the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, [b]Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* seventeen years. 2And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the [c]sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them.

3Then [d]the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of [e]Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of [f]Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael, all *their* days. 4So Jehoahaz [g]pleaded with the LORD, and the LORD listened to him; for [h]He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. 5[i]Then the LORD gave Israel a deliverer, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Syrians; and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before. 6Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin, *but* walked in them; [j]and the wooden image* also remained in Samaria. 7For He left of the army of Jehoahaz only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had destroyed them [k]and made them [l]like the dust at threshing.

8Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 9So Jehoahaz rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Joash his son reigned in his place.

Jehoash Reigns in Israel

10In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash* the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years. 11And he did evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, *but* walked in them.

12[m]Now the rest of the acts of Joash, [n]all that he did, and [o]his might with which he

* **12:19** Spelled *Jehoash* in 12:1ff * **12:20** Literally *The Landfill* * **12:21** Called *Zabad* in 2 Chronicles 24:26 • Called *Shimrith* in 2 Chronicles 24:26 * **13:1** Spelled *Jehoash* in 12:1 * **13:6** Hebrew *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess * **13:10** Spelled *Joash* in verse 9

12:17 ***Hazael king of Syria.*** The Aramean invasion recorded here took place late in Joash's reign. The king fell into apostasy and this invasion came as a judgment of his wickedness.

12:20 ***killed Joash.*** Joash had been severely wounded in Hazael's invasion (2 Chr. 24:24–25), and then fell victim to dissent and unpopularity that culminated in his assassination. Because of Joash's apostasy and murder of Zechariah, Jehoiada's son (2 Chr. 24:17–22), the king was not laid to rest in the royal tombs (2 Chr. 24:25).

13:2 ***evil . . . the sins of Jeroboam.*** After the end of the house of Omri in Jehu's purge, the kings of Israel reverted to the level of syncretism that had been established by Jeroboam I, indulging in a skewed religion in which worship of the Lord was mixed with idolatry.

13:4 ***pleaded with the LORD.*** Although Jehoahaz did not follow the Lord exclusively, God graciously heard his genuine plea for help. In His longsuffering mercy, God often deals patiently with people and blesses them in spite of their failures (1 Kin. 21:25–29; 2 Pet. 3:9).

13:6 Unbelief—No one is bound to continue following a path of sin. We always have the option of turning to God. However, the tendency to maintain things as they are and have been, to resist change no matter how urgently needed or how right it may be, or how much good it promises, is powerful. We cling to the known, the familiar, no matter how unsatisfying and ineffective it may be or how unhappy it may make us. Changing direction is not easy or painless, but the good news is that it really can be done. God is loving

12:16 [p] [Lev. 5:15, 18] [q] [Num. 18:9] **12:17** [r] 2 Kin. 8:12 [s] 2 Chr. 24:23 **12:18** [t] 1 Kin. 15:18 **12:20** [u] 2 Kin. 14:5 **12:21** [v] 2 Chr. 24:27 **13:1** [a] 2 Kin. 12:1 [b] 2 Kin. 10:35 **13:2** [c] 1 Kin. 12:26–33 **13:3** [d] Judg. 2:14 [e] 2 Kin. 8:12 [f] Amos 1:4 **13:4** [g] [Ps. 78:34] [h] [Ex. 3:7, 9] **13:5** [i] 2 Kin. 13:25; 14:25, 27 **13:6** [j] 1 Kin. 16:33 **13:7** [k] 2 Kin. 10:32 [l] [Amos 1:3] **13:12** [m] 2 Kin. 14:8–15 [n] 2 Kin. 13:14–19, 25 [o] 2 Kin. 14:9

fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 13So Joash [p]rested with his fathers. Then Jeroboam sat on his throne. And Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Death of Elisha

14Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, "O my father, my father, [q]the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!"

15And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and some arrows." So he took himself a bow and some arrows. 16Then he said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow." So he put his hand *on it*, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. 17And he said, "Open the east window"; and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. And he said, "The arrow of the LORD's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at [r]Aphek till you have destroyed *them*." 18Then he said, "Take the arrows"; so he took *them*. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground"; so he struck three times, and stopped. 19And the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed *it!* [s]But now you will strike Syria *only* three times."

20Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the [t]*raiding* bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. 21So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band *of raiders;* and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet.

Israel Recaptures Cities from Syria

22And [u]Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. 23But the LORD was [v]gracious to them, had compassion on them, and [w]regarded them, [x]because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence.

24Now Hazael king of Syria died. Then Ben-Hadad his son reigned in his place. 25And Jehoash* the son of Jehoahaz recaptured from the hand of Ben-Hadad, the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. [y]Three times Joash defeated him and recaptured the cities of Israel.

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

14 In [a]the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, [b]Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, became king. 2He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. 3And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like his father David; he did everything [c]as his father Joash had done. 4[d]However the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

5Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he executed his servants [e]who had murdered his father the king. 6But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the LORD commanded, saying, [f]"Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin."*

7[g]He killed ten thousand Edomites in [h]the Valley of Salt, and took Sela by war, [i]and called its name Joktheel to this day.

8[j]Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash* the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us face one

* **13:25** Spelled *Joash* in verses 12–14, 25
* **14:6** Deuteronomy 24:16 * **14:8** Spelled *Joash* in 13:12ff and 2 Chronicles 25:17ff

and forgiving, and when we repent of sin, He gives us the power to overcome it.

13:14 ***O my father.*** The grief of Jehoash at the impending death of Elisha shows that, like his father Jehoahaz, this Israelite king possessed some genuine spirituality. The line of Jehu had its good moments and received some reward from the Lord (10:30). However, none of this line or any other of the kings of Israel served God with all their hearts.

13:18 ***he struck three times, and stopped.*** Jehoash's half-hearted compliance with Elisha's instructions exposed his weak faith and illustrated God's unfavorable evaluation of his character (v. 11).

13:21 ***he revived.*** There was no magic in Elisha's bones; this was a demonstration of the power of God associated with His servant.

13:23 ***had compassion on them.*** This glimpse of the wonderful mercy of the living God is like a drink of fresh water in the midst of the sad tale of the northern kingdom.

14:1 ***Amaziah.*** The name Amaziah means "the LORD is mighty." He was one of the few godly kings in the kingdom of Judah.

14:4 ***high places.*** Like his father Joash before him (12:3), Amaziah allowed worship at the high places to continue. This practice blossomed into open idolatry in the reigns of subsequent kings (16:4; 21:3).

13:13 [p] 2 Kin. 14:16 **13:14** [q] 2 Kin. 2:12 **13:17** [r] 1 Kin. 20:26 **13:19** [s] 2 Kin. 13:25 **13:20** [t] 2 Kin. 3:5; 24:2 **13:22** [u] 2 Kin. 8:12, 13 **13:23** [v] 2 Kin. 14:27 [w] [Ex. 2:24, 25] [x] Ex. 32:13 **13:25** [y] 2 Kin. 13:18, 19 **14:1** [a] 2 Kin. 13:10 [b] 2 Chr. 25:1, 2 **14:3** [c] 2 Kin. 12:2 **14:4** [d] 2 Kin. 12:3 **14:5** [e] 2 Kin. 12:20 **14:6** [f] [Ezek. 18:4, 20] **14:7** [g] 2 Chr. 25:5–16 [h] 2 Sam. 8:13 [i] Josh. 15:38 **14:8** [j] 2 Chr. 25:17, 18

another *in battle*." 9And Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, [k]"The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the [l]cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as wife'; and a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. 10You have indeed defeated Edom, and [m]your heart has lifted you up. Glory *in that,* and stay at home; for why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall—you and Judah with you?"

11But Amaziah would not heed. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went out; so he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another at [n]Beth Shemesh, which *belongs* to Judah. 12And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent. 13Then Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh; and he went to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from [o]the Gate of Ephraim to [p]the Corner Gate—four hundred cubits. 14And he took all [q]the gold and silver, all the articles that were found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

15[r]Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did—his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah—*are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 16So Jehoash rested with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Then Jeroboam his son reigned in his place.

17[s]Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. 18Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 19And [t]they formed a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to [u]Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. 20Then they brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David.

21And all the people of Judah took [v]Azariah,* who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. 22He built [w]Elath and restored it to Judah, after the king rested with his fathers.

Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel

23In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, *and reigned* forty-one years. 24And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the [x]sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 25He [y]restored the territory of Israel [z]from the entrance of Hamath to [a]the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant [b]Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who *was* from [c]Gath Hepher. 26For the LORD [d]saw *that* the affliction of Israel *was* very bitter; and whether bond or free, [e]there was no helper for Israel. 27[f]And the LORD did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

28Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did—his might, how he made war, and how he recaptured for Israel, from [g]Damascus and Hamath, [h]*what had belonged* to Judah—*are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 29So Jeroboam rested with his fathers, the kings of Israel. Then [i]Zechariah his son reigned in his place.

* **14:21** Called *Uzziah* in 2 Chronicles 26:1ff, Isaiah 6:1, and elsewhere

14:9–10 Pride—Amaziah's conquest of the formidable city of Sela atop the seemingly unapproachable cliffs of the Wadi Musa was a monumental accomplishment. Rather than recognize God's hand in this feat, Amaziah became proud and fell into spiritual compromise (2 Chr. 25:5–16). A little success can sometimes be a dangerous thing. Failure to acknowledge God's power leads to personal pride, and such pride leads inevitably to downfall. God will not share His glory.

14:11 *Beth Shemesh.* The name of the city means "house of the sun," indicating that there had once been a temple to the sun god there in Canaanite times. Beth Shemesh was in the Valley of Sorek, about 15 miles west of Jerusalem. This was the town where the holy ark was taken after its "wanderings" among the Philistines.

14:17 *fifteen years.* The notice of fifteen years of life for Amaziah suggests he was released after the death of Jehoash for an additional period (782–767 B.C.). If so, he reigned alongside his son Azariah (or Uzziah), whose 52-year reign began in 792 B.C. (15:2).

14:23 *forty-one years.* Jeroboam II had a very long reign. His 41 years included 10 years as coregent with his father Jehoash (792–782 B.C.).

14:25 *Jonah.* Once again a prophet of God gave direction to a king. The reference to Jonah here provides the historical setting for the famous prophet (Jon. 1:1)

14:28 *his might.* The Scriptures emphasize Jeroboam's military prowess. Yet Jeroboam's might may have also been economic. The well-known Samaritan Ostraca, which may date from this period, record the delivery to Samaria of fine oil and barley produced on the royal estates.

14:29 *Zechariah.* The brief reign of Zechariah is noted in 15:8–12. He was the fourth in the line of Jehu to reign in Israel, in fulfillment of God's gracious promise to Jehu (10:30).

14:9 [k] Judg. 9:8–15 [l] 1 Kin. 4:33 **14:10** [m] Deut. 8:14 **14:11** [n] Josh. 19:38; 21:16 **14:13** [o] Neh. 8:16; 12:39 [p] Jer. 31:38 **14:14** [q] 1 Kin. 7:51 **14:15** [r] 2 Kin. 13:12, 13 **14:17** [s] 2 Chr. 25:25–28 **14:19** [t] 2 Chr. 25:27 [u] Josh. 10:31 **14:21** [v] 2 Kin. 15:13 **14:22** [w] 2 Kin. 16:6 **14:24** [x] 1 Kin. 12:26–33 **14:25** [y] 2 Kin. 10:32; 13:5, 25 [z] 1 Kin. 8:65 [a] Deut. 3:17 [b] Jon. 1:1 [c] Josh. 19:13 **14:26** [d] 2 Kin. 13:4 [e] Deut. 32:36 **14:27** [f] [2 Kin. 13:5, 23] **14:28** [g] 1 Kin. 11:24 [h] 2 Chr. 8:3 **14:29** [i] 2 Kin. 15:8

Azariah Reigns in Judah

15 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, [a]Azariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, [b]became king. **2**He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem. **3**And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done, **4**[c]except that the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. **5**Then the LORD [d]struck the king, so that he was a leper until the day of his [e]death; so he [f]dwelt in an isolated house. And Jotham the king's son *was* over the *royal* house, judging the people of the land.

6Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? **7**So Azariah rested with his fathers, and [g]they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.

Zechariah Reigns in Israel

8In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, [h]Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. **9**And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, [i]as his fathers had done; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. **10**Then Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and [j]struck and killed him in front of the people; and he reigned in his place.

11Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

12This *was* the word of the LORD which He spoke to Jehu, saying, [k]"Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth *generation*."* And so it was.

Shallum Reigns in Israel

13Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah* king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. **14**For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from [l]Tirzah, came to Samaria, and struck Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him; and he reigned in his place.

15Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, and the conspiracy which he led, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. **16**Then from Tirzah, Menahem attacked [m]Tiphsah, all who *were* there, and its territory. Because they did not surrender, therefore he attacked *it*. All [n]the women there who were with child he ripped open.

Menahem Reigns in Israel

17In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi became king over Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria. **18**And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. **19**[o]Pul* king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to [p]strengthen the kingdom under his control. **20**And Menahem [q]exacted the money from Israel, from all the very wealthy, from each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land.

21Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? **22**So Menahem rested with his

* **15:12** 2 Kings 10:30 * **15:13** Called *Azariah* in 14:21ff and 15:1ff * **15:19** That is, Tiglath-Pileser III (compare verse 29)

15:1 ***Azariah.*** Also called Uzziah (2 Chr. 26:1), this king is credited with 52 years of reign. This figure includes 10 years during which his father Amaziah was held captive (792–782 B.C.). The latter part of Azariah's reign was tainted by his intrusion into the priestly office (2 Chr. 26:16–19), an act that resulted in his being stricken with leprosy (v. 5). This condition put his son Jotham on the throne to rule with him and handle public matters relative to the royal office. The nature of Jotham's duties (v. 5), the assigning of a full 52 years of reign to Azariah, and Isaiah's dating of his call to the year of Azariah's (or Uzziah's) death (Is. 6:1) may indicate that Azariah retained the power of the throne until the end.

15:5 ***leper.*** The events that brought about this affliction are described in 2 Chr. 26:16–21.

15:12 ***fourth generation.*** Jehu had been promised a continuing posterity into the fourth generation as a reward for carrying out his divine commission (10:30), but after the death of Zechariah in 752 B.C., Israel plunged into a period of degeneracy, bloody conspiracies and international intrigue that would bring about its demise in 722 B.C.

15:17 ***Menahem.*** This wicked king came into power by assassination and established his authority by brutal acts against humanity. Ironically, his name means "comforter."

15:19 ***Pul.*** Pul is a second Babylonian name for the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.; 1 Chr. 5:26). Although he came to the throne as a usurper from the ranks of the military, he would prove a competent king. Under Tiglath-Pileser III and his successors, Assyria became the dominant power in the Middle East for well over a century (747–612 B.C.).

15:1 [a] 2 Kin. 15:13, 30 [b] 2 Kin. 14:21 **15:4** [c] 2 Kin. 12:3; 14:4; 15:35 **15:5** [d] 2 Chr. 26:19–23 [e] Is. 6:1 [f] [Lev. 13:46] **15:7** [g] 2 Chr. 26:23 **15:8** [h] 2 Kin. 14:29 **15:9** [i] 2 Kin. 14:24 **15:10** [j] Amos 7:9 **15:12** [k] 2 Kin. 10:30 **15:14** [l] 1 Kin. 14:17 **15:16** [m] 1 Kin. 4:24 [n] 2 Kin. 8:12 **15:19** [o] Hos. 8:9 [p] 2 Kin. 14:5 **15:20** [q] 2 Kin. 23:35

fathers. Then Pekahiah his son reigned in his place.

Pekahiah Reigns in Israel

23In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* two years. **24**And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. **25**Then Pekah the son of Remaliah, an officer of his, conspired against him and killed him in Samaria, in the [r]citadel of the king's house, along with Argob and Arieh; and with him were fifty men of Gilead. He killed him and reigned in his place.

26Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Pekah Reigns in Israel

27In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, [s]Pekah the son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years. **28**And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. **29**In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria [t]came and took [u]Ijon, Abel Beth Maachah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he [v]carried them captive to Assyria. **30**Then Hoshea the son of Elah led a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck and killed him; so he [w]reigned in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

31Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, indeed they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Jotham Reigns in Judah

32In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, [x]Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, began to reign. **33**He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jerusha* the daughter of Zadok. **34**And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD; he did [y]according to all that his father Uzziah had done. **35**[z]However the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. [a]He built the Upper Gate of the house of the LORD.

36Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? **37**In those days the LORD began to send [b]Rezin king of Syria and [c]Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah. **38**So Jotham rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

16 In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. **2**Ahaz *was* twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do *what was* right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his father David *had done*. **3**But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel; indeed [a]he made his son pass through the

* **15:33** Spelled *Jerushah* in 2 Chronicles 27:1

15:23 *Pekahiah.* Pekahiah means "the Lord has opened the eyes." After an evil reign of two years, a usurper "closed his eyes" for him.

15:25 Murder—Sometimes a corrupt leader needs to be taken out of power, but when this is done by coup and murder, the new leader ends up being just as bad as the old one. He lives in fear that someone will do the same thing to him; in an attempt to keep his position, he will exercise the same control and perpetrate the same kind of abuses as the leader he deposed. A vicious cycle is begun, as we can see from the succession of murders and new kings in Israel. Anytime leadership changes through conniving and coup, even if actual murder is not part of the picture, problems in trust and confidence will result.

15:27 *Pekah.* Because Hoshea's nine-year reign (17:1) began in 732 B.C., Pekah's twenty years must have included a time of kingship in his own district during the unsettled days of Shallum, Menahem, and Pekahiah (752–740 B.C.). Apparently Pekah rode the crest of anti-Assyrian sentiment.

15:30 *Hoshea . . . led a conspiracy.* The annals of Tiglath-Pileser III record Hoshea's heavy tribute and the Assyrian king's claim that he himself set the new Israelite king in office.

15:32 *Jotham.* Jotham's reign was partly righteous. After the purge of Ahaziah and Athaliah (9:27–29; 11:13–16), the kings of Judah who reigned in relative righteousness were Joash (12:2–3), Amaziah (14:3–4), and Azariah (15:3–4). A positive righteousness would be modeled by Hezekiah (18:3–6) and again by Josiah (22:2).

16:1 *Ahaz . . . began to reign.* The seventeenth year of Pekah was 736–735 B.C. Ahaz's 16-year reign apparently ended in 720 B.C. If so, like Jotham before him, Ahaz must have lived on another four years after giving up his rule. Hezekiah's first year of independent rule began in 715 B.C., 14 years before Sennacherib's invasion of Judah and his siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C.

16:3 *made his son pass through the fire.* According to the author of Chronicles, this rite was connected with the Baal worship practiced in the valley of the

15:25 [r] 1 Kin. 16:18 **15:27** [s] Is. 7:1 **15:29** [t] 1 Chr. 5:26 [u] 1 Kin. 15:20 [v] 2 Kin. 17:6 **15:30** [w] [Hos. 10:3, 7, 15] **15:32** [x] 2 Chr. 27:1 **15:34** [y] 2 Kin. 15:3, 4 **15:35** [z] 2 Kin. 15:4 [a] 2 Chr. 23:20; 27:3 **15:37** [b] 2 Kin. 16:5–9 [c] 2 Kin. 15:26, 27 **16:3** [a] [Lev. 18:21]

fire, according to the [b]abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel. 4And he sacrificed and burned incense on the [c]high places, [d]on the hills, and under every green tree.

5[e]Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to *make* war; and they besieged Ahaz but could not overcome *him*. 6At that time Rezin king of Syria [f]captured Elath for Syria, and drove the men of Judah from Elath. Then the Edomites* went to Elath, and dwell there to this day.

7So Ahaz sent messengers to [g]Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I *am* your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me." 8And Ahaz [h]took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasuries of the king's house, and sent *it as* a present to the king of Assyria. 9So the king of Assyria heeded him; for the king of Assyria went up against [i]Damascus and [j]took it, carried *its people* captive to [k]Kir, and killed Rezin.

10Now King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that *was* at Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the design of the altar and its pattern, according to all its workmanship. 11Then [l]Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. So Urijah the priest made *it* before King Ahaz came back from Damascus. 12And when the king came back from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and [m]the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. 13So he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering; and he poured his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the altar. 14He also brought [n]the bronze altar which *was* before the LORD, from the front of the temple—from between the *new* altar and the house of the LORD—and put it on the north side of the *new* altar. 15Then King Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, "On the great *new* altar burn [o]the morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king's burnt sacrifice, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice. And the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire *by*." 16Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that King Ahaz commanded.

17[p]And King Ahaz cut off [q]the panels of the carts, and removed the lavers from them; and he took down [r]the Sea from the bronze oxen that *were* under it, and put it on a pavement of stones. 18Also he removed the Sabbath pavilion which they had built in the temple, and he removed the king's outer entrance from the house of the LORD, on account of the king of Assyria.

19Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20So Ahaz rested with his fathers, and [s]was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

Hoshea Reigns in Israel

17 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, [a]Hoshea the son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, *and he reigned* nine years. 2And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him. 3[b]Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea [c]became his vassal, and paid him tribute money. 4And the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as *he had done* year by year. Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

* **16:6** Some ancient authorities read *Syrians*.

son of Hinnom (2 Chr. 28:2–3). Ahaz was an apostate who personally led his people in the religious worship practices of Canaan.

16:7 ***sent messengers . . . king of Assyria.*** Tiglath-Pileser's records list the tribute of both Hoshea and Ahaz.

16:10–16 Vanity—The king of Israel was commanded to pattern his reign according to God's Word, but Ahaz apparently thought his own ideas were better. Once the Word of God has been set aside, there is no stopping point for presumptuous spirituality and immoral activities. Such practices may be aesthetically and humanly pleasing, but Jesus designated them as vain worship because they are based upon precepts and traditions of men, rather than on God's holy and sufficient Word (Matt. 15:7–9).

16:18 ***the king of Assyria.*** Ahaz was more interested in imitating the foreign king than in following God. His use of the altar to make sacrifices to God and his many other religious innovations underscored Ahaz's essential paganism (2 Chr. 28:2–4,22–25). He went so far in his apostasy as to shut the doors of the temple (2 Chr. 28:24).

17:1 ***twelfth year.*** Hoshea became king in 732 B.C., so the twelve years of Ahaz indicate a period of coregency with his father Jotham.

17:3 ***Shalmaneser.*** Shalmaneser V succeeded Tiglath-Pileser III as king of Assyria in 727 B.C.

16:3 [b] [Deut. 12:31] **16:4** [c] 2 Kin. 15:34, 35 [d] [Deut. 12:2] **16:5** [e] Is. 7:1, 4 **16:6** [f] 2 Kin. 14:22 **16:7** [g] 1 Chr. 5:26 **16:8** [h] 2 Kin. 12:17, 18 **16:9** [i] 2 Kin. 14:28 [j] Amos 1:5 [k] Amos 9:7 **16:11** [l] Is. 8:2 **16:12** [m] 2 Chr. 26:16, 19 **16:14** [n] 2 Chr. 4:1 **16:15** [o] Ex. 29:39–41 **16:17** [p] 2 Chr. 28:24 [q] 1 Kin. 7:27–29 [r] 1 Kin. 7:23–25 **16:20** [s] 2 Chr. 28:27 **17:1** [a] 2 Kin. 15:30 **17:3** [b] 2 Kin. 18:9–12 [c] 2 Kin. 24:1

Israel Carried Captive to Assyria

5 Now [d]the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. 6 [e]In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and [f]carried Israel away to Assyria, [g]and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 For [h]so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had [i]feared other gods, 8 and [j]had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. 9 Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that *were* not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, [k]from watchtower to fortified city. 10 [l]They set up for themselves *sacred* pillars and [m]wooden images* [n]on every high hill and under every green tree. 11 There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger, 12 for they served idols, [o]of which the LORD had said to them, [p]"You shall not do this thing."

13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His [q]prophets, [r]every seer, saying, [s]"Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments *and* My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets." 14 Nevertheless they would not hear, but [t]stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who [u]did not believe in the LORD their God. 15 And they [v]rejected His statutes [w]and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed [x]idols, [y]became idolaters, and *went* after the nations who *were* all around them, *concerning* whom the LORD had charged them that they should [z]not do like them. 16 So they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, [a]made for themselves a molded image *and* two calves, [b]made a wooden image and worshiped all the [c]host of heaven, [d]and served Baal. 17 [e]And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, [f]practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and [g]sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. 18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left [h]but the tribe of Judah alone.

19 Also [i]Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. 20 And the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and [j]delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His [k]sight. 21 For [l]He tore Israel from the house of David, and [m]they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin. 22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, 23 until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, [n]as He had said by all His servants the prophets. [o]So Israel was carried

* **17:10** Hebrew *Asherim*, Canaanite deities

17:7 ***Israel had sinned.*** The reason for the fall of Samaria and the end of the northern kingdom was clearly its spiritual failure; they had turned away from the living God.

17:14–18 Israel's Disobedience—These verses are a good summary of the spiritual departure from God that led to Israel's eventual downfall. The people of Israel didn't listen and three specific results are recorded:

1. *The Israelites refused to believe.* All the fulfilled promises, all the history of God's saving acts were simply ignored. It didn't matter what God had done. They had ears to hear and eyes to see, yet failed to do so.
2. *They rejected God's laws and covenant.* They willfully turned their backs on the way of living that God had directed them toward.
3. *They worshiped idols.* They actually worshiped anything and everything but what they were instructed to worship. In spite of God's clear mandate to them to have no other gods before Him, the Israelites were easily influenced by any culture they came in contact with.

The common denominator here is the will. This was willful rebellion. We are no different. Every day each of us, by an act of our own will, does something disobedient. We worry unnecessarily, we have fears for aspects of our lives that we know God has promised to protect and care for. Sometimes we simply don't care what God has said. We'd rather do what we want because it feels good or because His way is too difficult. We are truly sinners in need of a forgiving God.

17:21 ***Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD.*** Jeroboam had initiated the false worship that set the standard for all of Israel's idolatrous activities. The worship of the calves at Dan and Bethel, and Israel's fascination with Baal worship (1 Kin. 12:28–29; 16:32–33), are repeatedly cited as the chief causes of Israel's spiritual defeat and political collapse.

17:5 [d] Hos. 13:16 **17:6** [e] Hos. 1:4; 13:16 [f] [Deut. 28:36, 64; 29:27, 28] [g] 1 Chr. 5:26 **17:7** [h] [Josh. 23:16] [i] Judg. 6:10 **17:8** [j] [Lev. 18:3] **17:9** [k] 2 Kin. 18:8 **17:10** [l] Is. 57:5 [m] [Ex. 34:12–14] [n] [Deut. 12:2] **17:12** [o] [Ex. 20:3–5] [p] [Deut. 4:19] **17:13** [q] Neh. 9:29, 30 [r] 1 Sam. 9:9 [s] [Jer. 18:11; 25:5; 35:15] **17:14** [t] [Acts 7:51] [u] Deut. 9:23 **17:15** [v] Jer. 44:3 [w] Deut. 29:25 [x] Deut. 32:21 [y] [Rom. 1:21–23] [z] [Deut. 12:30, 31] **17:16** [a] 1 Kin. 12:28 [b] [1 Kin. 14:15] [c] [Deut. 4:19] [d] 1 Kin. 16:31; 22:53 **17:17** [e] 2 Kin. 16:3 [f] [Deut. 18:10–12] [g] 1 Kin. 21:20 **17:18** [h] 1 Kin. 11:13, 32 **17:19** [i] Jer. 3:8 **17:20** [j] 2 Kin. 13:3; 15:29 [k] 2 Kin. 24:20 **17:21** [l] 1 Kin. 11:11, 31 [m] 1 Kin. 12:20, 28 **17:23** [n] 1 Kin. 14:16 [o] 2 Kin. 17:6

away from their own land to Assyria, *as it is* to this day.

Assyria Resettles Samaria

24 [p]Then the king of Assyria brought *people* from Babylon, Cuthah, [q]Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. 25 And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, *that* they did not fear the LORD; therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed *some* of them. 26 So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land." 27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land." 28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the LORD.

29 However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put *them* [r]in the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, *every* nation in the cities where they dwelt. 30 The men of [s]Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, 31 [t]and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites [u]burned their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. 32 So they feared the LORD, [v]and from every class they appointed for themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. 33 [w]They feared the LORD, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away.

34 To this day they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the LORD, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances, or the law and commandment which the LORD had commanded the children of Jacob, [x]whom He named Israel, 35 with whom the LORD had made a covenant and charged them, saying: [y]"You shall not fear other gods, nor [z]bow down to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them; 36 but the LORD, who [a]brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and [b]an outstretched arm, [c]Him you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice. 37 And the statutes, the ordinances, the law, and the commandment which He wrote for you, [d]you shall be careful to observe forever; you shall not fear other gods. 38 And the covenant that I have made with you, [e]you shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods. 39 But the LORD your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies." 40 However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals. 41 [f]So these nations feared the LORD, yet served their carved images; also their children and their children's children have continued doing as their fathers did, even to this day.

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

18 Now it came to pass in the third year of [a]Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, *that* [b]Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* [c]Abi* the daughter of Zechariah. 3 And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

4 [d]He removed the high places and broke the *sacred* pillars, cut down the wooden image* and broke in pieces the [e]bronze

* **18:2** Called *Abijah* in 2 Chronicles 29:1ff
* **18:4** Hebrew *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess

17:24 ***king of Assyria.*** This was probably Sargon II (722–705 B.C.), although the practice described here was continued by later kings as well. Such a mixing of populations was designed to break down ethnic distinctions and weaken the loyalties that the people had. It would also help create a sense of empire.
Samaria. This was the whole region where the repopulation took place; eventually the inhabitants would be called Samaritans.

17:33 ***feared the LORD, yet served their own gods.*** This is the classic example of syncretism, the attempt to mix the worship of the true God with other religious traditions and beliefs. The apostate religion of the people of Samaria caused them to be rejected by the faithful Jews who returned from the exile (Ezra 4:1–5), and by the time of the New Testament, hostility was very strong between the two groups (John 4:9; 8:48).

18:1 ***the third year of Hoshea.*** The 29 years of Hezekiah's reign thus included a period of coregency with his father Ahaz before he ruled independently (715–699 B.C.). The name Hezekiah means "the LORD has strengthened."

18:3 ***he did what was right in the sight of the LORD.*** Hezekiah was the first king since David who served the Lord with all his heart.

18:4 ***high places.*** Consistently, the kings who preceded Hezekiah are criticized by the author for not destroying the high places (15:34–35). While there

17:24 [p] Ezra 4:2, 10 [q] 2 Kin. 18:34 **17:29** [r] 1 Kin. 12:31; 13:32 **17:30** [s] 2 Kin. 17:24 **17:31** [t] Ezra 4:9 [u] [Deut. 12:31] **17:32** [v] 1 Kin. 12:31; 13:33 **17:33** [w] Zeph. 1:5 **17:34** [x] Gen. 32:28; 35:10 **17:35** [y] Judg. 6:10 [z] [Ex. 20:5] **17:36** [a] Ex. 14:15–30 [b] Ex. 6:6; 9:15 [c] [Deut. 10:20] **17:37** [d] Deut. 5:32 **17:38** [e] Deut. 4:23; 6:12 **17:41** [f] 2 Kin. 17:32, 33 **18:1** [a] 2 Kin. 17:1 [b] 2 Chr. 28:27; 29:1 **18:2** [c] Is. 38:5 **18:4** [d] 2 Chr. 31:1 [e] Num. 21:5–9

serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan.* 5He [f]trusted in the LORD God of Israel, [g]so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. 6For he [h]held fast to the LORD; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses. 7The LORD [i]was with him; he [j]prospered wherever he went. And he [k]rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. 8[l]He subdued the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory, [m]from watchtower to fortified city.

9Now [n]it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which *was* the seventh year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. 10And at the end of three years they took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, that *is*, [o]the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. 11[p]Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away captive to Assyria, and put them [q]in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 12because they [r]did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded; and they would neither hear nor do *them*.

13And [s]in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. 14Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; turn away from me; whatever you impose on me I will pay." And the king of Assyria assessed Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15So Hezekiah [t]gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house. 16At that time Hezekiah stripped *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD

17Then the king of Assyria sent *the* Tartan,* *the* Rabsaris,* *and the* Rabshakeh* from Lachish, with a great army against Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they had come up, they went and stood by the [u]aqueduct from the upper pool, [v]which *was* on the highway to the Fuller's Field. 18And when they had called to the king, [w]Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them. 19Then *the* Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: [x]"What confidence *is* this in which you trust? 20You speak of *having* plans and power for war; but *they are* mere words. And in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? 21[y]Now look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. 22But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' *is* it not He [z]whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this

* **18:4** Literally *Bronze Thing* * **18:17** A title, probably *Commander in Chief* • A title, probably *Chief Officer* • A title, probably *Chief of Staff* or *Governor*

were traditions of worship of the true God at these locations, far too often they became sites for the licentious worship of Baal and Asherah. Hezekiah's reforms included not only the destruction of the pagan cult objects introduced in the days of his apostate father Ahaz, but the bronze serpent that had been preserved since the days of Moses (2 Chr. 29–31). Symbols all too easily can be made into objects of veneration.

18:5 *none like him.* Hezekiah's faith was unparalleled by any other king who had preceded him after the time of David; Josiah's adherence to the law would be extolled in a similar manner (23:25).

18:6 Obedience—The obedience of Hezekiah provides a powerful lesson for all of God's people. He "clung" to the Lord, staying true to God and His commandments. He must have faced strong opposition as he eliminated practices which had been going on for generations, and destroyed objects which had long been considered sacred, but he knew that God's approval was more important than human approbation. In the same way, we must be willing to serve God before we please those around us.

18:13 *fourteenth year.* Hezekiah's fourteenth year of sole rule was 701 B.C. The details of the generally rebellious situation that provoked Sennacherib to invade the western portion of his empire are recounted in his annals, where Hezekiah is particularly mentioned for his involvement in the whole affair.

18:17 *Tartan . . . Rabsaris . . . Rabshakeh.* These titles suggest persons of high station in Assyria.

18:20 *in whom do you trust.* Perhaps Hezekiah's reputation for trusting in God was already widely known (v. 5). Trusting became the focal point of the Assyrian's psychological warfare (vv. 19–22,24–30).

18:21 *broken reed.* Actually, Sennacherib's warning against confidence in Egypt was well taken, the point having been made previously by Isaiah (Is. 30:3–5; 31:1–3).

18:5 [f] 2 Kin. 19:10 [g] 2 Kin. 23:25 **18:6** [h] Deut. 10:20 **18:7** [i] [2 Chr. 15:2] [j] 1 Sam. 18:5, 14 [k] 2 Kin. 16:7 **18:8** [l] Is. 14:29 [m] 2 Kin. 17:9 **18:9** [n] 2 Kin. 17:3 **18:10** [o] 2 Kin. 17:6 **18:11** [p] 2 Kin. 17:6 [q] 1 Chr. 5:26 **18:12** [r] 2 Kin. 17:7–18 **18:13** [s] 2 Chr. 32:1 **18:15** [t] 2 Kin. 12:18; 16:8 **18:17** [u] 2 Kin. 20:20 [v] Is. 7:3 **18:18** [w] Is. 22:20 **18:19** [x] 2 Chr. 32:10 **18:21** [y] Ezek. 29:6, 7 **18:22** [z] 2 Kin. 18:4

altar in Jerusalem'?"' 23Now therefore, I urge you, give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses—if you are able on your part to put riders on them! 24How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen? 25Have I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'"

26[a]Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to *the* Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in [b]Aramaic, for we understand *it;* and do not speak to us in Hebrew* in the hearing of the people who *are* on the wall."

27But *the* Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?"

28Then *the* Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and spoke, saying, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! 29Thus says the king: [c]'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he shall not be able to deliver you from his hand; 30nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."' 31Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make *peace* with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own [d]vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you drink the waters of his own cistern; 32until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, [e]a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." 33[f]Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? 34Where *are* the gods of [g]Hamath and Arpad? Where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and [h]Ivah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? 35Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, [i]that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

36But the people held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him." 37Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah [j]with *their* clothes torn, and told him the words of *the* Rabshakeh.

Isaiah Assures Deliverance

19 And [a]so it was, when King Hezekiah heard *it,* that he tore his clothes, covered himself with [b]sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. 2Then he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. 3And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This day *is* a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but *there is* no strength to bring them forth. 4[c]It may be that the LORD your God will hear all the words of *the* Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to [d]reproach the living God, and will [e]rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore lift up *your* prayer for the remnant that is left.'"

5So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6[f]And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD: "Do not be [g]afraid of the words which you have heard, with which

* **18:26** Literally *Judean*

18:25 ***The LORD said to me.*** The Assyrians may have been aware of prophecies concerning the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem and Assyria's own role as God's avengers (Is. 10:5–11). The remark was intended to introduce stark terror into the hearts of the people of Jerusalem (2 Chr. 32:18) by pointing out that now even their God was against them.

18:25 Self-Righteousness—The Assyrians were God's instrument for punishing Israel (Is. 10:5–10), but this fact was not due to any righteousness or virtue on Assyria's part. Rather, their attitude was blasphemous and proud (19:22). The lesson for the powerful king of Assyria is the lesson for kings, nations, and all individuals: no one may boast before the Lord (1 Cor. 1:29).

18:33 ***the gods of the nations.*** Rabshakeh's assertion that none of the gods of the nations who had opposed Assyria had withstood the Assyrian king is another aspect of the continued psychological warfare and evidence of the Rabshakeh's awareness of Isaiah's prophetic words (Is. 10:7–11).

19:2 ***Isaiah.*** The ministry of the great prophet Isaiah had begun in the year that Uzziah (or Azariah) died (Is. 6:1), nearly four decades earlier (740 B.C.). Once Isaiah had sought out Judah's godless King Ahaz to minister to him (Is. 7:3); now the prophet was being sought by the godly Hezekiah (the details of 18:13—20:19 are also recorded in Is. 36–39).

19:4 ***hear . . . reproach.*** The first verb does not suggest that God is unaware of the words of Rabshakeh. Rather, the words describe God as determining to redress the wrong.

19:6 ***Do not be afraid.*** Isaiah's prophecy was one of comfort. Not only would Sennacherib fail to conquer Jerusalem, but he would face a violent death upon his return home. Both points of this prophetic message would come true, although Sennacherib was

18:26 [a] Is. 36:11—39:8 [b] Ezra 4:7 **18:29** [c] 2 Chr. 32:15 **18:31** [d] 1 Kin. 4:20, 25 **18:32** [e] Deut. 8:7–9; 11:12 **18:33** [f] 2 Kin. 19:12 **18:34** [g] 2 Kin. 19:13 [h] 2 Kin. 17:24 **18:35** [i] Dan. 3:15 **18:37** [j] Is. 33:7 **19:1** [a] Is. 37:1 [b] Ps. 69:11 **19:4** [c] 2 Sam. 16:12 [d] 2 Kin. 18:35 [e] Ps. 50:21 **19:6** [f] Is. 37:6 [g] [Ps. 112:7]

the [h]servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. 7Surely I will send [i]a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'"

Sennacherib's Threat and Hezekiah's Prayer

8Then *the* Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed [j]from Lachish. 9And [k]the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, "Look, he has come out to make war with you." So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10"Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: 'Do not let your God [l]in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." 11Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them; and shall you be delivered? 12[m]Have the gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezeph, and the people of [n]Eden who *were* in Telassar? 13[o]Where *is* the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?'"

14[p]And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD God of Israel, *the One* [q]who dwells *between* the cherubim, [r]You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16[s]Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; [t]open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, [u]which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18and have cast their gods into the fire; for they *were* [v]not gods, but [w]the work of men's hands—wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. 19Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, [x]that all the kingdoms of the earth may [y]know that You *are* the LORD God, You alone."

The Word of the LORD Concerning Sennacherib

20Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: [z]'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, [a]I have heard.' 21This *is* the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him:

'The virgin, [b]the daughter of Zion,
Has despised you, laughed you to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
[c]Has shaken *her* head behind your back!

22 'Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
Against whom have you raised *your* voice,
And lifted up your eyes on high?
Against [d]the Holy *One* of Israel.
23 [e]By your messengers you have reproached the Lord,
And said: [f]"By the multitude of my chariots
I have come up to the height of the mountains,
To the limits of Lebanon;
I will cut down its tall cedars
And its choice cypress trees;
I will enter the extremity of its borders,
To its fruitful forest.
24 I have dug and drunk strange water,
And with the soles of my feet I have [g]dried up
All the brooks of defense."

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not assassinated until 20 years later (c. 681 B.C.). In his annals Sennacherib boasts of five more campaigns; however, he makes no mention of any other invasions of Judah.

19:9 ***Tirhakah king of Ethiopia.*** Since Tirhakah did not become king until 690 B.C., there is an apparent problem with the chronology of this verse. However, it is possible that the biblical author merely calls Tirhakah by the title he was best known by at the time of writing.

19:12 ***Eden.*** This is not the Eden of Genesis, but an area known today as Bit-Adini, south of Haran (Ezek. 27:23; Amos 1:5).

19:15 ***You have made heaven and earth.*** The conflict mentioned in this chapter involves far more than the kings of Egypt, Assyria, or Judah. The warfare is one in which the gods of the pagan world would dishonor the true and living God of Israel. Hezekiah's prayer was addressed to the God who alone is sovereign over all the kingdoms of the world. His sovereignty is related to the fact of creation; He is the God who made heaven and earth. The heathen gods are born in corrupted human imaginations, and backed by a rebellious angel (Satan), but God is the one who owns and controls the universe.

19:21 ***daughter of Zion.*** As elsewhere in the Old Testament (Zeph. 3:14), this phrase should be written "daughter Zion," without the "of." Zion (Jerusalem) is like a daughter to God, whom He will protect and guard as only a father would.

19:22 ***Holy One of Israel.*** This title is characteristic of Isaiah's own manner of referring to God. He uses the

19:6 [h] 2 Kin. 18:17 **19:7** [i] 2 Kin. 19:35–37 **19:8** [j] 2 Kin. 18:14, 17 **19:9** [k] 1 Sam. 23:27 **19:10** [l] 2 Kin. 18:5 **19:12** [m] 2 Kin. 18:33, 34 [n] Ezek. 27:23 **19:13** [o] 2 Kin. 18:34 **19:14** [p] Is. 37:14 **19:15** [q] Ex. 25:22 [r] [Is. 44:6] **19:16** [s] Ps. 31:2 [t] 2 Chr. 6:40 [u] 2 Kin. 19:4 **19:18** [v] [Jer. 10:3–5] [w] [Acts 17:29] **19:19** [x] Ps. 83:18 [y] 1 Kin. 8:42, 43 **19:20** [z] Is. 37:21 [a] 2 Kin. 20:5 **19:21** [b] Lam. 2:13 [c] Ps. 22:7, 8 **19:22** [d] Jer. 51:5 **19:23** [e] 2 Kin. 18:17 [f] Ps. 20:7 **19:24** [g] Is. 19:6

25 'Did you not hear long ago
How [h]I made it,
From ancient times that I formed it?
Now I have brought it to pass,
That [i]you should be
For crushing fortified cities *into* heaps
of ruins.
26 Therefore their inhabitants had little
power;
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were *as* the grass of the field
And the green herb,
As [j]the grass on the housetops
And *grain* blighted before it is grown.
27 'But [k]I know your dwelling place,
Your going out and your coming in,
And your rage against Me.
28 Because your rage against Me and
your tumult
Have come up to My ears,
Therefore [l]I will put My hook in your
nose
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will turn you back
[m]By the way which you came.

29 'This *shall be* a [n]sign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows
of itself,
And in the second year what springs
from the same;
Also in the third year sow and reap,
Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of
them.
30 [o]And the remnant who have escaped of
the house of Judah
Shall again take root downward,
And bear fruit upward.
31 For out of Jerusalem shall go a
remnant,
And those who escape from Mount
Zion.
[p]The zeal of the LORD of hosts* will do
this.'

32 "Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria:

'He shall [q]not come into this city,
Nor shoot an arrow there,
Nor come before it with shield,
Nor build a siege mound against it.
33 By the way that he came,
By the same shall he return;
And he shall not come into this city,'
Says the LORD.
34 'For [r]I will [s]defend this city, to save it
For My own sake and [t]for My servant
David's sake.'"

Sennacherib's Defeat and Death

35 And [u]it came to pass on a certain night that the angel* of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned *home*, and remained at [v]Nineveh. 37 Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons [w]Adrammelech and Sharezer [x]struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then [y]Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah's Life Extended

20 In [a]those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live.'"

2 Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, saying, 3b "Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done *what was* good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 "Return and tell Hezekiah [c]the leader of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: [d]"I have heard your prayer, I have seen [e]your tears; surely I will heal you. On

* **19:31** Following many Hebrew manuscripts and ancient versions (compare Isaiah 37:32); Masoretic Text omits *of hosts*. * **19:35** Or *Angel*

phrase 26 times (Is. 6:3). Sennacherib needed to know that his boastful pride blasphemed the sovereign and holy God of all nations.

19:30 ***remnant . . . Shall again take root.*** The promises in these verses were both for the immediate situation and ultimately for the final regathering of the Jewish people into their land in the time of the coming Messiah.

19:32 ***not come into this city.*** While Sennacherib later boasted of taking some 46 Judean cities, with reference to Jerusalem he could only report that he made Hezekiah "prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage." God's defense and deliverance of Jerusalem demonstrated His faithfulness to the Davidic covenant.

19:37 ***struck him down with the sword.*** The events depicted here took place 20 years after God's deliverance of Jerusalem. When his father was assassinated, Esarhaddon took the throne and ruled from 681 to 668 B.C.

20:3 ***I have walked before You.*** Hezekiah's prayer recognized that although all of life is in God's hands, God is also a rewarder of those who faithfully serve Him (Deut. 5:30–33; 30:15–16).

19:25 [h] [Is. 45:7] [i] Is. 10:5, 6 **19:26** [j] Ps. 129:6 **19:27** [k] Ps. 139:1–3 **19:28** [l] Ezek. 29:4; 38:4 [m] 2 Kin. 19:33, 36 **19:29** [n] 2 Kin. 20:8, 9 **19:30** [o] 2 Chr. 32:22, 23 **19:31** [p] Is. 9:7 **19:32** [q] Is. 8:7–10 **19:34** [r] 2 Kin. 20:6 [s] Is. 31:5 [t] 1 Kin. 11:12, 13 **19:35** [u] Is. 10:12–19; 37:36 **19:36** [v] Gen. 10:11 **19:37** [w] 2 Kin. 17:31 [x] 2 Kin. 19:7 [y] Ezra 4:2 **20:1** [a] Is. 38:1–22 **20:3** [b] Neh. 13:22 **20:5** [c] 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1 [d] Ps. 65:2 [e] Ps. 39:12; 56:8

the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. 6And I will add to your days fifteen years. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and [f]I will defend this city for My own sake, and for the sake of My servant David."'"

7Then [g]Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs." So they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

8And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, [h]"What *is* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD the third day?"

9Then Isaiah said, [i]"This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing which He has spoken: *shall* the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?"

10And Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees; no, but let the shadow go backward ten degrees."

11So Isaiah the prophet cried out to the LORD, and [j]He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.

The Babylonian Envoys

12[k]At that time Berodach-Baladan* the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13And [l]Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all* his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

14Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?"

So Hezekiah said, "They came from a far country, from Babylon."

15And he said, "What have they seen in your house?"

So Hezekiah answered, [m]"They have seen all that *is* in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them."

16Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: 17'Behold, the days are coming when all that *is* in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, [n]shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the LORD. 18'And [o]they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; [p]and they shall be [q]eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

19So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, [r]"The word of the LORD which you have spoken *is* good!" For he said, "Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?"

Death of Hezekiah

20[s]Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah—all his might, and how he [t]made a [u]pool and a tunnel and [v]brought water into the city—*are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21So [w]Hezekiah rested with his fathers. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh Reigns in Judah

21 Manasseh [a]*was* twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Hephzibah. 2And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, [b]according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had

* **20:12** Spelled *Merodach-Baladan* in Isaiah 39:1
* **20:13** Following many Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, and Targum; Masoretic Text omits *all*.

20:7 ***lump of figs.*** The practice of applying figs to an ulcerated sore is well attested in the records of the ancient Middle East, being mentioned as early as 2000 B.C.

20:12 ***Berodach-Baladan.*** This was a Chaldean king who twice ruled in Babylon (721–710, 703 B.C.). A perennial enemy of Assyria, he was twice defeated by them and cast out from Babylon. His search for allies in his resistance to Assyria may have occasioned the embassy to Hezekiah, especially because he had heard of Hezekiah's miraculous deliverance from the Assyrian army (2 Chr. 32:31).

20:13 ***showed them all the house of his treasures.*** One of the remarkable features of the Bible is the fact that it does not gloss over the faults of its best heroes and heroines. This account of the foolishness of Hezekiah follows immediately on the narrative of his great trust in the Lord (vv. 1–11).

20:16–18 Vanity—How much better for Israel's welfare if Hezekiah had been interested in introducing the Babylonian envoys to his God rather than to the treasures of the nation. The prophet's rebuke confirms that Hezekiah's action arose from a vain desire to impress the Babylonians with the externals of his kingdom. Human pride, and the vain hope that deliverance will come from man, must be forsaken if God's blessing is to be experienced.

20:19 ***The word of the LORD . . . is good.*** Hezekiah's response seems a little heartless. He did verbally acknowledge God's right to decide, but it does not appear that he had any real sense of the trouble his folly would bring on the people.

20:20 ***a pool and a tunnel.*** Hezekiah dug a tunnel between the spring of Gihon and the Pool of Siloam to bring a ready supply of water within the eastern wall of Jerusalem. This tunnel is still in existence, a crooked shaft 1,750 feet long.

21:1 ***Manasseh.*** This wicked king's fifty-five year reign was the longest of any of the kings of the divided kingdom. Externally, the period was one of

20:6 [f] 2 Kin. 19:34 **20:7** [g] Is. 38:21 **20:8** [h] Judg. 6:17, 37, 39 **20:9** [i] Is. 38:7, 8 **20:11** [j] Is. 38:8 **20:12** [k] Is. 39:1–8 **20:13** [l] 2 Chr. 32:27, 31 **20:15** [m] 2 Kin. 20:13 **20:17** [n] Jer. 27:21, 22; 52:17 **20:18** [o] 2 Kin. 24:12 [p] Dan. 1:3–7 [q] Dan. 1:11, 18 **20:19** [r] 1 Sam. 3:18 **20:20** [s] 2 Chr. 32:32 [t] Neh. 3:16 [u] Is. 7:3 [v] 2 Chr. 32:3, 30 **20:21** [w] 2 Chr. 32:33 **21:1** [a] 2 Chr. 33:1–9 **21:2** [b] 2 Kin. 16:3

cast out before the children of Israel. 3For
he rebuilt the high places [c]which Hezekiah
his father had destroyed; he raised up altars
for Baal, and made a wooden image,* [d]as
Ahab king of Israel had done; and he [e]wor-
shiped all the host of heaven* and served
them. 4[f]He also built altars in the house of
the LORD, of which the LORD had said, [g]"In
Jerusalem I will put My name." 5And he
built altars for all the host of heaven in the
[h]two courts of the house of the LORD. 6[i]Also
he made his son pass through the fire, prac-
ticed [j]soothsaying, used witchcraft, and
consulted spiritists and mediums. He did
much evil in the sight of the LORD, to pro-
voke *Him* to anger. 7He even set a carved
image of Asherah* that he had made, in the
house of which the LORD had said to David
and to Solomon his son, [k]"In this house and
in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of
all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name
forever; 8[l]and I will not make the feet of Is-
rael wander anymore from the land which
I gave their fathers—only if they are careful
to do according to all that I have command-
ed them, and according to all the law that
My servant Moses commanded them." 9But
they paid no attention, and Manasseh [m]se-
duced them to do more evil than the nations
whom the LORD had destroyed before the
children of Israel.

10And the LORD spoke [n]by His servants
the prophets, saying, 11[o]"Because Manas-
seh king of Judah has done these abomina-
tions ([p]he has acted more wickedly than all
the [q]Amorites who *were* before him, and
[r]has also made Judah sin with his idols),
12therefore thus says the LORD God of Is-
rael: 'Behold, *I* am bringing *such* calamity
upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever
hears of it, both [s]his ears will tingle. 13And
I will stretch over Jerusalem [t]the measur-
ing line of Samaria and the plummet of the
house of Ahab; [u]I will wipe Jerusalem as
one wipes a dish, wiping *it* and turning *it*
upside down. 14So I will forsake the [v]rem-
nant of My inheritance and deliver them
into the hand of their enemies; and they
shall become victims of plunder to all their
enemies, 15because they have done evil in
My sight, and have provoked Me to anger
since the day their fathers came out of
Egypt, even to this day.'"

16[w]Moreover Manasseh shed very much
innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem
from one end to another, besides his sin by
which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in
the sight of the LORD.

17Now [x]the rest of the acts of [y]Manas-
seh—all that he did, and the sin that he
committed—*are* they not written in the
book of the chronicles of the kings of Ju-
dah? 18So [z]Manasseh rested with his fa-
thers, and was buried in the garden of his
own house, in the garden of Uzza. Then his
son Amon reigned in his place.

Amon's Reign and Death

19[a]Amon *was* twenty-two years old
when he became king, and he reigned two
years in Jerusalem. His mother's name
was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz
of Jotbah. 20And he did evil in the sight
of the LORD, [b]as his father Manasseh had
done. 21So he walked in all the ways that
his father had walked; and he served the
idols that his father had served, and wor-
shiped them. 22He [c]forsook the LORD God
of his fathers, and did not walk in the way
of the LORD.

23[d]Then the servants of Amon [e]con-
spired against him, and killed the king
in his own house. 24But the people of the
land [f]executed all those who had conspired
against King Amon. Then the people of the
land made his son Josiah king in his place.

25Now the rest of the acts of Amon which
he did, *are* they not written in the book of
the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 26And
he was buried in his tomb in the garden of
Uzza. Then Josiah his son reigned in his
place.

* **21:3** Hebrew *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess • The gods of the Assyrians
* **21:7** A Canaanite goddess

political stability. It is known as the Assyrian Peace, an era in which the kings Esarhaddon (681–668 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (668–626 B.C.) reigned and brought the Assyrian Empire to its zenith. However, the length of Manasseh's reign does not indicate a good rule, but rather God's persevering mercy and faithfulness to the Davidic covenant (2 Chr. 33:10–13).

21:3 ***host of heaven.*** Worship of heavenly bodies was strictly forbidden (Deut. 4:19; 17:2–7) and was condemned strongly by Israel's prophets (Is. 47:13; Amos 5:26). Yet Manasseh paid no attention to either the law or the prophets (2 Chr. 33:2–10).

21:4 ***altars in the house of the LORD.*** All that had been accomplished by the godly kings of Judah was undone by this reprobate. But wicked as Manasseh was, God heard his prayer when he repented (2 Chr. 33:12–16).

21:15 ***since the day.*** The story of the Old Testament is not a record of God's anger, but of His mercy and the delay of His just wrath.

21:23 ***conspired against him.*** No reason is assigned for the conspiracy that brought about Amon's assassination. While it may have had some connection with the international crisis that precipitated Ashurbanipal's renewed attention to the west, Amon's own wickedness may have provided sufficient cause.

21:3 [c] 2 Kin. 18:4, 22 [d] 1 Kin. 16:31–33 [e] [Deut. 4:19; 17:2–5] **21:4** [f] Jer. 7:30; 32:34 [g] 1 Kin. 11:13 **21:5** [h] 1 Kin. 6:36; 7:12 **21:6** [i] [Lev. 18:21; 20:2] [j] [Deut. 18:10–14] **21:7** [k] 1 Kin. 8:29; 9:3 **21:8** [l] 2 Sam. 7:10 **21:9** [m] [Prov. 29:12] **21:10** [n] 2 Kin. 17:13 **21:11** [o] 2 Kin. 23:26, 27; 24:3, 4 [p] 1 Kin. 21:26 [q] Gen. 15:16 [r] 2 Kin. 21:9 **21:12** [s] Jer. 19:3 **21:13** [t] Amos 7:7, 8 [u] 2 Kin. 22:16–19; 25:4–11 **21:14** [v] Jer. 6:9 **21:16** [w] 2 Kin. 24:4 **21:17** [x] 2 Chr. 33:11–19 [y] 2 Kin. 20:21 **21:18** [z] 2 Chr. 33:20 **21:19** [a] 2 Chr. 33:21–23 **21:20** [b] 2 Kin. 21:2–6, 11, 16 **21:22** [c] 1 Kin. 11:33 **21:23** [d] 2 Chr. 33:24, 25 [e] 2 Kin. 12:20; 14:19 **21:24** [f] 2 Kin. 14:5

Josiah Reigns in Judah

22 Josiah [a]*was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of [b]Bozkath. **2**And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he [c]did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law

3[d]Now it came to pass, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the LORD, saying: **4**"Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been [e]brought into the house of the LORD, which [f]the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. **5**And let them [g]deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers in the house of the LORD; let them give it to those who *are* in the house of the LORD doing the work, to repair the damages of the house— **6**to carpenters and builders and masons—and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. **7**However [h]there need be no accounting made with them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully."

8Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, [i]"I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. **9**So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD." **10**Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

11Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes. **12**Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, [j]Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor* the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, **13**"Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great *is* [k]the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

14So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of [l]Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. **15**Then she said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to Me, **16**"Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, [m]I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read— **17**[n]because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.'"' **18**But as for [o]the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "*Concerning* the words which you have heard— **19**because your [p]heart was tender, and you [q]humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become [r]a desolation and [s]a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard *you*," says the

* **22:12** *Abdon the son of Micah* in 2 Chronicles 34:20

22:1 ***Josiah.*** The name Josiah means "the Lord supports." Like the name of Cyrus (Is. 44:28; 45:1) and of the city of Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), the name Josiah was announced by a prophet long before the time of his birth (1 Kin. 13:1–2).

22:2 ***did not turn aside.*** Not many rulers can rival Josiah's thirty-eight years of perseverance in righteousness. Some begin with high ideals and a commitment to do what is right in the sight of the Lord, but they soon learn that compromise is the art of politics. Compromise can be right and good. We ought to think more highly of others than ourselves and be willing to let go of our own preferences and opinions for the good of others. However, good can never result from compromising God's revealed ethics, morality, and justice. We must learn to live like Josiah, putting obedience to God before comfort and popular acceptance.

22:4 ***Hilkiah the high priest.*** This man was a major figure in the revival of true religion that young Josiah accomplished. The work of restoring the temple was under his direction.

22:8 ***the Book of the Law.*** This may mean either parts or all of the Pentateuch. Although it was placed by the side of the ark of the covenant (Deut. 31:26), it may have been lost, set aside, or hidden during the wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon.

22:14 ***Huldah the prophetess.*** Huldah is one of only a few women mentioned in Scripture as a prophetess. She served at the same time as other godly prophets, such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah, and some have suggested that her husband Shallum was a relative of Jeremiah (Jer. 32:7–12).

22:1 [a] 2 Chr. 34:1 [b] Josh. 15:39 **22:2** [c] Deut. 5:32 **22:3** [d] 2 Chr. 34:8 **22:4** [e] 2 Kin. 12:4 [f] 2 Kin. 12:9, 10 **22:5** [g] 2 Kin. 12:11–14 **22:7** [h] 2 Kin. 12:15 **22:8** [i] Deut. 31:24–26 **22:12** [j] Jer. 26:24 **22:13** [k] [Deut. 29:23–28; 31:17, 18] **22:14** [l] 2 Chr. 34:22 **22:16** [m] Deut. 29:27 **22:17** [n] Deut. 29:25–27 **22:18** [o] 2 Chr. 34:26 **22:19** [p] [Ps. 51:17] [q] 1 Kin. 21:29 [r] Lev. 26:31, 32 [s] Jer. 26:6; 44:22

LORD. 20"Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you [t]shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place."'" So they brought back word to the king.

Josiah Restores True Worship

23 Now [a]the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. 2The king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he [b]read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant [c]which had been found in the house of the LORD.

3Then the king [d]stood by a pillar and made a [e]covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all *his* heart and all *his* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant. 4And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the [f]priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring [g]out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah,* and for all the host of heaven;* and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. 5Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to [h]all the host of heaven. 6And he brought out the [i]wooden image* from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground *it* to [j]ashes, and threw its ashes on [k]the graves of the common people. 7Then he tore down the *ritual* booths [l]of the perverted persons* that *were* in the house of the LORD, [m]where the [n]women wove hangings for the wooden image. 8And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from [o]Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which *were* at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* to the left of the city gate. 9[p]Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, [q]but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren.

10And he defiled [r]Topheth, which *is* in [s]the Valley of the Son* of Hinnom, [t]that no man might make his son or his daughter [u]pass through the fire to Molech. 11Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who *was* in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12The altars that *were* [v]on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which [w]Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron. 13Then the king defiled the high places that *were* east of Jerusalem, which *were* on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which [x]Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon. 14And he [y]broke

* **23:4** A Canaanite goddess • The gods of the Assyrians * **23:6** Hebrew *Asherah*, a Canaanite goddess * **23:7** Hebrew *qedeshim*, that is, those practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals * **23:10** Kethib reads *Sons*.

23:2 ***he read . . . the words of the Book.*** Like Moses (Ex. 24:3–8) and Joshua (Josh. 8:34–35) before him, Josiah followed the ancient standard for godly leadership (Deut. 17:18–20; 31:9–13) and assembled the people to renew the covenant.

23:3 Knowing the Will of God—Christians often act as if learning the will of God is some mysterious process fraught with the danger of making all kinds of mistakes. This passage points to the fact that most of what we need to know about the will of God is contained in the Scriptures. The best place to *learn* the will of God is from reading the Bible. The only way to *do* the will of God is to obey the teaching of the Bible. God may have more specific plans for each of us, but His basic plan for all of us is to do what He says as revealed in His written word.

23:5 ***idolatrous priests.*** This term is also used by Zephaniah to describe the priests who led the rites associated with Baal and with star worship of various kinds (Zeph. 1:4). These priests had been appointed by Judah's past kings but functioned outside the divinely established priesthood.

23:6 ***wooden image.*** Although they had been destroyed by Hezekiah, these wooden images had been reintroduced by Manasseh (21:7) and also by Amon (21:21).

23:10 ***Topheth.*** This appears to have been a place in the valley of Hinnom where human sacrifices were made to Molech (Jer. 7:31–32; 32:35). ***pass through the fire to Molech.*** Some think that Molech was a god of the Ammonites (1 Kin. 11:5), or that Molech was the name of a type of child sacrifice associated with Baal worship (Jer. 19:5–6). Evidence of such child sacrifice has been found in the excavations at the Phoenician city of Carthage.

22:20 [t] [Is. 57:1, 2] **23:1** [a] 2 Chr. 34:29, 30 **23:2** [b] Deut. 31:10–13 [c] 2 Kin. 22:8 **23:3** [d] 2 Kin. 11:14 [e] 2 Kin. 11:17 **23:4** [f] 2 Kin. 25:18 [g] 2 Kin. 21:3–7 **23:5** [h] 2 Kin. 21:3 **23:6** [i] 2 Kin. 21:7 [j] Ex. 32:20 [k] 2 Chr. 34:4 **23:7** [l] 1 Kin. 14:24; 15:12 [m] Ezek. 16:16 [n] Ex. 38:8 **23:8** [o] Josh. 21:17 **23:9** [p] [Ezek. 44:10–14] [q] 1 Sam. 2:36 **23:10** [r] Is. 30:33 [s] Josh. 15:8 [t] [Lev. 18:21] [u] 2 Kin. 21:6 **23:12** [v] Jer. 19:13 [w] 2 Kin. 21:5 **23:13** [x] 1 Kin. 11:5–7 **23:14** [y] [Ex. 23:24]

in pieces the *sacred* pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

15Moreover the altar that *was* at Bethel, *and* the high place [z]which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place *and* crushed *it* to powder, and burned the wooden image. 16As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that *were* there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned *them* on the altar, and defiled it according to the [a]word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. 17Then he said, "What gravestone *is* this that I see?"

So the men of the city told him, "*It is* [b]the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel."

18And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of [c]the prophet who came from Samaria.

19Now Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that *were* [d]in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD* to anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel. 20[e]He [f]executed all the priests of the high places who *were* there, on the altars, and [g]burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

21Then the king commanded all the people, saying, [h]"Keep the Passover to the LORD your God, [i]as *it is* written in this Book of the Covenant." 22[j]Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the LORD in Jerusalem. 24Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of [k]the law which were written in the book [l]that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. 25[m]Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did *any* arise like him.

Impending Judgment on Judah

26Nevertheless the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, [n]because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. 27And the LORD said, "I will also remove Judah from My sight, as [o]I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, [p]'My name shall be there.'"*

Josiah Dies in Battle

28Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 29[q]In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And *Pharaoh Necho*

* **23:19** Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text and Targum omit *the* LORD.
* **23:27** 1 Kings 8:29

23:18 ***the prophet . . . from Samaria.*** The prophet from Samaria was the old prophet of Bethel (1 Kin. 13:11). Samaria is the name for an entire area, not just the city that was later the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kin. 13:32; 16:23–24). After the death of the man of God who had denounced Jeroboam's altar at Bethel, the aged prophet of Bethel requested that at his death he should be buried in Bethel beside that prophet of Judah.

23:22 ***Such a Passover.*** The restoration of religious places was part of the revival of spiritual worship. Although Hezekiah had held a Passover (2 Chr. 30), he had done so with some modification of the law (2 Chr. 30:13–20). Accordingly, Josiah's meeting of the strict requirements of the law (2 Chr. 35:1–19) was truly unparalleled since the days of the judges.

23:25 ***no king like him.*** Like his grandfather Hezekiah, who was famed for being without equal in his trust of the Lord (18:5), Josiah was truly a righteous king. Because of their outstanding examples of godliness, the authors of Kings and Chronicles devote considerable space to their reigns.

23:26–27 Unfaithfulness—The revival under Josiah, recorded in chapters 22 and 23, was like a stay of execution. It gave Judah some additional time but it was too little, too late. The die had been cast in Manasseh's reign as God threatened to wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes a dish (21:13) because Manasseh did more evil than the other nations whom the Lord had destroyed. In the light of Jeremiah 18:7–8 we must assume that Josiah's people responded only externally to God's principles and not from the heart. Unfaithfulness was deeply rooted, and professions of religion could not change them from the inside.

23:29 ***Pharaoh Necho.*** During the long years of Josiah's reign (640–609 B.C.), Assyrian power had steadily crumbled until, as Nahum had predicted, Nineveh itself had fallen (612 B.C.). The surviving Assyrian forces had regrouped at Haran. Because Egypt was a long-standing ally of Assyria, Necho journeyed northward to help the beleaguered Assyrians. Josiah's deployment of his forces to the valley of Megiddo was an attempt to prevent the Egyptians

23:15 *z* 1 Kin. 12:28–33 **23:16** *a* 1 Kin. 13:2 **23:17** *b* 1 Kin. 13:1, 30, 31 **23:18** *c* 1 Kin. 13:11, 31 **23:19** *d* 2 Chr. 34:6, 7 **23:20** *e* 1 Kin. 13:2 *f* 2 Kin. 10:25; 11:18 *g* 2 Chr. 34:5 **23:21** *h* 2 Chr. 35:1 *i* Deut. 16:2–8 **23:22** *j* 2 Chr. 35:18, 19 **23:24** *k* [Lev. 19:31; 20:27] *l* 2 Kin. 22:8 **23:25** *m* 2 Kin. 18:5 **23:26** *n* Jer. 15:4 **23:27** *o* 2 Kin. 17:18, 20; 18:11; 21:13 *p* 1 Kin. 8:29; 9:3 **23:29** *q* Jer. 2:16; 46:2

killed him at [r]Megiddo when he [s]confronted him. 30[t]Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And [u]the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz

31[v]Jehoahaz *was* twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* [w]Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. 33Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison [x]at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34Then [y]Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and [z]changed his name to [a]Jehoiakim. And *Pharaoh* took Jehoahaz [b]and went to Egypt, and he* died there.

Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah

35So Jehoiakim gave [c]the silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give *it* to Pharaoh Necho. 36[d]Jehoiakim *was* twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. 37And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

Judah Overrun by Enemies

24 In [a]his days Nebuchadnezzar king of [b]Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his vassal *for* three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. 2[c]And the LORD sent against him *raiding* bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, [d]according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. 3Surely at the commandment of the LORD *this* came upon Judah, to remove *them* from His sight [e]because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4[f]and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.

5Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 6[g]So Jehoiakim rested with his fathers. Then Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

7And [h]the king of Egypt did not come out of his land anymore, for [i]the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the River Euphrates.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiachin

8[j]Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name *was* Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. 9And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

10[k]At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, as his servants were besieging it. 12[l]Then Jehoiachin king of

* **23:34** That is, Jehoahaz

from aiding the Assyrian forces at Haran. Although Pharaoh Necho was delayed sufficiently so that Haran was lost to the Assyrians, Josiah's action ultimately cost him his life (2 Chr. 35:20–25).

23:31 ***Jehoahaz.*** Jehoahaz, also called Shallum (Jer. 22:11), was Josiah's third son (24:18; 1 Chr. 3:15).

23:34 ***went to Egypt, and he died there.*** The curse for Judah's disobedience was beginning to fall (Deut. 28:64–68).

23:37 ***he did evil.*** Jehoiakim's short reign was noted for its extreme wickedness (2 Chr. 36:5–8). Jeremiah depicts him as a despicable monster who took advantage of his people (Jer. 22:13–14,17), filled the land with every sort of vice and violence (Jer. 18:18–20), and opposed all that was holy (Jer. 25:1–7). Unlike his father Josiah, who led the nation in reformation at the hearing of the Word of God (22:11; 23:1–25), Jehoiakim went so far as to cut up and burn a scroll of Scripture (Jer. 36:21–24) and to kill Urijah, a true prophet of God (Jer. 26:20–23).

24:2 ***Chaldeans.*** This name originally applied to certain inhabitants of southern Mesopotamia, but by this time the term had come to be identified with the Babylonians, and Babylonia was called Chaldea. After the fall of the Babylonian Empire, the term Chaldean came to mean "soothsayer" (Dan. 2:2).

24:8 ***Jehoiachin.*** Because the scriptural description of Jehoiachin seems to represent him as a mature young man (Jer. 22:24–30; Ezek. 19:6), Jehoiachin's age at accession was probably eighteen rather than eight, as given elsewhere in some manuscripts (compare 2 Chr. 36:9).

23:29 [r] Zech. 12:11 [s] 2 Kin. 14:8 **23:30** [t] 2 Chr. 35:24 [u] 2 Chr. 36:1–4 **23:31** [v] Jer. 22:11 [w] 2 Kin. 24:18 **23:33** [x] 2 Kin. 25:6 **23:34** [y] 2 Chr. 36:4 [z] Dan. 1:7 [a] Matt. 1:11 [b] Ezek. 19:3, 4 **23:35** [c] 2 Chr. 23:33 **23:36** [d] 2 Chr. 36:5 **24:1** [a] Dan. 1:1 [b] 2 Kin. 20:14 **24:2** [c] Jer. 25:9; 32:28; 35:11 [d] 2 Kin. 20:17; 21:12–14; 23:27 **24:3** [e] 2 Kin. 21:2, 11; 23:26 **24:4** [f] 2 Kin. 21:16 **24:6** [g] Jer. 22:18, 19 **24:7** [h] Jer. 37:5–7 [i] Jer. 46:2 **24:8** [j] 2 Chr. 36:9 **24:10** [k] Dan. 1:1 **24:12** [l] Jer. 22:24–30; 24:1; 29:1, 2

Judah, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon, [m]in the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner.

The Captivity of Jerusalem

13 [n]And he carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he [o]cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, [p]as the LORD had said. 14 Also [q]he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, [r]ten thousand captives, and [s]all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except [t]the poorest people of the land. 15 And [u]he carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. 16 [v]All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all *who were* strong *and* fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

Zedekiah Reigns in Judah

17 Then [w]the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, [x]*Jehoiachin*'s* uncle, king in his place, and [y]changed his name to Zedekiah.

18 [z]Zedekiah *was* twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* [a]Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19 [b]He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 20 For because of the anger of the LORD *this* happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. [c]Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

The Fall and Captivity of Judah

25 Now it came to pass [a]in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and they built a siege wall against it all around. 2 So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 3 By the ninth *day* of the [b]*fourth* month the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.

4 Then [c]the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war *fled* at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans *were* still encamped all around against the city. And [d]*the king** went by way of the plain.* 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. 6 So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon [e]at Riblah, and they pronounced judgment on him. 7 Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, [f]put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.

8 And in the fifth month, [g]on the seventh *day* of the month (which *was* [h]the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), [i]Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9 [j]He burned the house of the LORD [k]and the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, [l]he burned with fire. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans who *were with* the captain of the guard [m]broke down the walls of Jerusalem all around.

11 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive [n]the rest of the people *who* remained in the city and the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon, with the rest of the multitude. 12 But the captain of the guard [o]left *some*

*24:17 Literally *his* *25:4 Literally *he* • Or *Arabah*, that is, the Jordan Valley

24:12 *Jehoiachin.* Jehoiakim apparently had died before Nebuchadnezzar arrived at Jerusalem, because it was Jehoiachin who was carried off captive with other leaders of Judah (such as Ezekiel; Ezek. 1:1). Jeremiah called him "Jeconiah" and "Coniah" (Jer. 22:24–28).
24:14–16 *carried.* The people of Israel lost their freedom and independence because of their own perpetually iniquitous ways. To be exiled is to be torn away from everything familiar, from everything traditional, from all identifiable scenery, and forced to live in a place where one has no identity and no roots. The people's whole sense of national identity was bound to their land, the place God had given them, and to be torn from that land was the ultimate evidence that God had rejected them.
24:15 *carried Jehoiachin captive.* Jehoiachin's captivity was prophesied in Jeremiah 22:24–27. Jehoiachin's eventual release is recorded in 25:27–30 and Jeremiah 52:31–34.
24:17 *Mattaniah.* This was Josiah's youngest son (1 Chr. 3:15). He reigned until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.
25:7 *put out the eyes.* The last thing Zedekiah saw was the reward of his sinful folly—the horrible spectacle of his own loved ones being put to death. He would carry this picture with him until his own death in a Babylonian prison (Jer. 52:11).
25:10 *broke down the walls.* These walls would lie in ruins for a century and a half (Neh. 2:11—6:16).

24:12 [m] 2 Chr. 36:10 **24:13** [n] Is. 39:6 [o] Dan. 5:2, 3 [p] Jer. 20:5 **24:14** [q] Jer. 24:1 [r] 2 Kin. 24:16 [s] 1 Sam. 13:19 [t] 2 Kin. 25:12 **24:15** [u] Jer. 22:24–28 **24:16** [v] Jer. 52:28 **24:17** [w] Jer. 37:1 [x] 2 Chr. 36:10 [y] 2 Chr. 36:4 **24:18** [z] Jer. 52:1 [a] 2 Kin. 23:31 **24:19** [b] 2 Chr. 36:12 **24:20** [c] Ezek. 17:15 **25:1** [a] Jer. 6:6; 34:2 **25:3** [b] Lam. 4:9, 10 **25:4** [c] Jer. 39:2 [d] Ezek. 12:12 **25:6** [e] Jer. 52:9 **25:7** [f] Jer. 39:7 **25:8** [g] Jer. 52:12 [h] 2 Kin. 24:12 [i] Jer. 39:9 **25:9** [j] 2 Chr. 36:19 [k] Jer. 39:8 [l] Jer. 17:27 **25:10** [m] Neh. 1:3 **25:11** [n] Jer. 5:19; 39:9 **25:12** [o] Jer. 39:10; 40:7; 52:16

of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers. 13[p]The bronze [q]pillars that *were* in the house of the LORD, and [r]the carts and [s]the bronze Sea that *were* in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and [t]carried their bronze to Babylon. 14They also took away [u]the pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. 15The firepans and the basins, the things of solid gold and solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. 16The two pillars, one Sea, and the carts, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, [v]the bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. 17[w]The height of one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the capital on it *was* of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits, and the network and pomegranates all around the capital were all of bronze. The second pillar was the same, with a network.

18[x]And the captain of the guard took [y]Seraiah the chief priest, [z]Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. 19He also took out of the city an officer who had charge of the men of war, [a]five men of the king's close associates who were found in the city, the chief recruiting officer of the army, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land *who were* found in the city. 20So Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. [b]Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land.

Gedaliah Made Governor of Judah

22Then he made Gedaliah the son of [c]Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor over [d]the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left. 23Now when all the [e]captains of the armies, they and *their* men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Careah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah* the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. 24And Gedaliah took an oath before them and their men, and said to them, "Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you."

25But [f]it happened in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men and struck and killed Gedaliah, the Jews, as well as the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. 26And all the people, small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose [g]and went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

Jehoiachin Released from Prison

27[h]Now it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh *day* of the month, *that* Evil-Merodach* king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, [i]released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. 28He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who *were* with him in Babylon. 29So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he [j]ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. 30And as for his provisions, *there was* a regular ration given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.

* **25:23** Spelled *Jezaniah* in Jeremiah 40:8
* **25:27** Literally *Man of Marduk*

25:17 ***three cubits.*** This may be the height of the capitals not including the ornamental work; 1 Kings 7:16 and Jeremiah 52:22 say five cubits.

25:18 ***Seraiah.*** Although Seraiah was executed (v. 21), his son Jehozadak was deported (1 Chr. 6:15). Through Jehozadak's line would come Ezra, the priest and great reformer, who one day would return to Jerusalem and take up Seraiah's work (Ezra 7:1).

25:22 ***Gedaliah.*** Gedaliah's father Ahikam had supported Jeremiah in his struggles with the apostate officials of Judah (Jer. 26:24). The prophet Jeremiah was allowed to stay and assist Gedaliah in the process of reconstruction (Jer. 39:11–14; 40:1–6).

25:27 ***Evil-Merodach.*** This king succeeded Nebuchadnezzar and reigned a short time (561–560 B.C.). Tablets from the reign of Nabonidus (555–539 B.C.) record the daily rations of Jehoiachin who is called "Yaukin, king of the land of Yahud (Judah)."

25:28 ***spoke kindly.*** Evil-Merodach's kindness toward Jehoiachin brings the books of Kings to an end on a ray of hope. Exile was neither the end of Israel nor of the Davidic line.

25:13 [p] Jer. 52:17 [q] 1 Kin. 7:15 [r] 1 Kin. 7:27 [s] 1 Kin. 7:23 [t] Jer. 27:19–22 **25:14** [u] Ex. 27:3 **25:16** [v] 1 Kin. 7:47 **25:17** [w] 1 Kin. 7:15–22 **25:18** [x] Jer. 39:9–13; 52:12–16, 24 [y] Ezra 7:1 [z] Jer. 21:1; 29:25, 29 **25:19** [a] Jer. 52:25 **25:21** [b] Deut. 28:36, 64 **25:22** [c] 2 Kin. 22:12 [d] Is. 1:9; Jer. 40:5 **25:23** [e] Jer. 40:7–9 **25:25** [f] Jer. 41:1–3 **25:26** [g] Jer. 43:4–7 **25:27** [h] Jer. 52:31–34 [i] Gen. 40:13, 20 **25:29** [j] 2 Sam. 9:7

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE
CHRONICLES

▶ **AUTHOR:** Tradition in the Jewish Talmud supports Ezra the priest as the author of 1 Chronicles. The content points to priestly authorship because of the emphasis on the temple, the priesthood, and the theocratic line of David in the southern kingdom of Judah. Ezra was an educated scribe (Ezra 7:6), and according to the apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees 2:13–15, Nehemiah collected an extensive library which was available to Ezra for his use in compiling Chronicles.

▶ **TIME:** c. 1004–971 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 1 Chr. 7:11–14

▶ **THEME:** First Chronicles is largely a retelling of the texts of 1 and 2 Samuel with administrative details and the roles that the various tribes and alliances played in the events of the nation. We don't see the family conflict with Michal when the ark is brought to Jerusalem or the affair with Bathsheba and its fallout. When it comes to succession, all we are told is that David chose Solomon to succeed him. This is a primary document of the history of Israel.

The Family of Adam—Seth to Abraham

1 Adam,[a] [b]Seth, Enosh, **2**Cainan,* Mahalalel, Jared, **3**Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, **4**[c]Noah,* Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

5[d]The sons of Japheth *were* Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. **6**The sons of Gomer *were* Ashkenaz, Diphath,* and Togarmah. **7**The sons of Javan *were* Elishah, Tarshishah,* Kittim, and Rodanim.*

8[e]The sons of Ham *were* Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. **9**The sons of Cush *were* Seba, Havilah, Sabta,* Raama,* and Sabtecha. The sons of Raama *were* Sheba and Dedan. **10**Cush [f]begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. **11**Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, **12**Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and the [g]Caphtorim). **13**[h]Canaan begot Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth; **14**the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; **15**the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; **16**the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.

17The sons of [i]Shem *were* Elam, Asshur, [j]Arphaxad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.* **18**Arphaxad begot Shelah, and Shelah begot Eber. **19**To Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* Peleg,* for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan. **20**[k]Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, **21**Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, **22**Ebal,* Abimael, Sheba, **23**Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.

24[l]Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah, **25**[m]Eber, Peleg, Reu, **26**Serug, Nahor, Terah, **27**and [n]Abram, who *is* Abraham. **28**[o]The sons of Abraham *were* [p]Isaac and [q]Ishmael.

The Family of Ishmael

29These *are* their genealogies: The [r]firstborn of Ishmael *was* Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, **30**Mishma, Dumah,

* **1:2** Hebrew *Qenan* * **1:4** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint adds *the sons of Noah.* * **1:6** Spelled *Riphath* in Genesis 10:3 * **1:7** Spelled *Tarshish* in Genesis 10:4 • Spelled *Dodanim* in Genesis 10:4 * **1:9** Spelled *Sabtah* in Genesis 10:7 • Spelled *Raamah* in Genesis 10:7 * **1:17** Spelled *Mash* in Genesis 10:23 * **1:19** Literally *Division* * **1:22** Spelled *Obal* in Genesis 10:28

1:1 ***Adam, Seth, Enosh.*** Including the names of these pre-flood people along with the rest of the genealogical record indicates that the chronicler had no question of their historical identity.
1:18 ***Eber.*** Eber was the ancestor of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The name Hebrew, a derivative of Eber's name, was applied to the Israelites.
1:19 ***the earth was divided.*** This refers to the division of the earth's population by the scattering of the human race following the judgment of God on the tower of Babel.

1:1 [a] Gen. 1:27; 2:7; 5:1, 2, 5 [b] Gen. 4:25, 26; 5:3–9 **1:4** [c] Gen. 5:28—10:1 **1:5** [d] Gen. 10:2–4 **1:8** [e] Gen. 10:6 **1:10** [f] Gen. 10:8–10, 13 **1:12** [g] Deut. 2:23 **1:13** [h] Gen. 9:18, 25–27; 10:15 **1:17** [i] Gen. 10:22–29; 11:10 [j] Luke 3:36 **1:20** [k] Gen. 10:26 **1:24** [l] Luke 3:34–36 **1:25** [m] Gen. 11:15 **1:27** [n] Gen. 17:5 **1:28** [o] Gen. 21:2, 3 [p] Gen. 21:2 [q] Gen. 16:11, 15 **1:29** [r] Gen. 25:13–16

Massa, Hadad,* Tema, 31Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These *were* the sons of Ishmael.

The Family of Keturah

32Now [s]the sons born to Keturah, Abraham's concubine, *were* Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan *were* Sheba and Dedan. 33The sons of Midian *were* Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

The Family of Isaac

34And [t]Abraham begot Isaac. [u]The sons of Isaac *were* Esau and Israel. 35The sons of [v]Esau *were* Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. 36And the sons of Eliphaz *were* Teman, Omar, Zephi,* Gatam, *and* Kenaz; and *by* [w]Timna,* Amalek. 37The sons of Reuel *were* Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

The Family of Seir

38[x]The sons of Seir *were* Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. 39And the sons of Lotan *were* Hori and Homam; Lotan's sister *was* Timna. 40The sons of Shobal *were* Alian,* Manahath, Ebal, Shephi,* and Onam. The sons of Zibeon *were* Ajah and Anah. 41The son of Anah *was* [y]Dishon. The sons of Dishon *were* Hamran,* Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 42The sons of Ezer *were* Bilhan, Zaavan, *and* Jaakan.* The sons of Dishan *were* Uz and Aran.

The Kings of Edom

43Now these *were* the [z]kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the children of Israel: Bela the son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. 44And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. 45When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. 46And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. The name of his city *was* Avith. 47When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. 48[a]And when Samlah died, Saul of Rehoboth-by-the-River reigned in his place. 49When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. 50And when Baal-Hanan died, Hadad* reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Pai.* His wife's name was Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. 51Hadad died also. And the chiefs of Edom were Chief Timnah, Chief Aliah,* Chief Jetheth, 52Chief Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, 53Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, 54Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These *were* the chiefs of Edom.

The Family of Israel

2 These *were* the [a]sons of Israel: [b]Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, 2Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

From Judah to David

3The sons of [c]Judah *were* Er, Onan, and Shelah. *These* three were born to him by the daughter of [d]Shua, the Canaanitess. [e]Er, the firstborn of Judah, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; so He killed him. 4And [f]Tamar, his daughter-in-law, [g]bore him Perez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah *were* five.

5The sons of [h]Perez *were* Hezron and Hamul. 6The sons of Zerah *were* Zimri, [i]Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara—five of them in all.

7The son of [j]Carmi *was* Achar,* the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the [k]accursed thing.

8The son of Ethan *was* Azariah.

9Also the sons of Hezron who were

* **1:30** Spelled *Hadar* in Genesis 25:15 * **1:36** Spelled *Zepho* in Genesis 36:11 • Compare Genesis 36:12 * **1:40** Spelled *Alvan* in Genesis 36:23 • Spelled *Shepho* in Genesis 36:23 * **1:41** Spelled *Hemdan* in Genesis 36:26 * **1:42** Spelled *Akan* in Genesis 36:27 * **1:50** Spelled *Hadar* in Genesis 36:39 • Spelled *Pau* in Genesis 36:39 * **1:51** Spelled *Alvah* in Genesis 36:40 * **2:7** Spelled *Achan* in Joshua 7:1 and elsewhere

1:36 *Timna.* Timna was Eliphaz's concubine (Gen. 36:12). Her son Amalek was the founder of the Amalekites, a people that became one of Israel's most persistent enemies (Ex. 17:8–16; Deut. 25:17–19; 1 Sam. 15:1–3).

1:38 *Seir.* Seir was the patriarchal name of the pre-Edomite population in the region east and south of the Dead Sea (Gen. 36:20–30). ***Lotan.*** Lotan was Timna's brother, and Timna was the concubine of Esau's son. This is how the people of Seir and the descendants of Esau were related, and together these two people groups became the kingdom of Edom.

1:43 *the kings . . . of Edom.* Although the kings of Edom ruled in succession, they were not part of a dynasty. Apparently Edom did not have a capital, and its kings ruled from their own cities.

1:51 *chiefs.* The word "chiefs" usually referred to military leaders (Gen. 36:40–43).

2:1–55 Family—The Hebrew nation, descended through Abraham, kept one of the most carefully preserved family records of all time. To be associated with the family of Israel was to be identified with the God of Israel, and the history of this people is closely associated with the things that God taught each of these ancestors.

1:32 [s] Gen. 25:1–4 **1:34** [t] Gen. 21:2 [u] Gen. 25:9, 25, 26, 29; 32:28 **1:35** [v] Gen. 36:10–19 **1:36** [w] Gen. 36:12 **1:38** [x] Gen. 36:20–28 **1:41** [y] Gen. 36:25 **1:43** [z] Gen. 36:31–43 **1:48** [a] Gen. 36:37 **2:1** [a] Gen. 29:32–35; 35:23, 26; 46:8–27 [b] Gen. 29:32; 35:22 **2:3** [c] Num. 26:19 [d] Gen. 38:2 [e] Gen. 38:7 **2:4** [f] Gen. 38:6 [g] Matt. 1:3 **2:5** [h] Ruth 4:18 **2:6** [i] 1 Kin. 4:31 **2:7** [j] 1 Chr. 4:1 [k] Josh. 6:18

born to him *were* Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.* 10Ram [l]begot Amminadab, and Amminadab begot Nahshon, [m]leader of the children of Judah; 11Nahshon begot Salma,* and Salma begot Boaz; 12Boaz begot Obed, and Obed begot Jesse; 13[n]Jesse begot Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea* the third, 14Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15Ozem the sixth, *and* David the [o]seventh.

16Now their sisters *were* Zeruiah and Abigail. [p]And the sons of Zeruiah *were* Abishai, Joab, and Asahel—three. 17Abigail bore Amasa; and the father of Amasa *was* Jether the Ishmaelite.*

The Family of Hezron

18Caleb the son of Hezron had children by Azubah, *his* wife, and by Jerioth. Now these were her sons: Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. 19When Azubah died, Caleb took [q]Ephrath* as his wife, who bore him Hur. 20And Hur begot Uri, and Uri begot [r]Bezalel.

21Now afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of [s]Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he *was* sixty years old; and she bore him Segub. 22Segub begot [t]Jair, who had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead. 23[u](Geshur and Syria took from them the towns of Jair, with Kenath and its towns—sixty towns.) All these *belonged to* the sons of Machir the father of Gilead. 24After Hezron died in Caleb Ephrathah, Hezron's wife Abijah bore him [v]Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

The Family of Jerahmeel

25The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron, *were* Ram, the firstborn, and Bunah, Oren, Ozem, *and* Ahijah. 26Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. 27The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. 28The sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai *were* Nadab and Abishur.

29And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. 30The sons of Nadab *were* Seled and Appaim; Seled died without children. 31The son of Appaim *was* Ishi, the son of Ishi *was* Sheshan, and [w]Sheshan's son *was* Ahlai. 32The sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai, *were* Jether and Jonathan; Jether died without children. 33The sons of Jonathan *were* Peleth and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

34Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. And Sheshan had an Egyptian servant whose name *was* Jarha. 35Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant as wife, and she bore him Attai. 36Attai begot Nathan, and Nathan begot [x]Zabad; 37Zabad begot Ephlal, and Ephlal begot [y]Obed; 38Obed begot Jehu, and Jehu begot Azariah; 39Azariah begot Helez, and Helez begot Eleasah; 40Eleasah begot Sismai, and Sismai begot Shallum; 41Shallum begot Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begot Elishama.

The Family of Caleb

42The descendants of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel *were* Mesha, his firstborn, who was the father of Ziph, and the sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron. 43The sons of Hebron *were* Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. 44Shema begot Raham the father of Jorkoam, and Rekem begot Shammai. 45And the son of Shammai *was* Maon, and Maon *was* the father of Beth Zur.

46Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; and Haran begot Gazez. 47And the sons of Jahdai *were* Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.

48Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. 49She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibea. And the daughter of Caleb *was* [z]Achsah.

50These were the descendants of Caleb: The sons of [a]Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, *were* Shobal the father of [b]Kirjath Jearim, 51Salma the father of Bethlehem, *and* Hareph the father of Beth Gader.

52And Shobal the father of Kirjath Jearim had descendants: Haroeh, *and* half

* **2:9** Spelled *Caleb* in 2:18, 42 * **2:11** Spelled *Salmon* in Ruth 4:21 and Luke 3:32 * **2:13** Spelled *Shammah* in 1 Samuel 16:9 and elsewhere * **2:17** Compare 2 Samuel 17:25 * **2:19** Spelled *Ephrathah* elsewhere

2:10 ***Nahshon.*** This genealogy is selective, focusing on the members important to the lineage of David. Nahshon was head of the tribe of Judah at the time of the wilderness march from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea (Num. 1:7; 2:3; 7:12). He was more than five generations removed from Judah.

2:16 ***sisters.*** Sisters are not usually mentioned in ancient genealogies. However this genealogy pays particular attention to the family of David, and as his sister's sons were important members of his military units, the sisters are listed.

2:18 ***Caleb.*** This Caleb is not the famous companion of Joshua (Num. 13:6; Josh. 14:6–7), who lived several centuries later during the conquest of Canaan.

2:51 ***father of Bethlehem.*** The chronicler recorded Caleb's genealogy because of the significance of Bethlehem, the birthplace of King David. One of Caleb's descendants, Salma, was the founder of Bethlehem.

2:10 *l* Matt. 1:4 *m* Num. 1:7; 2:3 **2:13** *n* 1 Sam. 16:6 **2:15** *o* 1 Sam. 16:10, 11; 17:12 **2:16** *p* 2 Sam. 2:18 **2:19** *q* 1 Chr. 2:50 **2:20** *r* Ex. 31:2; 38:22 **2:21** *s* Num. 27:1 **2:22** *t* Judg. 10:3 **2:23** *u* Deut. 3:14 **2:24** *v* 1 Chr. 4:5 **2:31** *w* 1 Chr. 2:34, 35 **2:36** *x* 1 Chr. 11:41 **2:37** *y* 2 Chr. 23:1 **2:49** *z* Josh. 15:17 **2:50** *a* 1 Chr. 4:4 *b* Josh. 9:17; 18:14

of the *families of* Manuhoth.* 53The families of Kirjath Jearim *were* the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraites. From these came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites.

54The sons of Salma *were* Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth Beth Joab, half of the Manahethites, and the Zorites.

55And the families of the scribes who dwelt at Jabez *were* the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, *and* the Suchathites. These *were* the [c]Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of [d]Rechab.

The Family of David

3 Now these were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: The firstborn *was* [a]Amnon, by [b]Ahinoam the [c]Jezreelitess; the second, Daniel,* by [d]Abigail the Carmelitess; 2the third, [e]Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; the fourth, [f]Adonijah the son of Haggith; 3the fifth, Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by his wife [g]Eglah.

4*These* six were born to him in Hebron. [h]There he reigned seven years and six months, and [i]in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. 5[j]And these were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea,* Shobab, Nathan, and [k]Solomon—four by Bathshua* the daughter of Ammiel.* 6Also *there* were Ibhar, Elishama,* Eliphelet,* 7Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, 8Elishama, Eliada,* and Eliphelet—[l]nine *in all.* 9*These were* all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and [m]Tamar their sister.

The Family of Solomon

10Solomon's son *was* [n]Rehoboam; Abijah* *was* his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, 11Joram* his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash* his son, 12Amaziah his son, Azariah* his son, Jotham his son, 13Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, 14Amon his son, *and* Josiah his son. 15The sons of Josiah *were* Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, and the fourth Shallum.* 16The sons of [o]Jehoiakim *were* Jeconiah his son *and* Zedekiah* his son.

The Family of Jeconiah

17And the sons of Jeconiah* *were* Assir,* Shealtiel [p]his son, 18*and* Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah. 19The sons of Pedaiah *were* Zerubbabel and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel *were* Meshullam, Hananiah, Shelomith their sister, 20and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed—five *in all.*

21The sons of Hananiah *were* Pelatiah and Jeshaiah, the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, and the sons of Shechaniah. 22The son of Shechaniah was Shemaiah. The sons of Shemaiah *were* [q]Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat—six *in all.* 23The sons of Neariah *were* Elioenai, Hezekiah, and Azrikam—three *in all.* 24The sons of Elioenai *were* Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani—seven *in all.*

The Family of Judah

4 The sons of Judah *were* [a]Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. 2And Reaiah the son of Shobal begot Jahath, and Jahath begot Ahumai and Lahad. These *were* the families of the Zorathites. 3These *were the sons of* the father of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash; and the name of their sister *was* Hazelelponi; 4and Penuel *was* the father of Gedor, and Ezer *was the* father of Hushah.

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* **2:52** Same as *the Manahethites*, verse 54
* **3:1** Called *Chileab* in 2 Samuel 3:3 * **3:5** Spelled *Shammua* in 14:4 and 2 Samuel 5:14 • Spelled *Bathsheba* in 2 Samuel 11:3 • Called *Eliam* in 2 Samuel 11:3 * **3:6** Spelled *Elishua* in 14:5 and 2 Samuel 5:15 • Spelled *Elpelet* in 14:5
* **3:8** Spelled *Beeliada* in 14:7 * **3:10** Spelled *Abijam* in 1 Kings 15:1 * **3:11** Spelled *Jehoram* in 2 Kings 1:17 and 8:16 • Spelled *Jehoash* in 2 Kings 12:1 * **3:12** Called *Uzziah* in Isaiah 6:1 * **3:15** Called *Jehoahaz* in 2 Kings 23:31
* **3:16** Compare 2 Kings 24:17 * **3:17** Also called *Coniah* in Jeremiah 22:24 and *Jehoiachin* in 2 Kings 24:8 • Or *Jeconiah the captive were*

3:1–5 *sons of David.* The fact that David had six sons by six wives in Hebron does not condone polygamy. David had apparently followed the custom of marrying the daughters of neighboring kings to create allies, in spite of the warning Moses gave for the kings to avoid accumulating many wives (Deut. 17:17). Jesus refers back to creation when He addresses the concept of single partners for life (Matt. 19:1–12), so it is clear that even though some polygamy was practiced, it has never been God's plan for marriage.

3:19 *Pedaiah.* Zerubbabel here is designated as a son of Pedaiah, but elsewhere (Ezra 3:2,8; 5:2; Neh. 12:1; Hag. 1:12,14; 2:2,23) as a son of Pedaiah's brother Salathiel (v. 17). It is likely that Salathiel had died while Zerubbabel was young, and that the youth was raised by his uncle Pedaiah. This relationship may explain Luke's statement that Zerubbabel was "the son of Salathiel" (Luke 3:27), who was a descendant of David through his son Nathan.

4:1 *sons of Judah.* The chronicler here refers to other persons and events relative to Judah's genealogy (2:3–17). In the list in this verse Perez is Judah's son, Hezron is his grandson, Carmi his nephew, Hur the grandson of Hezron, and Shobal the grandson of Hur.

4:4 *Ephrathah.* Ephrathah is the wife of the early Caleb (2:19) and the mother of Hur, whose son Salma was the "father of Bethlehem." The names of

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2:55 [c] Judg. 1:16 [d] Jer. 35:2 **3:1** [a] 2 Sam. 3:2–5 [b] 1 Sam. 25:43 [c] Josh. 15:56 [d] 1 Sam. 25:39–42 **3:2** [e] 2 Sam. 13:37; 15:1 [f] 1 Kin. 1:5 **3:3** [g] 2 Sam. 3:5 **3:4** [h] 2 Sam. 2:11 [i] 2 Sam. 5:5 **3:5** [j] 1 Chr. 14:4–7 [k] 2 Sam. 12:24, 25 **3:8** [l] 2 Sam. 5:14–16 **3:9** [m] 2 Sam. 13:1 **3:10** [n] 1 Kin. 11:43 **3:16** [o] Matt. 1:11 **3:17** [p] Matt. 1:12 **3:22** [q] Ezra 8:2 **4:1** [a] Gen. 38:29; 46:12

These *were* the sons of [b]Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah the father of Bethlehem.
5And [c]Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah. 6Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These *were* the sons of Naarah. 7The sons of Helah *were* Zereth, Zohar, and Ethnan; 8and Koz begot Anub, Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.
9Now Jabez was [d]more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez,* saying, "Because I bore *him* in pain." 10And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep *me* from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested.
11Chelub the brother of [e]Shuhah begot Mehir, who *was* the father of Eshton. 12And Eshton begot Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-Nahash. These *were* the men of Rechah.
13The sons of Kenaz *were* [f]Othniel and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel *were* Hathath,* 14and Meonothai *who* begot Ophrah. Seraiah begot Joab the father of [g]Ge Harashim,* for they were craftsmen. 15The sons of [h]Caleb the son of Jephunneh *were* Iru, Elah, and Naam. The son of Elah *was* Kenaz. 16The sons of Jehallelel *were* Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. 17The sons of Ezrah *were* Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. And *Mered's wife** bore Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa. 18(His wife Jehudijah* bore Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Sochoh, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.) And these were the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took.
19The sons of Hodiah's wife, the sister of Naham, *were* the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and of Eshtemoa the [i]Maachathite. 20And the sons of Shimon *were* Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth.
21The sons of [j]Shelah [k]the son of Judah *were* Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of the linen workers of the house of Ashbea; 22also Jokim, the men of Chozeba, and Joash; Saraph, who ruled in Moab, and Jashubi-Lehem. Now the records are ancient. 23These *were* the potters and those who dwell at Netaim* and Gederah;* there they dwelt with the king for his work.

The Family of Simeon

24The [l]sons of Simeon *were* Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib,* Zerah,* *and* Shaul, 25Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, and Mishma his son. 26And the sons of Mishma *were* Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, and Shimei his son. 27Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers did not have many children, [m]nor did any of their families multiply as much as the children of Judah.
28They dwelt at Beersheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual, 29Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, 30Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, 31Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susim, Beth Biri, and at Shaaraim. These *were* their cities until the reign of David. 32And their villages *were* Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan—five cities— 33and all the villages that *were* around these cities as far as Baal.* These *were* their dwelling places, and they maintained their genealogy: 34Meshobab, Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah; 35Joel, and Jehu the son of Joshibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel; 36Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, and Benaiah; 37Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah— 38these mentioned by name *were* leaders in their families, and their father's house increased greatly.
39So they went to the entrance of Gedor, as far as the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. 40And they found rich, good pasture, and the land *was* broad,

* **4:9** Literally *He Will Cause Pain* * **4:13** Septuagint and Vulgate add *and Meonothai.* * **4:14** Literally *Valley of Craftsmen* * **4:17** Literally *she* * **4:18** Or *His Judean wife* * **4:23** Literally *Plants* • Literally *Hedges* * **4:24** Called *Jachin* in Genesis 46:10 • Called *Zohar* in Genesis 46:10
* **4:33** Or *Baalath Beer* (compare Joshua 19:8)

Bethlehem and Ephrath are closely connected (Gen. 35:19; Ruth 4:11), and the birthplace of the anticipated Messiah is called Bethlehem Ephrathah (Mic. 5:2).
4:9–10 Providence—This passage does not say why or how Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. At the least, he recognized that God is the source of all blessings, and Jabez asked God to bless him. James said that we have not because we ask not (James 4:2–3), and then goes on to address the issue of selfish motives in prayer. Paul encourages believers not to be anxious, but to make our requests to God, with prayer and thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6). It is clear that it is right to ask God for the things that we believe are good, to thank Him for them, and to keep in mind that we can trust Him to meet all of our needs.
4:15 *Caleb.* This is the Caleb who was the friend and colleague of Joshua (Josh. 14:6–7).
4:21 *Er.* The fact the Shelah named his son "Er" indicates that he followed the levirate custom of raising up a child in the name of a deceased brother (Gen. 38:6–11).
4:24 *Simeon.* The tribe of Simeon had no land allotted to them (Josh. 19:1–9) because they were a small tribe. They settled in the territory of Judah.

4:4 [b] 1 Chr. 2:50 **4:5** [c] 1 Chr. 2:24 **4:9** [d] Gen. 34:19 **4:11** [e] Job 8:1 **4:13** [f] Josh. 15:17 **4:14** [g] Neh. 11:35 **4:15** [h] 1 Chr. 6:56 **4:19** [i] 2 Kin. 25:23 **4:21** [j] Gen. 38:11, 14 [k] Gen. 38:1–5; 46:12 **4:24** [l] Num. 26:12–14 **4:27** [m] Num. 2:9

quiet, and peaceful; for some Hamites formerly lived there.

41 These recorded by name came in the
days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and they
[n]attacked their tents and the Meunites who
were found there, and [o]utterly destroyed
them, as it is to this day. So they dwelt in
their place, because *there was* pasture for
their flocks there. 42 Now *some* of them, five
hundred men of the sons of Simeon, went
to Mount Seir, having as their captains Pe-
latiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the
sons of Ishi. 43 And they defeated [p]the rest
of the Amalekites who had escaped. They
have dwelt there to this day.

The Family of Reuben

5 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn
of Israel—[q]he *was* indeed the firstborn,
but because he [b]defiled his father's bed,
[c]his birthright was given to the sons of Jo-
seph, the son of Israel, so that the genealo-
gy is not listed according to the birthright;
2 yet [d]Judah prevailed over his brothers,
and from him *came* a [e]ruler, although the
birthright was Joseph's— 3 the sons of [f]Reu-
ben the firstborn of Israel were Hanoch,
Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

4 The sons of Joel *were* Shemaiah his
son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, 5 Micah
his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son, 6 and
Beerah his son, whom Tiglath-Pileser*
king of Assyria [g]carried into captivity.
He *was* leader of the Reubenites. 7 And his
brethren by their families, [h]when the gene-
alogy of their generations was registered:
the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah, 8 and Bela
the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son
of Joel, who dwelt in [i]Aroer, as far as Nebo
and Baal Meon. 9 Eastward they settled as
far as the entrance of the wilderness this
side of the River Euphrates, because their
cattle had multiplied [j]in the land of Gilead.

10 Now in the days of Saul they made war
[k]with the Hagrites, who fell by their hand;
and they dwelt in their tents throughout the
entire *area* east of Gilead.

The Family of Gad

11 And the [l]children of Gad dwelt next
to them in the land of [m]Bashan as far as
[n]Salcah: 12 Joel *was* the chief, Shapham the
next, then Jaanai and Shaphat in Bashan,
13 and their brethren of their father's house:
Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jachan,
Zia, and Eber—seven *in all*. 14 These *were*
the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the
son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of
Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jah-
do, the son of Buz; 15 Ahi the son of Abdiel,
the son of Guni, *was* chief of their father's
house. 16 And *the Gadites* dwelt in Gilead,
in Bashan and in its villages, and in all the
common-lands of [o]Sharon within their bor-
ders. 17 All these were registered by genealo-
gies in the days of [p]Jotham king of Judah,
and in the days of [q]Jeroboam king of Israel.

18 The sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and
half the tribe of Manasseh *had* forty-four
thousand seven hundred and sixty valiant
men, men able to bear shield and sword,
to shoot with the bow, and skillful in war,
who went to war. 19 They made war with
the Hagrites, [r]Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.
20 And [s]they were helped against them,
and the Hagrites were delivered into their
hand, and all who *were* with them, for
they [t]cried out to God in the battle. He
heeded their prayer, because they [u]put
their trust in Him. 21 Then they took away
their livestock—fifty thousand of their
camels, two hundred and fifty thousand
of their sheep, and two thousand of their
donkeys—also one hundred thousand of
their men; 22 for many fell dead, because
the war [v]*was* God's. And they dwelt in their
place until [w]the captivity.

The Family of Manasseh (East)

23 So the children of the half-tribe of Ma-
nasseh dwelt in the land. Their *numbers* in-
creased from Bashan to Baal Hermon, that
is, to [x]Senir, or Mount Hermon. 24 These
were the heads of their fathers' houses:
Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hoda-
viah, and Jahdiel. They were mighty men
of valor, famous men, *and* heads of their
fathers' houses.

25 And they were unfaithful to the God of
their fathers, and [y]played the harlot after
the gods of the peoples of the land, whom
God had destroyed before them. 26 So the
God of Israel stirred up the spirit of [z]Pul
king of Assyria, that is, [a]Tiglath-Pileser*

* **5:6** Hebrew *Tilgath-Pilneser* * **5:26** Hebrew *Tilgath-Pilneser*

5:9 *entrance . . . the River Euphrates.* The Reubenites had pushed east into the wilderness, so they were the first to be deported by the Assyrians (v. 6).

5:25 Unbelief—In marriage, adultery is the ultimate breach of trust, breaking a solemn promise of faithfulness and commitment. These tribes of Israel acted just like adulterers when they chose idols instead of the living God. Like a prostitute who has chosen crudity, vulgarity, and cheap finery instead of the steady faithful love and fine clothing from her husband, so Israel had believed a lie and abandoned their covenant with the living God.

5:26 *Tiglath Pileser.* The famous king Tiglath Pileser, who reigned around 745–727 B.C., has gone down in

4:41 [n] 2 Kin. 18:8 [o] 2 Kin. 19:11 **4:43** [p] 1 Sam. 15:8; 30:17 **5:1** [q] Gen. 29:32; 49:3 [b] Gen. 35:22; 49:4 [c] Gen. 48:15, 22 **5:2** [d] Gen. 49:8, 10 [e] Mic. 5:2 **5:3** [f] Ex. 6:14 **5:6** [g] 2 Kin. 18:11 **5:7** [h] 1 Chr. 5:17 **5:8** [i] Josh. 12:2; 13:15, 16 **5:9** [j] Josh. 22:8, 9 **5:10** [k] Gen. 25:12 **5:11** [l] Num. 26:15–18 [m] Josh. 13:11, 24–28 [n] Deut. 3:10 **5:16** [o] 1 Chr. 27:29 **5:17** [p] 2 Kin. 15:5, 32 [q] 2 Kin. 14:16, 28 **5:19** [r] Gen. 25:15 **5:20** [s] [1 Chr. 5:22] [t] 2 Chr. 14:11–13 [u] Ps. 9:10; 20:7, 8; 22:4, 5 **5:22** [v] [Josh. 23:10] [w] 2 Kin. 15:29; 17:6 **5:23** [x] Deut. 3:9 **5:25** [y] 2 Kin. 17:7 **5:26** [z] 2 Kin. 15:19 [a] 2 Kin. 15:29

king of Assyria. He carried the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh into captivity. He took them to [b]Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river of Gozan to this day.

The Family of Levi

6 The sons of Levi *were* [a]Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 2The sons of Kohath *were* Amram, [b]Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 3The children of Amram *were* Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. And the sons of Aaron *were* [c]Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 4Eleazar begot Phinehas, *and* Phinehas begot Abishua; 5Abishua begot Bukki, and Bukki begot Uzzi; 6Uzzi begot Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begot Meraioth; 7Meraioth begot Amariah, and Amariah begot Ahitub; 8[d]Ahitub begot [e]Zadok, and Zadok begot Ahimaaz; 9Ahimaaz begot Azariah, and Azariah begot Johanan; 10Johanan begot Azariah (it was he [f]who ministered as priest in the [g]temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem); 11[h]Azariah begot [i]Amariah, and Amariah begot Ahitub; 12Ahitub begot Zadok, and Zadok begot Shallum; 13Shallum begot Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begot Azariah; 14Azariah begot [j]Seraiah, and Seraiah begot Jehozadak. 15Jehozadak went *into captivity* [k]when the LORD carried Judah and Jerusalem into captivity by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

16The sons of Levi *were* [l]Gershon,* Kohath, and Merari. 17These are the names of the sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei. 18The sons of Kohath *were* Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 19The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi. Now these *are* the families of the Levites according to their fathers: 20Of Gershon *were* Libni his son, Jahath his son, [m]Zimmah his son, 21Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, *and* Jeatherai his son. 22The sons of Kohath *were* Amminadab his son, [n]Korah his son, Assir his son, 23Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son, 24Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son. 25The sons of Elkanah *were* [o]Amasai and Ahimoth. 26*As for* Elkanah,* the sons of Elkanah *were* Zophai* his son, Nahath* his son, 27Eliab* his son, Jeroham his son, *and* Elkanah his son. 28The sons of Samuel *were Joel** the firstborn, and Abijah the second.* 29The sons of Merari *were* Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son, 30Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, *and* Asaiah his son.

Musicians in the House of the LORD

31Now these are [p]the men whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after the [q]ark came to rest. 32They were ministering with music before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of

* **6:16** Hebrew *Gershom* (alternate spelling of *Gershon*, as in verses 1, 17, 20, 43, 62, and 71) * **6:26** Compare verse 35 • Spelled *Zuph* in verse 35 and 1 Samuel 1:1 • Compare verse 34 * **6:27** Compare verse 34 * **6:28** Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic (compare verse 33 and 1 Samuel 8:2) • Hebrew *Vasheni*

Assyrian annals as one of the most powerful rulers of the neo-Assyrian period (v. 6).

6:1–60 Family—Families are usually marked by certain traits or characteristics. Because the Levites were the designated priests, they had a special responsibility to have a reputation for uprightness and faithfulness, but all Israelites were a representation of God to the nations around them. If we are a part of the family of God, we should ask ourselves if we look like God. When people see us, do they see His characteristics?

6:1 *Levi.* All religious personnel involved in tabernacle or temple ministry had to be members of the tribe of Levi. Aaron himself was a Levite, and from the beginning of the priesthood his descendants were designated as the only ones who could serve as high priests (6:16–25; Ex. 28:1).

6:2–4 *Kohath.* This son of Levi was the one to whom the office of priest became exclusively connected. Every priest had to be a Levite, but not every Levite could become a priest. The high priests were descended from Aaron, Kohath's grandson. ***Eleazar.*** Beginning with Eleazar, the genealogy traces the line of high priests through Jehozadak, the priest who went into Babylonian exile with his people (v. 15). ***Ithamar.*** Another line of high priests began with Ithamar, including such persons as Eli, Ahimelech, and Abiathar. In the days of David the priestly service was divided between the Eleazar and the Ithamar priests. Solomon rejected the Ithamar priesthood, and accepted only the priests descended from Eleazar (1 Kin. 2:26–27). From Eleazar to Jehozadak, there were at least 22 high priests in unbroken succession.

6:8 *Zadok.* This priest, not the same person as the Zadok of verse 12, was the one selected by David to serve along with Ahimelech the son of Abiathar as high priest (2 Sam. 8:17).

6:14 *Jehozadak.* The last priest in the list was carried into Babylon (v. 15). He was the father of Joshua, the priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple and reestablish the Jewish community (Hag. 1:12,14).

6:17 *Gershon.* The purpose of this genealogy is to list the principal offspring of the sons of Levi who were not priests, but servants in the temple.

6:22 *Amminadab.* Amminadab is another name for Ishar (v. 18) who otherwise appears as the father of Korah (6:37–38; Ex. 6:21; Num. 16:1).

6:28 *Samuel.* Samuel's ancestors were described as Ephraimites (1 Sam. 1:1). Although Samuel was an Ephraimite because he lived in a city in the tribal territory of Ephraim, this genealogy makes it clear that he was a Levite. Levites lived in their own cities among all the tribes, because they did not receive a land inheritance. As a Levite, he could be trained under Eli (1 Sam. 2:11), and later officiate at public services that included sacrifices (1 Sam. 9:13; 10:8).

5:26 [b] 2 Kin. 17:6; 18:11 **6:1** [a] Ex. 6:16 **6:2** [b] 1 Chr. 6:18, 22 **6:3** [c] Lev. 10:1, 2 **6:8** [d] 2 Sam. 8:17 [e] 2 Sam. 15:27 **6:10** [f] 2 Chr. 26:17, 18 [g] 1 Kin. 6:1 **6:11** [h] Ezra 7:3 [i] 2 Chr. 19:11 **6:14** [j] Neh. 11:11 **6:15** [k] 2 Kin. 25:21 **6:16** [l] Ex. 6:16 **6:20** [m] 1 Chr. 6:42 **6:22** [n] Num. 16:1 **6:25** [o] 1 Chr. 6:35, 36 **6:31** [p] 1 Chr. 15:16–22, 27; 16:4–6 [q] 1 Chr. 15:25—16:1

meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they served in their office according to their order.

33 And these *are* the ones who ministered with their sons: Of the sons of the [r]Kohathites *were* Heman the singer, the son of Joel, the son of Samuel, 34 the son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel,* the son of Toah,* 35 the son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, 36 the son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, 37 the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of [s]Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, 38 the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel. 39 And his brother [t]Asaph, who stood at his right hand, *was* Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, 40 the son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchijah, 41 the son of [u]Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, 42 the son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, 43 the son of Jahath, the son of Gershon, the son of Levi.

44 Their brethren, the sons of Merari, on the left hand, *were* Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, 45 the son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, 46 the son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer, 47 the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.

48 And their brethren, the Levites, *were* appointed to every [v]kind of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

The Family of Aaron

49 [w]But Aaron and his sons offered sacrifices [x]on the altar of burnt offering and [y]on the altar of incense, for all the work of the Most Holy *Place,* and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. 50 Now these *are* the [z]sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, 51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, 52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, 53 Zadok his son, *and* Ahimaaz his son.

Dwelling Places of the Levites

54 [a]Now these *are* their dwelling places throughout their settlements in their territory, for they were *given* by lot to the sons of Aaron, of the family of the Kohathites: 55 [b]They gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, with its surrounding commonlands. 56 [c]But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. 57 And [d]to the sons of Aaron they gave *one of* the cities of refuge, Hebron; also Libnah with its common-lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its common-lands, 58 Hilen* with its common-lands, Debir with its common-lands, 59 Ashan* with its commonlands, and Beth Shemesh with its commonlands. 60 And from the tribe of Benjamin: Geba with its common-lands, Alemeth* with its common-lands, and Anathoth with its common-lands. All their cities among their families *were* thirteen.

61 [e]To the rest of the family of the tribe of the Kohathites *they gave* [f]by lot ten cities from half the tribe of Manasseh. 62 And to the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, *they gave* thirteen cities from the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. 63 To the sons of Merari, throughout their families, *they gave* [g]twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun. 64 So the children of Israel gave *these* cities with their common-lands to the Levites. 65 And they gave by lot from the tribe of the children of Judah, from the tribe of the children of Simeon, and from the tribe of the children of Benjamin these cities which are called by *their* names.

66 Now [h]some of the families of the sons of Kohath *were given* cities as their territory from the tribe of Ephraim. 67 [i]And they gave them *one of* the cities of refuge, Shechem with its common-lands, in the mountains of Ephraim, also Gezer with its commonlands, 68 [j]Jokmeam with its common-lands, Beth Horon with its common-lands, 69 Aijalon with its common-lands, and Gath Rimmon with its common-lands. 70 And from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Aner with its common-lands and Bileam with its

* **6:34** Spelled *Elihu* in 1 Samuel 1:1 • Spelled *Tohu* in 1 Samuel 1:1 * **6:58** Spelled *Holon* in Joshua 21:15 * **6:59** Spelled *Ain* in Joshua 21:16 * **6:60** Spelled *Almon* in Joshua 21:18

6:57 ***Hebron.*** The law specified that if a person killed another unintentionally he could find sanctuary in one of six specified cities, and there wait in safety for the trial (Num. 35:6–27). No one could take revenge as long as he was in the city of refuge. These six cities were included among the 48 Levitical cities, and Hebron, located in Judah, was one of them.

6:61—7:27 Family—In any family record, some of the names have strong memories associated with them. The reputations may be good or bad, but they are all a part of the family reputation. It is comforting to know that the family that produced Saul, the unfaithful king, is the same line that produced Saul, who became the faithful apostle Paul.

6:67 ***Shechem.*** Shechem was both a Levitical city and a city of refuge. Shechem was especially significant in Israel. It was the site of Abraham's first altar in Canaan (Gen. 12:6–7), the place where Jacob bought a piece of land (Gen. 33:19), and the location of the first capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kin. 12:25).

6:33 [r] Num. 26:57 **6:37** [s] Ex. 6:24 **6:39** [t] 2 Chr. 5:12 **6:41** [u] 1 Chr. 6:21 **6:48** [v] 1 Chr. 9:14–34 **6:49** [w] [Num. 18:1–8] [x] Lev. 1:8, 9 [y] Ex. 30:7 **6:50** [z] 1 Chr. 6:4–8 **6:54** [a] Josh. 21 **6:55** [b] Josh. 14:13; 21:11, 12 **6:56** [c] Josh. 14:13; 15:13 **6:57** [d] Josh. 21:13, 19 **6:61** [e] 1 Chr. 6:66–70 [f] Josh. 21:5 **6:63** [g] Josh. 21:7, 34–40 **6:66** [h] 1 Chr. 6:61 **6:67** [i] Josh. 21:21 **6:68** [j] Josh. 21:22

common-lands, for the rest of the family of the sons of Kohath.

71From the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh the sons of Gershon *were given* Golan in Bashan with its common-lands and Ashtaroth with its common-lands. 72And from the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its common-lands, Daberath with its common-lands, 73Ramoth with its common-lands, and Anem with its common-lands. 74And from the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its common-lands, Abdon with its common-lands, 75Hukok with its common-lands, and Rehob with its common-lands. 76And from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its common-lands, Hammon with its common-lands, and Kirjathaim with its common-lands.

77From the tribe of Zebulun the rest of the children of Merari *were given* Rimmon* with its common-lands and Tabor with its common-lands. 78And on the other side of the Jordan, across from Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, *they were given* from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness with its common-lands, Jahzah with its common-lands, 79Kedemoth with its common-lands, and Mephaath with its common-lands. 80And from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its common-lands, Mahanaim with its common-lands, 81Heshbon with its common-lands, and Jazer with its common-lands.

The Family of Issachar

7 The sons of Issachar *were* [a]Tola, Puah,* Jashub, and Shimron—four *in all.* 2The sons of Tola *were* Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house. *The sons* of Tola *were* mighty men of valor in their generations; [b]their number in the days of David *was* twenty-two thousand six hundred. 3The son of Uzzi *was* Izrahiah, and the sons of Izrahiah *were* Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Ishiah. All five of them *were* chief men. 4And with them, by their generations, according to their fathers' houses, *were* thirty-six thousand troops ready for war; for they had many wives and sons.

5Now their brethren among all the families of Issachar *were* mighty men of valor, listed by their genealogies, eighty-seven thousand in all.

The Family of Benjamin

6*The sons* of [c]Benjamin *were* Bela, Becher, and Jediael—three *in all.* 7The sons of Bela were Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri—five *in all.* They *were* heads of *their* fathers' houses, and they were listed by their genealogies, twenty-two thousand and thirty-four mighty men of valor.

8The sons of Becher *were* Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jerimoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these *are* the sons of Becher. 9And they were recorded by genealogy according to their generations, heads of their fathers' houses, twenty thousand two hundred mighty men of valor. 10The son of Jediael *was* Bilhan, and the sons of Bilhan *were* Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

11All these sons of Jediael *were* heads of their fathers' houses; *there were* seventeen thousand two hundred mighty men of valor fit to go out for war *and* battle. 12Shuppim and Huppim* *were* the sons of Ir, *and* Hushim *was* the son of Aher.

The Family of Naphtali

13The [d]sons of Naphtali *were* Jahziel,* Guni, Jezer, and Shallum,* the sons of Bilhah.

The Family of Manasseh (West)

14The [e]descendants of Manasseh: his Syrian concubine bore him [f]Machir the father of Gilead, the father of Asriel.* 15Machir took as his wife *the sister* of Huppim and Shuppim,* whose name *was* Maachah. The name of *Gilead's* grandson* *was* [g]Zelophehad,* but Zelophehad begot only daughters. 16(Maachah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she called his name Peresh. The name of his brother *was* Sheresh, and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem. 17The son of Ulam *was* [h]Bedan.) These *were* the descendants of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

* **6:77** Hebrew *Rimmono*, alternate spelling of *Rimmon;* see 4:32 * **7:1** Spelled *Puvah* in Genesis 46:13 * **7:12** Called *Hupham* in Numbers 26:39 * **7:13** Spelled *Jahzeel* in Genesis 46:24 • Spelled *Shillem* in Genesis 46:24 * **7:14** The son of Gilead (compare Numbers 26:30, 31) * **7:15** Compare verse 12 • Literally *the second* • Compare Numbers 26:30–33

6:76 *Kedesh.* Kedesh was another of the six cities of refuge. It was the most northern of the three west of the Jordan.

6:78 *Bezer.* Bezer was also a city of refuge, the farthest south of those east of the Jordan.

6:80 *Ramoth in Gilead.* Another city of refuge, Ramoth, was directly east of the Jordan. In this way the cities of refuge were distributed throughout the land so that any Israelite could be within a few miles of one of them. All six cities were assigned to the Levites, with Hebron designated for the priests (Deut. 17:8–13; 19:17–21).

7:14 *Manasseh . . . Machir.* Manasseh was the son of Joseph, and his son was Machir. Machir's daughter became the wife of Judah's grandson Hezron (2:2), which joined the two tribes of Judah and Manasseh.

7:15 *Zelophehad begot only daughters.* This man had no sons, so Moses made provision for inheritance rights for daughters in such cases (Num. 36:1–9).

7:1 [a] Num. 26:23–25 **7:2** [b] 2 Sam. 24:1–9 **7:6** [c] Gen. 46:21 **7:13** [d] Num. 26:48–50 **7:14** [e] Num. 26:29–34 [f] 1 Chr. 2:21 **7:15** [g] Num. 26:30–33; 27:1 **7:17** [h] 1 Sam. 12:11

18 His sister Hammoleketh bore Ishhod,
Abiezer, and Mahlah.
19 And the sons of Shemida were Ahian,
Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

The Family of Ephraim

20 [i]The sons of Ephraim *were* Shuthelah,
Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eladah
his son, Tahath his son, 21 Zabad his son,
Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead.
The men of Gath who were born in *that*
land killed *them* because they came down
to take away their cattle. 22 Then Ephraim
their father mourned many days, and his
brethren came to comfort him.
23 And when he went in to his wife, she
conceived and bore a son; and he called
his name Beriah,* because tragedy had
come upon his house. 24 Now his daughter
was Sheerah, who built Lower and Upper
[j]Beth Horon and Uzzen Sheerah; 25 and Re-
phah *was* his son, *as well* as Resheph, and
Telah his son, Tahan his son, 26 Laadan his
son, Ammihud his son, [k]Elishama his son,
27 Nun* his son, and [l]Joshua his son.
28 Now their [m]possessions and dwell-
ing places *were* Bethel and its towns: to
the east Naaran, to the west Gezer and
its towns, and Shechem and its towns, as
far as Ayyah* and its towns; 29 and by the
borders of the children of [n]Manasseh *were*
Beth Shean and its towns, Taanach and its
towns, [o]Megiddo and its towns, Dor and
its towns. In these dwelt the children of Jo-
seph, the son of Israel.

The Family of Asher

30 [p]The sons of Asher *were* Imnah, Ish-
vah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah.
31 The sons of Beriah *were* Heber and
Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith.*
32 And Heber begot Japhlet, Shomer,*
Hotham,* and their sister Shua. 33 The sons
of Japhlet *were* Pasach, Bimhal, and Ash-
vath. These *were* the children of Japhlet.
34 The sons of [q]Shemer *were* Ahi, Rohgah,
Jehubbah, and Aram. 35 And the sons of
his brother Helem *were* Zophah, Imna,
Shelesh, and Amal. 36 The sons of Zophah
were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah,
37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Jithran,*
and Beera. 38 The sons of Jether *were* Je-
phunneh, Pispah, and Ara. 39 The sons of
Ulla *were* Arah, Haniel, and Rizia.
40 All these *were* the children of Asher,
heads of *their* fathers' houses, choice men,
mighty men of valor, chief leaders. And
they were recorded by genealogies among
the army fit for battle; their number *was*
twenty-six thousand.

The Family Tree of King Saul of Benjamin

8 Now Benjamin begot [a]Bela his first-
born, Ashbel the second, Aharah* the
third, 2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the
fifth. 3 The sons of Bela *were* Addar,* Gera,
Abihud, 4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, 5 Gera,
Shephuphan, and Huram.
6 These *are* the sons of Ehud, who were
the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the in-
habitants of [b]Geba, and who forced them to
move to [c]Manahath: 7 Naaman, Ahijah, and
Gera who forced them to move. He begot
Uzza and Ahihud.
8 Also Shaharaim had children in the
country of Moab, after he had sent away
Hushim and Baara his wives. 9 By Hodesh
his wife he begot Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Mal-
cam, 10 Jeuz, Sachiah, and Mirmah. These
were his sons, heads of their fathers' *houses.*
11 And by Hushim he begot Abitub and
Elpaal. 12 The sons of Elpaal *were* Eber,
Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and
Lod with its towns; 13 and Beriah and [d]She-
ma, who *were* heads of their fathers' *hous-
es* of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who drove
out the inhabitants of Gath. 14 Ahio, Sha-
shak, Jeremoth, 15 Zebadiah, Arad, Eder,
16 Michael, Ispah, and Joha *were* the sons
of Beriah. 17 Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hiz-
ki, Heber, 18 Ishmerai, Jizliah, and Jobab
were the sons of Elpaal. 19 Jakim, Zichri,
Zabdi, 20 Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, 21 Adaiah,
Beraiah, and Shimrath *were* the sons of
Shimei. 22 Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, 23 Abdon,
Zichri, Hanan, 24 Hananiah, Elam, Antothi-
jah, 25 Iphdeiah, and Penuel *were* the sons
of Shashak. 26 Shamsherai, Shehariah,
Athaliah, 27 Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri
were the sons of Jeroham.
28 These *were* heads of the fathers' *hous-
es* by their generations, chief men. These
dwelt in Jerusalem.

* **7:23** Literally *In Tragedy* * **7:27** Hebrew *Non*
* **7:28** Many Hebrew manuscripts, Bomberg, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *Gazza.*
* **7:31** Or *Birzavith* or *Birzoth* * **7:32** Spelled *Shemer* in verse 34 • Spelled *Helem* in verse 35
* **7:37** Spelled *Jether* in verse 38 * **8:1** Spelled *Ahiram* in Numbers 26:38 * **8:3** Called *Ard* in Numbers 26:40

7:20–21 ***Tahath . . . Shuthelah.*** The repetition of these two names illustrates the custom of sons being named for their grandfathers or more remote ancestors.

8:1 ***Benjamin.*** The reason for this second and much more detailed genealogy of Benjamin is its focus on the genealogy of King Saul (vv. 29–40).

8:9 ***Mesha.*** There was a well-known Moabite king named Mesha. Both the Scriptures (2 Kin. 3:4) and the Moabite Stone attest to this fact. The reference here to Mesha as a son of Shaharaim and Hodesh, his Moabite wife (v. 8), suggests that the illustrious Moabite king may have had a Benjamite father, but the evidence is not conclusive.

8:28 ***chief men . . . dwelt in Jerusalem.*** This city was not taken by David until approximately 1004 B.C., so the line of Benjamin was traced to at least that time.

7:20 *i* Num. 26:35–37 **7:24** *j* Josh. 16:3, 5 **7:26** *k* Num. 10:22 **7:27** *l* Ex. 17:9, 14; 24:13; 33:11 **7:28** *m* Josh. 16:1–10 **7:29** *n* Josh. 17:7 *o* Josh. 17:11 **7:30** *p* Num. 26:44–47 **7:34** *q* 1 Chr. 7:32 **8:1** *a* Gen. 46:21 **8:6** *b* 1 Chr. 6:60 *c* 1 Chr. 2:52 **8:13** *d* 1 Chr. 8:21

29Now the father of Gibeon, whose [e]wife's name *was* Maacah, dwelt at
Gibeon. 30And his firstborn son *was* Ab-
don, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, 31Gedor,
Ahio, Zecher, 32and Mikloth, *who* begot
Shimeah.* They also dwelt alongside their
relatives in Jerusalem, with their brethren.
33[f]Ner* begot Kish, Kish begot Saul, and
Saul begot Jonathan, Malchishua, Abin-
adab,* and Esh-Baal.* 34The son of Jona-
than *was* Merib-Baal,* and Merib-Baal
begot [g]Micah. 35The sons of Micah *were*
Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. 36And
Ahaz begot Jehoaddah;* Jehoaddah begot
Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri
begot Moza. 37Moza begot Binea, Raphah*
his son, Eleasah his son, *and* Azel his son.
38Azel had six sons whose names
were these: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael,
Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these
were the sons of Azel. 39And the sons of
Eshek his brother *were* Ulam his firstborn,
Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third.
40The sons of Ulam were mighty men of
valor—archers. *They* had many sons and
grandsons, one hundred and fifty *in all.*
These *were* all sons of Benjamin.

9 So [a]all Israel was recorded by geneal-
ogies, and indeed, they *were* inscribed
in the book of the kings of Israel. But Ju-
dah was carried away captive to Babylon
because of their unfaithfulness. 2[b]And the
first inhabitants who *dwelt* in their posses-
sions in their cities *were* Israelites, priests,
Levites, and [c]the Nethinim.

Dwellers in Jerusalem

3Now in [d]Jerusalem the children of
Judah dwelt, and some of the children of
Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim
and Manasseh: 4Uthai the son of Ammi-
hud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the
son of Bani, of the descendants of Perez,
the son of Judah. 5Of the Shilonites: Asai-
ah the firstborn and his sons. 6Of the sons
of Zerah: Jeuel, and their brethren—six
hundred and ninety. 7Of the sons of Benja-
min: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of
Hodaviah, the son of Hassenuah; 8Ibneiah
the son of Jeroham; Elah the son of Uzzi,
the son of Michri; Meshullam the son of
Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of
Ibnijah; 9and their brethren, according to
their generations—nine hundred and fifty-
six. All these men *were* heads of a father's
house in their fathers' houses.

The Priests at Jerusalem

10[e]Of the priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and
Jachin; 11Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the
son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the
son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the [f]of-
ficer over the house of God; 12Adaiah the
son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son
of Malchijah; Maasai the son of Adiel, the
son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam,
the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer;
13and their brethren, heads of their fathers'
houses—one thousand seven hundred and
sixty. *They were* very able men for the
work of the service of the house of God.

The Levites at Jerusalem

14Of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of
Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of
Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; 15Bak-
bakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah the
son of Micah, the son of [g]Zichri, the son of
Asaph; 16[h]Obadiah the son of [i]Shemaiah,

* **8:32** Spelled *Shimeam* in 9:38 * **8:33** Also the son of Gibeon (compare 9:36, 39) • Called *Jishui* in 1 Samuel 14:49 • Called *Ishbosheth* in 2 Samuel 2:8 and elsewhere * **8:34** Called *Mephibosheth* in 2 Samuel 4:4 * **8:36** Spelled *Jarah* in 9:42
* **8:37** Spelled *Rephaiah* in 9:43

Even after David took the city, there may have been Benjamites who still lived there, for David gave Benjamites positions of responsibility in his government (11:31; 12:1–7,29).

8:30 *Kish.* Kish was the father of Saul (v. 33; 9:39). In this passage the relationship between Jeiel and Kish is unclear because Kish is also named as the son of Ner (v. 33). However, in 9:35–39 the lineage is clearly traced from Jeiel to Ner to Kish and finally to Saul.

8:32 *Jerusalem.* Jerusalem remained under Jebusite control until David conquered it (2 Sam. 5:6–19). Perhaps at this time the Benjamites lived among the Jebusites.

8:33 *Esh-Baal.* Esh-Baal was evidently Saul's youngest son, since he was not named in the genealogies of the beginning of Saul's reign (1 Sam. 14:49). Usually called Ishbosheth, which means "man of shame," he reigned for a short time after his father's death (2 Sam. 2:10).

9:1 Unfaithfulness—Blatant disobedience always leads to disaster. God is serious about working righteousness in our lives, and He knows the changes that both trials and blessings can bring to our hearts. He will not leave us in a state of lethargy and peace if we need to be ignited. Sometimes He will test us to see if we are serious about walking with Him. Like the Israelites, we need to ask ourselves if we are obedient or compromising.

9:2 *Israelites.* The deportation of Israel by the Assyrians from 734 to 722 B.C. resulted in Israel's dispersion throughout the eastern Mediterranean world. However, it is apparent from this verse that some of them joined their Judean brethren in the return from Babylon after 539 B.C.

9:3 *Ephraim and Manasseh.* Both of these tribes were from the northern kingdom, or Israel. This is another confirmation that the returning community included Israelites as well as Judeans. It is very possible that some of those in the northern tribes, who had remained faithful to the Lord, may have migrated into Judah before Assyria took Israel captive.

8:29 [e] 1 Chr. 9:35–38 **8:33** [f] 1 Sam. 14:51
8:34 [g] 2 Sam. 9:12 **9:1** [a] Ezra 2:59 **9:2** [b] Neh. 7:73
[c] Ezra 2:43; 8:20 **9:3** [d] Neh. 11:1, 2 **9:10** [e] Neh. 11:10–14 **9:11** [f] Jer. 20:1 **9:15** [g] Neh. 11:17 **9:16** [h] Neh. 11:17 [i] Neh. 11:17

the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun; and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

The Levite Gatekeepers

17And the gatekeepers *were* Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their brethren. Shallum *was* the chief. 18Until then *they had been* gatekeepers for the camps of the children of Levi at the King's Gate on the east.

19Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, from his father's house, the Korahites, *were* in charge of the work of the service, gatekeepers of the tabernacle. Their fathers had been keepers of the entrance to the camp of the LORD. 20And [j]Phinehas the son of Eleazar had been the officer over them in time past; the LORD *was* with him. 21[k]Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* keeper of the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

22All those chosen as gatekeepers *were* two hundred and twelve. [l]They were recorded by their genealogy, in their villages. David and Samuel [m]the seer had appointed them to their trusted office. 23So they and their children *were* in charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, the house of the tabernacle, by assignment. 24The gatekeepers were assigned to the four directions: the east, west, north, and south. 25And their brethren in their villages *had* to come with them from time to time [n]for seven days. 26For in this trusted office *were* four chief gatekeepers; they were Levites. And they had charge over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. 27And they lodged *all* around the house of God because they *had* the [o]responsibility, and they *were* in charge of opening *it* every morning.

Other Levite Responsibilities

28Now *some* of them were in charge of the serving vessels, for they brought them in and took them out by count. 29*Some* of them *were* appointed over the furnishings and over all the implements of the sanctuary, and over the [p]fine flour and the wine and the oil and the incense and the spices. 30And *some* of the sons of the priests made [q]the ointment of the spices.

31Mattithiah of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the trusted office [r]over the things that were baked in the pans. 32And some of their brethren of the sons of the Kohathites [s]*were* in charge of preparing the showbread for every Sabbath.

33These are [t]the singers, heads of the fathers' *houses* of the Levites, *who lodged* in the chambers, *and were* free *from other duties;* for they were employed in *that* work day and night. 34These heads of the fathers' *houses* of the Levites *were* heads throughout their generations. They dwelt at Jerusalem.

The Family of King Saul

35Jeiel the father of Gibeon, whose wife's name *was* [u]Maacah, dwelt at Gibeon. 36His firstborn son *was* Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, 37Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah,* and Mikloth. 38And Mikloth begot Shimeam.* They also dwelt alongside their relatives in Jerusalem, with their brethren. 39[v]Ner begot Kish, Kish begot Saul, and Saul begot Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal. 40The son of Jonathan *was* Merib-Baal, and Merib-Baal begot Micah. 41The sons of Micah *were* Pithon, Melech, Tahrea,*[w] and Ahaz.* 42And Ahaz begot Jarah;* Jarah begot Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begot Moza; 43Moza begot Binea, Rephaiah* his son, Eleasah his son, and Azel his son.

44And Azel had six sons whose names *were* these: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; these *were* the sons of Azel.

Tragic End of Saul and His Sons

10 Now [a]the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. 2Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. 3The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was wounded by the archers. 4Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. 5And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead,

* **9:37** Called *Zecher* in 8:31 * **9:38** Spelled *Shimeah* in 8:32 * **9:41** Spelled *Tarea* in 8:35 • Following Arabic, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate (compare 8:35); Masoretic Text and Septuagint omit *and Ahaz.* * **9:42** Spelled *Jehoaddah* in 8:36 * **9:43** Spelled *Raphah* in 8:37

9:19 ***Korah.*** As descendants of Kohath (Ex. 6:18) Korah and his line had close connections with the priesthood. They could not be priests, but they ministered closely with the temple, first as carriers of the holy objects (Num. 4:5–15), and later as gatekeepers.
10:4 ***uncircumcised.*** For the Hebrew, circumcision was a sign of God's promise through Abraham to them. The uncircumcised were those outside the

9:20 *j* Num. 25:6–13; 31:6 **9:21** *k* 1 Chr. 26:2, 14 **9:22** *l* 1 Chr. 26:1, 2 *m* 1 Sam. 9:9 **9:25** *n* 2 Kin. 11:4–7 **9:27** *o* 1 Chr. 23:30–32 **9:29** *p* 1 Chr. 23:29 **9:30** *q* Ex. 30:22–25 **9:31** *r* Lev. 2:5; 6:21 **9:32** *s* Lev. 24:5–8 **9:33** *t* 1 Chr. 6:31; 25:1 **9:35** *u* 1 Chr. 8:29–32 **9:39** *v* 1 Chr. 8:33–38 **9:41** *w* 1 Chr. 8:35 **10:1** *a* 1 Sam. 31:1, 2

he also fell on his sword and died. 6So Saul and his three sons died, and all his house died together. 7And when all the men of Israel who *were* in the valley saw that they had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook their cities and fled; then the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9And they stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news *in the temple* of their idols and among the people. 10*b*Then they put his armor in the temple of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

11And when all Jabesh Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, 12all the [c]valiant men arose and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons; and they brought them to [d]Jabesh, and buried their bones under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

13So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, [e]because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because [f]he consulted a medium for guidance. 14But *he* did not inquire of the LORD; therefore He killed him, and [g]turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.

David Made King over All Israel

11 Then [a]all Israel came together to David at Hebron, saying, "Indeed we *are* your bone and your flesh. 2Also, in time past, even when Saul was king, you *were* the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD your [b]God said to you, 'You shall [c]shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over My people Israel.'" 3Therefore all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. And [d]they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by [e]Samuel.

The City of David

4And David and all Israel [f]went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus, [g]where the Jebusites *were,* the inhabitants of the land. 5But the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You shall not come in here!" Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). 6Now David said, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain." And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and became chief. 7Then David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore they called it the City of David. 8And he built the city around it, from the Millo* to the surrounding area. Joab repaired the rest of the city. 9So David [h]went on and became great, and the LORD of hosts *was* with [i]him.

The Mighty Men of David

10Now [j]these *were* the heads of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, with all Israel, to make him king, according to [k]the word of the LORD concerning Israel.

11And this *is* the number of the mighty men whom David had: [l]Jashobeam the son of a Hachmonite, [m]chief of the captains;* he had lifted up his spear against three hundred, killed *by him* at one time.

12After him *was* Eleazar the son of [n]Dodo, the Ahohite, who *was one* of the

* **11:8** Literally *The Landfill* * **11:11** Following Qere; Kethib, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *the thirty* (compare 2 Samuel 23:8).

promise, often their enemies. ***abuse.*** The abuse of the Philistines might take the form of cutting off Saul's thumbs and big toes, which would leave him crippled and humiliated (Judg. 1:6–7). Whatever they did would have been meant to belittle Saul, his kingdom, and his God. ***was greatly afraid.*** The armorbearer was not afraid of Saul. He was afraid of God. He was afraid of killing one who had been anointed king over Israel and who belonged to God who had set him apart. ***sword and fell on it.*** Suicide was very rare among Hebrews of Old Testament times.

10:10 ***Dagon.*** Dagon was worshiped by the Philistines and other peoples in Syria and northwest Mesopotamia as the god of grain. Apparently the Philistines celebrated military victory by bringing a trophy of their success back to their temple where it could be displayed as a tribute to the might of their god.

10:14 ***He killed him.*** This statement is shocking in its bluntness. In the final analysis, Saul's death was not by his own hand, but by the hand of God. The Lord let Saul pursue a course that led to death.

11:1–2 Unity—The history of events between the death of Saul and the beginning of David's reign over all Israel is omitted by the chronicler, but is narrated in 2 Samuel 2–4. The fighting between the house of David and the house of Saul continued until Saul's son Ishbosheth was killed. Israel could not be unified as long as some were trying to be loyal to Saul. God had already rejected Saul and chosen David, but until Saul's house was gone, the people could not focus on God's choice for king. We as believers often find ourselves in a state of disunity because we are mixed up with our own agendas instead of seeing God's plan.

11:8 ***he built the city.*** Once David occupied Mount Ophel, the original and very small area of Jerusalem, he greatly enlarged it by building retaining walls along the Kidron valley to the east and south and the Tyropoeon valley to the west. Between these walls and the top of the hill he built terraces, so that various buildings could be constructed there.

10:10 *b* 1 Sam. 31:10 **10:12** *c* 1 Sam. 14:52 *d* 2 Sam. 21:12 **10:13** *e* 1 Sam. 13:13, 14; 15:22–26 *f* 1 Sam. 28:7 **10:14** *g* 1 Sam. 15:28 **11:1** *a* 2 Sam. 5:1 **11:2** *b* Ps. 78:70–72 *c* 2 Sam. 7:7 **11:3** *d* 2 Sam. 5:3 *e* 1 Sam. 16:1, 4, 12, 13 **11:4** *f* 2 Sam. 5:6 *g* Judg. 1:21; 19:10, 11 **11:9** *h* 2 Sam. 3:1 *i* 1 Sam. 16:18 **11:10** *j* 2 Sam. 23:8 *k* 1 Sam. 16:1, 12 **11:11** *l* 1 Chr. 27:2 *m* 1 Chr. 12:18 **11:12** *n* 1 Chr. 27:4

three mighty men. 13He was with David at Pasdammim. Now there the Philistines were gathered for battle, and there was a piece of ground full of barley. So the people fled from the Philistines. 14But they stationed themselves in the middle of *that* field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

15Now three of the thirty chief men [o]went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the army of the Philistines encamped [p]in the Valley of Rephaim. 16David *was* then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then in Bethlehem. 17And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" 18So the three broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that *was* by the gate, and took *it* and brought *it* to David. Nevertheless David would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. 19And he said, "Far be it from me, O my God, that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of these men *who have put* their lives *in jeopardy*? For at the risk of their lives they brought it." Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men.

20[q]Abishai the brother of Joab was chief of *another* three.* He had lifted up his spear against three hundred *men,* killed *them,* and won a name among *these* three. 21[r]Of the three he was more honored than the other two men. Therefore he became their captain. However he did not attain to the *first* three.

22Benaiah was the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man from Kabzeel, who had done many deeds. [s]He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab. He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day. 23And he killed an Egyptian, a man of *great* height, five cubits tall. In the Egyptian's hand *there was* a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. 24These *things* Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and won a name among three mighty men. 25Indeed he was more honored than the thirty, but he did not attain to the *first* three. And David appointed him over his guard.

26Also the mighty warriors *were* [t]Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, 27Shammoth the Harorite,* [u]Helez the Pelonite,* 28[v]Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, [w]Abiezer the Anathothite, 29Sibbechai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite, 30[x]Maharai the Netophathite, Heled* the son of Baanah the Netophathite, 31Ithai* the son of Ribai of Gibeah, of the sons of Benjamin, [y]Benaiah the Pirathonite, 32Hurai* of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel* the Arbathite, 33Azmaveth the Baharumite,* Eliahba the Shaalbonite, 34the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shageh the Hararite, 35Ahiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphal the son of Ur, 36Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, 37Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai, 38Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Hagri, 39Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite* (the armorbearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah), 40Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 41[z]Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai, 42Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite (a chief of the Reubenites) and thirty with him, 43Hanan the son of Maachah, Joshaphat the Mithnite, 44Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite, 45Jediael the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite, 46Eliel the Mahavite, Jeribai and Joshaviah the sons of Elnaam, Ithmah the Moabite, 47Eliel, Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

The Growth of David's Army

12 Now [a]these *were* the men who came to David at [b]Ziklag while he was still a fugitive from Saul the son of Kish; and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers in the war, 2armed with bows, using

* **11:20** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Syriac reads *thirty.* * **11:27** Spelled *Harodite* in 2 Samuel 23:25 • Called *Paltite* in 2 Samuel 23:26 * **11:30** Spelled *Heleb* in 2 Samuel 23:29 and *Heldai* in 1 Chronicles 27:15 * **11:31** Spelled *Ittai* in 2 Samuel 23:29 * **11:32** Spelled *Hiddai* in 2 Samuel 23:30 • Spelled *Abi-Albon* in 2 Samuel 23:31 * **11:33** Spelled *Barhumite* in 2 Samuel 23:31 * **11:39** Spelled *Beerothite* in 2 Samuel 23:37

11:18 ***poured it out to the LORD.*** Even though he had been longing for a drink from his "home well," David never considered sending any of his brave supporters to get it for him. When they risked their lives to bring it to him, David responded by pouring it on the ground, as if it had been a blood offering for God. The Israelites were strictly forbidden to eat blood (Lev. 3:17; Deut. 12:23), and David considered this water to be in the same category. Only God should receive such a sacrifice (Gen. 35:14).

11:23 ***five cubits.*** The Egyptian was about seven and a half feet tall.

11:41 ***Uriah.*** This is the same Uriah who was the husband of Bathsheba. The fact that Uriah was one of the mighty men of valor, who did so much to establish David as king, makes David's betrayal of Uriah doubly tragic (2 Sam. 11).

12:2 ***of Benjamin, Saul's brethren.*** There is a curious little play on words here. Benjamin means "son of the right hand." These Benjamites could shoot and sling with either the right hand or the left hand, which

11:15 [o] 2 Sam. 23:13 [p] 2 Sam. 5:18 **11:20** [q] 2 Sam. 23:18 **11:21** [r] 2 Sam. 23:19 **11:22** [s] 2 Sam. 23:20 **11:26** [t] 2 Sam. 23:24 **11:27** [u] 1 Chr. 27:10 **11:28** [v] 1 Chr. 27:9 [w] 1 Chr. 27:12 **11:30** [x] 1 Chr. 27:13 **11:31** [y] 1 Chr. 27:14 **11:41** [z] 2 Sam. 11 **12:1** [a] 1 Sam. 27:2 [b] 1 Sam. 27:6

both the right hand and [c]the left in *hurling* stones and *shooting* arrows with the bow. *They were* of Benjamin, Saul's brethren.

3 The chief *was* Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite; Jeziel and Pelet the sons of Azmaveth; Berachah, and Jehu the Anathothite; 4 Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad the Gederathite; 5 Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite; 6 Elkanah, Jisshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korahites; 7 and Joelah and Zebadiah the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

8 *Some* Gadites joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* [d]as swift as gazelles on the mountains: 9 Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, 10 Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, 11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh, 12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, 13 Jeremiah the tenth, and Machbanai the eleventh. 14 These *were* from the sons of Gad, captains of the army; the least was over a hundred, and the greatest was over a [e]thousand. 15 These *are* the ones who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its [f]banks; and they put to flight all *those* in the valleys, to the east and to the west.

16 Then some of the sons of Benjamin and Judah came to David at the stronghold. 17 And David went out to meet them, and answered and said to them, "If you have come peaceably to me to help me, my heart will be united with you; but if to betray me to my enemies, since *there is* no wrong in my hands, may the God of our fathers look and bring judgment." 18 Then the Spirit came upon [g]Amasai, chief of the captains, *and he said:*

"*We are* yours, O David;
We *are* on your side, O son of Jesse!
Peace, peace to you,
And peace to your helpers!
For your God helps you."

So David received them, and made them captains of the troop.

19 And *some* from Manasseh defected to David [h]when he was going with the Philistines to battle against Saul; but they did not help them, for the lords of the Philistines sent him away by agreement, saying, [i]"He may defect to his master Saul *and endanger* our heads." 20 When he went to Ziklag, those of Manasseh who defected to him were Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, captains of the thousands who *were* from Manasseh. 21 And they helped David against [j]the bands *of raiders,* for they *were* all mighty men of valor, and they were captains in the army. 22 For at *that* time they came to David day by day to help him, until *it was* a great army, [k]like the army of God.

David's Army at Hebron

23 Now these *were* the numbers of the divisions *that were* equipped for war, *and* [l]came to David at [m]Hebron to [n]turn *over* the kingdom of Saul to him, [o]according to the word of the LORD: 24 of the sons of Judah bearing shield and spear, six thousand eight hundred armed for war; 25 of the sons of Simeon, mighty men of valor fit for war, seven thousand one hundred; 26 of the sons of Levi four thousand six hundred; 27 Jehoiada, the leader of the Aaronites, and with him three thousand seven hundred; 28 [p]Zadok, a young man, a valiant warrior, and from his father's house twenty-two captains; 29 of the sons of Benjamin, relatives of Saul, three thousand (until then [q]the greatest part of them had remained loyal to the house of Saul); 30 of the sons of Ephraim twenty thousand eight hundred, mighty men of valor, famous men throughout their father's house; 31 of the half-tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, who were designated by name to come and make David king; 32 of the sons of Issachar [r]who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command; 33 of Zebulun there were fifty thousand who

made them particularly versatile in battle. They were more than "sons of the right hand" to David. They were "sons of the left hand" as well.

12:15 ***in the first month.*** The first month was Nisan, corresponding approximately to April, the time of spring rains. Ordinarily a person could not cross the Jordan at flood stage, but the fact that the Gadites were not stopped by the floods is a testimony of their unusual courage.

12:28 ***Zadok.*** This Zadok was probably the same Zadok who was first appointed by David as priest at Gibeon (16:39). The office of priest was not incompatible with that of warrior, as Phinehas showed (Num. 25:6–9; Josh. 22:13–30).

12:32 Wisdom—The men of Issachar were dealing with the issue of "the Lord's anointed." There was no longer any question that David was the Lord's choice, and that Saul had been replaced, but the timing was crucial. It would do no good to anoint David if it took rebellion and treason to place him on the throne. Men who gain power by trickery usually assume that others will be ready to do likewise, and dishonesty and intrigue are not a good foundation for a God-honoring nation. It is sometimes hard to wait for God's timing, or even hard to tell just what His timing is, but if we ask for wisdom, He will give it to us (James 1:5).

12:2 [c] Judg. 3:15; 20:16 **12:8** [d] 2 Sam. 2:18
12:14 [e] 1 Sam. 18:13 **12:15** [f] Josh. 3:15; 4:18, 19
12:18 [g] 2 Sam. 17:25 **12:19** [h] 1 Sam. 29:2 [i] 1 Sam. 29:4 **12:21** [j] 1 Sam. 30:1, 9, 10 **12:22** [k] Josh. 5:13–15
12:23 [l] 2 Sam. 2:1–4 [m] 1 Chr. 11:1 [n] 1 Chr. 10:14 [o] 1 Sam. 16:1–4 **12:28** [p] 2 Sam. 8:17 **12:29** [q] 2 Sam. 2:8, 9
12:32 [r] Esth. 1:13

went out to battle, expert in war with all weapons of war, [s]stouthearted men who could keep ranks; 34of Naphtali one thousand captains, and with them thirty-seven thousand with shield and spear; 35of the Danites who could keep battle formation, twenty-eight thousand six hundred; 36of Asher, those who could go out to war, able to keep battle formation, forty thousand; 37of the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, from the other side of the Jordan, one hundred and twenty thousand armed for battle with every *kind* of weapon of war.

38All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel *were* of [t]one mind to make David king. 39And they were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their brethren had prepared for them. 40Moreover those who were near to them, from as far away as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, were bringing food on donkeys and camels, on mules and oxen—provisions of flour and cakes of figs and cakes of raisins, wine and oil and oxen and sheep abundantly, for *there was* joy in Israel.

The Ark Brought from Kirjath Jearim

13 Then David consulted with the [a]captains of thousands and hundreds, *and* with every leader. 2And David said to all the assembly of Israel, "If *it seems* good to you, and if it is of the LORD our God, let us send out to our brethren everywhere *who are* [b]left in all the land of Israel, and with them to the priests and Levites *who are* in their cities *and* their common-lands, that they may gather together to us; 3and let us bring the ark of our God back to us, [c]for we have not inquired at it since the days of Saul." 4Then all the assembly said that they would do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5So [d]David gathered all Israel together, from [e]Shihor in Egypt to as far as the entrance of Hamath, to bring the ark of God [f]from Kirjath Jearim. 6And David and all Israel went up to [g]Baalah,* to Kirjath Jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God the LORD, [h]who dwells *between* the cherubim, where *His* name is proclaimed. 7So they carried the ark of God [i]on a new cart [j]from the house of Abinadab, and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. 8Then [k]David and all Israel played *music* before God with all *their* might, with singing, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on cymbals, and with trumpets.

9And when they came to Chidon's* threshing floor, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen stumbled. 10Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzza, and He struck him [l]because he put his hand to the ark; and he [m]died there before God. 11And David became angry because of the LORD's outbreak against Uzza; therefore that place is called Perez Uzza* to this day. 12David was afraid of God that day, saying, "How can I bring the ark of God to me?"

13So David would not move the ark with him into the City of David, but took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. 14[n]The ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed [o]the house of Obed-Edom and all that he had.

David Established at Jerusalem

14 Now [a]Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, with masons and carpenters, to build him a house. 2So David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, for his

* **13:6** Called *Baale Judah* in 2 Samuel 6:2
* **13:9** Called *Nachon* in 2 Samuel 6:6 * **13:11** Literally *Outburst Against Uzza*

13:3 *the ark of our God.* This was the ark of the covenant that contained a copy of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 25:10–22). Besides holding the stone tablets, the ark represented the presence of the living God among the Israelites.

13:5 Commitment—One of David's first official actions upon becoming king was to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem. The ark had been in Kirjath Jearim since the time it was returned by the Philistines when Samuel was a boy (1 Sam. 6:20—7:1). Moving the ark to Jerusalem was a sign of David's commitment to place the Lord first in his reign.

13:6 *the LORD, who dwells between the cherubim.* On each side of the ark of the covenant were two cherubim. They extended their wings over the cover, also called the mercy seat (Ex. 25:17–22), and the glory of God was perceived as sitting on top of the ark, as a King sits on a throne. ***Where His name is proclaimed.*** In Deuteronomy, the presence of God is often spoken of as the presence of His name (Deut. 12:1–14).

13:9 *Chidon's threshing floor.* Also called "Nachon's threshing floor" (2 Sam. 6:6), this hard flat surface was used for separating the grain kernels from the straw and husks.

13:11 *Perez Uzza.* Perez Uzza means "outbreak against Uzza." The ark should have been carried on poles by Levites (Num. 4:14–15). This direction for transporting the holy things was very clear, and should have been remembered.

14:1–2 *Hiram king of Tyre.* A powerful ruler of the Phoenician city-state of Tyre, Hiram is mentioned in the Scriptures and in other sources. He was a

12:33 [s] Ps. 12:2 **12:38** [t] 2 Chr. 30:12 **13:1** [a] 1 Chr. 11:15; 12:34 **13:2** [b] Is. 37:4 **13:3** [c] 1 Sam. 7:1, 2 **13:5** [d] 1 Sam. 7:5 [e] Josh. 13:3 [f] 1 Sam. 6:21; 7:1, 2 **13:6** [g] Josh. 15:9, 60 [h] Ex. 25:22 **13:7** [i] 1 Sam. 6:7 [j] 1 Sam. 7:1 **13:8** [k] 2 Sam. 6:5 **13:10** [l] [Num. 4:15] [m] Lev. 10:2 **13:14** [n] 2 Sam. 6:11 [o] 1 Chr. 26:4–8 **14:1** [a] 2 Sam. 5:11

kingdom was [b]highly exalted for the sake of His people Israel.

3Then David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David begot more sons and daughters. 4And [c]these are the names of his children whom he had in Jerusalem: Shammua,* Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 5Ibhar, Elishua,* Elpelet,* 6Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, 7Elishama, Beeliada,* and Eliphelet.

The Philistines Defeated

8Now when the Philistines heard that [d]David had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. And David heard *of it* and went out against them. 9Then the Philistines went and made a raid [e]on the Valley of Rephaim. 10And David [f]inquired of God, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?"

The LORD said to him, "Go up, for I will deliver them into your hand."

11So they went up to Baal Perazim, and David defeated them there. Then David said, "God has broken through my enemies by my hand like a breakthrough of water." Therefore they called the name of that place Baal Perazim.* 12And when they left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

13[g]Then the Philistines once again made a raid on the valley. 14Therefore David inquired again of God, and God said to him, "You shall not go up after them; circle around them, [h]and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. 15And it shall be, when you hear a sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall go out to battle, for God has gone out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines." 16So David did as God commanded him, and they drove back the army of the Philistines from Gibeon as far as Gezer. 17Then [i]the fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD [j]brought the fear of him upon all nations.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

15 *David* built houses for himself in the City of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, [a]and pitched a tent for it. 2Then David said, "No one may carry the [b]ark of God but the Levites, for [c]the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever." 3And David [d]gathered all Israel together at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. 4Then David assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites: 5of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and one hundred and twenty of his brethren; 6of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and two hundred and twenty of his brethren; 7of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, and one hundred and thirty of his brethren; 8of the sons of [e]Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and two hundred of his brethren; 9of the sons of [f]Hebron, Eliel the chief, and eighty of his brethren; 10of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and one hundred and twelve of his brethren.

11And David called for [g]Zadok and [h]Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and

* **14:4** Spelled *Shimea* in 3:5 * **14:5** Spelled *Elishama* in 3:6 • Spelled *Eliphelet* in 3:6 * **14:7** Spelled *Eliada* in 3:8 * **14:11** Literally *Master of Breakthroughs*

contemporary of both David and Solomon. He helped build David's house, and he also supplied material for the temple and other building projects in Solomon's reign (1 Kin. 9:10).

14:3 ***took more wives.*** See the note at 3:1–5.

14:4 ***children.*** The first four listed here are all sons of Bathsheba (3:5).

15:1 ***place for the ark.*** The place for the ark was in the tent in the City of David. The original tabernacle built in Moses' day had been placed at Shiloh (Josh. 18:1). It remained there until the capture of the ark by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4:1–11), when it was evidently moved to Nob, just two miles from Jerusalem (1 Sam. 21:1–6). Then it was moved to a high place at Gibeon (2 Chr. 1:3), about two miles north of Saul's city Gibeah. When David became king, he left the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon and appointed the priest Zadok to attend to its ministry (16:39). Even after he had built a new tabernacle on Mount Zion and brought the ark into it, the original tent remained at Gibeon. Solomon brought the ark from Mount Zion and the tabernacle of Moses from Gibeon and placed them in the new temple he had built on Mount Moriah (2 Chr. 5:4–5).

15:2 ***No one . . . but the Levites.*** According to the provisions of the Law, the ark was to be carried only by the Levites, by means of poles inserted through corner rings (Num. 4:14–15).

15:11 ***Zadok.*** The other line of the priesthood descended from Aaron's son Eleazar, and included Zadok (6:8). During David's time representatives of both Ithamar and Eleazar served. Zadok served at the tabernacle at Gibeon, and Abiathar served as chief priest at Jerusalem. When Solomon became king, Abiathar was deposed and Zadok ministered as high priest at the temple (1 Kin. 2:26–27,35). The dismissal of Abiathar as priest was in accordance with the Lord's word to Eli because of the unfaithfulness of Eli's sons (1 Sam. 2:27–36). ***Abiathar.*** The transition from the rule of Saul to David involved a transition from the old Mosaic tabernacle to the new place David had established on Mount Zion in preparation for the temple (v. 1). Abiathar's father, the priest Ahimelech, was in charge of the old tabernacle when it left Shiloh and was moved to Nob (1 Sam. 21:1). Ahimelech was Eli's great-grandson (1 Sam. 14:3; 22:9). Eli is considered to have been a descendant of Aaron's son Ithamar.

14:2 [b] Num. 24:7 **14:4** [c] 1 Chr. 3:5–8 **14:8** [d] 2 Sam. 5:17–21 **14:9** [e] 1 Chr. 11:15; 14:13 **14:10** [f] 1 Sam. 23:2, 4; 30:8 **14:13** [g] 2 Sam. 5:22–25 **14:14** [h] 2 Sam. 5:23 **14:17** [i] Josh. 6:27 [j] [Deut. 2:25; 11:25] **15:1** [a] 1 Chr. 16:1 **15:2** [b] [Num. 4:15] [c] Deut. 10:8; 31:9 **15:3** [d] 1 Kin. 8:1 **15:8** [e] Ex. 6:22 **15:9** [f] Ex. 6:18 **15:11** [g] 1 Chr. 12:28 [h] 1 Kin. 2:22, 26, 27

Amminadab. 12He said to them, "You *are* the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to *the place* I have prepared for it. 13For [i]because you *did* not *do it* the first *time,* [j]the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order."

14So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. 15And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as [k]Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

16Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren *to be* the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy. 17So the Levites appointed [l]Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, [m]Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of their brethren, the sons of Merari, [n]Ethan the son of Kushaiah; 18and with them their brethren of the second *rank:* Zechariah, Ben,* Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers; 19the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, *were* to sound the cymbals of bronze; 20Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with strings according to [o]Alamoth; 21Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, to direct with harps on the [p]Sheminith; 22Chenaniah, leader of the Levites, was instructor *in charge of* the music, because he *was* skillful; 23Berechiah and Elkanah *were* doorkeepers for the ark; 24Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, [q]were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God; and [r]Obed-Edom and Jehiah, doorkeepers for the ark.

25So [s]David, the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-Edom with joy. 26And so it was, when God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bulls and seven rams. 27David was clothed with a robe of fine [t]linen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master *with* the singers. David also wore a linen ephod. 28[u]Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.

29And it happened, [v]*as* the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the City of David, that Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David whirling and playing music; and she despised him in her heart.

The Ark Placed in the Tabernacle

16 So [a]they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. 2And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, [b]he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. 3Then he distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece *of meat,* and a cake of raisins.

* **15:18** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint omits *Ben.*

15:17 ***Heman.*** The musician Heman was the grandson of the prophet Samuel (6:33). He is probably the same Heman who appears in the superscription of Psalm 88. ***Asaph.*** Asaph was leader of the Gershonite Levites (6:39–43). Asaph and his sons ministered primarily as singers (25:1–2; 2 Chr. 20:14) and composers, as their superscriptions suggest (Ps. 50; 73–83). ***Ethan.*** Ethan was the head of the Merarite division of musicians (6:44). He may be the composer of Psalm 89.

15:20 ***with strings according to Alamoth.*** The meaning of "alamoth" is uncertain. It may mean a soprano voice.

15:21 ***harps on the Sheminith.*** The meaning of "sheminith" is uncertain, but it is apparently a musical term, perhaps derived from the Hebrew word for eighth, referring to musical scales.

15:24 ***Obed-Edom.*** It is likely that Obed-Edom in this verse was the same person who had custody of the ark in the months before it was brought to Jerusalem (13:13–14). He apparently was a Levite and certainly a righteous man.

15:29 ***Michal, Saul's daughter.*** Michal was David's first wife, whom he married before Saul started pursuing him (1 Sam. 18:27; 19:11–17). When David was hiding from Saul, Michal was given in marriage to another (1 Sam. 25:44). One of the conditions of David's peace agreement with Abner was that Michal be returned to him (2 Sam. 3:13–16). The Bible does not say why Michal despised David, but it seems probable that the real source of her attitude was bitterness about her life. If she had no understanding of God's hand in her life and the life of the nation, seeing David's joyful abandonment before the Lord would have been galling.

16:3 ***he distributed.*** David's distribution of food was in line with the nature of the peace offerings. Such offerings often accompanied occasions of praise and thanksgiving such as this one. They were unique in that they provided a common meal in which all participated before God—the offerer, his family and friends, and the priests (Lev. 7:11–14; 28–34; Deut. 12:17–19).

15:13 [i] 2 Sam. 6:3 [j] 1 Chr. 13:7–11 **15:15** [k] Ex. 25:14 **15:17** [l] 1 Chr. 6:33; 25:1 [m] 1 Chr. 6:39 [n] 1 Chr. 6:44 **15:20** [o] Ps. 46:title **15:21** [p] Ps. 6:title **15:24** [q] [Num. 10:8] [r] 1 Chr. 13:13, 14 **15:25** [s] 1 Kin. 8:1 **15:27** [t] 1 Sam. 2:18, 28 **15:28** [u] 1 Chr. 13:8 **15:29** [v] 2 Sam. 3:13, 14; 6:16, 20–23 **16:1** [a] 2 Sam. 6:17 **16:2** [b] 1 Kin. 8:14

4 And he appointed some of the Levites
to minister before the ark of the LORD, to
[c]commemorate, to thank, and to praise the
LORD God of Israel: 5 Asaph the chief, and
next to him Zechariah, *then* [d]Jeiel, Shemir-
amoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah,
and Obed-Edom: Jeiel with stringed instru-
ments and harps, but Asaph made music
with cymbals; 6 Benaiah and Jahaziel the
priests regularly *blew* the trumpets before
the ark of the covenant of God.

David's Song of Thanksgiving

7 On that day [e]David [f]first delivered
this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his
brethren, to thank the LORD:

8 [g]Oh, give thanks to the LORD!
Call upon His name;
Make known His deeds among the
peoples!
9 Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
Talk of all His wondrous works!
10 Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who
seek the LORD!
11 Seek the LORD and His strength;
Seek His face evermore!
12 Remember His marvelous works
which He has done,
His wonders, and the judgments of His
mouth,
13 O seed of Israel His servant,
You children of Jacob, His chosen
ones!

14 He *is* the LORD our God;
His [h]judgments *are* in all the earth.
15 Remember His covenant forever,
The word which He commanded, for a
thousand generations,
16 *The* [i]*covenant which* He made with
Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac,
17 And [j]confirmed it to [k]Jacob for a
statute,
To Israel *for* an everlasting covenant,
18 Saying, "To you I will give the land of
Canaan
As the allotment of your inheritance,"
19 When you were [l]few in number,
Indeed very few, and strangers in it.

20 When they went from one nation to
another,
And from *one* kingdom to another
people,
21 He permitted no man to do them
wrong;
Yes, He [m]rebuked kings for their
sakes,
22 *Saying*, [n]"Do not touch My anointed
ones,
And do My prophets no harm."*

23 [o]Sing to the LORD, all the earth;
Proclaim the good news of His
salvation from day to day.
24 Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.

25 For the LORD *is* great and greatly to be
praised;
He *is* also to be feared above all gods.
26 For all the gods [p]of the peoples *are*
idols,
But the LORD made the heavens.
27 Honor and majesty *are* before Him;
Strength and gladness are in His
place.

28 Give to the LORD, O families of the
peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.
29 Give to the LORD the glory *due* His
name;

* **16:22** Compare verses 8–22 with Psalm 105:1–15

16:4 ***Levites.*** The appointment of Levites described here was of a more permanent nature than that of 15:1–24, which concerned the immediate task of moving the ark into Jerusalem. Some of the same persons were involved, as verses 5 and 6 make clear.

16:7 ***to thank the LORD.*** David's musical abilities are well-known, both as a harpist (1 Sam. 16:18) and as the writer of many of the psalms. This psalm consists of three different parts. Each portion correlates with part of another psalm. Verses 8–22 correspond with Psalm 105:1–15; verses 23–33 with Psalm 96:1–13; and verses 34–36 with Psalm 106:1,47–48.

16:12–16 Obedience—"Remember His marvelous works . . . Remember His covenant forever . . ." and for those of us who are believers, "proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (1 Cor. 11:23–26). Remembering is connected to obedience, only when we remember His commands can we obey Him.

16:22 ***anointed.*** In this context "anointed ones" means those set apart for God's service, not necessarily literally anointed with oil.

16:29 The Meaning of Worship—Worship refers to the honor and praise given in thought or deed to a person or thing. The Bible teaches that God alone is worthy of worship (Ps. 29:2). But it also records accounts of those who worshiped inappropriately: people (Acts 14:8–18); false gods (2 Kin. 10:19); images and idols (Is. 2:8); heavenly bodies (2 Kin. 21:3); Satan (Rev. 13:4); and demons (Rev. 9:20).

True worship involves at least three important elements:

1. *Reverence.* This includes the honor and respect directed toward the Lord in thought and feeling. Jesus said that those who worship God must do so "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). The term *spirit* speaks of the personal nature of worship. It is from my person to God's person and involves the intellect, emotions, and will. The word *truth* speaks of the content of worship. God is pleased when we worship Him, understanding His true character.

16:4 [c] Ps. 38:title; 70:title **16:5** [d] 1 Chr. 15:18
16:7 [e] 2 Sam. 22:1; 23:1 [f] Ps. 105:1–15 **16:8** [g] Ps. 105:1–15
16:14 [h] Is. 26:9] **16:16** [i] Gen. 17:2; 26:3; 28:13; 35:11
16:17 [j] Gen. 35:11, 12 [k] Gen. 28:10–15 **16:19** [l] Gen. 34:30
16:21 [m] Gen. 12:17; 20:3 **16:22** [n] Gen. 20:7 **16:23** [o] Ps. 96:1–13 **16:26** [p] Lev. 19:4

Bring an offering, and come before
Him.
Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of
holiness!
30 Tremble before Him, all the earth.
The world also is firmly established,
It shall not be moved.
31 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the
earth be glad;
And let them say among the nations,
"The LORD reigns."
32 Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;
Let the field rejoice, and all that *is* in it.
33 Then the [q]trees of the woods shall
rejoice before the LORD,
For He is [r]coming to judge the earth.*
34 [s]Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is*
good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.*
35 [t]And say, "Save us, O God of our
salvation;
Gather us together, and deliver us
from the Gentiles,
To give thanks to Your holy name,
To triumph in Your praise."
36 [u]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting!*

And all [v]the people said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD.

Regular Worship Maintained

37 So he left [w]Asaph and his brothers there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister before the ark regularly, as every day's work [x]required; 38 and [y]Obed-Edom with his sixty-eight brethren, including Obed-Edom the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, *to be* gatekeepers; 39 and Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests, [z]before the tabernacle of the LORD [a]at the high place that *was* at Gibeon, 40 to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering regularly [b]morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the Law of the LORD which He commanded Israel; 41 and with them Heman and Jeduthun and the rest who were chosen, who were designated by name, to give thanks to the LORD, [c]because His mercy *endures* forever; 42 and with them Heman and Jeduthun, to sound aloud with trumpets and cymbals and the musical instruments of God. Now the sons of Jeduthun *were* gatekeepers.

43 [d]Then all the people departed, every man to his house; and David returned to bless his house.

God's Covenant with David

17 Now [a]it came to pass, when David was dwelling in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD *is* under tent curtains."

2 Then Nathan said to David, "Do all that *is* in your heart, for God *is* with you."

* **16:33** Compare verses 23–33 with Psalm 96:1–13 * **16:34** Compare verse 34 with Psalm 106:1
* **16:36** Compare verses 35, 36 with Psalm 106:47, 48

2. *Public expression.* This was particularly prevalent in the Old Testament because of the sacrificial system. For example, when a believer received a particular blessing for which he wanted to thank God, it was not sufficient to say it privately; he expressed his thanks publicly with a thank offering (Lev. 7:12).
3. *Service.* The words for worship in both Testaments originally referred to the labor of slaves for the master. Worship especially includes the joyful service which Christians render to Christ their Master. The concept of worship involves much more than church attendance once or twice a week. It involves an entire life of obedience, service, and praise to God.

16:33 *trees . . . rejoice.* This is a figure of speech called personification, in which inanimate things are spoken of as if they had human characteristics. Because the whole creation was negatively affected by the fall of humanity into sin, it could not be restored to perfection and could not truly rejoice until humanity was redeemed. ***He is coming.*** When the Lord returns to the earth, all creation will burst out in praise.

16:38 *Obed-Edom.* There are two men by this name in this verse. The first is the Obed-Edom whose house sheltered the ark for three months (13:14) and who was a doorkeeper (15:24). The second was also a gatekeeper, a son of Jeduthun.

16:39 *Zadok.* Until the temple of Solomon was completed, there were two legitimate places for community worship—the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon, and David's tabernacle on Mount Zion. Zadok, a descendant of Eleazar, served at Gibeon, while Abiathar, a descendant of Ithamar, served at Jerusalem (see note at 15:11).

16:41 *Jeduthun.* This was probably another name for the musician Ethan, who is usually named together with Asaph and Heman (15:17,19; 6:33,39,44).

16:42 *musical instruments of God.* It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of music in Old Testament worship. The Book of Psalms in itself, and constant references to choral and orchestral ministry demonstrate the significance of music as the people worshiped their Creator (9:33; 15:16–24; 16:4–6; 25:1–31).

17:1 *Nathan the prophet.* Nathan was a prophet at the time of both David and Solomon. He was closely connected with both kings, and was trusted as a faithful spokesman of God (2 Sam. 7:2–3; 12:1–15; 1 Kin. 1:8–38; 45; 2 Chr. 29:25). The "book of Nathan the prophet" provided a source for the composition of the books of Chronicles (29:29; 2 Chr. 9:29). ***a house of cedar.*** Cedar paneling was too expensive to be used in an ordinary home.

16:33 [q] Is. 55:12, 13 [r] [Matt. 25:31–46] **16:34** [s] Ps. 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; 136:1 **16:35** [t] Ps. 106:47, 48 **16:36** [u] 1 Kin. 8:15, 56 [v] Deut. 27:15 **16:37** [w] 1 Chr. 16:4, 5 [x] Ezra 3:4 **16:38** [y] 1 Chr. 13:14 **16:39** [z] 2 Chr. 1:3 [a] 1 Kin. 3:4 **16:40** [b] [Ex. 29:38–42] **16:41** [c] 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3 **16:43** [d] 2 Sam. 6:18–20 **17:1** [a] 2 Sam. 7:1

3But it happened that night that the word
of God came to Nathan, saying, 4"Go and
tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD:
"You shall [b]not build Me a house to dwell
in. 5For I have not dwelt in a house since the
time that I brought up Israel, even to this
day, but have gone from tent to tent, and
from *one* tabernacle *to another.* 6Wherever
I have moved about with all Israel, have I
ever spoken a word to any of the judges of
Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My
people, saying, 'Why have you not built Me
a house of cedar?'" ' 7Now therefore, thus
shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus
says the LORD of hosts: "I took you [c]from
the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to
be ruler over My people Israel. 8And I have
been with you wherever you have gone,
and have cut off all your enemies from be-
fore you, and have made you a name like
the name of the great men who *are* on the
earth. 9Moreover I will appoint a place for
My people Israel, and will [d]plant them, that
they may dwell in a place of their own and
move no more; nor shall the sons of wick-
edness oppress them anymore, as previ-
ously, 10since the time that I commanded
judges *to be* over My people Israel. Also I
will subdue all your enemies. Furthermore
I tell you that the LORD will build you a
house.* 11And it shall be, when your days
are [e]fulfilled, when you must go *to be* with
your fathers, that I will set up your [f]seed af-
ter you, who will be of your sons; and I will
establish his kingdom. 12[g]He shall build Me
a house, and I will establish his throne for-
ever. 13[h]I will be his Father, and he shall be
My son; and I will not take My mercy away
from him, [i]as I took *it* from *him* who was
before you. 14And [j]I will establish him in
My house and in My kingdom forever; and
his throne shall be established forever."' "

15According to all these words and ac-
cording to all this vision, so Nathan spoke
to David.

16[k]Then King David went in and sat be-
fore the LORD; and he said: "Who *am* I, O
LORD God? And what is my house, that You
have brought me this far? 17And *yet* this
was a small thing in Your sight, O God;
and You have *also* spoken of Your servant's
house for a great while to come, and have
regarded me according to the rank of a
man of high degree, O LORD God. 18What
more can David *say* to You for the honor of
Your servant? For You know Your servant.
19O LORD, for Your servant's sake, and ac-
cording to Your own heart, You have done
all this greatness, in making known all
these great things. 20O LORD, *there is* none
like You, nor *is there any* God besides You,
according to all that we have heard with
our ears. 21[l]And who *is* like Your people Is-
rael, the one nation on the earth whom God
went to redeem for Himself *as* a people—
to make for Yourself a name by great and
awesome deeds, by driving out nations
from before Your people whom You re-
deemed from Egypt? 22For You have made
Your people Israel Your very own people
forever; and You, LORD, have become their
God.

23"And now, O LORD, the word which
You have spoken concerning Your servant
and concerning his house, *let it* be estab-
lished forever, and do as You have said.
24So let it be established, that Your name
may be magnified forever, saying, 'The
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, *is* Israel's
God.' And let the house of Your servant Da-
vid be established before You. 25For You, O
my God, have revealed to Your servant that
You will build him a house. Therefore Your
servant has found it *in his heart* to pray be-
fore You. 26And now, LORD, You are God,
and have promised this goodness to Your
servant. 27Now You have been pleased to
bless the house of Your servant, that it may
continue before You forever; for You have
blessed it, O LORD, and *it shall be* blessed
forever."

David's Further Conquests

18 After this [a]it came to pass that Da-
vid attacked the Philistines, subdued
them, and took Gath and its towns from the
hand of the Philistines. 2Then he defeated
[b]Moab, and the Moabites became David's
[c]servants, *and* brought tribute.

* **17:10** That is, a royal dynasty

17:9 ***I will appoint a place.*** This did not mean that Israel would move to another land, but it was a restating of God's promise that they were meant to inherit the land (Gen. 13:14–17; 15:18–21; 17:8; Ex. 3:16–17; 6:8; Deut. 1:8; Josh. 1:2–5).

17:16–18 Thankfulness—As with David, God's willingness to bless us is not because we are great but because He is good. His purpose is for us to be like Him, and to bless us and establish us forever with Him through Christ (John 14).

17:20 ***God besides You.*** This is a clear assertion of the uniqueness of Israel's God. Statements such as "all gods" and "the gods of the peoples" in David's song of thanksgiving (16:25–26) must be understood in the light of this clear confession that there is only one living God.

18:1 ***took Gath.*** This is the only record of David taking a Philistine city, although he had defeated the Philistines many times in battle. Gath was the Philistine city closest to Israelite territory, so it posed the greatest threat to Israel.

18:2 ***Moab.*** David's great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabitess (Ruth 4:13–17), and David had sent his own family to Moab for protection when he was

17:4 [b] [1 Chr. 28:2, 3] **17:7** [c] 1 Sam. 16:11–13 **17:9** [d] Amos 9:14 **17:11** [e] 1 Kin. 2:10 [f] [1 Chr. 22:9–13; 28:20]; Matt. 1:6; Luke 3:31 **17:12** [g] [Ps. 89:20–37; Luke 1:33] **17:13** [h] Heb. 1:5 [i] [1 Sam. 15:23–28] **17:14** [j] Matt. 19:28; 25:31; [Luke 1:31–33]; Acts 2:30 **17:16** [k] 2 Sam. 7:18 **17:21** [l] Ps. 147:20 **18:1** [a] 2 Sam. 8:1–18 **18:2** [b] 2 Sam. 8:2 [c] Ps. 60:8

3And [d]David defeated Hadadezer* king of Zobah *as far as* Hamath, as he went to establish his power by the River Euphrates. 4David took from him one thousand chariots, seven thousand* horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Also David hamstrung all the chariot *horses,* except that he spared enough of them for one hundred chariots.

5When the [e]Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand of the Syrians. 6Then David put *garrisons* in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, *and* brought tribute. So the LORD preserved David wherever he went. 7And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8Also from Tibhath* and from Chun, cities of Hadadezer, David brought a large amount of [f]bronze, with which [g]Solomon made the bronze Sea, the pillars, and the articles of bronze.

9Now when Tou* king of Hamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah, 10he sent Hadoram* his son to King David, to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Tou); and *Hadoram brought with him* all kinds of [h]articles of gold, silver, and bronze. 11King David also dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had brought from all *these* nations—from Edom, from Moab, from the [i]people of Ammon, from the [j]Philistines, and from [k]Amalek.

12Moreover [l]Abishai the son of Zeruiah killed [m]eighteen thousand Edomites* in the Valley of Salt. 13[n]He also put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David wherever he went.

David's Administration

14So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people. 15Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the army; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* recorder; 16Zadok the son of Ahitub and Abimelech the son of Abiathar *were* the priests; Shavsha* *was* the scribe; 17[o]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons *were* chief ministers at the king's side.

The Ammonites and Syrians Defeated

19 It[a] happened after this that Nahash the king of the people of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his place. 2Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. And David's servants came to Hanun in the land of the people of Ammon to comfort him.

3And the princes of the people of Ammon said to Hanun, "Do you think that David really honors your father because he has sent comforters to you? Did his servants not come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?"

4Therefore Hanun took David's servants, shaved them, and cut off their garments in the middle, at their [b]buttocks, and sent them away. 5Then *some* went and told David about the men; and he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and *then* return."

6When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, Hanun and the people of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire for themselves chariots and horsemen from Mesopotamia,* from Syrian Maacah, [c]and from Zobah.* 7So they hired for themselves thirty-two thousand chariots, with the king of Maacah and his people, who came and encamped before Medeba. Also the

* **18:3** Hebrew *Hadarezer,* and so throughout chapters 18 and 19 * **18:4** Or *seven hundred* (compare 2 Samuel 8:4) * **18:8** Spelled *Betah* in 2 Samuel 8:8 * **18:9** Spelled *Toi* in 2 Samuel 8:9, 10 * **18:10** Spelled *Joram* in 2 Samuel 8:10 * **18:12** Or *Syrians* (compare 2 Samuel 8:13) * **18:16** Spelled *Seraiah* in 2 Samuel 8:17 * **19:6** Hebrew *Aram Naharaim* • Spelled *Zoba* in 2 Samuel 10:6

hiding from Saul (1 Sam. 22:3–4). Yet Moab had been an enemy of Israel (Num. 23), and would be again (Ezek. 25:9).

18:11 *dedicated . . . to the LORD.* The fact that David dedicated all the spoils of war to God suggests that he viewed the battles as campaigns initiated and led by God. When Solomon built the temple, he brought all the dedicated things into the temple treasuries (2 Chr. 5:1).

18:17 *Cherethites . . . Pelethites.* These were companies of soldiers, probably mercenaries from Philistia (Ezek. 25:16; 1 Sam. 30:14; 2 Sam. 15:18).

19:1 *Nahash.* Nahash was reigning in Saul's earliest years (1 Sam. 11:1); the present incident must have occurred early in David's reign at Jerusalem.

19:3 Slander—The delegation was treated scandalously, and David's motives were slanderously attacked. Of course there were no grounds for such suspicions. Men who themselves act basely toward their neighbors are most likely to suspect such behavior in others. One of the marks of a godly person is that he does not slander with his tongue (Ps. 15:3).

19:4 *shaved . . . cut off.* Hebrew men were proud of their beards and scrupulously modest in their attire. The Ammonites had humiliated David's men in the most offensive way possible.

19:6 *a thousand talents.* A talent is about 75 pounds.

18:3 [d] 2 Sam. 8:3 **18:5** [e] 2 Sam. 8:5, 6 **18:8** [f] 2 Sam. 8:8 [g] 1 Kin. 7:15, 23 **18:10** [h] 2 Sam. 8:10–12 **18:11** [i] 2 Sam. 10:14 [j] 2 Sam. 5:17–25 [k] 2 Sam. 1:1 **18:12** [l] 2 Sam. 23:18 [m] 2 Sam. 8:13 **18:13** [n] 2 Sam. 8:14 **18:17** [o] 2 Sam. 8:18 **19:1** [a] 2 Sam. 10:1–19 **19:4** [b] Is. 20:4 **19:6** [c] 1 Chr. 18:5, 9

people of Ammon gathered together from their cities, and came to battle.

8Now when David heard *of it,* he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. 9Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array before the gate of the city, and the kings who had come *were* by themselves in the field.

10When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best and put *them* in battle array against the Syrians. 11And the rest of the people he put under the command of Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in battle array against the people of Ammon. 12Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you. 13Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do *what is* good in His sight."

14So Joab and the people who *were* with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him. 15When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai his brother, and entered the city. So Joab went to Jerusalem.

16Now when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought the Syrians who were beyond the River,* and Shophach* the commander of Hadadezer's army *went* before them. 17When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan and came upon them, and set up in *battle* array against them. So when David had set up in battle array against the Syrians, they fought with him. 18Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed seven thousand* charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers* of the Syrians, and killed Shophach the commander of the army. 19And when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and became his servants. So the Syrians were not willing to help the people of Ammon anymore.

Rabbah Is Conquered

20 It[a] happened in the spring of the year, at the time kings go out *to battle,* that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of the people of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But [b]David stayed at Jerusalem. And [c]Joab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it. 2Then David [d]took their king's crown from his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance. 3And he brought out the people who *were* in it, and put *them* to work* with saws, with iron picks, and with axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned *to* Jerusalem.

Philistine Giants Destroyed

4Now it happened afterward [e]that war broke out at Gezer with the Philistines, at which time [f]Sibbechai the Hushathite killed Sippai,* *who was one* of the sons of the giant. And they were subdued.

5Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair* killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's [g]beam.

6Yet again [h]there was war at Gath, where there was a man of *great* stature, with twenty-four fingers and toes, six *on each hand* and six *on each foot;* and he also was born to the giant. 7So when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea,* David's brother, killed him.

8These were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

The Census of Israel and Judah

21 Now [a]Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel. 2So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, [b]and bring the number of them to me that I may know *it*."

* **19:16** That is, the Euphrates • Spelled *Shobach* in 2 Samuel 10:16 * **19:18** Or *seven hundred* (compare 2 Samuel 10:18) • Or *horsemen* (compare 2 Samuel 10:18) * **20:3** Septuagint reads *cut them.* * **20:4** Spelled *Saph* in 2 Samuel 21:18 * **20:5** Spelled *Jaare-Oregim* in 2 Samuel 21:19 * **20:7** Spelled *Shimeah* in 2 Samuel 21:21 and *Shammah* in 1 Samuel 16:9

19:19 *servants.* "Servants" did not signify household slaves, but national subservience to a greater power, in this case, Israel.

20:1 *David stayed at Jerusalem.* This is the time that David committed adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11). The chronicler omits this story, not because it is unsavory, but because it has no bearing on his theme. He is showing how the Davidic dynasty was the fulfillment of God's promises.

20:2 *crown.* The crown David took was ceremonial and not for wearing, since it weighed about 75 pounds. David put the crown on his head to demonstrate that he had vanquished the Ammonites and now reigned over them as well.

20:7 *Shimea.* This was David's older brother, the third son of Jesse (2:13).

20:8 *the giant in Gath.* Goliath was from Gath (1 Sam. 17:4).

21:1 Temptation by Satan— The role of Satan as the Christian's opponent is well summed up by the meaning of the name Satan, which means "adversary." He is also called "the devil," meaning "accuser." He can

20:1 [a] 2 Sam. 11:1 [b] 2 Sam. 11:2—12:25 [c] 2 Sam. 12:26 **20:2** [d] 2 Sam. 12:30, 31 **20:4** [e] 2 Sam. 21:18 [f] 1 Chr. 11:29 **20:5** [g] 1 Sam. 17:7 **20:6** [h] 2 Sam. 21:20 **21:1** [a] 2 Sam. 24:1–25 **21:2** [b] 1 Chr. 27:23, 24

3And Joab answered, "May the LORD
make His people a hundred times more
than they are. But, my lord the king, *are*
they not all my lord's servants? Why then
does my lord require this thing? Why
should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?"
4Nevertheless the king's word prevailed
against Joab. Therefore Joab departed
and went throughout all Israel and came
to Jerusalem. 5Then Joab gave the sum
of the number of the people to David. All
Israel *had* one million one hundred thou-
sand men who drew the sword, and Judah
had four hundred and seventy thousand
men who drew the sword. 6[c]But he did not
count Levi and Benjamin among them, for
the king's word was abominable to Joab.
7And God was displeased with this
thing; therefore He struck Israel. 8So Da-
vid said to God, [d]"I have sinned greatly,
because I have done this thing; [e]but now,
I pray, take away the iniquity of Your ser-
vant, for I have done very foolishly."
9Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David's
[f]seer, saying, 10"Go and tell David, [g]say-
ing, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three
things; choose one of them for yourself,
that I may do *it* to you."' "
11So Gad came to David and said to him,
"Thus says the LORD: 'Choose for yourself,
12[h]either three* years of famine, or three
months to be defeated by your foes with the
sword of your enemies overtaking *you*, or
else for three days the sword of the LORD—
the plague in the land, with the angel* of
the LORD destroying throughout all the ter-
ritory of Israel.' Now consider what answer
I should take back to Him who sent me."
13And David said to Gad, "I am in great
distress. Please let me fall into the hand of
the LORD, for His [i]mercies *are* very great;
but do not let me fall into the hand of man."
14So the LORD sent a [j]plague upon Israel,
and seventy thousand men of Israel fell.
15And God sent an [k]angel to Jerusalem to
destroy it. As he* was destroying, the LORD
looked and [l]relented of the disaster, and
said to the angel who was destroying, "It is
enough; now restrain your* hand." And the
angel of the LORD stood by the [m]threshing
floor of Ornan* the Jebusite.

* **21:12** Or *seven* (compare 2 Samuel 24:13) • Or *Angel*, and so elsewhere in this chapter
* **21:15** Or *He* • Or *Your* • Spelled *Araunah* in 2 Samuel 24:16

appear as a dragon (Rev. 12:3–4,9) or as a beautifully deceptive "angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14). He stands hatefully opposed to all the work of God and promotes defiance among men (Job 2:4–5). When Satan sinned he was expelled from heaven (Luke 10:18), although apparently he still had some access to God (Job 2:4–5). A multitude of angels joined him in his rebellion and subsequently became the demons mentioned often in the biblical record (Matt. 12:24; Rev. 12:7). Although Satan's doom was secured by Jesus' death on the cross (John 16:11), he will continue to hinder God's program until he and his angels are destroyed (Matt. 25:41).

The terrifying work of Satan in the unbeliever is described in Scripture as follows: he blinds their minds (2 Cor. 4:4); he takes the Word of God from their hearts (Luke 8:12); and he controls them (Acts 13:8). In regard to Christians, Satan may accuse them (Rev. 12:10), devour their testimony for Christ (1 Pet. 5:8–9), deceive them (Col. 2:8), hinder their work (1 Thess. 2:18), tempt them to immorality (1 Cor. 7:5), and even be used by God to discipline Christians (1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 12:7).

The Christian's response to Satan is to recognize his power and deception (2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:11), to adhere steadfastly to the faith (1 Pet. 5:9) to resist him openly (James 4:7), and not to give him opportunities. In practice, the best way to oppose him is to be a growing Christian. Believers can respond to temptation by Satan with confidence. We know that nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:38–39). Also in light of Satan's tremendous power to blind men to the gospel, Christians must always be aggressively and compassionately witnessing to the lost in order to snatch them from his control.

21:2 *David said.* Samuel attributed David's impulse to number the people to God Himself (2 Sam. 24:1) while here it is attributed to Satan (v. 1). The apparent contradiction can be resolved by recognizing that though Satan is the author of all evil, he cannot exercise his evil intentions apart from the permission of God. Moreover, God could use Satan to accomplish His own purposes of judgment (1 Kin. 22:19–23; Job 1) or discipline (as here with David). ***Go, number.*** David's plan to take a census was not evil in itself, for the Lord Himself at other times had commanded the Israelites to be counted (Num. 1). The problem seems to have been David's presumptuous attitude. He apparently wanted to have a number to look at, instead of remembering that no matter how many or few were the Israelites, their strength was always in the Lord. ***Beersheba to Dan.*** This was the traditional way of describing all of Israel from south to north. The distance is about 150 miles.

21:3 *a cause of guilt.* Joab's warning was David's chance to repent of his intention to number the people for his own purposes. God does not entice us to evil (James 1:13–15; 4:7–8), and even though God was using Satan in this situation, David was still the one who decided to sin (v. 17). God knew what was in David's heart, and either through Joab's rebuke or through David carrying out his sinful thoughts, God intended to deal with David's attitude.

21:9 *seer.* Gad was a prophet, one who received revelations from the Lord (1 Sam. 22:5).

21:15 *Jerusalem to destroy it.* When God saw David's repentance and heard his intercessory prayer (v. 17), He relented and stopped the destroying angel. God responded to David's heartfelt prayer. One of the most important aspects of intercessory prayer is how it turns the heart of the one praying toward God, and aligns the intercessor with God's attitudes and purposes.

21:6 [c] 1 Chr. 27:24 **21:8** [d] 2 Sam. 24:10 [e] 2 Sam. 12:13 **21:9** [f] 1 Sam. 9:9 **21:10** [g] 2 Sam. 24:12–14 **21:12** [h] 2 Sam. 24:13 **21:13** [i] Ps. 51:1; 130:4, 7 **21:14** [j] 1 Chr. 27:24 **21:15** [k] 2 Sam. 24:16 [l] Gen. 6:6 [m] 2 Chr. 3:1

16 Then David lifted his eyes and [n]saw
the angel of the LORD standing between
earth and heaven, having in his hand a
drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem.
So David and the elders, clothed in sack-
cloth, fell on their faces. 17 And David said
to God, "Was it not I who commanded the
people to be numbered? I am the one who
has sinned and done evil indeed; but these
[o]sheep, what have they done? Let Your
hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against
me and my father's house, but not against
Your people that they should be plagued."
18 Therefore, the [p]angel of the LORD
commanded Gad to say to David that
David should go and erect an altar to the
LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the
Jebusite. 19 So David went up at the word
of Gad, which he had spoken in the name
of the LORD. 20 Now Ornan turned and saw
the angel; and his four sons *who were* with
him hid themselves, but Ornan continued
threshing wheat. 21 So David came to Or-
nan, and Ornan looked and saw David.
And he went out from the threshing floor,
and bowed before David with *his* face to
the ground. 22 Then David said to Ornan,
"Grant me the place of *this* threshing floor,
that I may build an altar on it to the LORD.
You shall grant it to me at the full price,
that the plague may be withdrawn from
the people."
23 But Ornan said to David, "Take *it* to
yourself, and let my lord the king do *what*
is good in his eyes. Look, I *also* give *you*
the oxen for burnt offerings, the threshing
implements for wood, and the wheat for the
grain offering; I give *it* all."
24 Then King David said to Ornan, "No,
but I will surely buy *it* for the full price, for
I will not take what is yours for the LORD,
nor offer burnt offerings with *that which*
costs *me* nothing." 25 So [q]David gave Or-
nan six hundred shekels of gold by weight
for the place. 26 And David built there an
altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offer-
ings and peace offerings, and called on the
LORD; and [r]He answered him from heaven
by fire on the altar of burnt offering.
27 So the LORD commanded the angel,
and he returned his sword to its sheath.
28 At that time, when David saw that the
LORD had answered him on the threshing
floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed
there. 29 [s]For the tabernacle of the LORD
and the altar of the burnt offering, which
Moses had made in the wilderness, *were* at
that time at the high place in [t]Gibeon. 30 But
David could not go before it to inquire of
God, for he was afraid of the sword of the
angel of the LORD.

David Prepares to Build the Temple

22 Then David said, [a]"This *is* the house
of the LORD God, and this *is* the al-
tar of burnt offering for Israel." 2 So David
commanded to gather the [b]aliens who
were in the land of Israel; and he appoint-
ed masons to [c]cut hewn stones to build the
house of God. 3 And David prepared iron
in abundance for the nails of the doors of
the gates and for the joints, and bronze in
abundance [d]beyond measure, 4 and cedar
trees in abundance; for the [e]Sidonians and
those from Tyre brought much cedar wood
to David.
5 Now David said, [f]"Solomon my son *is*
young and inexperienced, and the house
to be built for the LORD *must be* exceed-
ingly magnificent, famous and glorious
throughout all countries. I will now make
preparation for it." So David made abun-
dant preparations before his death.
6 Then he called for his son Solomon, and
charged him to build a house for the LORD
God of Israel. 7 And David said to Solomon:
"My son, as for me, [g]it was in my mind to
build a house [h]to the name of the LORD my
God; 8 but the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, [i]'You have shed much blood
and have made great wars; you shall not
build a house for My name, because you
have shed much blood on the earth in My
sight. 9 [j]Behold, a son shall be born to you,
who shall be a man of rest; and I will give
him [k]rest from all his enemies all around.
His name shall be Solomon,* for I will give
peace and quietness to Israel in his days.
10 [l]He shall build a house for My name,
and [m]he shall be My son, and I *will be* his
Father; and I will establish the throne of
his kingdom over Israel forever.' 11 Now,

* **22:9** Literally *Peaceful*

21:24 ***costs me nothing.*** David showed a clear perception of the essence of sacrifice. Every prayer, every sacrifice must come from the heart and labor of the one who offers these things to God. No one can have a relationship with God for or on the behalf of someone else.

21:29 ***tabernacle . . . which Moses had made.*** The Old Testament account does not fully trace the movement of the tabernacle after Shiloh, but it did end up first at Nob and finally at Gibeon (15:1).

22:1 ***This is the house of the LORD God.*** As long as the ark remained at Kirjath Jearim and the tabernacle of Moses was at Nob and Gibeon, it was impossible for worship to be carried out in the manner originally intended. When the house of God was built, the ark and the altar would be together once again.

22:5 ***young and inexperienced.*** Solomon was born about halfway through David's reign. At the time that David began to gather building materials, Solomon was probably not over 18 years old.

21:16 [n] 2 Chr. 3:1 **21:17** [o] 2 Sam. 7:8 **21:18** [p] 2 Chr. 3:1
21:25 [q] 2 Sam. 24:24 **21:26** [r] Lev. 9:24 **21:29** [s] 1 Kin. 3:4
[t] 1 Chr. 16:39 **22:1** [a] Deut. 12:5 **22:2** [b] 1 Kin. 9:20, 21
[c] 1 Kin. 5:17, 18 **22:3** [d] 1 Kin. 7:47 **22:4** [e] 1 Kin. 5:6–10
22:5 [f] 1 Chr. 29:1, 2 **22:7** [g] 2 Sam. 7:1, 2 [h] Deut. 12:5, 11
22:8 [i] 1 Chr. 28:3 **22:9** [j] 1 Chr. 28:5 [k] 1 Kin. 4:20, 25; 5:4
22:10 [l] 1 Chr. 17:12, 13; 28:6 [m] Matt. 1:6; Heb. 1:5

my son, may [n]the LORD be with you; and may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God, as He has said to you. 12Only may the LORD [o]give you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. 13[p]Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. [q]Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed. 14Indeed I have taken much trouble to prepare for the house of the LORD one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron [r]beyond measure, for it is so abundant. I have prepared timber and stone also, and you may add to them. 15Moreover *there are* workmen with you in abundance: woodsmen and stonecutters, and all types of skillful men for every kind of work. 16Of gold and silver and bronze and iron *there is* no limit. Arise and begin working, and [s]the LORD be with you."

17David also commanded all the [t]leaders of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying,* 18"*Is* not the LORD your God with you? [u]And has He *not* given you rest on every side? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and before His people. 19Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God. Therefore arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, to [v]bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy articles of God into the house that is to be built [w]for the name of the LORD."

The Divisions of the Levites

23 So when David was old and full of days, he made his son [a]Solomon king over Israel.

2And he gathered together all the leaders of Israel, with the priests and the Levites. 3Now the Levites were numbered from the age of [b]thirty years and above; and the number of individual males was thirty-eight thousand. 4Of these, twenty-four thousand *were* to [c]look after the work of the house of the LORD, six thousand *were* [d]officers and judges, 5four thousand *were* gatekeepers, and four thousand [e]praised the LORD with *musical* instruments, [f]"which I made," *said David,* "for giving praise."

6Also [g]David separated them into divisions among the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

7Of the [h]Gershonites: Laadan* and Shimei. 8The sons of Laadan: the first Jehiel, then Zetham and Joel—three *in all.* 9The sons of Shimei: Shelomith, Haziel, and Haran—three *in all.* These were the heads of the fathers' *houses* of Laadan. 10And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina,* Jeush, and Beriah. These *were* the four sons of Shimei. 11Jahath was the first and Zizah the second. But Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons; therefore they were assigned as one father's house.

12[i]The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel—four *in all.* 13The sons of [j]Amram: Aaron and Moses; and [k]Aaron was set apart, he and his sons forever, that he should sanctify the most holy things, [l]to burn incense before the LORD, [m]to minister to Him, and [n]to give the blessing in His name forever. 14Now [o]the sons of Moses the man of God were reckoned to the tribe of Levi. 15[p]The sons of Moses *were* Gershon* and Eliezer. 16Of the sons of Gershon, [q]Shebuel* *was* the first. 17Of the descendants of Eliezer, [r]Rehabiah was the first. And Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very many. 18Of the sons of Izhar, [s]Shelomith *was* the first. 19[t]Of the sons of Hebron, Jeriah *was* the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. 20Of the sons of Uzziel, Michah *was* the first and Jesshiah the second.

21[u]The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli *were* Eleazar and [v]Kish. 22And Eleazar died, and [w]had no sons, but only daughters; and their brethren, the sons of Kish, [x]took them *as wives.*

* **23:7** Spelled *Libni* in Exodus 6:17 * **23:10** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Zizah* (compare verse 11). * **23:15** Hebrew *Gershom* (compare 6:16) * **23:16** Spelled *Shubael* in 24:20

22:13 Zeal—David says in Psalm 71, "O God, You have taught me from my youth: and to this day I declare Your wondrous works" (v. 17). Wherever he went, David proclaimed the goodness and majesty of God, and now he saw the temple and the centrality of worship as the pinnacle of his service for God. He could encourage Solomon to proceed with confidence because he knew he was doing God's will.

22:18 *subdued before the LORD.* The conquest of the land began in Joshua's time and was completed under David. It had been a long process, including times of great disobedience and others of great faith. There is an element of submission in this statement, relating both to the Israelites and the land itself.

23:1 *his son Solomon king.* This phrasing suggests that this is an official appointment, perhaps in the role of coregent with David. It was later ratified by the whole nation (29:22).

22:11 [n] 1 Chr. 22:16 **22:12** [o] 1 Kin. 3:9–12
22:13 [p] 1 Chr. 28:7 [q] [Josh. 1:6, 7, 9] **22:14** [r] 1 Chr. 22:3
22:16 [s] 1 Chr. 22:11 **22:17** [t] 1 Chr. 28:1–6 **22:18** [u] Josh. 22:4 **22:19** [v] 2 Chr. 5:2–14 [w] 1 Kin. 5:3 **23:1** [a] 1 Kin. 1:33–40 **23:3** [b] Num. 4:1–3 **23:4** [c] Ezra 3:8, 9 [d] Deut. 16:18–20 **23:5** [e] 1 Chr. 15:16 [f] 2 Chr. 29:25–27
23:6 [g] Ex. 6:16 **23:7** [h] 1 Chr. 26:21 **23:12** [i] Ex. 6:18
23:13 [j] Ex. 6:20 [k] Heb. 5:4 [l] 1 Sam. 2:28 [m] [Deut. 21:5] [n] Num. 6:23 **23:14** [o] 1 Chr. 26:20–24 **23:15** [p] Ex. 18:3, 4 **23:16** [q] 1 Chr. 26:24 **23:17** [r] 1 Chr. 26:25
23:18 [s] 1 Chr. 24:22 **23:19** [t] 1 Chr. 24:23 **23:21** [u] 1 Chr. 24:26 [v] 1 Chr. 24:29 **23:22** [w] 1 Chr. 24:28 [x] Num. 36:6

23 [y]The sons of Mushi *were* Mahli, Eder, and
Jeremoth—three *in all.*
24 These *were* the sons of [z]Levi by their
fathers' houses—the heads of the fathers'
houses as they were counted individually
by the number of their names, who did the
work for the service of the house of the
LORD, from the age of [a]twenty years and
above.
25 For David said, "The LORD God of Is-
rael [b]has given rest to His people, that they
may dwell in Jerusalem forever"; 26 and also
to the Levites, "They shall no longer [c]carry
the tabernacle, or any of the articles for its
service." 27 For by the [d]last words of David
the Levites *were* numbered from twenty
years old and above; 28 because their duty
was to help the sons of Aaron in the service
of the house of the LORD, in the courts and
in the chambers, in the purifying of all holy
things and the work of the service of the
house of God, 29 both with [e]the showbread
and [f]the fine flour for the grain offering,
with [g]the unleavened cakes and [h]*what is*
baked in the pan, with what is mixed and
with all kinds of [i]measures and sizes; 30 to
stand every morning to thank and praise
the LORD, and likewise at evening; 31 and
at every presentation of a burnt offering
to the LORD [j]on the Sabbaths and on the
New Moons and on the [k]set feasts, by num-
ber according to the ordinance governing
them, regularly before the LORD; 32 and that
they should [l]attend to the [m]needs of the tab-
ernacle of meeting, the needs of the holy
place, and the [n]needs of the sons of Aaron
their brethren in the work of the house of
the LORD.

The Divisions of the Priests

24 Now *these are* the divisions of
the sons of Aaron. [a]The sons of
Aaron *were* Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar,
and Ithamar. 2 And [b]Nadab and Abi-
hu died before their father, and had no
children; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar
ministered as priests. 3 Then David
with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and
[c]Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar,
divided them according to the schedule of
their service.
4 There were more leaders found of the
sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar,
and *thus* they were divided. Among the
sons of Eleazar *were* sixteen heads of
their fathers' houses, and eight heads of
their fathers' houses among the sons of
Ithamar. 5 Thus they were divided by lot,
one group as another, for there were offi-
cials of the sanctuary and officials *of the*
house of God, from the sons of Eleazar and
from the sons of Ithamar. 6 And the scribe,
Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, *one of* the
Levites, wrote them down before the king,
the leaders, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech
the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the
fathers' *houses* of the priests and Levites,
one father's house taken for Eleazar and
one for Ithamar.
7 Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the
second to Jedaiah, 8 the third to Harim,
the fourth to Seorim, 9 the fifth to Malchi-
jah, the sixth to Mijamin, 10 the seventh to
Hakkoz, the eighth to [d]Abijah, 11 the ninth
to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, 12 the
eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,
13 the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth
to Jeshebeab, 14 the fifteenth to Bilgah, the
sixteenth to Immer, 15 the seventeenth to
Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez,* 16 the
nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to
Jehezekel,* 17 the twenty-first to Jachin, the
twenty-second to Gamul, 18 the twenty-third
to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.
19 This *was* the schedule of their service
[e]for coming into the house of the LORD ac-
cording to their ordinance by the hand of
Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Is-
rael had commanded him.

Other Levites

20 And the rest of the sons of Levi: of the
sons of Amram, Shubael;* of the sons of
Shubael, Jehdeiah. 21 Concerning [f]Rehabi-
ah, of the sons of Rehabiah, the first *was*

* **24:15** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Aphses.*
* **24:16** Masoretic Text reads *Jehezkel.*
* **24:20** Spelled *Shebuel* in 23:16

23:26 *no longer carry.* When the tabernacle was replaced by a permanent building, the role of the Levites changed. This is another aspect of the subdued land. The Israelites were there to stay.
23:30 Praise—This is a beautiful picture of daily praise, thanking the Lord for the day that begins and the day that ends. As believers, we don't need someone else to thank the Lord on our behalf. We need to praise Him. The value of praise is that it lifts our hearts to God's heart. It keeps us thinking about Him and worshiping Him. Life can be almost overwhelming at times, and a habit of praising God lifts our thoughts above our troubles and focuses on who He is and what He has done.
23:32 *holy place.* This referred to the outer room of the tabernacle. The Most Holy Place was only approached by the high priest.
24:1 *sons of Aaron.* See notes at 6:2–4; 15:11.
24:10 *Abijah.* This Abijah may be the ancestor of Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, who is named in Luke 1:5.
24:20–21 *sons of Levi.* The nonpriestly Levites also were divided by clan to determine their service rotation.

23:23 [y] 1 Chr. 24:30 **23:24** [z] Num. 10:17, 21 [a] Ezra 3:8 **23:25** [b] 1 Chr. 22:18 **23:26** [c] Num. 4:5, 15; 7:9 **23:27** [d] 2 Sam. 23:1 **23:29** [e] Ex. 25:30 [f] Lev. 6:20 [g] Lev. 2:1, 4 [h] Lev. 2:5, 7 [i] Lev. 19:35 **23:31** [j] Num. 10:10 [k] Lev. 23:2–4 **23:32** [l] 2 Chr. 13:10, 11 [m] [Num. 1:53] [n] Num. 3:6–9, 38 **24:1** [a] Lev. 10:1–6 **24:2** [b] Num. 3:1–4; 26:61 **24:3** [c] 1 Chr. 18:16 **24:10** [d] Luke 1:5 **24:19** [e] 1 Chr. 9:25 **24:21** [f] 1 Chr. 23:17

Isshiah. 22Of the Izharites, Shelomoth;* of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath. 23Of the sons *of* [g]*Hebron*,* Jeriah *was the first*,* Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, *and* Jekameam the fourth. 24*Of* the sons of Uzziel, Michah; of the sons of Michah, Shamir. 25The brother of Michah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah. 26[h]The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi; the son of Jaaziah, Beno. 27The sons of Merari by Jaaziah *were* Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. 28Of Mahli: Eleazar, [i]who had no sons. 29Of Kish: the son of Kish, Jerahmeel.

30Also [j]the sons of Mushi *were* Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites according to their fathers' houses.

31These also cast lots just as their brothers the sons of Aaron did, in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the priests and Levites. The chief fathers *did* just as their younger brethren.

The Musicians

25 Moreover David and the captains of the army separated for the service *some* of the sons of [a]Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who *should* prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals. And the number of the skilled men performing their service was: 2Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asharelah;* the sons of Asaph *were* under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied according to the order of the king. 3Of [b]Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri,* Jeshaiah, *Shimei*, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six,* under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp to give thanks and to praise the LORD. 4Of Heman, the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel,* Shebuel,* Jerimoth,* Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, *and* Mahazioth. 5All these *were* the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to exalt his [c]horn.* For God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

6All these *were* under the direction of their father for the music *in* the house of the LORD, with cymbals, stringed instruments, and [d]harps, for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman *were* [e]under the authority of the king. 7So the [f]number of them, with their brethren who were instructed in the songs of the LORD, all who were skillful, *was* two hundred and eighty-eight.

8And they cast lots for their duty, the small as well as the great, [g]the teacher with the student.

9Now the first lot for Asaph came out for Joseph; the second for Gedaliah, him with his brethren and sons, twelve; 10the third for Zaccur, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 11the fourth for Jizri,* his sons and his brethren, twelve; 12the fifth for Nethaniah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 13the sixth for Bukkiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 14the seventh for Jesharelah,* his sons and his brethren, twelve; 15the eighth for Jeshaiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 16the ninth for Mattaniah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 17the tenth for Shimei, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 18the eleventh for Azarel,* his sons and his brethren, twelve; 19the twelfth for Hashabiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 20the thirteenth for Shubael,* his sons and his brethren, twelve; 21the fourteenth for Mattithiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 22the fifteenth for Jeremoth,* his sons and his brethren, twelve; 23the sixteenth for Hananiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 24the seventeenth for Joshbekashah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 25the eighteenth for Hanani, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 26the nineteenth for Mallothi, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 27the twentieth for Eliathah, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 28the twenty-first for Hothir, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 29the twenty-second for Giddalti, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 30the twenty-third for Mahazioth, his sons and his brethren, twelve; 31the twenty-fourth for Romamti-Ezer, his sons and his brethren, twelve.

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* **24:22** Spelled *Shelomith* in 23:18 * **24:23** Supplied from 23:19 (following some Hebrew manuscripts and Septuagint manuscripts) • Supplied from 23:19 (following some Hebrew manuscripts and Septuagint manuscripts) * **25:2** Spelled *Jesharelah* in verse 14 * **25:3** Spelled *Jizri* in verse 11 • *Shimei*, appearing in one Hebrew and several Septuagint manuscripts, completes the total of six sons (compare verse 17). * **25:4** Spelled *Azarel* in verse 18 • Spelled *Shubael* in verse 20 • Spelled *Jeremoth* in verse 22 * **25:5** That is, to increase his power or influence * **25:11** Spelled *Zeri* in verse 3 * **25:14** Spelled *Asharelah* in verse 2 * **25:18** Spelled *Uzziel* in verse 4 * **25:20** Spelled *Shebuel* in verse 4 * **25:22** Spelled *Jerimoth* in verse 4

25:1 ***prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals.*** The role of prophet was not limited to a prediction or proclamation in words. Vocal and instrumental music could be a kind of prophetic message, usually in the form of praise (1 Sam. 10:5–6).

25:2 ***according to the order of the king.*** This underscored the leading role that David took in the religious life of the nation.

24:23 [g] 1 Chr. 23:19; 26:31 **24:26** [h] Ex. 6:19 **24:28** [i] 1 Chr. 23:22 **24:30** [j] 1 Chr. 23:23 **25:1** [a] 1 Chr. 6:30, 33, 39, 44 **25:3** [b] 1 Chr. 16:41, 42 **25:5** [c] 1 Chr. 16:42 **25:6** [d] 1 Chr. 15:16 [e] 1 Chr. 15:19; 25:2 **25:7** [f] 1 Chr. 23:5 **25:8** [g] 2 Chr. 23:13

The Gatekeepers

26 Concerning the divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah the son of [a]Kore, of the sons of Asaph.
2And the sons of Meshelemiah *were* [b]Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,
3Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh.
4Moreover the sons of [c]Obed-Edom *were* Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth,
5Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth; for God blessed him.
6Also to Shemaiah his son were sons born who governed their fathers' houses, because they *were* men of great ability.
7The sons of Shemaiah *were* Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad, whose brothers Elihu and Semachiah *were* able men.
8All these *were* of the sons of Obed-Edom, they and their sons and their brethren, [d]able men with strength for the work: sixty-two of Obed-Edom.
9And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, eighteen able men.
10Also [e]Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons: Shimri the first (for *though* he was not the firstborn, his father made him the first),
11Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth; all the sons and brethren of Hosah *were* thirteen.
12Among these *were* the divisions of the gatekeepers, among the chief men, *having* duties just like their brethren, to serve in the house of the LORD.
13And they [f]cast lots for each gate, the small as well as the great, according to their father's house.
14The lot for the East *Gate* fell to Shelemiah. Then they cast lots *for* his son Zechariah, a wise counselor, and his lot came out for the North Gate;
15to Obed-Edom the South Gate, and to his sons the storehouse.* **16**To Shuppim and Hosah *the lot came out* for the West Gate, with the Shallecheth Gate on the [g]ascending highway—watchman opposite watchman.
17On the east *were* six Levites, on the north four each day, on the south four each day, and for the storehouse* two by two.
18As for the Parbar* on the west, *there were* four on the highway *and* two at the Parbar.
19These were the divisions of the gatekeepers among the sons of Korah and among the sons of Merari.

The Treasuries and Other Duties

20Of the Levites, Ahijah *was* [h]over the treasuries of the house of God and over the treasuries of the [i]dedicated things.
21The sons of Laadan, the descendants of the Gershonites of Laadan, heads of their fathers' *houses*, of Laadan the Gershonite: Jehieli.
22The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and Joel his brother, *were* over the treasuries of the house of the LORD.
23Of the [j]Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites:
24[k]Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* overseer of the treasuries.
25And his brethren by Eliezer *were* Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiah his son, Joram his son, Zichri his son, and [l]Shelomith his son.
26This Shelomith and his brethren *were* over all the treasuries of the dedicated things [m]which King David and the heads of fathers' *houses*, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the army, had dedicated.
27Some of the spoils won in battles they dedicated to maintain the house of the LORD.
28And all that Samuel [n]the seer, Saul the son of Kish, Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated, every dedicated *thing*, was under the hand of Shelomith and his brethren.
29Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons [o]*performed* duties as [p]officials and judges over Israel outside Jerusalem.
30Of the Hebronites, [q]Hashabiah and his brethren, one thousand seven hundred able men, had the oversight of Israel on the west side of the Jordan for all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king.
31Among the Hebronites, [r]Jerijah *was* head of the Hebronites according to his genealogy of the fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought, and there were found among them capable men [s]at Jazer of Gilead.
32And his brethren *were* two thousand seven hundred able men, heads of fathers' *houses*, whom King David made officials over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God and the [t]affairs of the king.

* **26:15** Hebrew *asuppim* * **26:17** Hebrew *asuppim* * **26:18** Probably a court or colonnade extending west of the temple

26:1–32 Duty—Our duties include all of the activities required to fulfill an assigned service. We are not praised for doing these jobs, and sometimes only the Lord sees what we have done. The temple servants knew that their jobs were "for" the Lord, but they were not personally very visible among the hundreds who did similar tasks. From the gatekeepers to the guardians of the treasures, faithfulness was the moral obligation, or duty, of each officer. For us as believers, the moral obligation is the same. We are never off duty.

26:14 *lot for the East Gate.* The East Gate was the most important because it led straight into the main entrance of the temple.

26:1 [a] Ps. 42:title **26:2** [b] 1 Chr. 9:21 **26:4** [c] 1 Chr. 15:18, 21 **26:8** [d] 1 Chr. 9:13 **26:10** [e] 1 Chr. 16:38 **26:13** [f] 1 Chr. 24:5, 31; 25:8 **26:16** [g] 1 Kin. 10:5 **26:20** [h] 1 Chr. 9:26 [i] 1 Chr. 26:22, 24, 26; 28:12 **26:23** [j] Ex. 6:18 **26:24** [k] 1 Chr. 23:16 **26:25** [l] 1 Chr. 23:18 **26:26** [m] 2 Sam. 8:11 **26:28** [n] 1 Sam. 9:9 **26:29** [o] Neh. 11:16 [p] 1 Chr. 23:4 **26:30** [q] 1 Chr. 27:17 **26:31** [r] 1 Chr. 23:19 [s] Josh. 21:39 **26:32** [t] 2 Chr. 19:11

The Military Divisions

27 And the children of Israel, according to their number, the heads of fathers' *houses,* the captains of thousands and hundreds and their officers, served the king in every matter of the *military* divisions. *These divisions* came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, each division *having* twenty-four thousand.

2Over the first division for the first month *was* [a]Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel, and in his division *were* twenty-four thousand; **3***he was* of the children of Perez, and the chief of all the captains of the army for the first month. **4**Over the division of the second month *was* Dodai* an Ahohite, and of his division Mikloth also *was* the leader; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **5**The third captain of the army for the third month *was* [b]Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, who was chief; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **6**This was the Benaiah *who was* [c]mighty *among* the thirty, and was over the thirty; in his division *was* Ammizabad his son. **7**The fourth *captain* for the fourth month *was* [d]Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **8**The fifth captain for the fifth month *was* Shamhuth* the Izrahite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. **9**The sixth *captain* for the sixth month *was* [e]Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **10**The seventh *captain* for the seventh month *was* [f]Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **11**The eighth *captain* for the eighth month *was* [g]Sibbechai the Hushathite, of the Zarhites; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **12**The ninth *captain* for the ninth month *was* [h]Abiezer the Anathothite, of the Benjamites; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **13**The tenth *captain* for the tenth month *was* [i]Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zarhites; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **14**The eleventh *captain* for the eleventh month *was* [j]Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand. **15**The twelfth *captain* for the twelfth month *was* Heldai* the Netophathite, of Othniel; in his division *were* twenty-four thousand.

Leaders of Tribes

16Furthermore, over the tribes of Israel: the officer over the Reubenites *was* Eliezer the son of Zichri; over the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah; **17***over* the Levites, [k]Hashabiah the son of Kemuel; over the Aaronites, Zadok; **18***over* Judah, [l]Elihu, *one* of David's brothers; *over* Issachar, Omri the son of Michael; **19***over* Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah; *over* Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel; **20***over* the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah; *over* the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah; **21***over* the half-*tribe* of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah; *over* Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner; **22***over* Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the leaders of the tribes of Israel.

23But David did not take the number of those twenty years old and under, because [m]the LORD had said He would multiply Israel like the [n]stars of the heavens. **24**Joab the son of Zeruiah began a census, but he did not finish, for [o]wrath came upon Israel because of this census; nor was the number recorded in the account of the chronicles of King David.

Other State Officials

25And Azmaveth the son of Adiel *was* over the king's treasuries; and Jehonathan the son of Uzziah was over the storehouses in the field, in the cities, in the villages, and in the fortresses. **26**Ezri the son of Chelub was over those who did the work of the field for tilling the ground. **27**And

* **27:4** Hebrew *Dodai,* usually spelled *Dodo* (compare 2 Samuel 23:9) * **27:8** Spelled *Shammoth* in 11:27 and *Shammah* in 2 Samuel 23:11 * **27:15** Spelled *Heled* in 11:30 and *Heleb* in 2 Samuel 23:29

27:1 ***heads of fathers' houses, the captains.*** Apparently a professional standing army is being described here, one that was divided into twelve corps.
27:2 ***Jashobeam.*** A connection can be made here to the list of David's mighty men, which is also headed by Jashobeam (11:11–12). He was one of "the three," which meant that he was regarded as unusually heroic.
27:4 ***Dodai.*** Dodai's son Eleazar was the second of the mighty men included in the first trio along with Jashobeam (11:12).
27:5 ***Benaiah.*** As the son of a priest, Benaiah was from the tribe of Levi. In the earlier list of mighty men he was celebrated for killing a lion and a gigantic Egyptian (11:22–23). Because of this kind of courage, he was honored among the thirty mighty men, though he was not one of "the three" (11:24). Later he was named as commander of the entire Israelite army (2 Kin. 4:4).
27:7 ***Asahel.*** David's nephew Asahel (2:15–16) was among the thirty mighty men, but did not achieve a position among "the three" (11:26).
27:11–12 ***Sibbechai . . . Abiezer.*** These two men were also members of the elite thirty mighty men. (11:28–29).
27:18 ***Elihu.*** This brother of David is usually called Eliab (1 Sam. 16:6).

27:2 [a] 1 Chr. 11:11 **27:5** [b] 1 Chr. 18:17 **27:6** [c] 2 Sam. 23:20–23 **27:7** [d] 1 Chr. 11:26 **27:9** [e] 1 Chr. 11:28 **27:10** [f] 1 Chr. 11:27 **27:11** [g] 2 Sam. 21:18 **27:12** [h] 1 Chr. 11:28 **27:13** [i] 1 Chr. 11:30 **27:14** [j] 1 Chr. 11:31 **27:17** [k] 1 Chr. 26:30 **27:18** [l] 1 Sam. 16:6 **27:23** [m] [Deut. 6:3] [n] Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 26:4 **27:24** [o] 1 Chr. 21:1–7

Shimei the Ramathite *was* over the vineyards, and Zabdi the Shiphmite was over the produce of the vineyards for the supply of wine. 28Baal-Hanan the Gederite was over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that *were* in the lowlands, and Joash *was* over the store of oil. 29And Shitrai the Sharonite *was* over the herds that fed in Sharon, and Shaphat the son of Adlai was over the herds *that were* in the valleys. 30Obil the Ishmaelite *was* over the camels, Jehdeiah the Meronothite *was* over the donkeys, 31and Jaziz the [p]Hagrite *was* over the flocks. All these *were* the officials over King David's property.

32Also Jehonathan, David's uncle, *was* a counselor, a wise man, and a scribe; and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons. 33[q]Ahithophel *was* the king's counselor, and [r]Hushai the Archite *was* the king's companion. 34After Ahithophel *was* Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, then [s]Abiathar. And the general of the king's army *was* [t]Joab.

Solomon Instructed to Build the Temple

28 Now David assembled at Jerusalem all [a]the leaders of Israel: the officers of the tribes and [b]the captains of the divisions who served the king, the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, and [c]the stewards over all the substance and possessions of the king and of his sons, with the officials, the valiant men, and all [d]the mighty men of valor.

2Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people: [e]I *had* it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for [f]the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it. 3But God said to me, [g]'You shall not build a house for My name, because you *have been* a man of war and have shed [h]blood.' 4However the LORD God of Israel [i]chose me above all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever, for He has chosen [j]Judah *to be* the ruler. And of the house of Judah, [k]the house of my father, and [l]among the sons of my father, He was pleased with me to make *me* king over all Israel. 5[m]And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) [n]He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. 6Now He said to me, 'It is [o]your son Solomon *who* shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father. 7Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, [p]if he is steadfast to observe My commandments and My judgments, as it is this day.' 8Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave *it* as an inheritance for your children after you forever.

9"As for you, my son Solomon, [q]know the

27:29 *Sharonite.* A fertile plain between Israelite and Philistine territory, Sharon was ideal for grazing cattle and sheep. It is appropriate that someone from Sharon, who knew the land and all its seasonal changes, should be in charge of the livestock.

27:30 *Ishmaelite.* As inhabitants of the desert, the Ishmaelites were at home with the breeding and use of camels.

28:2 *footstool.* The word "footstool" is a metaphor describing either the ark of the covenant or the tabernacle as the earthly base of God's activity. The words make a little picture of God on His throne in heaven, resting His feet on the earth.

28:4–6 Government of Israel—The government of Israel was under two important headings; the laws, and the leaders. *The laws*—The "commandments," especially the Ten Commandments, revealed God's holiness and set up a divine standard of righteousness for the people to follow (Ex. 20:1–17). The judgments governed the social life of the people (Ex. 21). The ordinances included the sacrifices that showed that blood must be shed for the forgiveness of sins (Lev. 1–17). *The leaders*—At first Moses was the primary leader; then he was replaced by Joshua. After Joshua's death the nation was governed for many years by judges who were usually raised up by God to oppose a specific enemy. Finally, at the people's request, God granted them a king, thus establishing the monarchy (1 Sam. 8:6–17).

Through most of Israel's history four leadership roles can be seen:

1. *The king* was the Lord's representative who ruled the people, but only as the Lord's servant. He led in war (1 Sam. 8:20) and made judicial decisions (2 Sam. 15:2), but could not make law, since he himself was under the law (Deut. 17:14–20).
2. *The priest* taught the Lord's laws and officiated at the offering of sacrifices (Lev. 1:5).
3. *The prophet* was the man of God who spoke for God and gave divine pronouncements for the present or the future.
4. *The wise man* produced literary works stressing practical wisdom (Prov. 1:1), taught discipline of character to the young (Prov. 22:17), and gave counsel to the king (2 Sam. 16:20).

28:6 *be My son . . . I will be his Father.* This remarkable statement not only shows that the Davidic kings enjoyed unparalleled access to the Lord as His adopted sons (17:3; Ps. 2:7), but it anticipates the absolute sonship of the Son of David, Jesus Christ (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5).

27:31 [p] 1 Chr. 5:10 **27:33** [q] 2 Sam. 15:12 [r] 2 Sam. 15:32–37 **27:34** [s] 1 Kin. 1:7 [t] 1 Chr. 11:6 **28:1** [a] 1 Chr. 27:16 [b] 1 Chr. 27:1, 2 [c] 1 Chr. 27:25 [d] 1 Chr. 11:10–47 **28:2** [e] 2 Sam. 7:2 [f] Ps. 99:5; 132:7 **28:3** [g] 2 Sam. 7:5, 13 [h] [1 Chr. 17:4; 22:8] **28:4** [i] 1 Sam. 16:6–13 [j] Gen. 49:8–10 [k] 1 Sam. 16:1 [l] 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:12, 13 **28:5** [m] 1 Chr. 3:1–9; 14:3–7; 23:1 [n] 1 Chr. 22:9; 29:1 **28:6** [o] 2 Sam. 7:13, 14 **28:7** [p] 1 Chr. 22:13 **28:9** [q] [John 17:3]

God of your father, and serve Him [r]with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for [s]the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. [t]If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will [u]cast you off forever. **10**Consider now, [v]for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it."

11Then David gave his son Solomon [w]the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; **12**and the [x]plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, [y]of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things; **13**also for the division of the priests and the [z]Levites, for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the articles of service in the house of the LORD. **14***He gave* gold by weight for *things* of gold, for all articles used in every kind of service; also *silver* for all articles of silver by weight, for all articles used in every kind of service; **15**the weight for the [a]lampstands of gold, and their lamps of gold, by weight for each lampstand and its lamps; for the lampstands of silver by weight, for the lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each lampstand. **16**And by weight *he gave* gold for the tables of the showbread, for each [b]table, and silver for the tables of silver; **17**also pure gold for the forks, the basins, the pitchers of pure gold, and the golden bowls—*he gave gold* by weight for every bowl; and for the silver bowls, *silver* by weight for every bowl; **18**and refined gold by weight for the [c]altar of incense, and for the construction of the chariot, that is, the gold [d]cherubim that spread *their wings* and overshadowed the ark of the covenant of the LORD. **19**"All *this*," *said David,* [e]"the LORD made me understand in writing, by *His* hand upon me, all the works of these plans."

20And David said to his son Solomon, [f]"Be strong and of good courage, and do *it;* do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God—my God—*will be* with you. [g]He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. **21***Here are* [h]the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and [i]every willing craftsman *will be* with you for all manner of workmanship, for every kind of service; also the leaders and all the people *will be* completely at your command."

Offerings for Building the Temple

29 Furthermore King David said to all the assembly: "My son Solomon, whom alone God has [a]chosen, *is* [b]young and inexperienced; and the work *is* great, because the temple* *is* not for man but for the LORD God. **2**Now for the house of my God I have prepared with all my might: gold for *things to be made of* gold, silver for *things of* silver, bronze for *things of* bronze, iron for *things of* iron, wood for *things of* wood, [c]onyx stones, *stones* to be set, glistening stones of various colors, all kinds of precious stones, and marble slabs in abundance. **3**Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver: **4**three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of [d]Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses; **5**the gold for *things of* gold and the silver for *things of* silver, and for all kinds of work *to be done* by the hands of craftsmen. Who *then* is [e]willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD?"

6Then [f]the leaders of the fathers' *houses,* leaders of the tribes of Israel, the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with [g]the officers over the king's work, [h]offered willingly. **7**They gave for the work of the house of God five thousand talents and ten

* **29:1** Literally *palace*

28:19 ***by His hand upon me.*** The plans for the temple were from God, just as the plans of the tabernacle of Moses were. This was extremely important, for God had stressed the necessity of making the tabernacle exactly according to His instructions (Ex. 38:22; 39:5–7,42–43). The Israelites would need to know that this permanent building was God's plan, not just David's.

28:20 ***Be strong and of good courage.*** David's charge to Solomon is very similar to the charge given to Joshua when Moses handed over the leadership of Israel to him (Josh. 1:6–9).

29:4 Generosity—It is extremely difficult to assign a modern monetary value to ancient goods and services, but we might compare David's gift for the temple to approximately one billion, eight hundred thousand dollars in gold, and eighty-four million in silver. This kind of personal wealth is astounding, but for David, its value was significant only as provision for the temple for the Lord. He never lost sight of the fact that both honor and riches come from God. They are His to give, His to use, and His to remove.

29:7 ***five thousand talents.*** This represents about 190 tons of gold. ***ten thousand darics.*** This is about 185 pounds of gold. ***eighteen thousand talents.***

28:9 [r] 2 Kin. 20:3 [s] [1 Sam. 16:7] [t] 2 Chr. 15:2 [u] Deut. 31:17 **28:10** [v] 1 Chr. 22:13; 28:6 **28:11** [w] 1 Chr. 28:19 **28:12** [x] Heb. 8:5 [y] 1 Chr. 26:20, 28 **28:13** [z] 1 Chr. 23:6 **28:15** [a] Ex. 25:31–39 **28:16** [b] 1 Kin. 7:48 **28:18** [c] Ex. 30:1–10 [d] Ex. 25:18–22 **28:19** [e] Ex. 25:40 **28:20** [f] 1 Chr. 22:13 [g] Josh. 1:5 **28:21** [h] 1 Chr. 24–26 [i] Ex. 35:25–35; 36:1, 2 **29:1** [a] 1 Chr. 28:5 [b] 1 Kin. 3:7 **29:2** [c] Is. 54:11, 12 **29:4** [d] 1 Kin. 9:28 **29:5** [e] [2 Cor. 8:5, 12] **29:6** [f] 1 Chr. 27:1; 28:1 [g] 1 Chr. 27:25–31 [h] Ex. 35:21–35

thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. 8And whoever had *precious* stones gave *them* to the treasury of the house of the LORD, into the hand of [i]Jehiel* the Gershonite. 9Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had [j]offered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.

David's Praise to God

10Therefore David blessed the LORD before all the assembly; and David said:

"Blessed are You, LORD God of
Israel, our Father, forever and
ever.
11 [k]Yours, O LORD, *is* the greatness,
The power and the glory,
The victory and the majesty;
For all *that is* in heaven and in earth
is Yours;
Yours *is* the kingdom, O LORD,
And You are exalted as head
over all.
12 [l]Both riches and honor *come* from
You,
And You reign over all.
In Your hand *is* power and might;
In Your hand *it is* to make great
And to give strength to all.
13 "Now therefore, our God,
We thank You
And praise Your glorious name.
14 But who *am* I, and who *are* my people,
That we should be able to offer so
willingly as this?
For all things *come* from You,
And of Your own we have given You.
15 For [m]we *are* aliens and pilgrims before
You,
As *were* all our fathers;
[n]Our days on earth *are* as a
shadow,
And without hope.

16"O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have prepared to build You a house for Your holy name is from Your hand, and *is* all Your own. 17I know also, my God, that You [o]test the heart and [p]have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these *things;* and now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to You. 18O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the intent of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and fix their heart toward You. 19And [q]give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do all *these things*, and to build the temple* for which [r]I have made provision."

20Then David said to all the assembly, "Now bless the LORD your God." So all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king.

Solomon Anointed King

21And they made sacrifices to the LORD and offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the next day: a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and [s]sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. 22So they ate and drank before the LORD with great gladness on that day. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and [t]anointed *him* before the LORD *to be* the leader, and Zadok *to*

* **29:8** Possibly the same as *Jehieli* (compare 26:21, 22) * **29:19** Literally *palace*

This was equivalent to about 675 tons. ***one hundred thousand talents.*** This was approximately 3,750 tons.

29:10 *blessed the LORD.* David modeled before the people the worship of the living God. He started with praise for God's goodness, greatness, and glory, and then acknowledged his place under the care and blessing of God.

29:14–15 All That We Have—Even though David was king and could accumulate whatever he wanted, he was more conscious of the need to give, particularly to God. How can anyone strive to accumulate, if you know in the long run that none of what you've gathered is really yours? Generosity is the natural outcome of a right perspective on possessions.

Verse 15 points to two other elements that indicate a basis for generosity. David understood where his real home was, namely with God. If a king regards himself as an alien in his own land, how much more should we? Somehow he resisted the temptation to regard the land as his to do with as he wished. He understood the brevity of life. Why spend time accumulating when we can't take it with us? Living with this perspective allows us to be transparent before God. We can be in sync with God because we're keeping nothing from Him. What we have has value only as it furthers the kingdom, and God is quite capable of supplying everything we need to be able to live.

It also means we're functioning clearly in the context of the biblical mandate of stewardship. We're here to have dominion (Gen. 1:28) but with the end that God is honored by what we do.

29:18 *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.* These familiar words identify the Israelites with the promises of God to their forefathers, and to the God of those promises.

29:22 *king the second time.* This refers to the ratification of Solomon's kingship (see note at 23:1).

29:8 *i* 1 Chr. 23:8 **29:9** *j* 2 Cor. 9:7 **29:11** *k* 1 Tim. 1:17 **29:12** *l* Rom. 11:36 **29:15** *m* Heb. 11:13, 14 *n* Job 14:2 **29:17** *o* [1 Chr. 28:9] *p* Prov. 11:20 **29:19** *q* [1 Chr. 28:9] *r* 1 Chr. 29:1, 2 **29:21** *s* 1 Kin. 8:62, 63 **29:22** *t* 1 Kin. 1:32–35, 39

be priest. 23Then Solomon sat on the throne
of the LORD as king instead of David his fa-
ther, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed
him. 24All the leaders and the mighty men,
and also all the sons of King David, [u]sub-
mitted themselves to King Solomon. 25So
the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in
the sight of all Israel, and [v]bestowed on him
such royal majesty as had not been on any
king before him in Israel.

The Close of David's Reign

26Thus David the son of Jesse reigned
over all Israel. 27[w]And the period that
he reigned over Israel *was* forty years;
[x]seven years he reigned in Hebron, and
thirty-three *years* he reigned in Jeru-
salem. 28So he [y]died in a good old age,
[z]full of days and riches and honor; and
Solomon his son reigned in his place.
29Now the acts of King David, first
and last, indeed they *are* written in the
book of Samuel the seer, in the book of
Nathan the prophet, and in the book of
Gad the seer, 30with all his reign and his
might, [a]and the events that happened to
him, to Israel, and to all the kingdoms of
the lands.

29:23 ***throne of the LORD.*** The position of king may have passed from David to Solomon, but the throne was the Lord's. Eventually Jesus the Son of David and the Son of God would sit on that throne and reign forever (Luke 1:32).

29:24 [u] Eccl. 8:2 **29:25** [v] 1 Kin. 3:13 **29:27** [w] 1 Kin. 2:11 [x] 2 Sam. 5:5 **29:28** [y] Gen. 25:8 [z] 1 Chr. 23:1
29:30 [a] Dan. 2:21; 4:23, 25

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE
CHRONICLES

▶ **AUTHOR:** The sources of 1 and 2 Chronicles include multiple official and prophetic records. In addition to these, the author-compiler had access to genealogical lists and documents, such as the message and letters of Sennacherib (2 Chr. 32:10–17). It seems likely that Ezra was the author as Jewish tradition suggests.

▶ **TIME:** c. 991–538 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** 2 Chr. 7:14

▶ **THEME:** Second Chronicles begins with Solomon's reign and ends with the fall of Jerusalem. It covers more extensively the details involved in the building and dedication of the temple. The kings of Judah are detailed down through the last king, Zedekiah, who is exiled to Babylon in 587 B.C. It largely ignores what happens in the northern kingdom after the split into two nations.

Solomon Requests Wisdom

1 Now [a]Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and [b]the LORD his God *was* with him and [c]exalted him exceedingly.

2And Solomon spoke to all Israel, to [d]the captains of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to every leader in all Israel, the heads of the fathers' *houses*. **3**Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that *was* at [e]Gibeon; for the tabernacle of meeting with God was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had [f]made in the wilderness. **4**[g]But David had brought up the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim to *the place* David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. **5**Now [h]the bronze altar that [i]Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put* before the tabernacle of the LORD; Solomon and the assembly sought Him *there*. **6**And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of meeting, and [j]offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

7[k]On that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

8And Solomon said to God: "You have shown great [l]mercy to David my father, and have made me [m]king in his place. **9**Now, O LORD God, let Your promise to David my father be established, [n]for You have made me king over a people like the [o]dust of the earth in multitude. **10**[p]Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may [q]go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?"

11[r]Then God said to Solomon: "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king—**12**wisdom and knowledge *are* granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as [s]none of the kings have

* **1:5** Some authorities read *it was there*.

1:3 *high place.* In the Old Testament the high places were usually associated with pagan worship (Num. 22:41). The Israelites were specifically charged to destroy these places of worship so that they would not become a snare and lead them into idol worship (Num. 33:53; Deut. 33:59). Nevertheless, Israelites often chose the high places to worship (1 Sam. 9:12). The high place at Gibeon was the location of the Mosaic tabernacle and the great bronze altar throughout David's reign (see note at 1 Kin. 14:23).

1:10 *go out and come in.* This figure of speech refers to the totality of Solomon's life. As king he would lead by example as well as by edict.

1:11–12 Wisdom—There's significance here in what Solomon didn't ask for. He didn't ask for honor, money, a long life, or the death of his enemies. He didn't ask for the things that would be on the top of most people's lists. He didn't ask for what would make life comfortable and easy. He asked for what would make life good. He asked for wisdom with an eye toward how he would rule, knowing that the quality of his reign largely depended on the quality of his judgments in dealing with people and issues. His priority was his service to others rather than doing

1:1 [a] 1 Kin. 2:46 [b] Gen. 39:2 [c] 1 Chr. 29:25 **1:2** [d] 1 Chr. 27:1–34 **1:3** [e] 1 Kin. 3:4 [f] Ex. 25–27; 35:4—36:38 **1:4** [g] 2 Sam. 6:2–17 **1:5** [h] Ex. 27:1, 2; 38:1, 2 [i] Ex. 31:2 **1:6** [j] 1 Kin. 3:4 **1:7** [k] 1 Kin. 3:5–14; 9:2 **1:8** [l] Ps. 18:50 [m] 1 Chr. 28:5 **1:9** [n] 2 Sam. 7:8–16 [o] Gen. 13:16 **1:10** [p] 1 Kin. 3:9 [q] Deut. 31:2 **1:11** [r] 1 Kin. 3:11–13 **1:12** [s] 2 Chr. 9:22

had who *were* before you, nor shall any after you have the like."

Solomon's Military and Economic Power

13 So Solomon came to Jerusalem from the high place that *was* at Gibeon, from before the tabernacle of meeting, and reigned over Israel. 14 [t]And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 15 [u]Also the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in the lowland. 16 [v]And Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the *current* price. 17 They also acquired and imported from Egypt a chariot for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse for one hundred and fifty; thus, through their agents,* they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple

2 Then Solomon [a]determined to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal house for himself. 2 [b]Solomon selected seventy thousand men to bear burdens, eighty thousand to quarry *stone* in the mountains, and three thousand six hundred to oversee them.

3 Then Solomon sent to Hiram* king of Tyre, saying:

[c]As you have dealt with David my father, and sent him cedars to build himself a house to dwell in, *so deal with me.* 4 Behold, [d]I am building a temple for the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate *it* to Him, [e]to burn before Him sweet incense, for [f]the continual showbread, for [g]the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the [h]Sabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the set feasts of the LORD our God. This *is an ordinance* forever to Israel.

5 And the temple which I build *will be* great, for [i]our God is greater than all gods. 6 [j]But who is able to build Him a temple, since heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? Who *am* I then, that I should build Him a temple, except to burn sacrifice before Him?

7 Therefore send me at once a man skillful to work in gold and silver, in bronze and iron, in purple and crimson and blue, who has skill to engrave with the skillful men who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, [k]whom David my father provided. 8 [l]Also send me cedar and cypress and algum logs from Lebanon, for I know that your servants have skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and indeed my servants *will be* with your servants, 9 to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the temple which I am about to build *shall be* great and wonderful.

10 [m]And indeed I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut timber,

* **1:17** Literally *by their hands* * **2:3** Hebrew *Huram* (compare 1 Kings 5:1)

what was supposedly best for his personal well-being.

What would be an equivalent today? A corporate executive wanting to know how to make his company contribute for the good of society as opposed to focusing exclusively on profit? A manager being more interested in seeing his staff happy and functioning well rather than getting ahead himself? A father making personal sacrifices for the health of his family?

1:14 *chariots.* A chariot force of 1,400 units was a significant achievement for Israel, a nation located primarily in hilly terrain where chariots were of limited value. ***horsemen.*** Moses warned the future kings not to multiply horses for themselves, nor were they to send people back to Egypt to multiply horses (Deut. 17:16). The number of horses that Solomon had for his 1,400 chariots was probably about 4,000.

1:17 *six hundred shekels of silver.* It is often difficult to assign a price in modern currency to the goods and services of the ancient world. This verse suggests that a chariot cost as much as four horses. ***exported.*** Solomon had a thriving business in horses and chariots. Because Israel was on the route between Asia and Africa, such goods would go through Israel and become subject to Solomon's heavy import and export taxes.

2:3 *Hiram the king of Tyre.* Also called Huram, he was the same Phoenician ruler who had provided men and materials for David's palace.

2:5 *our God is greater than all gods.* Solomon's statement means that God is the only true God, not that He is the greatest among many lesser ones. All pagan "gods" are not gods at all (1 Cor. 8:4–5; 10:20).

2:6 Heaven—God is omnipresent. This means that He is everywhere present at all times. There are no bounds or limitations to His presence. But in a special sense, God does have a center for His existence. This is described by Solomon as the "heaven of heavens," an expression also used by Moses (Deut. 10:14). His title "LORD of hosts" (1 Sam. 1:3) suggests that the dwelling of God is populated by angels and other heavenly beings. It is here that His throne is situated (Is. 6:1). In this sphere His will is done perfectly (Dan. 4:35).

2:10 *wheat . . . barley.* The amount of wheat and barley was about 125,000 bushels, or 3,750 tons of each. ***wine . . . oil.*** Twenty thousand baths of wine and oil was approximately 115,000 gallons of each.

1:14 [t] 1 Kin. 10:26 **1:15** [u] 2 Chr. 9:27 **1:16** [v] 1 Kin. 10:28; 22:36 **2:1** [a] 1 Kin. 5:5 **2:2** [b] 2 Chr. 2:18 **2:3** [c] 1 Chr. 14:1 **2:4** [d] 2 Chr. 2:1 [e] Ex. 30:7 [f] Ex. 25:30 [g] Ex. 29:38–42 [h] Num. 28:3, 9–11 **2:5** [i] Ps. 135:5 **2:6** [j] 1 Kin. 8:27 **2:7** [k] 1 Chr. 22:15 **2:8** [l] 1 Kin. 5:6 **2:10** [m] 1 Kin. 5:11

twenty thousand kors of ground wheat,
twenty thousand kors of barley, twenty
thousand baths of wine, and twenty
thousand baths of oil.

11 Then Hiram king of Tyre answered in
writing, which he sent to Solomon:

[n]Because the LORD loves His people, He
has made you king over them.

12 Hiram* also said:

[o]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel,
[p]who made heaven and earth, for He has
given King David a wise son, endowed
with prudence and understanding, who
will build a temple for the LORD and a
royal house for himself!

13 And now I have sent a skillful man,
endowed with understanding, Huram*
my master* *craftsman* 14[q](the son of a
woman of the daughters of Dan, and
his father was a man of Tyre), skilled
to work in gold and silver, bronze and
iron, stone and wood, purple and blue,
fine linen and crimson, and to make
any engraving and to accomplish
any plan which may be given to him,
with your skillful men and with the skill-
ful men of my lord David your father.

15 Now therefore, the wheat, the barley,
the oil, and the wine which [r]my lord
has spoken of, let him send to his
servants. 16[s]And we will cut wood from
Lebanon, as much as you need; we will
bring it to you in rafts by sea to Joppa,
and you will carry it up to Jerusalem.

17[t]Then Solomon numbered all the
aliens who *were* in the land of Israel, after
the census in which [u]David his father had
numbered them; and there were found to
be one hundred and fifty-three thousand
six hundred. 18And he made [v]seventy thou-
sand of them bearers of burdens, eighty
thousand stonecutters in the mountain,
and three thousand six hundred overseers
to make the people work.

Solomon Builds the Temple

3 Now [a]Solomon began to build the house
of the LORD at [b]Jerusalem on Mount
Moriah, where *the* LORD* had appeared
to his father David, at the place that David
had prepared on the threshing floor of [c]Or-
nan* the Jebusite. 2And he began to build
on the second *day* of the second month in
the fourth year of his reign.

3This is the foundation [d]which Solomon
laid for building the house of God: The
length *was* sixty cubits (by cubits accord-
ing to the former measure) and the width
twenty cubits. 4And the [e]vestibule that
was in front *of the sanctuary** was twenty
cubits long across the width of the house,
and the height *was* one hundred and*
twenty. He overlaid the inside with pure
gold. 5[f]The larger room* he [g]paneled with
cypress which he overlaid with fine gold,
and he carved palm trees and chainwork
on it. 6And he decorated the house with
precious stones for beauty, and the gold
was gold from Parvaim. 7He also overlaid
the house—the beams and doorposts, its
walls and doors—with gold; and he carved
cherubim on the walls.

8And he made the [h]Most Holy Place. Its
length was according to the width of the
house, twenty cubits, and its width twen-
ty cubits. He overlaid it with six hundred

* **2:12** Hebrew *Huram* (compare 1 Kings 5:1)
* **2:13** Spelled *Hiram* in 1 Kings 7:13 • Literally *father* (compare 1 Kings 7:13, 14) * **3:1** Literally *He*, following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *the* LORD; Targum reads *the Angel of the* LORD. • Spelled *Araunah* in 2 Samuel 24:16ff
* **3:4** The main room of the temple; elsewhere called the holy place (compare 1 Kings 6:3) • Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Arabic, some manuscripts of the Septuagint, and Syriac omit *one hundred and.* * **3:5** Literally *house*

2:12 Prudence—The wisdom and generosity of King Hiram toward Solomon showed him to be a prudent king. He wanted things to go well for Solomon because he liked and respected his father David, and good neighbors created stability for both nations.
2:14 ***woman of the daughters of Dan.*** His mother was an Israelite from the tribe of Dan.
3:1 ***Mount Moriah.*** This was the mountain where Abraham brought his son Isaac to sacrifice him (Gen. 22) and where the Lord provided a ram instead. It was suitable that this place where Abraham showed such incredible obedience should be the site of the temple that dealt with the issues of sacrifice and sin.
threshing floor of Ornan. It was here that David saw the angel of death and prayed for the people (2 Sam. 24).
3:2 ***second day of the second month.*** The second month fell in our month of April.
3:3 ***cubits according to the former measure.*** The Israelites had two standard cubits, one about 17 inches and the other about 20 inches. The temple was probably made on the cubit that measured a little over 17 inches, which means that its foundation was approximately 90 feet long and 30 feet wide. The tabernacle that Moses made in the wilderness was about 45 feet long and 15 feet wide (Ex. 26:15–37). More details of the temple are in 1 Kings 5–7.
3:5 ***larger room.*** This room was the holy place, or sanctuary (1 Kin. 6:17).
3:8 ***Most Holy Place.*** The "holy of holies," or Most Holy Place, was the inner sanctuary where the ark of the covenant was kept. This room was cubical, 30 feet on a side. ***six hundred talents.*** The room was overlaid with about 23 tons of gold.

2:11 *n* 2 Chr. 9:8 **2:12** *o* 1 Kin. 5:7 *p* Rev. 10:6
2:14 *q* 1 Kin. 7:13, 14 **2:15** *r* 2 Chr. 2:10 **2:16** *s* 1 Kin. 5:8, 9 **2:17** *t* 1 Kin. 5:13; 2 Chr. 8:7, 8 *u* 1 Chr. 22:2
2:18 *v* 2 Chr. 2:2 **3:1** *a* 1 Kin. 6:1 *b* Gen. 22:2–14 *c* 1 Chr. 21:18; 22:1 **3:3** *d* 1 Kin. 6:2 **3:4** *e* 1 Kin. 6:3
3:5 *f* 1 Kin. 6:17 *g* 1 Kin. 6:15 **3:8** *h* Ex. 26:33

talents of fine gold. 9The weight of the nails *was* fifty shekels of gold; and he overlaid the upper [i]area with gold. 10[j]In the Most Holy Place he made two cherubim, fashioned by carving, and overlaid them with gold. 11The wings of the cherubim *were* twenty cubits in *overall* length: one wing *of the one cherub was* five cubits, touching the wall of the room, and the other wing *was* five cubits, touching the wing of the other cherub; 12*one* wing of the other cherub *was* five cubits, touching the wall of the room, and the other wing *also was* five cubits, touching the wing of the other cherub. 13The wings of these cherubim spanned twenty cubits overall. They stood on their feet, and they faced inward. 14And he made the [k]veil of blue, purple, crimson, and fine linen, and wove cherubim into it.

15Also he made in front of the temple* [l]two pillars thirty-five* cubits high, and the capital that *was* on the top of each of *them* was five cubits. 16He made wreaths of chainwork, as in the inner sanctuary, and put *them* on top of the pillars; and he made [m]one hundred pomegranates, and put *them* on the wreaths of chainwork. 17Then he [n]set up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand and the other on the left; he called the name of the one on the right hand Jachin, and the name of the one on the left Boaz.

Furnishings of the Temple

4 Moreover he made [a]a bronze altar: twenty cubits was its length, twenty cubits its width, and ten cubits its height.

2[b]Then he made the Sea of cast *bronze,* ten cubits from one brim to the other; *it was* completely round. Its height *was* five cubits, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference. 3[c]And under it *was* the likeness of oxen encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, all the way around the Sea. The oxen *were* cast in two rows, when it was cast. 4It stood on twelve [d]oxen: three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; the Sea *was set* upon them, and all their back parts *pointed* inward. 5It *was* a handbreadth thick; and its brim was shaped like the brim of a cup, *like* a lily blossom. It contained three thousand* baths.

6He also made [e]ten lavers, and put five on the right side and five on the left, to wash in them; such things as they offered for the burnt offering they would wash in them, but the Sea *was* for the [f]priests to wash in. 7[g]And he made ten lampstands of gold [h]according to their design, and set *them* in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. 8[i]He also made ten tables, and placed *them* in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. And he made one hundred [j]bowls of gold.

9Furthermore [k]he made the court of the priests, and the [l]great court and doors for the court; and he overlaid these doors with bronze. 10[m]He set the Sea on the right side, toward the southeast.

11Then [n]Huram made the pots and the

* **3:15** Literally *house* • Or *eighteen* (compare 1 Kings 7:15; 2 Kings 25:17; and Jeremiah 52:21)
* **4:5** Or *two thousand* (compare 1 Kings 7:26)

3:9 ***nails . . . gold.*** Gold by itself is too soft to use for nails, so the nails mentioned here must have been plated with gold, as the weight would indicate.
3:13 ***twenty cubits.*** The wings of the cherubim spanned the entire width of the room.
3:14 ***the veil.*** The veil was a heavy curtain between the holy place and the Most Holy Place. It shielded the ark and cherubim from view, and as God was visualized as sitting on the mercy seat under the wings of the cherubim (see note at 1 Chr. 13:6), it also shielded even the priests from the most intimate presence of God. The veil between the holy place and the Most Holy Place was ripped in two when Jesus died on the cross (Matt. 27:51). The tearing of the temple curtain is seen as a symbol that through Jesus, believers have direct access to God (Heb. 6:19; 9:1—10:20).
3:15 ***thirty-five cubits . . . five cubits.*** The pillars were about 53 feet tall with a 7 foot capital on top.
3:17 ***Jachin . . . Boaz.*** The names of the two pillars mean "He establishes" and "in Him is strength."
4:2 ***Sea of cast bronze.*** The Sea was a receptacle for water corresponding to the much smaller bronze basin of the Mosaic tabernacle (Ex. 30:17–21). The basin provided water for the priests to wash their hands and feet in preparation for ministering at the altar. The Sea served the same purpose. It was huge—15 feet in diameter and 45 feet in circumference.
4:5 ***three thousand baths.*** When filled with about 27,000 gallons of water the sea would have weighed about 108 tons.
4:6 ***ten lavers.*** Each laver held 40 baths, or about 230 gallons (1 Kin. 7:38). They could accommodate large animals, such as oxen. The law of burnt offerings required certain parts of the animal to be washed in water before it was placed on the altar (Lev. 1:9,13).
4:7 ***ten lampstands.*** The wilderness tabernacle had only one lampstand (Ex. 25:31), but the temple had ten.
4:8 ***ten tables.*** There had been only one table in the tabernacle (Ex. 25:23). The increase reflects the grandeur of the temple, as well as the large number of people to be served.
4:9 ***court of the priests.*** There were areas in and about the temple that only the priests could enter. One of these was the area immediately surrounding it and enclosed by a separating wall, the "court of the priests." ***great court.*** The great court was an outer area where the people in general could go.

3:9 *i* 1 Chr. 28:11 **3:10** *j* 1 Kin. 6:23–28 **3:14** *k* Ex. 26:31 **3:15** *l* 1 Kin. 7:15–20 **3:16** *m* 1 Kin. 7:20 **3:17** *n* 1 Kin. 7:21 **4:1** *a* Ex. 27:1, 2 **4:2** *b* 1 Kin. 7:23–26 **4:3** *c* 1 Kin. 7:24–26 **4:4** *d* 1 Kin. 7:25 **4:6** *e* 1 Kin. 7:38, 40 *f* Ex. 30:19–21 **4:7** *g* 1 Kin. 7:49 *h* Ex. 25:31 **4:8** *i* 1 Kin. 7:48 *j* 1 Chr. 28:17 **4:9** *k* 1 Kin. 6:36 *l* 2 Kin. 21:5 **4:10** *m* 1 Kin. 7:39 **4:11** *n* 1 Kin. 7:40–51

shovels and the bowls. So Huram finished doing the work that he was to do for King Solomon for the house of God:
12 the two pillars and [o]the bowl-shaped capitals *that were* on top of the two pillars; the two networks covering the two bowl-shaped capitals which *were* on top of the pillars; 13 [p]four hundred pomegranates for the two networks (two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that *were* on the pillars); 14 he also made [q]carts and the lavers on the carts; 15 one Sea and twelve oxen under it; 16 also the pots, the shovels, the forks—and all their articles [r]Huram his master* *craftsman* made of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD.

17 In the plain of Jordan the king had them cast in clay molds, between Succoth and Zeredah.* 18 [s]And Solomon had all these articles made in such great abundance that the weight of the bronze was not determined.

19 Thus [t]Solomon had all the furnishings made for the house of God: the altar of gold and the tables on which *was* [u]the showbread; 20 the lampstands with their lamps of pure gold, to burn [v]in the prescribed manner in front of the inner sanctuary, 21 with [w]the flowers and the lamps and the wick-trimmers of gold, of purest gold; 22 the trimmers, the bowls, the ladles, and the censers of pure gold. As for the entry of the sanctuary, its inner doors to the Most Holy *Place,* and the doors of the main hall of the temple, *were* gold.

5 So [a]all the work that Solomon had done for the house of the LORD was finished; and Solomon brought in the things which his father David had dedicated: the silver and the gold and all the furnishings. And he put *them* in the treasuries of the house of God.

The Ark Brought into the Temple

2 [b]Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, in Jerusalem, that they might bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD up [c]from the City of David, which *is* Zion. 3 [d]Therefore all the men of Israel assembled with the king [e]at the feast, which *was* in the seventh month. 4 So all the elders of Israel came, and the [f]Levites took up the ark. 5 Then they brought up the ark, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that *were* in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up. 6 Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him before the ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude. 7 Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the [g]inner sanctuary of the temple,* to the Most Holy *Place,* under the wings of the cherubim. 8 For the cherubim spread *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. 9 The poles extended so that the ends of the [h]poles of the ark could be seen from *the holy place,* in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. 10 Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets which Moses [i]put *there* at Horeb, when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they had come out of Egypt.

11 And it came to pass when the priests came out of the *Most* Holy *Place* (for all the priests who *were* present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their

* **4:16** Literally *father* * **4:17** Spelled *Zaretan* in 1 Kings 7:46 * **5:7** Literally *house*

4:14 *carts.* The carts had four bronze wheels (1 Kin. 7:27–37).

4:17 *cast in clay molds*. Many bronze products were made at a place in the Jordan valley about 35 miles north of the Dead Sea. Archaeologists have uncovered evidence of this work in an area where the clay is suitable for bronze casting.

4:19 *altar of gold.* This altar was used for offering incense (Ex. 30:1–10; 1 Kin. 7:48). It was in the holy place just in front of the veil.

4:22 *inner doors.* The tabernacle had a veil between the Most Holy Place, where the ark was, and the "house," or holy place. Solomon's temple had a set of doors there as well.

5:2 *ark of the covenant.* Though David had built a tabernacle, or tent, on Mount Zion to house the ark (1 Chr. 15:1), it was still separate from the original tabernacle and bronze altar at Gibeon. Completing Solomon's temple made it possible for the ark and the altar to be in the same place for the first time since the Israelites lost the ark to the Philistines during the days when the tabernacle was at Shiloh and Samuel was a little boy (1 Sam. 4–6).

5:3 *feast.* Since this was the seventh month, the feast was the Feast of Tabernacles. This was an appropriate occasion for moving the ark to a permanent location because the feast commemorated Israel's wandering in the wilderness when the ark had no permanent place (Lev. 23:39–43).

5:5 *tabernacle.* This tent was the Mosaic tabernacle. Solomon ended worship at the high place at Gibeon by dismantling the tabernacle and bringing it and all its furnishings to Jerusalem.

5:9 *to this day.* The ark was supposed to remain safely in the temple forever. At the time of the writing of this book (probably between 460 and 430 B.C.), the temple had been destroyed and the ark was gone. No one knows what happened to the ark after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

4:12 [o] 1 Kin. 7:41 **4:13** [p] 1 Kin. 7:20 **4:14** [q] 1 Kin. 7:27, 43 **4:16** [r] 1 Kin. 7:45 **4:18** [s] 1 Kin. 7:47 **4:19** [t] 1 Kin. 7:48–50 [u] Ex. 25:30 **4:20** [v] Ex. 27:20, 21 **4:21** [w] Ex. 25:31 **5:1** [a] 1 Kin. 7:51 **5:2** [b] 1 Kin. 8:1–9 [c] 2 Sam. 6:12 **5:3** [d] 1 Kin. 8:2 [e] 2 Chr. 7:8–10 **5:4** [f] 1 Chr. 15:2, 15 **5:7** [g] 2 Chr. 4:20 **5:9** [h] Ex. 25:13–15 **5:10** [i] Deut. 10:2, 5

[i]divisions), 12[k]and the Levites *who were* the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, [l]and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets— 13indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying:*

[m]"*For He is* good,
For His mercy *endures* forever,"*

that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, 14so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; [n]for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

6 Then [a]Solomon spoke:

"The LORD said He would dwell in the
[b]dark cloud.
2 I have surely built You an exalted
house,
And [c]a place for You to dwell in
forever."

Solomon's Speech upon Completion of the Work

3Then the king turned around and [d]blessed the whole assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. 4And he said: "Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who has fulfilled with His hands *what* He spoke with His mouth to my father David, [e]saying, 5'Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel *in which* to build a house, that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man to be a ruler over My people Israel. 6[f]Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I [g]have chosen David to be over My people Israel.' 7Now [h]it was in the heart of my father David to build a temple* for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 8But the LORD said to my father David, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well in that it was in your heart. 9Nevertheless you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My [i]name.' 10So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke, and I have filled the position of my father David, and [j]sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised; and I have built the temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 11And there I have put the ark, [k]in which *is* the covenant of the LORD which He made with the children of Israel."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

12[l]Then *Solomon** stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands 13(for Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt down on his knees before all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven); 14and he said: "LORD God of Israel, [m]*there is* no God in heaven or on earth like You, who keep *Your* [n]covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts. 15[o]You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled *it* with Your hand, as *it is* this day. 16Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, [p]'You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, [q]only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk in My law as you have walked before Me.' 17And now, O LORD God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David.

* **5:13** Compare Psalm 106:1 * **6:7** Literally *house*, and so in verses 8–10 * **6:12** Literally *he* (compare 1 Kings 8:22)

5:12 ***Asaph . . . Heman . . . Jeduthun.*** These men were the heads of the divisions of Levitical musicians (1 Chr. 6:33,39; 25:1).

5:13 Praise—Praise and worship are simply recognizing the perfections and worthiness of the Lord. His lovingkindness never runs out or diminishes. Every day His mercy and grace exist in perfection on our behalf. A time for daily praise is one of the best ways to grow closer to God.

6:2 ***to dwell in forever.*** It did not occur to Solomon that one day the glory of the Lord would depart from this temple and it would be destroyed (Ezek. 10:18).

6:14 ***there is no God . . . like You.*** Solomon's acclamation is echoed by every child of God who reflects on God's faithfulness and mercy to those who "walk before Him" with "all their hearts." It is not that Solomon considered other gods to be valid, but he was in a position to see the kind of trust that pagans put in their gods, and how whimsical and unfaithful these "gods" were.

6:16 ***only if your sons take heed.*** Solomon was recognizing that the covenant was dependent on the people remaining faithful to God, and he wanted his line to walk with God as David had. Even though future generations did not imitate David, God's faithfulness was carried out through Jesus, the Son of David (Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 22:41–45).

5:11 *j* 1 Chr. 24:1–5 **5:12** *k* 1 Chr. 25:1–7 *l* 1 Chr. 13:8; 15:16, 24 **5:13** *m* 1 Chr. 16:34, 41; Ps. 100:5; 106:1; 136 **5:14** *n* Ex. 40:35 **6:1** *a* 1 Kin. 8:12–21 *b* [Lev. 16:2] **6:2** *c* 2 Chr. 7:12 **6:3** *d* 2 Sam. 6:18 **6:4** *e* 1 Chr. 17:5 **6:6** *f* Deut. 12:5–7 *g* 1 Chr. 28:4 **6:7** *h* 2 Sam. 7:2 **6:9** *i* 1 Chr. 28:3–6 **6:10** *j* 1 Kin. 2:12; 10:9 **6:11** *k* 2 Chr. 5:7–10 **6:12** *l* 1 Kin. 8:22 **6:14** *m* [Ex. 15:11] *n* [Deut. 7:9] **6:15** *o* 1 Chr. 22:9, 10 **6:16** *p* 2 Chr. 7:18 *q* Ps. 132:12

18 "But will God indeed dwell with men
on the earth? [r]Behold, heaven and the
heaven of heavens cannot contain You.
How much less this temple* which I have
built! 19 Yet regard the prayer of Your ser-
vant and his supplication, O LORD my God,
and listen to the cry and the prayer which
Your servant is praying before You: 20 that
Your eyes may be [s]open toward this tem-
ple day and night, toward the place where
You said *You would* put Your name, that
You may hear the prayer which Your ser-
vant makes [t]toward this place. 21 And may
You hear the supplications of Your servant
and of Your people Israel, when they pray
toward this place. Hear from heaven Your
dwelling place, and when You hear, [u]for-
give.

22 "If anyone sins against his neighbor,
and is forced to take an [v]oath, and comes
and takes an oath before Your altar in this
temple, 23 then hear from heaven, and act,
and judge Your servants, bringing retribu-
tion on the wicked by bringing his way on
his own head, and justifying the righteous
by giving him according to his [w]righteous-
ness.

24 "Or if Your people Israel are defeat-
ed before an [x]enemy because they have
sinned against You, and return and con-
fess Your name, and pray and make sup-
plication before You in this temple, 25 then
hear from heaven and forgive the sin of
Your people Israel, and bring them back to
the land which You gave to them and their
fathers.

26 "When the [y]heavens are shut up and
there is no rain because they have sinned
against You, when they pray toward this
place and confess Your name, and turn
from their sin because You afflict them,
27 then hear *in* heaven, and forgive the sin
of Your servants, Your people Israel, that
You may teach them the good way in which
they should walk; and send rain on Your
land which You have given to Your people
as an inheritance.

28 "When there [z]is famine in the land,
pestilence or blight or mildew, locusts or
grasshoppers; when their enemies besiege
them in the land of their cities; whatever
plague or whatever [a]sickness *there is;*
29 whatever prayer, whatever supplication
is *made* by anyone, or by all Your people
Israel, when each one knows his own bur-
den and his own grief, and spreads out
his hands to this temple: 30 then hear from
heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive,
and give to everyone according to all his
ways, whose heart You know (for You
alone [b]know the [c]hearts of the sons of
men), 31 that they may fear You, to walk in
Your ways as long as they live in the land
which You gave to our fathers.

32 "Moreover, concerning a foreigner,
[d]who is not of Your people Israel, but has
come from a far country for the sake of
Your great name and Your mighty hand
and Your outstretched arm, when they
come and pray in this temple; 33 then hear
from heaven Your dwelling place, and do
according to all for which the foreigner
calls to You, that all peoples of the earth
may know Your name and fear You, as
do Your people Israel, and that they may
know that this temple which I have built is
called by Your name.

34 "When Your people go out to battle
against their enemies, wherever You send
them, and when they pray to You toward
this city which You have chosen and the
temple which I have built for Your name,
35 then hear from heaven their prayer and
their supplication, and maintain their
cause.

36 "When they sin against You (for *there is*
[e]no one who does not sin), and You become
angry with them and deliver them to the en-
emy, and they take them [f]captive to a land
far or near; 37 *yet* when they come to them-
selves in the land where they were carried
captive, and repent, and make supplication
to You in the land of their captivity, saying,
'We have sinned, we have done wrong, and
have committed wickedness'; 38 and *when*
they return to You with all their heart and
with all their soul in the land of their cap-
tivity, where they have been carried cap-
tive, and pray toward their land which You

* **6:18** Literally *house*

6:23 *hear from heaven.* Solomon's request that God hear from heaven underscored God's transcendence. Although God had chosen to be present on earth at the temple, He is also beyond the limits of the temple building.

6:25 *bring them back.* This statement is a hint of the future captivity and deportation of God's disobedient people (Deut. 28:29–30). When the exile to Babylon became a reality, the temple was destroyed and no one could pray at that place as before. But even in those days, God's people directed their prayer toward Jerusalem (Dan. 6:10).

6:32–33 *concerning a foreigner.* God made His covenant exclusively with Israel, the nation descended from Abraham, but He did so for the purpose of attracting the nations to Himself, the Creator of all people. A foreigner who embraced the Lord as God would be numbered among God's people.

6:36 *there is no one who does not sin.* This statement is repeated in the New Testament (Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8–10). ***take them captive.*** Solomon's speech anticipated the possibility of exile (v. 25), something that had already taken place by the time Chronicles was written.

6:18 [r] [2 Chr. 2:6] **6:20** [s] 2 Chr. 7:15 [t] Dan. 6:10
6:21 [u] [Mic. 7:18] **6:22** [v] Ex. 22:8–11 **6:23** [w] [Job 34:11]
6:24 [x] 2 Kin. 21:14, 15 **6:26** [y] 1 Kin. 17:1 **6:28** [z] 2 Chr. 20:9 [a] [Mic. 6:13] **6:30** [b] [1 Chr. 28:9] [c] [1 Sam. 16:7]
6:32 [d] John 12:20 **6:36** [e] [Rom. 3:9, 19; 5:12] [f] Deut. 28:63–68

gave to their fathers, the [g]city which You
have chosen, and toward the temple which
I have built for Your name: 39then hear from
heaven Your dwelling place their prayer
and their supplications, and maintain their
cause, and forgive Your people who have
sinned against You. 40Now, my God, I pray,
let Your eyes be [h]open and *let* Your ears *be*
attentive to the prayer *made* in this place.

41 [i]"Now therefore,
Arise, O LORD God, to Your [j]resting
place,
You and the ark of Your strength.
Let Your priests, O LORD God, be
clothed with salvation,
And let Your saints [k]rejoice in
goodness.

42 "O LORD God, do not turn away the face
of Your Anointed;
[l]Remember the mercies of Your servant
David."*

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

7 When [a]Solomon had finished praying,
[b]fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and [c]the glory of the LORD filled the temple.* 2[d]And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house. 3When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, *saying:*

[e]"For *He is* good,
[f]For His mercy *endures* forever."*

4[g]Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. 5King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. 6[h]And the priests attended to their services; the Levites also with instruments of the music of the LORD, which King David had made to praise the LORD, saying, "For His mercy *endures* forever,"* whenever David offered praise by their ministry. [i]The priests sounded trumpets opposite them, while all Israel stood.

7Furthermore [j]Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that *was* in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat.

8[k]At that time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly [l]from the entrance of Hamath to [m]the Brook of Egypt.* 9And on the eighth day they held a [n]sacred assembly, for they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days.

* **6:42** Compare Psalm 132:8–10 * **7:1** Literally *house* * **7:3** Compare Psalm 106:1 * **7:6** Compare Psalm 106:1 * **7:8** That is, the Shihor (compare 1 Chronicles 13:5)

7:1 Miracles—This event marks the third of four events when supernatural fire fell from heaven. The first occurred during the dedication of the tabernacle in the days of Moses (Lev. 9:24). The second happened when David dedicated a piece of ground to the Lord that later became the site of Solomon's temple (1 Chr. 21:26). The final occurrence transpired on Mount Carmel when Elijah prayed for fire to consume his offering (1 Kin. 18:38). We often think that a miracle will convince an unbeliever of the reality of the living God, and sometimes it does. But sensing the presence of God, or seeing His work, does not equal believing. The Israelites often backslid, even after miraculous events, and even the miracles of Jesus did not convince all that He was the Messiah (Matt. 11:20–24).

7:3 Need for Worship—The first reason for worship is simply that God commands it (1 Chr. 16:29; Matt. 4:10). The first four of the Ten Commandments charge men and women to worship the one true God and Him alone (Ex. 20:3–10). To allow anything or anyone other than God to have a position of lordship over us constitutes gross disobedience to the will of God and incurs His terrible wrath (Ex. 20:5; Deut. 27:15). Eventually all peoples will bow to God anyway, even if they do so unwillingly (Phil. 2:10).

An equally important reason for worship is that God is worthy of our worship. He designed us for worship. He alone possesses the attributes that merit our worship and service. Among these are goodness (Ps. 100:5), mercy (Ex. 4:31), holiness (Ps. 99:5,9), and creative power (Rev. 4:11). When men of biblical times clearly saw the unveiled glory of God, they could not help but fall prostrate in worship. Examples of this response can be seen in the actions of Moses (Ex. 34:5–8), Isaiah (Is. 6), Paul (Acts 9:3–6), and John (Rev. 1:9–17).

A final reason for worship is that men and women need to give it. People cannot find personal fulfillment apart from the glad submission of themselves in worshipful obedience to God. He is the Creator and they are the creatures (Rev. 4:11). We are made to worship God. If we do anything less, we fail to be who God created us to be. One who worships God not only participates in the occupation of heaven (Rev. 7:9–12), but also finds joyful satisfaction in the present time (Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:24).

7:8 *feast.* The feast was the Feast of Tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and continued through the twenty-second day (see note at 5:3). ***Hamath . . . Brook of Egypt.*** These geographical locations specify the extent of Solomon's early kingdom from north to south.

7:9 *dedication of the altar.* This is the same dedication referred to in 5:3.

6:38 [g] Dan. 6:10 **6:40** [h] 2 Chr. 6:20 **6:41** [i] Ps. 132:8–10, 16 [j] 1 Chr. 28:2 [k] Neh. 9:25 **6:42** [l] Ps. 89:49; 132:1, 8–10 **7:1** [a] 1 Kin. 8:54 [b] Lev. 9:24 [c] 1 Kin. 8:10, 11 **7:2** [d] 2 Chr. 5:14 **7:3** [e] Ps. 106:1; 136:1 [f] 2 Chr. 20:21 **7:4** [g] 1 Kin. 8:62, 63 **7:6** [h] 1 Chr. 15:16 [i] 2 Chr. 5:12 **7:7** [j] 1 Kin. 8:64–66; 9:3 **7:8** [k] 1 Kin. 8:65 [l] 1 Kin. 4:21, 24 [m] Josh. 13:3 **7:9** [n] Lev. 23:36

10 [o]On the twenty-third day of the seventh
month he sent the people away to their
tents, joyful and glad of heart for the good
that the LORD had done for David, for Solomon, and for His people Israel. 11 Thus
[p]Solomon finished the house of the LORD
and the king's house; and Solomon successfully accomplished all that came into
his heart to make in the house of the LORD
and in his own house.

God's Second Appearance to Solomon

12 Then the LORD [q]appeared to Solomon
by night, and said to him: "I have heard
your prayer, [r]and have chosen this [s]place
for Myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 [t]When
I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or
command the locusts to devour the land, or
send pestilence among My people, 14 if My
people who are [u]called by My name will
[v]humble themselves, and pray and seek
My face, and turn from their wicked ways,
[w]then I will hear from heaven, and will
forgive their sin and heal their land. 15 Now
[x]My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer *made* in this place. 16 For now
[y]I have chosen and sanctified this house,
that My name may be there forever; and
My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. 17 [z]As for you, if you walk before
Me as your father David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you,
and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, 18 then I will establish the throne of
your kingdom, as I covenanted with David
your father, saying, [a]'You shall not fail *to*
have a man as ruler in Israel.'

19 [b]"But if you turn away and forsake My
statutes and My commandments which I
have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, 20 [c]then I will
uproot them from My land which I have
given them; and this house which I have
sanctified for My name I will cast out of
My sight, and will make it a proverb and a
[d]byword among all peoples.

21 "And *as for* [e]this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be
[f]astonished and say, [g]'Why has the LORD
done thus to this land and this house?'
22 Then they will answer, 'Because they
forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who
brought them out of the land of Egypt, and
embraced other gods, and worshiped them
and served them; therefore He has brought
all this calamity on them.'"

Solomon's Additional Achievements

8 It [a]came to pass at the end of [b]twenty years, when Solomon had built the
house of the LORD and his own house,
2 that the cities which Hiram* had given to
Solomon, Solomon built them; and he settled the children of Israel there. 3 And Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and seized it.
4 [c]He also built Tadmor in the wilderness,
and all the storage cities which he built in
[d]Hamath. 5 He built Upper Beth Horon and
[e]Lower Beth Horon, fortified cities *with*
walls, gates, and bars, 6 also Baalath and
all the storage cities that Solomon had, and
all the chariot cities and the cities of the
cavalry, and all that Solomon [f]desired to
build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all
the land of his dominion.

7 [g]All the people *who were* left of the
Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and
Jebusites, who *were* not of Israel— 8 that is,
their descendants who were left in the land
after them, whom the children of Israel did
not destroy—from these Solomon raised
forced labor, as it is to this day. 9 But Solomon did not make the children of Israel
servants for his work. Some *were* men of

* **8:2** Hebrew *Huram* (compare 2 Chronicles 2:3)

7:10 ***sent the people away to their tents.*** The people returned to their huts, or booths, where they stayed as a part of the Feast of Tabernacles. Few if any Israelites used tents for their housing at this time.

7:11 ***house of the LORD . . . king's house.*** Since it took Solomon 13 years to build his palace and 20 years in all to build both it and the temple, these events are halfway through Solomon's 40-year reign.

7:14 Prayer—This promise to hear, if the people will pray, is directly linked to the covenant promises that God made with the Israelites (Deut. 28–30). Blessings were linked to obedience, curses linked to rebellion, and the promise that God would hear if they repented was the reminder that God had eternal commitment to them. Even nations outside this covenant have taken great comfort in remembering this promise. God always hears the sincere prayers of His people, and Christians are directed to pray for the leaders of the nations (1 Tim. 2:1–2).

8:4 ***Tadmor.*** Solomon built and fortified cities such as Tadmor because they were on vital caravan routes. These fortified cities provided protection to his caravans and became the customs points at which Solomon collected taxes. ***storage cities.*** Facilities were scattered throughout Solomon's outlying provinces to provide warehouses for his armies and merchantmen, as well as to store produce and other tributes paid by the vassal states (1 Kin. 9:19).

8:5 ***Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon.*** These cities were strategically located near the border between Judah and the northern tribal districts, along a major mountain pass to the Mediterranean (Josh. 10:10; 1 Sam. 13:18).

7:10 [o] 1 Kin. 8:66 **7:11** [p] 1 Kin. 9:1 **7:12** [q] 1 Kin. 3:5; 11:9 [r] Deut. 12:5, 11 [s] 2 Chr. 6:20 **7:13** [t] 2 Chr. 6:26–28 **7:14** [u] [Is. 43:7] [v] [James 4:10] [w] 2 Chr. 6:27, 30 **7:15** [x] 2 Chr. 6:20, 40 **7:16** [y] 2 Chr. 6:6 **7:17** [z] 1 Kin. 9:4 **7:18** [a] 2 Chr. 6:16 **7:19** [b] Lev. 26:14, 33 **7:20** [c] Deut. 28:63–68 [d] Ps. 44:14 **7:21** [e] 2 Kin. 25:9 [f] 2 Chr. 29:8 [g] [Deut. 29:24, 25] **8:1** [a] 1 Kin. 9:10–14 [b] 1 Kin. 6:38—7:1 **8:4** [c] 1 Kin. 9:17, 18 [d] 1 Chr. 18:3, 9 **8:5** [e] 1 Chr. 7:24 **8:6** [f] 2 Chr. 7:11 **8:7** [g] 1 Kin. 9:20

war, captains of his officers, captains of his chariots, and his cavalry. 10And others *were* chiefs of the officials of King Solomon: [h]two hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people.

11Now Solomon [i]brought the daughter of Pharaoh up from the City of David to the house he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because *the places* to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy."

12Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the vestibule, 13according to the [j]daily rate, offering according to the commandment of Moses, for the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the [k]three appointed yearly [l]feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. 14And, according to the order of David his father, he appointed the [m]divisions of the priests for their service, [n]the Levites for their duties (to praise and serve before the priests) as the duty of each day required, and the [o]gatekeepers by their divisions at each gate; for so David the man of God had commanded. 15They did not depart from the command of the king to the priests and Levites concerning any matter or concerning the [p]treasuries.

16Now all the work of Solomon was well-ordered from* the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.

17Then Solomon went to [q]Ezion Geber and Elath* on the seacoast, in the land of Edom. 18[r]And Hiram sent him ships by the hand of his servants, and servants who knew the sea. They went with the servants of Solomon to [s]Ophir, and acquired four hundred and fifty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba's Praise of Solomon

9 Now [a]when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, *having* a very great retinue, camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. 2So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her. 3And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 4the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his [b]cupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

5Then she said to the king: "*It was* a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 6However I did not believe their words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You exceed the fame of which I heard. 7Happy *are* your men and happy *are* these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! 8Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on His throne *to be* king for the LORD your God! Because your God has [c]loved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness."

9And she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones; there never were any spices such as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

10Also, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, [d]who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum* wood and precious stones. 11And the king made walkways *of* the algum* wood for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers; and there were none such *as these* seen before in the land of Judah.

12Now King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, *much more* than she had brought to the king. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

Solomon's Great Wealth

13[e]The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six

* **8:16** Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *as far as.* * **8:17** Hebrew *Eloth* (compare 2 Kings 14:22) * **9:10** Or *almug* (compare 1 Kings 10:11, 12) * **9:11** Or *almug* (compare 1 Kings 10:11, 12)

8:18 ***Hiram.*** The Phoenicians were world famous mariners, so when Solomon undertook a merchant marine enterprise he called once more on his good friend Hiram, king of Tyre. ***Ophir.*** A source of finest gold (1 Chr. 29:4); the location of Ophir is not known, except that it was reached by sea. People have speculated that it may have been in South Arabia, India, or Africa.

9:1 ***Sheba.*** Sheba was more than a thousand miles south of Israel, at the southern end of the Arabian peninsula.

9:8 ***Blessed be the LORD your God.*** The language of politeness in the ancient world does not necessarily suggest that the queen of Sheba was converted. Visiting dignitaries customarily praised the god of the host nation.

9:13 ***six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold.*** Solomon's annual income in gold amounted to 25 tons.

8:10 [h] 1 Kin. 9:23 **8:11** [i] 1 Kin. 3:1; 7:8; 9:24; 11:1
8:13 [j] Num. 28:3, 9, 11, 26; 29:1 [k] Ex. 23:14–17; 34:22, 23 [l] Lev. 23:1–44 **8:14** [m] 1 Chr. 24:3 [n] 1 Chr. 25:1 [o] 1 Chr. 9:17; 26:1 **8:15** [p] 1 Chr. 26:20–28 **8:17** [q] 1 Kin. 9:26
8:18 [r] 2 Chr. 9:10, 13 [s] 1 Chr. 29:4 **9:1** [a] [Matt. 12:42]
9:4 [b] Neh. 1:11 **9:8** [c] Deut. 7:8 **9:10** [d] 2 Chr. 8:18
9:13 [e] 1 Kin. 10:14–29

talents of gold, 14besides *what* the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon. 15And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred *shekels* of hammered gold went into each shield. 16*He* also *made* three hundred shields of hammered gold; three hundred *shekels** of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the [f]House of the Forest of Lebanon.

17Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. 18The throne *had* six steps, with a footstool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. 19Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like *this* had been made for any *other* kingdom.

20All King Solomon's drinking vessels *were* gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon *were* pure gold. Not *one was* silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. 21For the king's ships went to [g]Tarshish with the servants of Hiram.* Once every three years the merchant ships* came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.*

22So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. 23And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. 24Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, [h]armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

25Solomon [i]had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

26[j]So he reigned over all the kings [k]from the River* to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. 27[l]The king made silver *as common* in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees [m]as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in the lowland. 28[n]And they brought horses to Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

Death of Solomon

29[o]Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of [p]Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of [q]Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? 30[r]Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. 31Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

The Revolt Against Rehoboam

10 And [a]Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. 2So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard *it* (he was in Egypt, [b]where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon), that Jeroboam returned from Egypt. 3Then they sent for him and called him. And Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, 4"Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."

* **9:16** Or *three minas* (compare 1 Kings 10:17) * **9:21** Hebrew *Huram* (compare 1 Kings 10:22) • Literally *ships of Tarshish* (deep-sea vessels) • Or *peacocks* * **9:26** That is, the Euphrates

This figure probably reflects the annual revenues of the entire nation through taxes.

9:14 *kings . . . governors . . . brought.* The gold and silver that the kings and governors brought to Solomon was tribute, a form of taxation on vassal states, not a voluntary gift.

9:15 *shields of hammered gold.* The targets or shields of beaten gold were for decorative or ceremonial purpose, not the armory. Gold was too expensive, too heavy, and too soft to use in battle.

9:26 *to the land of the Philistines.* Most of the kings of Israel had continuing trouble with the Philistines, even though they were able to subdue every other surrounding neighbor. David had some success against the Philistines (1 Chr. 18:1), and later Jehoshaphat managed to exact tribute from some of them (17:11).

9:29 *Nathan the prophet.* This is the same Nathan that rebuked David for his adultery and murder (2 Sam. 12:1–15). He was a confidant and counselor to both David and Solomon (1 Kin. 1:8–11). ***Ahijah . . . Iddo.*** Ahijah and Iddo were contemporaries who compiled the accounts of both Jeroboam and Rehoboam (12:15).

9:31 *Rehoboam.* Rehoboam was a son of Solomon by his wife Naamah of Ammon (12:13). He was 41 when he began to rule, so he must have been born during the period when Solomon ruled alongside David (1 Chr. 29:22–23).

10:1 *Shechem.* Rehoboam probably chose Shechem as the place to be crowned because a rift had begun to develop between the northern and southern tribes (1 Kin. 11:26–40).

10:4 Wisdom—Bravado is different than wisdom. Saying that one is going to be tough is different than being wise. Short of despotic force, no king can rule a people who do not trust him, and even if there is not outright rebellion, the resistance makes an unhappy nation. Like many other people, Rehoboam mistook conciliation for weakness, and lost his chance to have influence with most of the nation. It is important to remember that the outcome of this encounter was just what God wanted. Rehoboam was reaping the fruits of his father's (and his own) indifference to God.

9:16 [f] 1 Kin. 7:2 **9:21** [g] 2 Chr. 20:36, 37 **9:24** [h] 1 Kin. 20:11 **9:25** [i] 1 Kin. 4:26; 10:26 **9:26** [j] 1 Kin. 4:21 [k] Gen. 15:18 **9:27** [l] 1 Kin. 10:27 [m] 2 Chr. 1:15–17 **9:28** [n] 2 Chr. 1:16 **9:29** [o] 1 Kin. 11:41 [p] 1 Kin. 11:29 [q] 2 Chr. 12:15; 13:22 **9:30** [r] 1 Kin. 4:21; 11:42, 43 **10:1** [a] 1 Kin. 12:1–20 **10:2** [b] 1 Kin. 11:40

5So he said to them, "Come back to me after three days." And the people departed.
6Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, saying, "How do you advise *me* to answer these people?"
7And they spoke to him, saying, "If you are kind to these people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be your servants forever."
8[c]But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. 9And he said to them, "What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke which your father put on us'?"
10Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you should speak to the people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make *it* lighter on us'—thus you shall say to them: 'My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's waist! 11And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I *will chastise you* with scourges!'"*
12So [d]Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me the third day." 13Then the king answered them roughly. King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders, 14and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father* made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father chastised you with whips, but I *will chastise you* with scourges!"* 15So the king did not listen to the people; [e]for the turn *of events* was from God, that the LORD might fulfill His [f]word, which He had spoken by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
16Now when all Israel *saw* that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying:

"What share have we in David?
We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.
Every man to your tents, O Israel!
Now see to your own house, O David!"

So all Israel departed to their tents. 17But Rehoboam reigned over the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah.

18Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who *was* in charge of revenue; but the children of Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted *his* chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. 19[g]So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

11 Now [a]when Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled from the house of Judah and Benjamin one hundred and eighty thousand chosen *men* who were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.
2But the word of the LORD came [b]to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, 3"Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying, 4'Thus says the LORD: "You shall not go up or fight against your brethren! Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me."'" Therefore they obeyed the words of the LORD, and turned back from attacking Jeroboam.

Rehoboam Fortifies the Cities

5So Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defense in Judah. 6And he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, 7Beth Zur, Sochoh, Adullam, 8Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, 9Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, 10Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and Benjamin, fortified cities. 11And he fortified the strongholds, and put captains in them, and stores of food, oil, and wine. 12Also in every city *he put* shields and spears, and made them very strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

Priests and Levites Move to Judah

13And from all their territories the priests and the Levites who *were* in all Israel took their stand with him. 14For the Levites left [c]their common-lands and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for [d]Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them from serving as priests to the LORD. 15[e]Then he appointed for himself priests for the high places, for [f]the demons, and [g]the calf idols which he had made. 16[h]And after *the* Levites *left*,* those from all the tribes

* **10:11** Literally *scorpions* * **10:14** Following many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate (compare verse 10 and 1 Kings 12:14); Masoretic Text reads *I.* • Literally *scorpions*
* **11:16** Literally *after them*

10:15 ***the turn of events was from God.*** Human foolishness and decisions often achieve God's purposes. Solomon's defection from God late in his reign had already disqualified his descendants from ruling over all Israel (1 Kin. 11:9–13). Rehoboam initiated the split with his own foolish actions.
11:13 ***all their territories.*** Though Israel and Judah had split into two kingdoms, the priests and Levites of Israel sided with Judah. One reason for this was that they knew that Rehoboam was of the lineage of David, and therefore part of God's covenant promise to David. Another reason was that Jeroboam had established his own religious cult, which had no need for the true priests of God (1 Kin. 12:24–33).
11:16 ***came to Jerusalem.*** Once the legitimate religious leaders had left Israel, the worshipers of God in the northern kingdom could no longer worship in

10:8 [c] 1 Kin. 12:8–11 **10:12** [d] 1 Kin. 12:12–14
10:15 [e] 1 Chr. 5:22 [f] 1 Kin. 11:29–39 **10:19** [g] 1 Kin. 12:19
11:1 [a] 1 Kin. 12:21–24 **11:2** [b] 1 Chr. 12:5 **11:14** [c] Num. 35:2–5 [d] 2 Chr. 13:9 **11:15** [e] 1 Kin. 12:31; 13:33; 14:9 [f] [Lev. 17:7] [g] 1 Kin. 12:28 **11:16** [h] 2 Chr. 14:7

of Israel, such as set their heart to seek the LORD God of Israel, [i]came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers. 17So they [j]strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong for three years, because they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

The Family of Rehoboam

18Then Rehoboam took for himself as wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David, *and of* Abihail the daughter of [k]Eliah the son of Jesse. 19And she bore him children: Jeush, Shamariah, and Zaham. 20After her he took [l]Maachah the granddaughter* of [m]Absalom; and she bore him [n]Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. 21Now Rehoboam loved Maachah the granddaughter of Absalom more than all his [o]wives and his concubines; for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and begot twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. 22And Rehoboam [p]appointed [q]Abijah the son of Maachah as chief, *to be* leader among his brothers; for he *intended* to make him king. 23He dealt wisely, and dispersed some of his sons throughout all the territories of Judah and Benjamin, to every [r]fortified city; and he gave them provisions in abundance. He also sought many wives *for them.*

Egypt Attacks Judah

12 Now [a]it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, that [b]he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel along with him. 2[c]And it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam *that* Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD, 3with twelve hundred chariots, sixty thousand horsemen, and people without number who came with him out of Egypt—[d]the Lubim and the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians. 4And he took the fortified cities of Judah and came to Jerusalem.

5Then [e]Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah, who were gathered together in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, "Thus says the LORD: 'You have forsaken Me, and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.'"

6So the leaders of Israel and the king [f]humbled themselves; and they said, [g]"The LORD *is* righteous."

7Now when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, [h]the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance. My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. 8Nevertheless [i]they will be his servants, that they may distinguish [j]My service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations."

9[k]So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything. He also carried away the gold shields which Solomon had [l]made. 10Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place, and committed *them* [m]to the hands of the captains of the guard, who guarded the doorway of the king's house. 11And whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the guard would go and bring them out; then they would take them back into the guardroom. 12When he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to destroy *him* completely; and things also went well in Judah.

* **11:20** Literally *daughter*, but in the broader sense of granddaughter (compare 2 Chronicles 13:2)

good conscience, so they either made pilgrimages to Jerusalem, or moved there (1 Kin. 12:25–33). At the time of the Babylonian captivity (36:10) the northern kingdom was already captured by Assyria (2 Kin. 17), but there were many representatives from the northern tribes living in Judah.

11:22 *Abijah.* Rehoboam named his son Abijah as the next king to ensure a smooth succession following his death. Abijah probably served under or alongside Rehoboam, just as Solomon had served under David (1 Chr. 23:1).

12:2 *Egypt.* Egypt was beginning to recover from a long period of decline and wanted to reestablish control over Israel. God used their ambitions to discipline Rehoboam for abandoning the Lord.

12:3 *Lubim . . . Sukkiim.* The Lubim were the Libyans, and the Sukkiim were other desert tribes, probably from western Libya. ***Ethiopians.*** These famous warriors, sometimes referred to as Cushites, originated in the lands south of Egypt.

12:6 Righteousness—The king and princes of Judah recognized that the Lord was righteous, even in leaving them in the hands of Shishak. What they did not know, was the difference between being the "vassal" of the righteous Lord, and the vassal of the unrighteous Shishak. Like the Israelites, we count on the righteousness and graciousness of the Lord toward us. It is good to know that He is unfailing in His lovingkindness, but it is not something to presume upon, as if our conforming to His image does not really matter.

12:9 *took away the treasures.* Judah was now a vassal state of Egypt.

11:16 [i] 2 Chr. 15:9, 10; 30:11, 18 **11:17** [j] 2 Chr. 12:1, 13 **11:18** [k] 1 Sam. 16:6 **11:20** [l] 2 Chr. 13:2 [m] 1 Kin. 15:2 [n] 1 Kin. 14:31 **11:21** [o] Deut. 17:17 **11:22** [p] Deut. 21:15–17 [q] 2 Chr. 13:1 **11:23** [r] 2 Chr. 11:5 **12:1** [a] 2 Chr. 11:17 [b] 1 Kin. 14:22–24 **12:2** [c] 1 Kin. 11:40; 14:25 **12:3** [d] 2 Chr. 16:8 **12:5** [e] 2 Chr. 11:2 **12:6** [f] [James 4:10] [g] Ex. 9:27 **12:7** [h] 1 Kin. 21:28, 29 **12:8** [i] Is. 26:13 [j] [Deut. 28:47, 48] **12:9** [k] 1 Kin. 14:25, 26 [l] 2 Chr. 9:15, 16 **12:10** [m] 1 Kin. 14:27

The End of Rehoboam's Reign

13 Thus King Rehoboam strengthened
himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Now
[n]Rehoboam *was* forty-one years old when
he became king; and he reigned seven-
teen years in Jerusalem, [o]the city which
the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes
of Israel, to put His name there. His moth-
er's name *was* Naamah, an [p]Ammonitess.
14 And he did evil, because he did not pre-
pare his heart to seek the LORD.

15 The acts of Rehoboam, first and last,
are they not written in the book of She-
maiah the prophet, [q]and of Iddo the seer
concerning genealogies? [r]And *there were*
wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam
all their days. 16 So Rehoboam rested with
his fathers, and was buried in the City of
David. Then [s]Abijah* his son reigned in
his place.

Abijah Reigns in Judah

13 In [a]the eighteenth year of King Jer-
oboam, Abijah became king over
[b]Judah. 2 He reigned three years in Jerusa-
lem. His mother's name *was* Michaiah* the
daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

And there was war between Abijah and
Jeroboam. 3 Abijah set the battle in order
with an army of valiant warriors, four hun-
dred thousand choice men. Jeroboam also
drew up in battle formation against him
with eight hundred thousand choice men,
mighty men of valor.

4 Then Abijah stood on Mount [c]Zemara-
im, which *is* in the mountains of Ephraim,
and said, "Hear me, Jeroboam and all Is-
rael: 5 Should you not know that the LORD
God of Israel [d]gave the dominion over Is-
rael to David forever, to him and his sons,
[e]by a covenant of salt? 6 Yet Jeroboam the
son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the
son of David, rose up and [f]rebelled against
his lord. 7 Then [g]worthless rogues gath-
ered to him, and strengthened themselves
against Rehoboam the son of Solomon,
when Rehoboam was [h]young and inexperi-
enced and could not withstand them. 8 And
now you think to withstand the kingdom of
the LORD, which is in the hand of the sons
of David; and you *are* a great multitude,
and with you are the gold calves which Jer-
oboam [i]made for you as gods. 9 [j]Have you
not cast out the priests of the LORD, the
sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and made
for yourselves priests, like the peoples of
other lands, [k]so that whoever comes to
consecrate himself with a young bull and
seven rams may be a priest of [l]*things that*
are not gods? 10 But as for us, the LORD *is*
our [m]God, and we have not forsaken Him;
and the priests who minister to the LORD
are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *at-*
tend to *their* duties. 11 [n]And they burn to
the LORD every morning and every eve-
ning burnt sacrifices and sweet incense;
they also *set* the [o]showbread *in order on*
the pure *gold* table, and the lampstand of
gold with its lamps [p]to burn every evening;
for we keep the command of the LORD our
God, but you have forsaken Him. 12 Now
look, God Himself is with us as *our* [q]head,
[r]and His priests with sounding trumpets to
sound the alarm against you. O children of
Israel, do not fight against the LORD God
of your fathers, for you shall not prosper!"

13 But Jeroboam caused an ambush to go
around behind them; so they were in front
of Judah, and the ambush *was* behind
them. 14 And when Judah looked around,
to their surprise the battle line *was* at
both front and rear; and they [s]cried out
to the LORD, and the priests sounded the

* **12:16** Spelled *Abijam* in 1 Kings 14:31
* **13:2** Spelled *Maachah* in 11:20, 21 and 1 Kings 15:2

13:2 *His mother's name was Michaiah.* Michaiah is a variation of "Maachah." She is the daughter of "Uriel of Gibeah" in this passage, as well as the "daughter of Absalom" (11:21). It is thought that she was the granddaughter of Absalom, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah and Absalom's daughter Tamar (2 Sam. 14:27). The terms "father, mother, son, daughter" were often used in talking of ancestors instead of generations. Jesus is referred to as the "Son of David" (Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 22:42), which is clearly a reference to His ancestry.

13:5 *covenant of salt.* Salt was a preservative and symbolized durability, so a covenant of salt was one that would not be broken. Sometimes covenant makers each took a pinch of salt and mixed it, to show that just as the salt could not be separated, so the promise could not be set aside.

13:6 *Yet Jeroboam.* The throne had been promised to David's line forever, yet the promise was contingent on the faithfulness of his descendants (7:18–19). Because Solomon had turned from God, part of the kingdom was taken from him, and Jeroboam was chosen by God through the prophet Ahijah to rule over the part of the kingdom that was taken from Solomon (10:2). So far this story mirrors the events in the lives of Saul and David. But unlike David, Jeroboam did not wait for the Lord to deliver the promised kingdom to him. Jeroboam took his place by force, and immediately turned from God. His name became a byword, synonymous with "bad king." (See also 1 Kin. 11–14.)

13:7 *when Rehoboam was young and inexperienced.* Abijah's version of the nation's division put his father in a relatively good light. Rehoboam was 41 years old when he became king (12:13).

12:13 [n] 1 Kin. 14:21 [o] 2 Chr. 6:6 [p] 1 Kin. 11:1, 5
12:15 [q] 2 Chr. 9:29; 13:22 [r] 1 Kin. 14:30 **12:16** [s] 2 Chr. 11:20–22 **13:1** [a] 1 Kin. 15:1 [b] 1 Kin. 12:17
13:4 [c] Josh. 18:22 **13:5** [d] 2 Sam. 7:8–16 [e] Num. 18:19 **13:6** [f] 1 Kin. 11:28; 12:20 **13:7** [g] Judg. 9:4 [h] 2 Chr. 12:13 **13:8** [i] 1 Kin. 12:28; 14:9 **13:9** [j] 2 Chr. 11:13–15 [k] Ex. 29:29–33 [l] Jer. 2:11; 5:7 **13:10** [m] Josh. 24:15 **13:11** [n] 2 Chr. 2:4 [o] Lev. 24:5–9 [p] Ex. 27:20, 21
13:12 [q] [Heb. 2:10] [r] [Num. 10:8–10] **13:14** [s] 2 Chr. 6:34, 35; 14:11

trumpets. 15Then the men of Judah gave a shout; and as the men of Judah shouted, it happened that God [t]struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. 16And the children of Israel fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hand. 17Then Abijah and his people struck them with a great slaughter; so five hundred thousand choice men of Israel fell slain. 18Thus the children of Israel were subdued at that time; and the children of Judah prevailed, [u]because they relied on the LORD God of their fathers.

19And Abijah pursued Jeroboam and took cities from him: Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages, and [v]Ephrain* with its villages. 20So Jeroboam did not recover strength again in the days of Abijah; and the LORD [w]struck him, and [x]he died.

21But Abijah grew mighty, married fourteen wives, and begot twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. 22Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, his ways, and his sayings *are* written in [y]the annals of the prophet Iddo.

14 So Abijah rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then [a]Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land was quiet for ten years.

Asa Reigns in Judah

2Asa did *what was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God, 3for he removed the altars of the foreign *gods* and [b]the high places, and [c]broke down the *sacred* pillars [d]and cut down the wooden images. 4He commanded Judah to [e]seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to observe the law and the commandment. 5He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah, and the kingdom was quiet under him. 6And he built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest; he had no war in those years, because the LORD had given him [f]rest. 7Therefore he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and make walls around *them,* and towers, gates, and bars, *while* the land *is* yet before us, because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought *Him,* and He has given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered. 8And Asa had an army of three hundred thousand from Judah who carried shields and spears, and from Benjamin two hundred and eighty thousand men who carried shields and drew [g]bows; all these *were* mighty men of [h]valor.

9[i]Then Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots, and he came to [j]Mareshah. 10So Asa went out against him, and they set the troops in battle array in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. 11And Asa [k]cried out to the LORD his God, and said, "LORD, *it is* [l]nothing for You to help, whether with many or with those who have no power; help us, O LORD our God, for we rest on You, and [m]in Your name we go against this multitude. O LORD, You *are* our God; do not let man prevail against You!"

12So the LORD [n]struck the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. 13And Asa and the people who *were* with him pursued them to [o]Gerar. So the Ethiopians were overthrown, and they could not recover, for they were broken before the LORD and His army. And they carried away very much spoil. 14Then they defeated all the cities around Gerar, for [p]the fear of the LORD came upon them; and they plundered all the cities, for there was exceedingly much spoil in them. 15They also attacked the livestock enclosures, and carried off sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

The Reforms of Asa

15 Now [a]the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. 2And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him:

* **13:19** Or *Ephron*

14:2–4 Faithfulness—King Asa chose to be faithful to God as he began his reign. His people enjoyed ten years of peace because of Asa's obedience. For each one of us there is a peace that comes with faithfulness to God. This does not necessarily mean that outer circumstances are uncomplicated, but in our hearts the peace of God can still reign. Like Asa, our actions affect the lives of those around us. We are created to have an eternal relationship with God, and that begins in the life of faith, believing that He is who He says He is and that we need Him. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

14:3 *pillars . . . images.* Sacred pillars were stone posts associated with Canaanite fertility rites. Asherah was a Canaanite goddess associated with Baal worship. Asherim were the poles, trees, or groves that were symbolic parts of Asherah worship.

14:9 *Zerah the Ethiopian.* Since Egypt was strong at this time (12:3) and fully in control of its own territory, it is likely that Zerah and his large army were mercenaries of the Egyptian king Osorkon I (914–874 B.C.), successor of Shishak. ***Mareshah.*** Mareshah was one of Asa's important fortified cities, about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem (11:8). It was near the Via Maris, the coastal highway connecting Egypt and Canaan, making it strategically important.

14:13 *Gerar.* Gerar was at the frontier between Egypt and Canaan and might have been in Egyptian territory at this time.

13:15 [t] 2 Chr. 14:12 **13:18** [u] 2 Chr. 14:11 **13:19** [v] Josh. 15:9 **13:20** [w] 1 Sam. 2:6; 25:38 [x] 1 Kin. 14:20 **13:22** [y] 2 Chr. 9:29 **14:1** [a] 1 Kin. 15:8 **14:3** [b] 1 Kin. 15:14 [c] [Ex. 34:13] [d] 1 Kin. 11:7 **14:4** [e] [2 Chr. 7:14] **14:6** [f] 2 Chr. 15:15 **14:8** [g] 1 Chr. 12:2 [h] 2 Chr. 13:3 **14:9** [i] 2 Chr. 12:2, 3; 16:8 [j] Josh. 15:44 **14:11** [k] Ex. 14:10 [l] [1 Sam. 14:6] [m] 1 Sam. 17:45 **14:12** [n] 2 Chr. 13:15 **14:13** [o] Gen. 10:19; 20:1 **14:14** [p] 2 Chr. 17:10 **15:1** [a] 2 Chr. 20:14; 24:20

"Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. [b]The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. [c]If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if [d]you forsake Him, He will forsake you. 3[e]For a long time Israel *has been* without the true God, without a [f]teaching priest, and without [g]law; 4but [h]when in their trouble they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them. 5And in those times *there was* no peace to the one who went out, nor to the one who came in, but great turmoil *was* on all the inhabitants of the lands. 6[i]So nation was destroyed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every adversity. 7But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!"

8And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded* the prophet, he took courage, and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities [j]which he had taken in the mountains of Ephraim; and he restored the altar of the LORD that *was* before the vestibule of the LORD. 9Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and [k]those who dwelt with them from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, for they came over to him in great numbers from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

10So they gathered together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. 11[l]And they offered to the LORD at that time seven hundred bulls and seven thousand sheep from the spoil they had brought. 12Then they [m]entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; 13[n]and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel [o]was to be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. 14Then they took an oath before the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting and trumpets and rams' horns. 15And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and [p]sought Him with all their soul; and He was found by them, and the LORD gave them [q]rest all around.

16Also he removed [r]Maachah, the mother of Asa the king, from *being* queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah;* and Asa cut down her obscene image, then crushed and burned *it* by the Brook Kidron. 17But [s]the high places were not removed from Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was loyal all his days.

18He also brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated and that he himself had dedicated: silver and gold and utensils. 19And there was no war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

Asa's Treaty with Syria

16 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, [a]Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah, [b]that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 2Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, 3"*Let there be* a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."

4So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali. 5Now it happened, when Baasha heard *it*, that he stopped building Ramah and ceased his work. 6Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used for building; and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

Hanani's Message to Asa

7And at that time [c]Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: [d]"Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the LORD your God,

* **15:8** Following Masoretic Text and Septuagint; Syriac and Vulgate read *Azariah the son of Oded* (compare verse 1). * **15:16** A Canaanite deity

15:10 ***third month.*** This quite likely locates this festival at the time of the firstfruits, the Feast of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15–21; Num. 28:26–31).

15:16 ***Maachah.*** It appears that "mother" is used in the sense of ancestress; Maachah was the mother of Asa's father, Abijah (13:2). Still, Asa demoted her from her position as queen mother because she set up pagan idols—a courageous and delicate task for anyone, even a king.

15:17 Perseverance—Asa started his reign with a determination to serve the Lord and to abolish idol worship. Oded the prophet spurred him on to finish the job, to get rid of idols in his land and the land just captured. Paul talks about fighting the good fight, finishing the course, keeping the faith (2 Tim. 4:7). We all need people like Oded in our lives, who encourage us to keep on being faithful. In the same manner, we need to encourage others to persevere to the end.

16:6 ***Geba and Mizpah.*** Geba was just east of Ramah, and Mizpah was between Ramah and Bethel. Fortifying these two cities effectively stopped Israel from rebuilding Ramah because it was now between two of Asa's fortresses.

16:7–9 ***Hanani the seer.*** Hanani was probably the

15:2 [b] [James 4:8] [c] [1 Chr. 28:9] [d] 2 Chr. 24:20 **15:3** [e] Hos. 3:4 [f] 2 Kin. 12:2 [g] Lev. 10:11 **15:4** [h] [Deut. 4:29] **15:6** [i] Matt. 24:7 **15:8** [j] 2 Chr. 13:19 **15:9** [k] 2 Chr. 11:16 **15:11** [l] 2 Chr. 14:13–15 **15:12** [m] 2 Kin. 23:3 **15:13** [n] Ex. 22:20 [o] Deut. 13:5–15 **15:15** [p] 2 Chr. 15:2 [q] 2 Chr. 14:7 **15:16** [r] 1 Kin. 15:2, 10, 13 **15:17** [s] 1 Kin. 15:14 **16:1** [a] 1 Kin. 15:17–22 [b] 2 Chr. 15:9 **16:7** [c] 2 Chr. 19:2 [d] [Jer. 17:5]

therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. 8 Were [e]the Ethiopians and [f]the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your [g]hand. 9 [h]For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him. In this [i]you have done foolishly; therefore from now on [j]you shall have wars." 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer, and [k]put him in prison, for *he was* enraged at him because of this. And Asa oppressed *some* of the people at that time.

Illness and Death of Asa

11 [l]Note that the acts of Asa, first and last, are indeed written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 12 And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe; yet in his disease he [m]did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.

13 [n]So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign. 14 They buried him in his own tomb, which he had made for himself in the City of David; and they laid him in the bed which was filled [o]with spices and various ingredients prepared in a mixture of ointments. They made [p]a very great burning for him.

Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah

17 Then [a]Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place, and strengthened himself against Israel. 2 And he placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of [b]Judah and in the cities of Ephraim [c]which Asa his father had taken. 3 Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, 4 but sought the God* of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to [d]the acts of Israel. 5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah [e]gave presents to Jehoshaphat, [f]and he had riches and honor in abundance. 6 And his heart took delight in the ways of the LORD; moreover [g]he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah.

7 Also in the third year of his reign he sent his leaders, Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Michaiah, [h]to teach in the cities of Judah. 8 And with them *he sent* Levites: Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah—the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. 9 [i]So they taught in Judah, and *had* the Book of the Law of the LORD with them; they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

10 And [j]the fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. 11 Also *some* of the Philistines [k]brought Jehoshaphat presents and silver as tribute; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred male goats.

12 So Jehoshaphat became increasingly powerful, and he built fortresses and storage cities in Judah. 13 He had much property in the cities of Judah; and the men of war, mighty men of valor, *were* in Jerusalem.

14 These *are* their numbers, according to their fathers' houses. Of Judah, the captains of thousands: Adnah the captain, and with him three hundred thousand mighty men of valor; 15 and next to him *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and eighty thousand; 16 and next to him *was* Amasiah the son of Zichri, [l]who willingly offered himself to the LORD, and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valor. 17 Of Benjamin: Eliada a mighty man of valor, and with him two hundred thousand men armed with bow and shield; 18 and next to him *was* Jehozabad, and with him one hundred and eighty thousand prepared for war. 19 These served the king, besides [m]those the king put in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

Micaiah Warns Ahab

18 Jehoshaphat [a]had riches and honor in abundance; and by marriage he [b]allied himself with [c]Ahab. 2 [d]After some years he went down to *visit* Ahab in

* **17:4** Septuagint reads *LORD God.*

father of another prophet, Jehu, who once challenged King Jehoshaphat of Judah (19:2; 20:34).

17:2 ***cities of Ephraim.*** Ephraim is a synonym for Israel. The cities referred to here are mentioned also in 15:8.

17:13–18 ***men of war, mighty men of valor.*** Jehoshaphat's men were grouped into three divisions of Judeans with a total number of 780,000 and two divisions of Benjamites numbering 380,000. The Hebrew word for thousand can mean family, or clan, (Judg. 6:15; 1 Sam. 10:19; Mic. 5:2). In that case, the 780,000 would be 780 companies, and the 380,000 would be 380 companies, and the total warriors would be nearer to 78,000 and 38,000.

18:2 ***Ramoth Gilead.*** This important city was some 35 miles east of Beth Shan, and was controlled by the

16:8 [e] 2 Chr. 14:9 [f] 2 Chr. 12:3 [g] 2 Chr. 13:16, 18
16:9 [h] Zech. 4:10 [i] 1 Sam. 13:13 [j] 1 Kin. 15:32 **16:10** [k] Jer. 20:2 **16:11** [l] 1 Kin. 15:23, 24 **16:12** [m] [Jer. 17:5]
16:13 [n] 1 Kin. 15:24 **16:14** [o] John 19:39, 40 [p] 2 Chr. 21:19 **17:1** [a] 1 Kin. 15:24 **17:2** [b] 2 Chr. 11:5 [c] 2 Chr. 15:8 **17:4** [d] 1 Kin. 12:28 **17:5** [e] 1 Kin. 10:25 [f] 2 Chr. 18:1
17:6 [g] 1 Kin. 22:43 **17:7** [h] 2 Chr. 15:3; 35:3 **17:9** [i] Neh. 8:3, 7 **17:10** [j] 2 Chr. 14:14 **17:11** [k] 2 Chr. 9:14; 26:8
17:16 [l] Judg. 5:2, 9 **17:19** [m] 2 Chr. 17:2 **18:1** [a] 2 Chr. 17:5 [b] 2 Kin. 8:18 [c] 1 Kin. 22:40 **18:2** [d] 1 Kin. 22:2

Samaria; and Ahab killed sheep and oxen in abundance for him and the people who were with him, and persuaded him to go up *with him* to Ramoth Gilead. 3So Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me *against* Ramoth Gilead?"

And he answered him, "I *am* as you *are*, and my people as your people; *we will be* with you in the war."

4Also Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, [e]"Please inquire for the word of the LORD today."

5Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?"

So they said, "Go up, for God will deliver it into the king's hand."

6But Jehoshaphat said, "*Is there* not still a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of [f]Him?"*

7So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "*There is* still one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he never prophesies good concerning me, but always evil. He *is* Micaiah the son of Imla."

And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say such things!"

8Then the king of Israel called one *of his* officers and said, "Bring Micaiah the son of Imla quickly!"

9The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, clothed in *their* robes, sat each on his throne; and they sat at a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. 10Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made [g]horns of iron for himself; and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.'"

11And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver *it* into the king's hand."

12Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Therefore please let your word be like *the word of* one of them, and speak encouragement."

13And Micaiah said, "*As* the LORD lives, [h]whatever my God says, that I will speak."

14Then he came to the king; and the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?"

And he said, "Go and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand!"

15So the king said to him, "How many times shall I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"

16Then he said, "I saw all Israel [i]scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no [j]shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.'"

17And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

18Then *Micaiah* said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His [k]throne, and all the host of heaven standing on His right hand and His left. 19And the LORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab king of Israel to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. 20Then a [l]spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' 21So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And *the* LORD said, 'You shall persuade *him* and also prevail; go out and do so.' 22Therefore look! [m]The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you."

23Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and [n]struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?"

24And Micaiah said, "Indeed you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide!"

* **18:6** Or *him*

Arameans. It was also one of the Israelite cities of refuge (Josh. 20:8; 1 Chr. 6:80).

18:5 ***prophets.*** These prophets were probably prophets of Baal or Ashera (1 Kin. 18:19), the Canaanite gods worshiped by Ahab's wife Jezebel.

18:11 ***prophesied.*** The true prophet's words come directly from God, and they show God's thoughts, and sometimes His plans. These false prophets were speaking authoritatively, probably accompanied with such ravings and demonstrations as would show their power and ability to see the future (1 Kin. 18:26–29).

18:15 ***nothing but the truth.*** Ahab knew from experience that his prophets told him what they thought he wanted to hear, not the truth. Because their prophecies agreed with Micaiah's he knew that Micaiah must have been mocking when he prophesied success.

18:22 ***lying spirit.*** The spirits who stood before the Lord were both angels and demons, none of whom could act without God's permission. God allowed this spirit to work in the mouths of the false prophets to accomplish His own purposes of judgment (1 Chr. 21:1; Job 1).

18:4 [e] 2 Sam. 2:1 **18:6** [f] 2 Kin. 3:11 **18:10** [g] Zech. 1:18–21 **18:13** [h] Num. 22:18–20, 35; 23:12, 26 **18:16** [i] [Jer. 23:1–8; 31:10] [j] Matt. 9:36 **18:18** [k] Is. 6:1–5 **18:20** [l] Job 1:6 **18:22** [m] Ezek. 14:9 **18:23** [n] Jer. 20:2

25 Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son;
26 and say, 'Thus says the king: [o]"Put this *fellow* in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I return in peace."' "
27 But Micaiah said, "If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by [p]me." And he said, "Take heed, all you people!"

Ahab Dies in Battle

28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead.
29 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will [q]disguise myself and go into battle; but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into battle.
30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots who *were* with him, saying, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel."
31 So it was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, "It *is* the king of Israel!" Therefore they surrounded him to attack; but Jehoshaphat [r]cried out, and the LORD helped him, and God diverted them from him.
32 For so it was, when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him.
33 Now a certain man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded."
34 The battle increased that day, and the king of Israel propped *himself* up in *his* chariot facing the Syrians until evening; and about the time of sunset he died.

19 Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned safely to his house in Jerusalem.
2 And Jehu the son of Hanani [a]the seer went out to meet him, and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and [b]love those who hate the LORD? Therefore the [c]wrath of the LORD *is* upon you.
3 Nevertheless [d]good things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have [e]prepared your heart to seek God."

The Reforms of Jehoshaphat

4 So Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem; and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the mountains of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD God of their [f]fathers.
5 Then he set [g]judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city,
6 and said to the judges, "Take heed to what you are doing, for [h]you do not judge for man but for the LORD, [i]who *is* with you in the judgment.
7 Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do *it,* for [j]*there is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, no [k]partiality, nor taking of bribes."
8 Moreover in Jerusalem, for the judgment of the LORD and for controversies, Jehoshaphat [l]appointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the chief fathers of Israel, when they returned to Jerusalem.* 9 And he commanded them, saying, "Thus you shall act [m]in the fear of the LORD, faithfully and with a loyal heart:
10 [n]Whatever case comes to you from your brethren who dwell in their cities, whether of bloodshed or offenses against law or commandment, against statutes or ordinances, you shall warn them, lest they trespass against the LORD and [o]wrath come upon [p]you and your brethren. Do this, and you will not be guilty.
11 And take notice: [q]Amariah the chief priest *is* over you [r]in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters; also the Levites *will be* officials before you. Behave courageously, and the LORD will be [s]with the good."

Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir Defeated

20 It happened after this *that* the people of [a]Moab with the people of [b]Ammon, and *others* with them besides the [c]Ammonites,* came to battle against Jehoshaphat.
2 Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the

* **19:8** Septuagint and Vulgate read *for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* * **20:1** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Meunites* (compare 26:7).

18:33 *at random.* From the human perspective, this was a chance shot. From God's perspective, chance had no part in it. Ahab's disguise could not foil God's plan.

19:3 Repentance—Repentance is never by word only. It is always followed by actions which show that the attitude of repentance is really present. Part of repentance is acknowledging that God is right and that He knows how we should live. It was the change in Jehoshaphat's actions that proved his change of heart.

19:4 *mountains of Ephraim.* The mountains of Ephraim became the northern border of Judah after the division into two kingdoms. This is another way of saying that the whole country was brought back to the Lord.

18:26 [o] 2 Chr. 16:10 **18:27** [p] Deut. 18:22 **18:29** [q] 2 Chr. 35:22 **18:31** [r] 2 Chr. 13:14, 15 **19:2** [a] 1 Kin. 16:1 [b] Ps. 139:21 [c] 2 Chr. 32:25 **19:3** [d] 2 Chr. 17:4, 6 [e] 2 Chr. 30:19 **19:4** [f] 2 Chr. 15:8–13 **19:5** [g] [Deut. 16:18–20] **19:6** [h] [Deut. 1:17] [i] Ps. 82:1 **19:7** [j] [Deut. 32:4] [k] [Deut. 10:17, 18] **19:8** [l] 2 Chr. 17:8 **19:9** [m] [2 Sam. 23:3] **19:10** [n] Deut. 17:8 [o] Num. 16:46 [p] [Ezek. 3:18] **19:11** [q] Ezra 7:3 [r] 1 Chr. 26:30 [s] [2 Chr. 15:2; 20:17] **20:1** [a] 1 Chr. 18:2 [b] 1 Chr. 19:15 [c] 2 Chr. 26:7

sea, from Syria;* and they are [d]in Hazazon Tamar" (which *is* [e]En Gedi). 3And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to [f]seek the LORD, and [g]proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. 4So Judah gathered together to ask [h]*help* from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

5Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, 6and said: "O LORD God of our fathers, *are* You not [i]God in heaven, and [j]do You *not* rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and [k]in Your hand *is there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? 7*Are* You not [l]our God, *who* [m]drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham [n]Your friend forever? 8And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, 9[o]'If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your [p]name *is* in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.' 10And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir—whom You [q]would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but [r]they turned from them and did not destroy them— 11here they are, rewarding us [s]by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. 12O our God, will You not [t]judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but [u]our eyes *are* upon You."

13Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD.

14Then [v]the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. 15And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: [w]'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, [x]for the battle *is* not yours, but God's. 16Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. 17[y]You will not *need* to fight in this *battle*. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, [z]for the LORD *is* with you."

18And Jehoshaphat [a]bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. 19Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.

20So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: [b]Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." 21And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, [c]and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying:

[d]"Praise the LORD,
[e]For His mercy *endures* forever."*

22Now when they began to sing and to praise, [f]the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. 23For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy *them*. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, [g]they helped to destroy one another.

24So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there *were* their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.

25When Jehoshaphat and his people

*__20:2__ Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts and Old Latin read *Edom*. *__20:21__ Compare Psalm 106:1

20:14 *Jahaziel.* As a member of the Asaph division of the Levites (1 Chr. 6:39; 15:17–19; 16:7) Jahaziel was probably a musician. The spiritual work of the musicians was closely linked with prophecy (1 Chr. 25:1).

20:19 *Kohathites . . . Korahites.* The Kohathites were members of the Levitical division of Heman the singer (1 Chr. 6:33). The Korahites were a subdivision of the Kohathites (1 Chr. 6:37,39) who were employed as gatekeepers to the temple.

20:21 Thankfulness—More necessary than guns for soldiers, more important than strategy, is the giving of thanks to God. Judah faced a literal, physical battle involving great odds. They sent their singers out first, singing praises to God and thanking Him for His everlasting lovingkindness. Is this the way we face battles in our lives? Do we first thank God for who He is, what He has done, and for His faithfulness to us?

__20:2__ [d] Gen. 14:7 [e] Josh. 15:62 __20:3__ [f] 2 Chr. 19:3 [g] Ezra 8:21 __20:4__ [h] 2 Chr. 14:11 __20:6__ [i] Deut. 4:39 [j] Dan. 4:17, 25, 32 [k] 1 Chr. 29:12 __20:7__ [l] Ex. 6:7 [m] Ps. 44:2 [n] Is. 41:8 __20:9__ [o] 2 Chr. 6:28–30 [p] 2 Chr. 6:20 __20:10__ [q] Deut. 2:4, 9, 19 [r] Num. 20:21 __20:11__ [s] Ps. 83:1–18 __20:12__ [t] Judg. 11:27 [u] Ps. 25:15; 121:1, 2; 123:1, 2; 141:8 __20:14__ [v] 2 Chr. 15:1; 24:20 __20:15__ [w] [Deut. 1:29, 30; 31:6, 8] [x] 1 Sam. 17:47 __20:17__ [y] Ex. 14:13, 14 [z] Num. 14:9 __20:18__ [a] Ex. 4:31 __20:20__ [b] Is. 7:9 __20:21__ [c] 1 Chr. 16:29 [d] Ps. 106:1; 136:1 [e] 2 Chr. 5:13 __20:22__ [f] Judg. 7:22 __20:23__ [g] 1 Sam. 14:20

came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies,* and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much. 26And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah* until this day. 27Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had [h]made them rejoice over their enemies. 28So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the LORD. 29And [i]the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. 30Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his [j]God gave him rest all around.

The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign

31[k]So Jehoshaphat was king over Judah. *He was* thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. 32And he walked in the way of his father [l]Asa, and did not turn aside from it, doing *what was* right in the sight of the LORD. 33Nevertheless [m]the high places were not taken away, for as yet the people had not [n]directed their hearts to the God of their fathers.

34Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, indeed they *are* written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, [o]which *is* mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

35After this [p]Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, [q]who acted very [r]wickedly. 36And he allied himself with him [s]to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion Geber. 37But Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works." [t]Then the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to go [u]to Tarshish.

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

21 And [a]Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Jehoram his son reigned in his place. 2He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azaryahu, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. 3Their father gave them great gifts of silver and gold and precious things, with fortified cities in Judah; but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he *was* the firstborn.

4Now when Jehoram was established over the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself and killed all his brothers with the sword, and also *others* of the princes of Israel.

5[b]Jehoram *was* thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 6And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for he had the daughter of [c]Ahab as a wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. 7Yet the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the [d]covenant that He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and to his [e]sons forever.

8[f]In his days Edom revolted against Judah's authority, and made a king over themselves. 9So Jehoram went out with his officers, and all his chariots with him. And he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots. 10Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah's authority to this day. At that time Libnah revolted against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers. 11Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to [g]commit harlotry, and led Judah astray.

* **20:25** A few Hebrew manuscripts, Old Latin, and Vulgate read *garments;* Septuagint reads *armor.*
* **20:26** Literally *Blessing*

20:26 ***Valley of Berachah.*** The Judeans renamed Ziz "the Valley of Berachah," meaning "blessing," to remind themselves of God's goodness.

20:34 ***Jehu.*** The son of the prophet Hanani, Jehu was a prophet himself (19:2). He is mentioned in 1 Kings in connection with the kings of Israel, and was therefore a good source of information about both the northern and southern kingdoms.

20:35 ***Ahaziah.*** Ahaziah was the son of Ahab. He succeeded his father and reigned for two years (1 Kin. 22:51). Ahaziah was injured in a fall and turned to the Philistine gods rather than to the Lord for healing (2 Kin. 1:2).

21:11 ***commit harlotry.*** Israel's relationship with God was like a marriage relationship. Worship of other gods was a violation in the same way that prostitution violates a marriage. It not only says that the true husband is not worthy of respect, it is a rejection of the whole idea of the faithfulness and care of the true husband.

20:27 [h] Neh. 12:43 **20:29** [i] 2 Chr. 14:14; 17:10 **20:30** [j] Job 34:29 **20:31** [k] [1 Kin. 22:41–43] **20:32** [l] 2 Chr. 14:2 **20:33** [m] 2 Chr. 15:17; 17:6 [n] 2 Chr. 12:14; 19:3 **20:34** [o] 1 Kin. 16:1, 7 **20:35** [p] 2 Chr. 18:1 [q] 1 Kin. 22:48–53 [r] [2 Chr. 19:2] **20:36** [s] 1 Kin. 9:26; 10:22 **20:37** [t] 1 Kin. 22:48 [u] 2 Chr. 9:21 **21:1** [a] 1 Kin. 22:50 **21:5** [b] 2 Kin. 8:17–22 **21:6** [c] 2 Chr. 18:1 **21:7** [d] 2 Sam. 7:8–17 [e] 1 Kin. 11:36 **21:8** [f] 2 Kin. 8:20; 14:7, 10 **21:11** [g] [Lev. 20:5]

12 And a letter came to him from Elijah
the prophet, saying,

Thus says the LORD God of your father
David:
Because you have not walked in the
ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in
the ways of Asa king of Judah, 13 but
have walked in the way of the kings of
Israel, and have [h]made Judah and the
inhabitants of Jerusalem to [i]play the
harlot like the [j]harlotry of the house
of Ahab, and also have [k]killed your
brothers, those of your father's house-
hold, *who were* better than yourself,
14 behold, the LORD will strike your
people with a serious affliction—your
children, your wives, and all your pos-
sessions; 15 and you *will become* very
sick with a [l]disease of your intestines,
until your intestines come out by rea-
son of the sickness, day by day.

16 Moreover the [m]LORD [n]stirred up
against Jehoram the spirit of the Philis-
tines and the [o]Arabians who *were* near the
Ethiopians. 17 And they came up into Judah
and invaded it, and carried away all the
possessions that were found in the king's
house, and also [p]his sons and his wives, so
that there was not a son left to him except
Jehoahaz,* the youngest of his sons.

18 After all this the LORD struck him [q]in
his intestines with an incurable disease.
19 Then it happened in the course of time,
after the end of two years, that his intes-
tines came out because of his sickness;
so he died in severe pain. And his people
made no burning for him, like [r]the burning
for his fathers.

20 He was thirty-two years old when he
became king. He reigned in Jerusalem
eight years and, to no one's sorrow, de-
parted. However they buried him in the
City of David, but not in the tombs of the
kings.

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

22 Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem
made [a]Ahaziah his youngest son
king in his place, for the raiders who
came with the [b]Arabians into the camp
had killed all the [c]older *sons*. So Ahazi-
ah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah,
reigned. 2 Ahaziah *was* forty-two* years
old when he became king, and he reigned
one year in Jerusalem. His mother's
name *was* [d]Athaliah the granddaughter
of Omri. 3 He also walked in the ways of
the house of Ahab, for his mother advised
him to do wickedly. 4 Therefore he did evil
in the sight of the LORD, like the house of
Ahab; for they were his counselors after
the death of his father, to his destruction.
5 He also followed their advice, and went
with Jehoram* the son of Ahab king of Is-
rael to war against Hazael king of Syria at
Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded
Joram. 6 [e]Then he returned to Jezreel to
recover from the wounds which he had re-
ceived at Ramah, when he fought against
Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah* the
son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down
to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel,
because he was sick.

7 His going to Joram [f]was God's occa-
sion for Ahaziah's downfall; for when he
arrived, [g]he went out with Jehoram against
Jehu the son of Nimshi, [h]whom the LORD
had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.
8 And it happened, when Jehu was [i]execut-
ing judgment on the house of Ahab, and
[j]found the princes of Judah and the sons of
Ahaziah's brothers who served Ahaziah,
that he killed them. 9 [k]Then he searched for
Ahaziah; and they caught him (he was hid-
ing in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu.
When they had killed him, they buried
him, "because," they said, "he is the son of
[l]Jehoshaphat, who [m]sought the LORD with
all his heart."

So the house of Ahaziah had no one to
assume power over the kingdom.

* **21:17** Elsewhere called *Ahaziah* (compare 2 Chronicles 22:1) * **22:2** Or *twenty-two* (compare 2 Kings 8:26) * **22:5** Also spelled *Joram* (compare verses 5 and 7; 2 Kings 8:28; and elsewhere) * **22:6** Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and 2 Kings 8:29 read *Ahaziah*.

21:12 ***Elijah the prophet.*** Though 1 and 2 Kings pay considerable attention to Elijah (1 Kin. 17:1—2 Kin. 2:18), the books of Chronicles mention him only here. He had been taken up into heaven after King Ahaziah's death (2 Kin. 1:17; 2:1).

21:20 ***tombs of the kings.*** These tombs were a royal cemetery in Jerusalem where most of the kings of David's dynasty were buried. (Asa was an exception, 16:14.)

22:1 ***Ahaziah.*** Ahaziah of Judah was the namesake of his uncle from Israel. His father Jehoram had married a sister of Ahab's son Ahaziah (1 Kin. 22:40; 2 Kin. 8:18).

22:5 ***Jehoram the son of Ahab.*** Jehoram succeeded his brother Ahaziah because Ahaziah had no son of his own (2 Kin. 1:17). He is also called Joram, a short form of Jehoram, to distinguish him from his brother-in-law Jehoram who was king of Judah. ***Hazael.*** Hazael was the king of Damascus who came to power after assassinating Ben-Hadad (2 Kin. 8:7–15). Elijah had prophesied that this would come about and had even commissioned Elisha to anoint Hazael to his new position (1 Kin. 19:15). Elisha wept after he had anointed Hazael, for he knew that Hazael would cruelly kill many Israelites. ***Ramoth-Gilead.*** Ahab and Jehoshaphat had tried to recover this city from Aramean domination 12 years earlier (18:3).

21:13 [h] 2 Chr. 21:11 [i] Deut. 31:16 [j] 2 Kin. 9:22 [k] 2 Chr. 21:4 **21:15** [l] 2 Chr. 21:18, 19 **21:16** [m] 2 Chr. 33:11 [n] 1 Kin. 11:14, 23 [o] 2 Chr. 17:11 **21:17** [p] 2 Chr. 24:7 **21:18** [q] 2 Chr. 13:20; 21:15 **21:19** [r] 2 Chr. 16:14 **22:1** [a] 2 Chr. 21:17; 22:6 [b] 2 Chr. 21:16 [c] 2 Chr. 21:17 **22:2** [d] 2 Chr. 21:6 **22:6** [e] 2 Kin. 9:15 **22:7** [f] 2 Chr. 10:15 [g] 2 Kin. 9:21–24 [h] 2 Kin. 9:6, 7 **22:8** [i] 2 Kin. 9:22–24 [j] 2 Kin. 10:10–14 **22:9** [k] [2 Kin. 9:27] [l] 1 Kin. 15:24 [m] 2 Chr. 17:4; 20:3, 4

Athaliah Reigns in Judah

10 [n]Now when Athaliah the mother of
Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she
arose and destroyed all the royal heirs of
the house of Judah. 11But Jehoshabeath,*
the daughter of the king, took [o]Joash the
son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from
among the king's sons who were being
murdered, and put him and his nurse in a
bedroom. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter
of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the
priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah),
hid him from Athaliah so that she did not
kill him. 12And he was hidden with them in
the house of God for six years, while Atha-
liah reigned over the land.

Joash Crowned King of Judah

23 In [a]the seventh year [b]Jehoiada
strengthened himself, *and made a*
covenant with the captains of hundreds:
Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the
son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of
[c]Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and
Elishaphat the son of Zichri. 2And they
went throughout Judah and gathered the
Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the
[d]chief fathers of Israel, and they came to
Jerusalem.

3Then all the assembly made a covenant
with the king in the house of God. And he
said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall
reign, as the LORD has [e]said of the sons of
David. 4This *is* what you shall do: One-
third of you [f]entering on the Sabbath, of
the priests and the Levites, *shall be* keep-
ing watch over the doors; 5one-third *shall*
be at the king's house; and one-third at
the Gate of the Foundation. All the people *shall*
be in the courts of the house of the LORD.
6But let no one come into the house of the
LORD except the priests and [g]those of
the Levites who serve. They may go in, for they
are holy; but all the people shall keep the
watch of the LORD. 7And the Levites shall
surround the king on all sides, every man
with his weapons in his hand; and whoev-
er comes into the house, let him be put to
death. You are to be with the king when he
comes in and when he goes out."

8So the Levites and all Judah did ac-
cording to all that Jehoiada the priest
commanded. And each man took his men
who were to be on duty on the Sabbath,
with those who were going *off duty* on the
Sabbath; for Jehoiada the priest had not
dismissed [h]the divisions. 9And Jehoiada
the priest gave to the captains of hundreds
the spears and the large and small [i]shields
which *had belonged* to King David, that
were in the temple of God. 10Then he set
all the people, every man with his weap-
on in his hand, from the right side of the
temple to the left side of the temple, along
by the altar and by the temple, all around
the king. 11And they brought out the king's
son, put the crown on him, [j]*gave him* the
Testimony,* and made him king. Then
Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and
said, "*Long* live the king!"

Death of Athaliah

12Now when [k]Athaliah heard the noise
of the people running and praising the
king, she came to the people *in* the temple
of the LORD. 13*When* she looked, there was
the king standing by his pillar at the en-
trance; and the leaders and the trumpeters
were by the king. All the people of the land
were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, also
the singers with musical instruments, and
[l]those who led in praise. So Athaliah tore
her clothes and said, [m]"Treason! Treason!"

14And Jehoiada the priest brought out
the captains of hundreds who were set
over the army, and said to them, "Take
her outside under guard, and slay with the
sword whoever follows her." For the priest
had said, "Do not kill her in the house of
the LORD."

15So they seized her; and she went by
way of the entrance [n]of the Horse Gate *into*
the king's house, and they killed her there.

16Then Jehoiada made a [o]covenant be-
tween himself, the people, and the king, that
they should be the LORD's people. 17And all
the people went to the temple* of Baal, and
tore it down. They broke in pieces its altars
and images, and [p]killed Mattan the priest
of Baal before the altars. 18Also Jehoiada

* **22:11** Spelled *Jehosheba* in 2 Kings 11:2
* **23:11** That is, the Law (compare Exodus 25:16, 21; 31:18) * **23:17** Literally *house*

22:10 ***the royal heirs.*** Most of the royal heirs that Athaliah murdered were her own grandchildren. She wanted to stamp out the Davidic dynasty and bring Judah back under Israelite control. Satan had been diligent in his attempts to thwart the plans of God, and because the Davidic line was directly linked to the Messiah, this would have been a strategic move. It is not unlike the murder of the baby boys by Herod at the time of Jesus' birth (Matt. 2:10–18).

23:3 Unity—Unity is only unity when we are "the same" on issues of the truth. The removal of Athaliah could not have occurred without the cooperation and teamwork of everyone. Knowing that they were doing God's will gave them great courage.

23:11 ***the Testimony.*** The Testimony was a copy of the law of Moses, part of which outlined the king's covenant privileges and duties (Deut. 17:18–20; 1 Chr. 29:19). ***anointed him.*** Anointing was a sign and seal of the king's appointment by God (1 Sam. 16:3; 1 Kin. 1:39).

22:10 *n* 2 Kin. 11:1–3 **22:11** *o* 2 Kin. 12:18 **23:1** *a* 2 Kin. 11:4 *b* 2 Kin. 12:2 *c* 1 Chr. 2:37, 38 **23:2** *d* Ezra 1:5 **23:3** *e* 2 Sam. 7:12 **23:4** *f* 1 Chr. 9:25 **23:6** *g* 1 Chr. 23:28–32 **23:8** *h* 1 Chr. 24:1–31 **23:9** *i* 2 Sam. 8:7 **23:11** *j* Deut. 17:18 **23:12** *k* 2 Chr. 22:10 **23:13** *l* 1 Chr. 25:6–8 *m* 2 Kin. 9:23 **23:15** *n* Neh. 3:28 **23:16** *o* Josh. 24:24, 25 **23:17** *p* Deut. 13:6–9

appointed the oversight of the house of the LORD to the hand of the priests, the Levites, whom David had [q]assigned in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as *it is* written in the [r]Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, *as it was established* by David. 19And he set the [s]gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD, so that no one *who was* in any way unclean should enter.

20[t]Then he took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the house of the LORD; and they went through the Upper Gate to the king's house, and set the king on the throne of the kingdom. 21So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

Joash Repairs the Temple

24 Joash [a]*was* seven years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Zibiah of Beersheba. 2Joash [b]did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. 3And Jehoiada took two wives for him, and he had sons and daughters.

4Now it happened after this *that* Joash set his heart on repairing the house of the LORD. 5Then he gathered the priests and the Levites, and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah, and [c]gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that you do it quickly."

However the Levites did not do it quickly. 6[d]So the king called Jehoiada the chief *priest*, and said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and from Jerusalem the collection, *according to the commandment* of [e]Moses the servant of the LORD and of the assembly of Israel, for the [f]tabernacle of witness?" 7For [g]the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also presented all the [h]dedicated things of the house of the LORD to the Baals.

8Then at the king's command [i]they made a chest, and set it outside at the gate of the house of the LORD. 9And they made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the LORD [j]the collection *that* Moses the servant of God *had imposed* on Israel in the wilderness. 10Then all the leaders and all the people rejoiced, brought their contributions, and put *them* into the chest until all had given. 11So it was, at that time, when the chest was brought to the king's official by the hand of the Levites, and [k]when they saw that *there was* much money, that the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it and returned it to its place. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who did the work of the service of the house of the LORD; and they hired masons and carpenters to [l]repair the house of the LORD, and also those who worked in iron and bronze to restore the house of the LORD. 13So the workmen labored, and the work was completed by them; they restored the house of God to its original condition and reinforced it. 14When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada; [m]they made from it articles for the house of the LORD, articles for serving and offering, spoons and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

Apostasy of Joash

15But Jehoiada grew old and was full of days, and he died; *he was* one hundred and thirty years old when he died. 16And they buried him in the City of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and His house.

17Now after the death of Jehoiada the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them. 18Therefore they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served [n]wooden images and idols; and [o]wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass. 19Yet He [p]sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the LORD; and they testified against them, but they would not listen.

20Then the Spirit of God came upon

24:7 ***dedicated things.*** The dedicated things included gold, silver, and other valuables collected as tribute from defeated enemies and presented to God as spoils of war, acknowledging that the victory was His and for His purposes (2 Sam. 8:10–11).

24:14 ***all the days of Jehoiada.*** As long as Jehoiada remained alive, Judah enjoyed a revival of the true worship of God.

24:20–21 ***Zechariah the son of Jehoiada.*** This priest is not the prophet of the same name who wrote the Book of Zechariah, nor is he the Zechariah mentioned by Jesus (Matt. 23:35). Zechariah, whose father rescued the young Joash, may even have been raised like a brother to King Joash. The "Zechariah son of Berechiah," that Jesus refers to was probably the prophet who wrote the Book of Zechariah (Zech. 1:7), although the reference to his death is found only in the Gospels.

23:18 [q] 1 Chr. 23:6, 30, 31; 24:1 [r] Num. 28:2
23:19 [s] 1 Chr. 26:1–19 **23:20** [t] 2 Kin. 11:19 **24:1** [a] 2 Kin. 11:21; 12:1–15 **24:2** [b] 2 Chr. 26:4, 5 **24:5** [c] 2 Kin. 12:4 **24:6** [d] 2 Kin. 12:7 [e] Ex. 30:12–16 [f] Num. 1:50
24:7 [g] 2 Chr. 21:17 [h] 2 Kin. 12:4 **24:8** [i] 2 Kin. 12:9
24:9 [j] 2 Chr. 24:6 **24:11** [k] 2 Kin. 12:10 **24:12** [l] 2 Chr. 30:12 **24:14** [m] 2 Kin. 12:13 **24:18** [n] 1 Kin. 14:23 [o] [Ex. 34:12–14] **24:19** [p] 2 Chr. 36:15, 16

[q]Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God: [r]'Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper? [s]Because you have forsaken the LORD, He also has forsaken you.'" 21So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they [t]stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the LORD. 22Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but killed his son; and as he died, he said, "The LORD look on *it*, and [u]repay!"

Death of Joash

23So it happened in the spring of the year *that* [v]the army of Syria came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the leaders of the people from among the people, and sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus. 24For the army of the Syrians [w]came with a small company of men; but the LORD [x]delivered a very great army into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they [y]executed judgment against Joash. 25And when they had withdrawn from him (for they left him severely wounded), [z]his own servants conspired against him because of the blood of the sons* of Jehoiada the priest, and killed him on his bed. So he died. And they buried him in the City of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings.

26These are the ones who conspired against him: Zabad* the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith* the Moabitess. 27Now *concerning* his sons, and [a]the many oracles about him, and the repairing of the house of God, indeed they *are* written in the annals of the book of the kings. [b]Then Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

25 Amaziah [a]*was* twenty-five years old *when* he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. 2And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, [b]but not with a loyal heart.

3[c]Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established for him, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king. 4However he did not execute their children, but *did* as *it is* written in the Law in the Book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, [d]"The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall die for his own sin."*

The War Against Edom

5Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together and set over them captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, according to *their* fathers' houses, throughout all Judah and Benjamin; and he numbered them [e]from twenty years old and above, and found them to be three hundred thousand choice *men, able* to go to war, who could handle spear and shield. 6He also hired one hundred thousand mighty men of valor from Israel for one hundred talents of silver. 7But a [f]man of God came to him, saying, "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD *is* not with Israel—*not with* any of the children of Ephraim. 8But if you go, be gone! Be strong in battle! *Even so,* God shall make you fall before the enemy; for God has [g]power to help and to overthrow."

9Then Amaziah said to the man of God, "But what *shall we* do about the hundred talents which I have given to the troops of Israel?"

And the man of God answered, [h]"The LORD is able to give you much more than this." 10So Amaziah discharged the troops that had come to him from Ephraim, to go back home. Therefore their anger was greatly aroused against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.

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* **24:25** Septuagint and Vulgate read *son* (compare verses 20–22). * **24:26** Or *Jozachar* (compare 2 Kings 12:21) • Or *Shomer* (compare 2 Kings 12:21) * **25:4** Deuteronomy 24:16

24:22 Martyrs—Zechariah is one of the pre-Christian martyrs who gave his life for his faith in God. Some of these faithful ones are listed in Hebrews 11; some are known only to God. Jesus predicted that those killed for their faith would actually increase in the last days (Matt. 10:21; 24:9) and during the coming great tribulation, the ranks of the martyrs will swell to unprecedented size (Rev. 7:14). The "offense" of martyrs is their relationship with God; their comfort is that God knows, and He keeps them faithful to the end (2 Tim. 4:8).

24:24 *execution judgment.* God arranged for Israel's defeat and Joash's death in fulfillment of Zechariah's dying cry for justice (v. 22). Judgment for evil does not always come so quickly, but it is just as inevitable, no matter how long it is delayed.

25:7 *do not let the army of Israel go with you.* As long as Israel was in rebellion against God, He would not bless any alliance with them. ***Ephraim.*** Ephraim was the dominant tribe in Israel, so the whole kingdom was sometimes referred to as Ephraim (Hos. 4:15–19).

24:20 [q] Matt. 23:35 [r] Num. 14:41 [s] [2 Chr. 15:2] **24:21** [t] [Neh. 9:26] **24:22** [u] [Gen. 9:5] **24:23** [v] 2 Kin. 12:17 **24:24** [w] Lev. 26:8; Is. 30:17 [x] Lev. 26:25 [y] 2 Chr. 22:8 **24:25** [z] 2 Kin. 12:20, 21 **24:27** [a] 2 Kin. 12:18 [b] 2 Kin. 12:21 **25:1** [a] 2 Kin. 14:1–6 **25:2** [b] 2 Chr. 25:14 **25:3** [c] 2 Kin. 14:5 **25:4** [d] Deut. 24:16 **25:5** [e] Num. 1:3 **25:7** [f] 2 Chr. 11:2 **25:8** [g] 2 Chr. 14:11; 20:6 **25:9** [h] [Deut. 8:18]

11 Then Amaziah strengthened himself,
and leading his people, he went to [i]the Val-
ley of Salt and killed ten thousand of the
people of Seir. 12 Also the children of Judah
took captive ten thousand alive, brought
them to the top of the rock, and cast them
down from the top of the rock, so that they
all were dashed in pieces.
13 But as for the soldiers of the army
which Amaziah had discharged, so that
they would not go with him to battle, they
raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to
Beth Horon, killed three thousand in them,
and took much spoil.
14 Now it was so, after Amaziah came
from the slaughter of the Edomites, that
[j]he brought the gods of the people of Seir,
set them up *to be* [k]his gods, and bowed
down before them and burned incense to
them. 15 Therefore the anger of the LORD
was aroused against Amaziah, and He sent
him a prophet who said to him, "Why have
you sought [l]the gods of the people, which
[m]could not rescue their own people from
your hand?"
16 So it was, as he talked with him, that
the king said to him, "Have we made you
the king's counselor? Cease! Why should
you be killed?"
Then the prophet ceased, and said, "I
know that God has [n]determined to destroy
you, because you have done this and have
not heeded my advice."

Israel Defeats Judah

17 Now [o]Amaziah king of Judah asked
advice and sent to Joash* the son of Jehoa-
haz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying,
"Come, let us face one another *in battle*."
18 And Joash king of Israel sent to Ama-
ziah king of Judah, saying, "The thistle
that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that
was in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daugh-
ter to my son as wife'; and a wild beast that
was in Lebanon passed by and trampled
the thistle. 19 Indeed you say that you have
defeated the Edomites, and your heart is
lifted up to [p]boast. Stay at home now; why
should you meddle with trouble, that you
should fall—you and Judah with you?"
20 But Amaziah would not heed, for [q]it
came from God, that He might give them
into the hand *of their enemies*, because
they [r]sought the gods of Edom. 21 So Joash
king of Israel went out; and he and Ama-
ziah king of Judah faced one another at
[s]Beth Shemesh, which *belongs* to Judah.
22 And Judah was defeated by Israel, and
every man fled to his tent. 23 Then Joash
the king of Israel captured Amaziah king
of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of [t]Je-
hoahaz, at Beth Shemesh; and he brought
him to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall
of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to
the Corner Gate—four hundred cubits.
24 And *he took* all the gold and silver, all
the articles that were found in the house of
God with [u]Obed-Edom, the treasures of the
king's house, and hostages, and returned
to Samaria.

Death of Amaziah

25 [v]Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Ju-
dah, lived fifteen years after the death of
Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel.
26 Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, from
first to last, indeed *are* they not written in
the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?
27 After the time that Amaziah turned away
from following the LORD, they made a con-
spiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he
fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to
Lachish and killed him there. 28 Then they
brought him on horses and buried him
with his fathers in the City of Judah.

Uzziah Reigns in Judah

26 Now all the people of Judah took Uz-
ziah,* who *was* sixteen years old, and
made him king instead of his father Ama-
ziah. 2 He built Elath* and restored it to Ju-
dah, after the king rested with his fathers.
3 Uzziah *was* sixteen years old when
he became king, and he reigned fifty-two
years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was
Jecholiah of Jerusalem. 4 And he did *what*

* **25:17** Spelled *Jehoash* in 2 Kings 14:8ff
* **26:1** Called *Azariah* in 2 Kings 14:21ff
* **26:2** Hebrew *Eloth*

25:11 ***Valley of Salt.*** This valley was probably in the desert south of the Dead Sea. ***people of Seir.*** These people were Edomites, descendants of Esau.
25:18 ***thistle . . . cedar.*** The thistle represents Amaziah, and the cedar, Joash. It was arrogant for the weak, insignificant Amaziah to suppose that he could defeat Joash. ***wild beast.*** The wild beast that tramples the thistle represents the war that Amaziah was so eager to pursue.
25:19 Vanity—Those who reject God's counsel in favor of their own way are taking counsel against Him; their devisings are in vain and will come to nothing (Ps. 2:12). Refusing God's counsel, though seeking counsel from others, Amaziah decided to challenge the king of Israel to war (v. 17). It is hard to imagine how he thought he could succeed under such circumstances. One of the delusions that goes with rejection of God is a false confidence in ones' own powers of understanding.
25:27 ***Lachish.*** The fact that Amaziah reached the city of Lachish on the border with Philistia, some 25 miles from Jerusalem, suggests that he may have been seeking sanctuary among the Philistines.
26:2 ***Elath.*** On the eastern arm of the Red Sea, Elath was technically in Edomite territory (8:17), but it was regularly under Israel or Judah throughout Old Testament times (21:8–10).

25:11 [i] 2 Kin. 14:7 **25:14** [j] 2 Chr. 28:23 [k] [Ex. 20:3, 5] **25:15** [l] [Ps. 96:5] [m] 2 Chr. 25:11 **25:16** [n] [1 Sam. 2:25] **25:17** [o] 2 Kin. 14:8–14 **25:19** [p] 2 Chr. 26:16; 32:25 **25:20** [q] 1 Kin. 12:15 [r] 2 Chr. 25:14 **25:21** [s] Josh. 19:38 **25:23** [t] 2 Chr. 21:17; 22:1, 6 **25:24** [u] 1 Chr. 26:15 **25:25** [v] 2 Kin. 14:17–22

was [a]right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. 5[b]He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who [c]had understanding in the visions* of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him [d]prosper.

6Now he went out and [e]made war against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath, the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities *around* Ashdod and among the Philistines. 7God helped him against [f]the Philistines, against the Arabians who lived in Gur Baal, and against the Meunites. 8Also the Ammonites [g]brought tribute to Uzziah. His fame spread as far as the entrance of Egypt, for he became exceedingly strong.

9And Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the [h]Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the corner buttress of the wall; then he fortified them. 10Also he built towers in the desert. He dug many wells, for he had much livestock, both in the lowlands and in the plains; *he also had* farmers and vinedressers in the mountains and in Carmel, for he loved the soil.

11Moreover Uzziah had an army of fighting men who went out to war by companies, according to the number on their roll as prepared by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the officer, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains. 12The total number of chief officers* of the mighty men of valor *was* two thousand six hundred. 13And under their authority *was* an army of three hundred and seven thousand five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. 14Then Uzziah prepared for them, for the entire army, shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows, and slings *to cast* stones. 15And he made devices in Jerusalem, invented by [i]skillful men, to be on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and large stones. So his fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong.

The Penalty for Uzziah's Pride

16But [j]when he was strong his heart was [k]lifted up, to *his* destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God [l]by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense. 17So [m]Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the LORD—valiant men. 18And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, "*It* [n]*is* not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the [o]priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You *shall have* no honor from the LORD God."

19Then Uzziah became furious; and he *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense. And while he was angry with the priests, [p]leprosy broke out on his forehead, before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the incense altar. 20And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he *was* leprous; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also [q]hurried to get out, because the LORD had struck him.

21[r]King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He dwelt in an [s]isolated house, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. Then Jotham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

22Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, [t]the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz wrote. 23[u]So Uzziah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which *belonged* to the kings, for they said, "He is a leper." Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.

Jotham Reigns in Judah

27 Jotham [a]*was* twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jerushah* the daughter of Zadok. 2And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah had done (although he did not enter the temple of the LORD). But still [b]the people acted corruptly.

* **26:5** Several Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Arabic read *fear.*
* **26:12** Literally *chief fathers* * **27:1** Spelled *Jerusha* in 2 Kings 15:33

26:15 ***devices.*** This is one of the earliest references to catapults, which seem to have been defensive weapons, since their users were on the towers and in the corners.

26:19 ***leprosy.*** Leprosy was any kind of serious skin condition (Lev. 13:1—14:32). Today the term "leprosy" refers technically only to Hansen's disease. The law viewed leprosy as a breach of God's own holiness; it was a graphic symbol of defilement.

26:22 ***Isaiah.*** Isaiah the prophet witnessed the last years of Uzziah, but very little about Uzziah is included in the Book of Isaiah. The books of Kings and Chronicles frequently refer to further details written about the kings, but they were not part of the Scripture, so we know very little about these records.

27:1 ***sixteen years.*** Jotham's sixteen years began eleven years before Uzziah died. This suggests that Uzziah had leprosy for more than a decade before he died.

26:4 [a] 2 Chr. 24:2 **26:5** [b] 2 Chr. 24:2 [c] Dan. 1:17; 10:1 [d] [2 Chr. 15:2; 20:20; 31:21] **26:6** [e] Is. 14:29 **26:7** [f] 2 Chr. 21:16 **26:8** [g] 2 Chr. 17:11 **26:9** [h] Neh. 3:13, 19, 32 **26:15** [i] Ex. 39:3, 8 **26:16** [j] [Deut. 32:15] [k] 2 Chr. 25:19 [l] 2 Kin. 16:12, 13 **26:17** [m] 1 Chr. 6:10 **26:18** [n] [Num. 3:10; 16:39, 40; 18:7] [o] Ex. 30:7, 8 **26:19** [p] 2 Kin. 5:25–27 **26:20** [q] Esth. 6:12 **26:21** [r] 2 Kin. 15:5 [s] [Lev. 13:46] **26:22** [t] Is. 1:1 **26:23** [u] Is. 6:1 **27:1** [a] 2 Kin. 15:32–35 **27:2** [b] 2 Kin. 15:35

3He built the Upper Gate of the house of the LORD, and he built extensively on the wall of [c]Ophel. 4Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built fortresses and towers. 5He also fought with the king of the [d]Ammonites and defeated them. And the people of Ammon gave him in that year one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand kors of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. The people of Ammon paid this to him in the second and third years also. 6So Jotham became mighty, [e]because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God.

7Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars and his ways, indeed they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. 8He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. 9[f]So Jotham rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then [g]Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

28 Ahaz [a]*was* twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, as his father David *had done*. 2For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made [b]molded images for [c]the Baals. 3He burned incense in [d]the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and burned [e]his children in the [f]fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had [g]cast out before the children of Israel. 4And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

Syria and Israel Defeat Judah

5Therefore [h]the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria. They [i]defeated him, and carried away a great multitude of them as captives, and brought *them* to Damascus. Then he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who defeated him with a great slaughter. 6For [j]Pekah the son of Remaliah killed one hundred and twenty thousand in Judah in one day, all valiant men, [k]because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. 7Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, Azrikam the officer over the house, and Elkanah *who was* second to the king. 8And the children of Israel carried away captive of their [l]brethren two hundred thousand women, sons, and daughters; and they also took away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

Israel Returns the Captives

9But a [m]prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded; and he went out before the army that came to Samaria, and said to them: "Look, [n]because the LORD God of your fathers was angry with Judah, He has delivered them into your hand; but you have killed them in a rage *that* [o]reaches up to heaven. 10And now you propose to force the children of Judah and Jerusalem to be your [p]male and female slaves; *but are* you not also guilty before the LORD your God? 11Now hear me, therefore, and return the captives, whom you have taken captive from your brethren, [q]for the fierce wrath of the LORD *is* upon you."

12Then some of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against those who came from the war, 13and said to them, "You shall not bring the captives here, for we *already* have offended the LORD. You

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27:3 ***Upper Gate.*** This gate connected the temple and the royal palace. ***wall of Ophel.*** Ophel was the original Jebusite area of Jerusalem. Its walls dated back hundreds of years and must have required regular maintenance.

27:6 Truth—In the face of deep moral corruption among his people, Jotham set his course to act on God's truth. There is always blessing in obedience, even if the blessing is not the sort that the rest of the world can see.

28:1 ***did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD.*** During Ahaz's reign Isaiah and Micah prophesied in Judah, and Hosea prophesied in Israel.

28:3 ***Valley of the Son of Hinnom.*** This valley, also called the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, was just outside the western wall of Jerusalem. It was a dumping ground for all kinds of refuse, much of which was burned. The valley itself became a symbol of impurity. It was used as a site of pagan worship, including human sacrifice (2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 7:31–32; 19:2–6; 32:35). ***abominations of the nations.*** Worshipers of the Ammonite god Molech practiced human and child sacrifice (Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5; Deut. 12:31).

28:4 ***every green tree.*** Canaanite nature cults focused on evergreens, probably as symbols of perpetual fertility (see note at 14:3).

28:6 ***Pekah.*** Pekah, who assassinated Pekahiah son of Menahem so that he could become king of Israel (2 Kin. 15:23–27), reigned for 20 years. He was murdered in a plot headed by Hoshea, the last king of Israel. ***because they had forsaken the LORD God.*** Pekah was not offended by Judah's godlessness and did not himself initiate this purge. God used Pekah to carry out His judgment.

28:9 ***Oded.*** The prophet Oded is mentioned only here. ***killed them in a rage.*** God used the Israelite armies to carry out His judgment on Judah (v. 6), but He never intended for the Israelites to enjoy it.

28:13 ***our guilt is great.*** Within ten years the Assyrians would capture Samaria and deport all of the

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27:3 [c] 2 Chr. 33:14 **27:5** [d] 2 Chr. 26:8 **27:6** [e] 2 Chr. 26:5 **27:9** [f] 2 Kin. 15:38 [g] Is. 1:1 **28:1** [a] 2 Kin. 16:2–4 **28:2** [b] Ex. 34:17 [c] Judg. 2:11 **28:3** [d] Josh. 15:8 [e] 2 Kin. 23:10 [f] [Lev. 18:21] [g] [Lev. 18:24–30] **28:5** [h] [Is. 10:5] [i] Is. 7:1, 17 **28:6** [j] 2 Kin. 15:27 [k] [2 Chr. 29:8] **28:8** [l] Deut. 28:25, 41 **28:9** [m] 2 Chr. 25:15 [n] [Is. 10:5; 47:6] [o] Rev. 18:5 **28:10** [p] [Lev. 25:39, 42, 43, 46] **28:11** [q] James 2:13

intend to add to our sins and to our guilt; for our guilt is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel." 14So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the leaders and all the assembly. 15Then the men [r]who were designated by name rose up and took the captives, and from the spoil they clothed all who were naked among them, dressed them and gave them sandals, [s]gave them food and drink, and anointed them; and they let all the feeble ones ride on donkeys. So they brought them to their brethren at Jericho, [t]the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

Assyria Refuses to Help Judah

16[u]At the same time King Ahaz sent to the kings* of Assyria to help him. 17For again the [v]Edomites had come, attacked Judah, and carried away captives. 18[w]The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland and of the South of Judah, and had taken Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Sochoh with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they dwelt there. 19For the LORD brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of [x]Israel, for he had [y]encouraged moral decline in Judah and had been continually unfaithful to the LORD. 20Also [z]Tiglath-Pileser* king of Assyria came to him and distressed him, and did not assist him. 21For Ahaz took part *of the treasures* from the house of the LORD, from the house of the king, and from the leaders, and he gave *it* to the king of Assyria; but he did not help him.

Apostasy and Death of Ahaz

22Now in the time of his distress King Ahaz became increasingly unfaithful to the LORD. This *is that* King Ahaz. 23For [a]he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, saying, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, I will sacrifice to them [b]that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel. 24So Ahaz gathered the articles of the house of God, cut in pieces the articles of the house of God, [c]shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and made for himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem. 25And in every single city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

26[d]Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, indeed they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 27So Ahaz rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem; but they [e]did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah Reigns in Judah

29 Hezekiah [a]became king *when he was* twenty-five years old, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Abijah* the daughter of Zechariah. 2And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple

3In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he [b]opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. 4Then he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them in the East Square, 5and said to them: "Hear me, Levites! Now sanctify yourselves, [c]sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy *place.* 6For our fathers have trespassed and done evil in the eyes of

* **28:16** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *king* (compare verse 20). * **28:20** Hebrew *Tilgath-Pilneser* * **29:1** Spelled *Abi* in 2 Kings 18:2

Israelites, treating them far more cruelly than they were treating the Judeans. The Israelites brought this judgment on themselves not only by this incident, but by the whole course of the history of their unfaithfulness to God.

28:16 ***kings of Assyria.*** The kings of Assyria were Tiglath-Pileser III, Shalamaneser V, and Sargon II.

28:18 ***Beth Shemesh . . . Gimzo.*** All these places were near valleys that led up to central Judah from the surrounding plains. Control of them meant control of Judah itself. Because Ahaz understood this, he appealed to Assyria.

28:20 ***Tiglath-Pileser.*** Tiglath-Pileser brought the Mesopotamian influence over the countries of the eastern Mediterranean to its highest point. He undertook a campaign against Arpad in Syria and terrorized Menahem of Israel so much that Menahem paid him a huge bribe to be left alone (2 Kin. 15:19). Tiglath returned to the west again, and Ahaz scrambled for protection against Syria and Israel (2 Kin. 16:5–7; Is. 7:1–2). The Assyrians overran Damascus and replaced the assassinated Pekah of Israel with Hoshea (2 Kin. 15:30), but they did not assist Ahaz. The king of Judah's troubles with the Edomites, Philistines, Arameans, and even the Israelites (Is. 7:1) were over for the time being, but at great cost.

28:23 Unbelief—Looking to the gods of his enemies, foolishly believing that the gods had aided his enemies in their victory, Ahaz went farther from God into unbelief. Ahaz committed two grievous sins. He ascribed to another source what was God's doing, and he placed his faith in what was imagined, to bring success to himself. There is never a time when God is out of control. Even if things do not turn out the way we wish they would, we can be sure that if we keep our minds and attitudes in line with God's ways, we will eventually see these events from His perspective.

28:15 [r] 2 Chr. 28:12 [s] [Prov. 25:21, 22] [t] Deut. 34:3
28:16 [u] 2 Kin. 16:7 **28:17** [v] Obad. 10–14 **28:18** [w] Ezek. 16:27, 57 **28:19** [x] 2 Chr. 21:2 [y] Ex. 32:25 **28:20** [z] 1 Chr. 5:26 **28:23** [a] 2 Chr. 25:14 [b] Jer. 44:17, 18 **28:24** [c] 2 Chr. 29:3, 7 **28:26** [d] 2 Kin. 16:19, 20 **28:27** [e] 2 Chr. 21:20; 24:25 **29:1** [a] 2 Kin. 18:1 **29:3** [b] 2 Chr. 28:24; 29:7
29:5 [c] 2 Chr. 29:15, 34; 35:6

the LORD our God; they have forsaken Him, have [d]turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and turned *their* backs *on Him.* 7[e]They have also shut up the doors of the vestibule, put out the lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy *place* to the God of Israel. 8Therefore the [f]wrath of the LORD fell upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He has [g]given them up to trouble, to desolation, and to [h]jeering, as you see with your [i]eyes. 9For indeed, because of this [j]our fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, our daughters, and our wives *are* in captivity.

10"Now *it is* in my heart to make [k]a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us. 11My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has [l]chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister to Him and burn incense."

12Then these Levites arose: [m]Mahath the son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the [n]Kohathites; of the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; of the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah; 13of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; 14of the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel.

15And they gathered their brethren, [o]sanctified themselves, and went according to the commandment of the king, at the words of the LORD, [p]to cleanse the house of the LORD. 16Then the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse *it*, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temple of the LORD to the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took *it* out and carried *it* to the Brook [q]Kidron.

17Now they began to sanctify on the first *day* of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the LORD. So they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.

18Then they went in to King Hezekiah and said, "We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offerings with all its articles, and the table of the showbread with all its articles. 19Moreover all the articles which King Ahaz in his reign had [r]cast aside in his transgression we have prepared and sanctified; and there they *are,* before the altar of the LORD."

Hezekiah Restores Temple Worship

20Then King Hezekiah rose early, gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD. 21And they brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats for a [s]sin offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah. Then he commanded the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD. 22So they killed the bulls, and the priests received the blood and [t]sprinkled *it* on the altar. Likewise they killed the rams and sprinkled the blood on the altar. They also killed the lambs and sprinkled the blood on the altar. 23Then they brought out the male goats *for* the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they laid their [u]hands on them. 24And the priests killed them; and they presented their blood on the altar as a sin offering [v]to make an atonement for all Israel, for the king commanded *that* the burnt offering and the sin offering *be made* for all Israel.

25[w]And he stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with stringed instruments, and with harps, [x]according to the commandment of David, of [y]Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; [z]for thus *was* the commandment of the LORD by His prophets. 26The Levites stood with the instruments [a]of David, and the priests with [b]the trumpets. 27Then Hezekiah commanded *them* to offer the burnt offering on the altar. And when the burnt offering began, [c]the song of the LORD *also* began, with the trumpets and with the instruments of David king of Israel. 28So all the assembly worshiped, the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; all *this continued* until the burnt offering was finished. 29And when they had finished offering, [d]the king and all who were present with him bowed and worshiped. 30Moreover

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29:9 *in captivity.* Under the wicked leadership of Ahaz, many of the people of Judah had been taken captive by Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel (28:5–8).

29:12 *Kohathites . . . Merari . . . Gershonites.* Hezekiah summoned the leaders of the three major Levitical clans, two leaders from each clan.

29:21 *bulls . . . rams . . . lambs . . . goats.* The law required the sacrifice of these animals for atonement of sin in general (Lev. 1:3–13). On the other hand, the sacrifice of goats atoned for specific sins (Lev. 4:1—5:13). Here the priests offered seven of each kind to signify the wholeness of their repentance.

29:24 *all Israel.* The repetition of "all Israel" here suggests that Hezekiah meant to include all twelve tribes, including the northern kingdom (30:1–9).

29:30 *the words of David and of Asaph.* This refers to the psalms of David and Asaph (1 Chr. 6:39; 15:17; 16:5; 25:1), many of them in the Book of Psalms. The people of Judah used these psalms for community worship and private meditation.

29:6 [d] Ezek. 8:16 **29:7** [e] 2 Chr. 28:24 **29:8** [f] 2 Chr. 24:18 [g] 2 Chr. 28:5 [h] 1 Kin. 9:8 [i] Deut. 28:32 **29:9** [j] 2 Chr. 28:5–8, 17 **29:10** [k] 2 Chr. 15:12; 23:16 **29:11** [l] Num. 3:6; 8:14; 18:2, 6 **29:12** [m] 2 Chr. 31:13 [n] Num. 3:19, 20 **29:15** [o] 2 Chr. 29:5 [p] 1 Chr. 23:28 **29:16** [q] 2 Chr. 15:16; 30:14 **29:19** [r] 2 Chr. 28:24 **29:21** [s] Lev. 4:3–14 **29:22** [t] Lev. 8:14, 15, 19, 24 **29:23** [u] Lev. 4:15, 24; 8:14 **29:24** [v] Lev. 14:20 **29:25** [w] 1 Chr. 16:4; 25:6 [x] 2 Chr. 8:14 [y] 2 Sam. 24:11 [z] 2 Chr. 30:12 **29:26** [a] 1 Chr. 23:5 [b] 2 Chr. 5:12 **29:27** [c] 2 Chr. 23:18 **29:29** [d] 2 Chr. 20:18

King Hezekiah and the leaders commanded the Levites to sing praise to the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshiped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, "Now *that* you have consecrated yourselves to the LORD, come near, and bring sacrifices and [e]thank offerings into the house of the LORD." So the assembly brought in sacrifices and thank offerings, and as many as were of a [f]willing heart *brought* burnt offerings. 32 And the number of the burnt offerings which the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs; all these *were* for a burnt offering to the LORD. 33 The consecrated things *were* six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep. 34 But the priests were too few, so that they could not skin all the burnt offerings; therefore [g]their brethren the Levites helped them until the work was ended and until the *other* priests had sanctified themselves, [h]for the Levites were [i]more diligent in [j]sanctifying themselves than the priests. 35 Also the burnt offerings *were* in abundance, with [k]the fat of the peace offerings and *with* [l]the drink offerings for *every* burnt offering.

So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order. 36 Then Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced that God had prepared the people, since the events took place so suddenly.

Hezekiah Keeps the Passover

30 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel. 2 For the king and his leaders and all the assembly in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second [a]month. 3 For they could not keep it [b]at the regular time,* [c]because a sufficient number of priests had not consecrated themselves, nor had the people gathered together at Jerusalem. 4 And the matter pleased the king and all the assembly. 5 So they resolved to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem, since they had not done *it* for a long *time* in the *prescribed* manner.

6 Then the [d]runners went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the king and his leaders, and spoke according to the command of the king: "Children of Israel, [e]return to the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; then He will return to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of [f]the kings of [g]Assyria. 7 And do not be [h]like your fathers and your brethren, who trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, so that He [i]gave them up to [j]desolation, as you see. 8 Now do not be [k]stiff-necked, as your fathers *were, but* yield yourselves to the LORD; and enter His sanctuary, which He has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, [l]that the fierceness of His wrath may turn away from you. 9 For if you return to the LORD, your brethren and your children *will be treated* with [m]compassion by those who lead them captive, so that they may come back to this land; for the LORD your God *is* [n]gracious and merciful, and will not turn *His* face from you if you [o]return to Him."

10 So the runners passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun; but [p]they laughed at them and mocked them. 11 Nevertheless [q]some from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. 12 Also [r]the hand of God was on Judah to give them singleness of heart to obey the command of the king and the leaders, [s]at the word of the LORD.

13 Now many people, a very great assembly, gathered at Jerusalem to keep the Feast

* **30:3** That is, the first month (compare Leviticus 23:5); literally *at that time*

29:31 ***thank offerings.*** Sometimes called "peace" or "fellowship" offerings, thank offerings celebrated the relationship gained by the offerings of atonement (vv. 21–24; Lev. 3:1–17; 7:11–36). The thank offerings included people and priests in a great banquet together, all in fellowship with God.

29:34 ***priests were too few.*** Under Ahaz the priests and Levites had been stripped of their duties. Now, 20 years later, there were not enough priests.

30:1 ***sent to all Israel.*** Though the kingdom of Israel had split more than two centuries before, Hezekiah never lost sight of the fact that God's covenant was made with all twelve tribes and that His promises included them all (Ezek. 37:15–28).

30:8 ***enter His sanctuary.*** People who were not priests were not allowed to enter the temple. This phrase is a figure of speech for serving the Lord.

30:9 ***if you return to the LORD.*** Hezekiah was referring to the covenant (Deut. 28–30) which promised that obedience would lead to blessing in the land, and disobedience would result in exile.

30:10 ***as far as Zebulun.*** Zebulun was probably the northernmost territory of Israel at this time because Naphtali had been taken by Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kin. 15:29).

29:31 [e] Lev. 7:12 [f] Ex. 35:5, 22 **29:34** [g] 2 Chr. 35:11 [h] 2 Chr. 30:3 [i] Ps. 7:10 [j] 2 Chr. 29:5 **29:35** [k] Lev. 3:15, 16 [l] Num. 15:5–10 **30:2** [d] Num. 9:10, 11 **30:3** [b] Ex. 12:6, 18 [c] 2 Chr. 29:17, 34 **30:6** [d] Esth. 8:14 [e] [Jer. 4:1] [f] 2 Kin. 15:19, 29 [g] 2 Chr. 28:20 **30:7** [h] Ezek. 20:18 [i] Is. 1:9 [j] 2 Chr. 29:8 **30:8** [k] Ex. 32:9 [l] 2 Chr. 29:10 **30:9** [m] Ps. 106:46 [n] [Ex. 34:6] [o] [Is. 55:7] **30:10** [p] 2 Chr. 36:16 **30:11** [q] 2 Chr. 11:16; 30:18, 21 **30:12** [r] [Phil. 2:13] [s] 2 Chr. 29:25

of [t]Unleavened Bread in the second month.
14 They arose and took away the [u]altars that
were in Jerusalem, and they took away all
the incense altars and cast *them* into the
Brook [v]Kidron. 15 Then they slaughtered
the Passover *lambs* on the fourteenth *day*
of the second month. The priests and
the Levites were [w]ashamed, and sanctified
themselves, and brought the burnt offer-
ings to the house of the LORD. 16 They stood
in their [x]place according to their custom,
according to the Law of Moses the man
of God; the priests sprinkled the blood *re-*
ceived from the hand of the Levites. 17 For
there were many in the assembly who had
not sanctified themselves; [y]therefore the
Levites had charge of the slaughter of the
Passover *lambs* for everyone *who was* not
clean, to sanctify *them* to the LORD. 18 For
a multitude of the people, [z]many from
Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebu-
lun, had not cleansed themselves, [a]yet they
ate the Passover contrary to what was writ-
ten. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying,
"May the good LORD provide atonement for
everyone 19 *who* [b]prepares his heart to seek
God, the LORD God of his fathers, though
he is not *cleansed* according to the purifi-
cation of the sanctuary." 20 And the LORD
listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.

21 So the children of Israel who were
present at Jerusalem kept [c]the Feast of
Unleavened Bread seven days with great
gladness; and the Levites and the priests
praised the LORD day by day, *singing* to the
LORD, accompanied by loud instruments.
22 And Hezekiah gave encouragement to all
the Levites [d]who taught the good knowl-
edge of the LORD; and they ate throughout
the feast seven days, offering peace offer-
ings and [e]making confession to the LORD
God of their fathers.

23 Then the whole assembly agreed
to keep *the feast* [f]another seven days,
and they kept it *another* seven days with
gladness. 24 For Hezekiah king of Judah
[g]gave to the assembly a thousand bulls
and seven thousand sheep, and the leaders
gave to the assembly a thousand bulls and
ten thousand sheep; and a great number of
priests [h]sanctified themselves. 25 The whole
assembly of Judah rejoiced, also the priests
and Levites, all the assembly that came
from Israel, the sojourners [i]who came
from the land of Israel, and those who
dwelt in Judah. 26 So there was great joy in
Jerusalem, for since the time of [j]Solomon
the son of David, king of Israel, *there had*
been nothing like this in Jerusalem. 27 Then
the priests, the Levites, arose and [k]blessed
the people, and their voice was heard; and
their prayer came *up* to [l]His holy dwelling
place, to heaven.

The Reforms of Hezekiah

31 Now when all this was finished, all
Israel who were present went out to
the cities of Judah and [a]broke the *sacred*
pillars in pieces, cut down the wooden
images, and threw down the high places
and the altars—from all Judah, Benjamin,
Ephraim, and Manasseh—until they had
utterly destroyed them all. Then all the
children of Israel returned to their own cit-
ies, every man to his possession.

2 And Hezekiah appointed [b]the divisions
of the priests and the Levites according to
their divisions, each man according to his
service, the priests and Levites [c]for burnt
offerings and peace offerings, to serve,
to give thanks, and to praise in the gates
of the camp* of the LORD. 3 The king also
appointed a portion of his [d]possessions for
the burnt offerings: for the morning and
evening burnt offerings, the burnt offer-
ings for the Sabbaths and the New Moons
and the set feasts, as *it is* written in the
[e]Law of the LORD.

* **31:2** That is, the temple

30:17 ***Levites had charge of the slaughter.*** Traditionally the slaughter of the Passover lamb was performed by the head of the family (Ex. 12:3–6). But on this occasion many were not ritually purified, and the Levites acted on their behalf.

30:22 ***who taught the good knowledge.*** The Levites' ministry included teaching (17:8–10). The people of Israel had had virtually no consistent teaching of God's revelation for 200 years, apart from the witness of the prophets such as Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, and Amos.

30:25 ***sojourners.*** The strangers were aliens who lived in Israel and Judah and who could come to the festivals because they adhered to God and the law (Deut. 16:11; 26:11; 29:11; 31:12).

30:26 Heaven—Solomon asked God to hear the prayers of the people as they directed their prayers toward the temple in Jerusalem, and to respond from His dwelling in heaven (2 Chr. 6:21). The people, nearly 200 years after Solomon made this prayer, sought the Lord, and He heard them. There is great joy among the people when they realize that God hears them from heaven, and there is great joy in heaven when one sinner repents (Luke 15:7).

31:2 ***Hezekiah appointed.*** The long interruption (28:24) of Judah's official worship in the time of Ahaz brought chaos to their religious life. David had originally organized the Levitical system, but because of the years of neglect, Hezekiah had to reorganize it.

31:3 ***New Moons.*** The new moon celebrations came at the appearance of the new moon, the beginning of another month (Num. 28:11–15). ***set feasts.*** The fixed festivals were the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:4–8); Feast of Firstfruits or Pentecost

30:13 [t] Lev. 23:6 **30:14** [u] 2 Chr. 28:24 [v] 2 Chr. 29:16 **30:15** [w] 2 Chr. 29:34 **30:16** [x] 2 Chr. 35:10, 15 **30:17** [y] 2 Chr. 29:34 **30:18** [z] 2 Chr. 30:1, 11, 25 [a] [Num. 9:10] **30:19** [b] 2 Chr. 19:3 **30:21** [c] Ex. 12:15; 13:6 **30:22** [d] 2 Chr. 17:9; 35:3 [e] Ezra 10:11 **30:23** [f] 1 Kin. 8:65 **30:24** [g] 2 Chr. 35:7, 8 [h] 2 Chr. 29:34 **30:25** [i] 2 Chr. 30:11, 18 **30:26** [j] 2 Chr. 7:8–10 **30:27** [k] Num. 6:23 [l] Deut. 26:15 **31:1** [a] 2 Kin. 18:4 **31:2** [b] 1 Chr. 23:6; 24:1 [c] 1 Chr. 23:30, 31 **31:3** [d] 2 Chr. 35:7 [e] Num. 28:1—29:40

4 Moreover he commanded the people
who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute [f]support
for the priests and the Levites, that
they might devote themselves to [g]the Law
of the LORD.
5 As soon as the commandment was
circulated, the children of Israel brought
in abundance [h]the firstfruits of grain and
wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce
of the field; and they brought in abundantly
the [i]tithe of everything. 6 And the children
of Israel and Judah, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, brought the tithe of oxen and
sheep; also the [j]tithe of holy things which
were consecrated to the LORD their God
they laid in heaps.
7 In the third month they began laying
them in heaps, and they finished in the
seventh month. 8 And when Hezekiah and
the leaders came and saw the heaps, they
blessed the LORD and His people Israel.
9 Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and
the Levites concerning the heaps. 10 And
Azariah the chief priest, from the [k]house
of Zadok, answered him and said, [l]"Since
the people began to bring the offerings into
the house of the LORD, we have had enough
to eat and have plenty left, for the LORD has
blessed His people; and what is left *is* this
great [m]abundance."
11 Now Hezekiah commanded *them* to
[n]prepare rooms in the house of the LORD,
and they prepared them. 12 Then they faithfully brought in the offerings, the tithes,
and the dedicated things; [o]Cononiah the
Levite had charge of them, and Shimei his
brother *was* the next. 13 Jehiel, Azaziah,
Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel,
Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah *were*
overseers under the hand of Cononiah and
Shimei his brother, at the commandment of
Hezekiah the king and Azariah the [p]ruler
of the house of God. 14 Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper of the East Gate,
was over the [q]freewill offerings to God, to
distribute the offerings of the LORD and the
most holy things. 15 And under him *were*
[r]Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, *his* faithful assistants
in [s]the cities of the priests, to distribute [t]allotments to their brethren by divisions, to
the great as well as the small.
16 Besides those males from three years
old and up who were written in the genealogy, they distributed to everyone
who entered the house of the LORD his
daily portion for the work of his service,
by his division, 17 and to the priests who
were written in the genealogy according
to their father's house, and to the Levites
[u]from twenty years old and up according
to their work, by their divisions, 18 and to all
who were written in the genealogy—their
little ones and their wives, their sons and
daughters, the whole company of them—
for in their faithfulness they sanctified
themselves in holiness.
19 Also for the sons of Aaron the priests,
who were in [v]the fields of the commonlands of their cities, in every single city,
there were men who were [w]designated by
name to distribute portions to all the males
among the priests and to all who were listed by genealogies among the Levites.
20 Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he [x]did what *was* good and right
and true before the LORD his God. 21 And
in every work that he began in the service
of the house of God, in the law and in the
commandment, to seek his God, he did *it*
with all his heart. So he [y]prospered.

Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD

32 After [a]these deeds of faithfulness,
Sennacherib king of Assyria came
and entered Judah; he encamped against
the fortified cities, thinking to win them
over to himself. 2 And when Hezekiah saw
that Sennacherib had come, and that his
purpose was to make war against Jerusalem, 3 he consulted with his leaders and commanders* to stop the water from the springs
which *were* outside the city; and they helped
him. 4 Thus many people gathered together

* **32:3** Literally *mighty men*

(Lev. 23:15–22); and the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:33–43).

31:5 ***firstfruits.*** The early harvests of grain, particularly barley, were being reaped at this time. The Passover had been held a month late (30:2) and it was now the third month. The first fruits began appearing at the time of the late Passover, and the harvests were fully gathered in some 50 days later, at the time of Pentecost (Lev. 23:9–22). ***the tithe.*** A tenth of the harvest belonged to the Levites (Num. 18:21–24).

31:17 ***genealogy . . . by their divisions.*** All temple servants had to descend from Levi, but the priests had to trace their genealogy specifically to Aaron (1 Chr. 6:49–53).

32:1 ***Sennacherib.*** In Hezekiah's fourteenth year, Sennacherib invaded Judah and eventually laid siege to Jerusalem (2 Kin. 18:13–17). One of the most imperialistic of Assyria's kings, Sennacherib undertook many military campaigns to the west. In his own inscriptions he boasts of having taken many of Judah's cities, a claim supported by the parallel account in 2 Kings.

32:3 ***stop the water.*** Hezekiah managed to stop the water by concealing the springs outside the city and then digging a tunnel to bring them to the Pool of Siloam inside the city walls. Hezekiah hid the source of water and made it unavailable to the enemy (2 Kin. 20:20). The Siloam Inscription describes how

31:4 [f] Num. 18:8 [g] Mal. 2:7 **31:5** [h] Ex. 22:29 [i] [Lev. 27:30] **31:6** [j] Deut. 14:28 **31:10** [k] 1 Chr. 6:8, 9 [l] [Mal. 3:10] [m] Ex. 36:5 **31:11** [n] 1 Kin. 6:5–8 **31:12** [o] 2 Chr. 35:9 **31:13** [p] Jer. 20:1 **31:14** [q] Deut. 23:23 **31:15** [r] 2 Chr. 29:12 [s] Josh. 21:1–3, 9 [t] 1 Chr. 9:26 **31:17** [u] 1 Chr. 23:24, 27 **31:19** [v] Lev. 25:34 [w] 2 Chr. 31:12–15 **31:20** [x] 2 Kin. 20:3; 22:2 **31:21** [y] Ps. 1:3 **32:1** [a] 2 Kin. 18:13—19:37

who stopped all the [b]springs and the brook that ran through the land, saying, "Why should the kings* of Assyria come and find much water?" 5And [c]he strengthened himself, [d]built up all the wall that was broken, raised *it* up to the towers, and *built* another wall outside; also he repaired the [e]Millo* *in* the City of David, and made weapons and shields in abundance. 6Then he set military captains over the people, gathered them together to him in the open square of the city gate, and [f]gave them encouragement, saying, 7[g]"Be strong and courageous; [h]do not be afraid nor dismayed before the king of Assyria, nor before all the multitude that *is* with him; for [i]*there are* more with us than with him. 8With him *is* an [j]arm of flesh; but [k]with us *is* the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles." And the people were strengthened by the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

9[l]After this Sennacherib king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem (but he and all the forces with him *laid siege* against Lachish), to Hezekiah king of Judah, and to all Judah who *were* in Jerusalem, saying, 10[m]"Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria: 'In what do you trust, that you remain under siege in Jerusalem? 11Does not Hezekiah persuade you to give yourselves over to die by famine and by thirst, saying, [n]"The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria"? 12[o]Has not the same Hezekiah taken away His high places and His altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, "You shall worship before one altar and burn incense on [p]it"? 13Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of *other* lands? [q]Were the gods of the nations of those lands in any way able to deliver their lands out of my hand? 14Who *was there* among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed that could deliver his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my [r]hand? 15Now therefore, [s]do not let Hezekiah deceive you or persuade you like this, and do not believe him; for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people from my hand or the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you from my hand?'"

16Furthermore, his servants spoke against the LORD God and against His servant Hezekiah.

17He also wrote letters to revile the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against Him, saying, [t]"As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people from my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver His people from my [u]hand." 18[v]Then they called out with a loud voice in Hebrew* to the people of Jerusalem who *were* on the wall, to frighten them and trouble them, that they might take the city. 19And they spoke against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth—[w]the work of men's hands.

Sennacherib's Defeat and Death

20[x]Now because of this King Hezekiah and [y]the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prayed and cried out to heaven. 21[z]Then the LORD sent an angel who cut down every mighty man of valor, leader, and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned [a]shamefaced to his own land. And when he had gone into the temple of his god, some of his own offspring struck him down with the sword there.

22Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *others*, and guided them* on every side. 23And many brought gifts to the LORD at Jerusalem, and [b]presents to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was [c]exalted in the sight of all nations thereafter.

Hezekiah Humbles Himself

24[d]In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death, and he prayed to the LORD;

* **32:4** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Arabic, Septuagint, and Syriac read *king*. * **32:5** Literally *The Landfill* * **32:18** Literally *Judean* * **32:22** Septuagint reads *gave them rest;* Vulgate reads *gave them treasures*.

workmen constructed the 1,800 foot tunnel connecting the springs of Gihon to the Pool of Siloam.

32:5 ***repaired the Millo.*** Millo means "landfill" and refers to extensive terracing that surrounded the ancient hills of Ophel and Mount Zion. The work of extending the hills of Jerusalem was first undertaken by David (1 Chr. 11:7–8) and continued by Solomon (1 Kin. 9:15).

32:9 ***laid siege against Lachish.*** Both the Old Testament and Assyrian inscriptions document the siege against Lachish, an important fortified city west of Jerusalem and near the great coastal route (11:9). Its capture by Assyria would cut off access to Jerusalem from the west and would give Assyria control of the coast.

32:18 ***in Hebrew.*** Aramaic had become the language of international communication and diplomacy and there was no reason to continue the dialogue in Hebrew except to traumatize the people.

32:20 ***the prophet Isaiah.*** By now the prophet Isaiah had been involved in public ministry to the kings of Judah for nearly 40 years (26:22; Is. 6:1). He had considerable prestige and was especially important as a counselor of young Hezekiah (Is. 37:1–7).

32:4 [b] 2 Kin. 20:20 **32:5** [c] Is. 22:9, 10 [d] 2 Chr. 25:23 [e] 2 Sam. 5:9 **32:6** [f] 2 Chr. 30:22 **32:7** [g] [Deut. 31:6] [h] 2 Chr. 20:15 [i] 2 Kin. 6:16 **32:8** [j] [Jer. 17:5] [k] [Rom. 8:31] **32:9** [l] 2 Kin. 18:17 **32:10** [m] 2 Kin. 18:19 **32:11** [n] 2 Kin. 18:30 **32:12** [o] 2 Kin. 18:22 [p] 2 Chr. 31:1, 2 **32:13** [q] 2 Kin. 18:33–35 **32:14** [r] [Is. 10:5–12] **32:15** [s] 2 Kin. 18:29 **32:17** [t] 2 Kin. 19:9 [u] 2 Kin. 19:12 **32:18** [v] 2 Kin. 18:28 **32:19** [w] [Ps. 96:5; 115:4–8] **32:20** [x] 2 Kin. 19:15 [y] 2 Kin. 19:2 **32:21** [z] Zech. 14:3 [a] Ps. 44:7 **32:23** [b] 2 Sam. 8:10 [c] 2 Chr. 1:1 **32:24** [d] Is. 38:1–8

and He spoke to him and gave him a sign.
25But Hezekiah [e]did not repay according to the favor *shown* him, for [f]his heart was lifted up; [g]therefore wrath was looming over him and over Judah and Jerusalem.
26[h]Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them [i]in the days of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah's Wealth and Honor

27Hezekiah had very great riches and honor. And he made himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for shields, and for all kinds of desirable items;
28storehouses for the harvest of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of livestock, and folds for flocks.*
29Moreover he provided cities for himself, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for [j]God had given him very much property.
30[k]This same Hezekiah also stopped the water outlet of Upper Gihon, and brought the water by tunnel* to the west side of the City of David. Hezekiah [l]prospered in all his works.
31However, *regarding* the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, whom they [m]sent to him to inquire about the wonder that was *done* in the land, God withdrew from him, in order to [n]test him, that He might know all *that was* in his heart.

Death of Hezekiah

32Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, indeed they *are* written in [o]the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* in the [p]book of the kings of Judah and Israel.
33[q]So Hezekiah rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the upper tombs of the sons of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem [r]honored him at his death. Then Manasseh his son reigned in his place.

Manasseh Reigns in Judah

33 Manasseh [a]*was* twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.
2But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the [b]abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.
3For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had [c]broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and [d]made wooden images; and he worshiped [e]all the host of heaven* and served them.
4He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, [f]"In Jerusalem shall My name be forever."
5And he built altars for all the host of heaven [g]in the two courts of the house of the LORD.
6[h]Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced [i]soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and [j]consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.
7[k]He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, [l]"In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever;
8[m]and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers—only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses."
9So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

* **32:28** Following Septuagint and Vulgate; Arabic and Syriac omit *folds for flocks;* Masoretic Text reads *flocks for sheepfolds.* * **32:30** Literally *brought it straight* (compare 2 Kings 20:20)
* **33:3** The gods of the Assyrians

32:25 ***his heart was lifted up.*** Hezekiah had received Babylonian envoys who had come to congratulate him on his recovery, and probably to enlist his support in their struggle against Assyria (2 Kin. 20:12–19). Their visit ignited his desire to show off the treasures of his kingdom, and this treasure was eventually seized by the same Babylonians (2 Kin. 20:16–18; Is. 39:6–7).
32:31 ***test.*** This test was not for God's benefit, but for Hezekiah's.
33:4 ***In Jerusalem shall My name be.*** The point was that God had the exclusive right to inhabit the temple, as opposed to the deities Manasseh introduced (v. 5).
33:6 ***pass through the fire.*** Like Ahaz, Manasseh practiced human sacrifice, going so far as to offer up his own children (28:3). ***practiced soothsaying.*** Soothsaying is an attempt to determine the plans and purposes of the gods so that one can avoid their hostility or take advantage of their favors (Is. 2:6; Jer. 27:9). ***witchcraft . . . sorcery.*** Witchcraft and sorcery attempt to bring about desired results by employing magical or mystical rituals. ***mediums . . . spiritists.*** Mediums are those who claim to contact and consult with the dead. Spiritists are the "knowing ones" whose specialty is also communication with the dead in the hope of acquiring information inaccessible to the living. All such practices were common among Canaanite and other pagan religions and were to be strictly avoided by God's people (Deut. 13:1–6; 18:9–14).

32:25 [e] Ps. 116:12 [f] [Hab. 2:4] [g] 2 Chr. 24:18 **32:26** [h] Jer. 26:18, 19 [i] 2 Kin. 20:19 **32:29** [j] 1 Chr. 29:12 **32:30** [k] Is. 22:9–11 [l] 2 Chr. 31:21 **32:31** [m] Is. 39:1 [n] [Deut. 8:2, 16] **32:32** [o] Is. 36–39 [p] 2 Kin. 18–20 **32:33** [q] 2 Chr. 20:21 [r] Prov. 10:7 **33:1** [a] 2 Kin. 21:1–9 **33:2** [b] 2 Chr. 28:3 **33:3** [c] 2 Kin. 18:4 [d] Deut. 16:21 [e] Deut. 17:3 **33:4** [f] 2 Chr. 6:6; 7:16 **33:5** [g] 2 Chr. 4:9 **33:6** [h] [Lev. 18:21] [i] Deut. 18:11 [j] 2 Kin. 21:6 **33:7** [k] 2 Chr. 25:14 [l] Ps. 132:14 **33:8** [m] 2 Sam. 7:10

Manasseh Restored After Repentance

10 And the LORD spoke to Manasseh
and his people, but they would not listen.
11 [n]Therefore the LORD brought upon them
the captains of the army of the king of As-
syria, who took Manasseh with hooks,*
[o]bound him with bronze *fetters,* and car-
ried him off to Babylon. 12 Now when he
was in affliction, he implored the LORD
his God, and [p]humbled himself greatly be-
fore the God of his fathers, 13 and prayed to
Him; and He [q]received his entreaty, heard
his supplication, and brought him back to
Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manas-
seh [r]knew that the LORD *was* God.

14 After this he built a wall outside the
City of David on the west side of [s]Gihon, in
the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish
Gate; and *it* [t]enclosed Ophel, and he raised
it to a very great height. Then he put mili-
tary captains in all the fortified cities of Ju-
dah. 15 He took away [u]the foreign gods and
the idol from the house of the LORD, and
all the altars that he had built in the mount
of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem;
and he cast *them* out of the city. 16 He also
repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed
peace offerings and [v]thank offerings on it,
and commanded Judah to serve the LORD
God of Israel. 17 [w]Nevertheless the people
still sacrificed on the high places, *but* only
to the LORD their God.

Death of Manasseh

18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh,
his prayer to his God, and the words of
[x]the seers who spoke to him in the name
of the LORD God of Israel, indeed they *are*
written in the book* of the kings of Israel.
19 Also his prayer and *how God* received
his entreaty, and all his sin and trespass,
and the sites where he built high places and
set up wooden images and carved images,
before he was humbled, indeed they *are*
written among the sayings of Hozai.* 20 [y]So
Manasseh rested with his fathers, and they
buried him in his own house. Then his son
Amon reigned in his place.

Amon's Reign and Death

21 [z]Amon *was* twenty-two years old
when he became king, and he reigned two
years in Jerusalem. 22 But he did evil in the
sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh
had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the
carved images which his father Manasseh
had made, and served them. 23 And he did
not humble himself before the LORD, [a]as
his father Manasseh had humbled himself;
but Amon trespassed more and more.

24 [b]Then his servants conspired against
him, and [c]killed him in his own house.
25 But the people of the land executed all
those who had conspired against King
Amon. Then the people of the land made
his son Josiah king in his place.

Josiah Reigns in Judah

34 Josiah [a]*was* eight years old when he
became king, and he reigned thirty-
one years in Jerusalem. 2 And he did *what*
was right in the sight of the LORD, and
walked in the ways of his father David; *he*
did *not* turn aside to the right hand or to
the left.

3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while
he was still [b]young, he began to [c]seek the
God of his father David; and in the twelfth
year he began [d]to purge Judah and Jeru-
salem [e]of the high places, the wooden im-
ages, the carved images, and the molded
images. 4 [f]They broke down the altars of
the Baals in his presence, and the incense
altars which *were* above them he cut down;
and the wooden images, the carved imag-
es, and the molded images he broke in piec-
es, and made dust of them [g]and scattered *it*
on the graves of those who had sacrificed
to them. 5 He also [h]burned the bones of the
priests on their [i]altars, and cleansed Judah

* **33:11** That is, nose hooks (compare 2 Kings 19:28) * **33:18** Literally *words* * **33:19** Septuagint reads *the seers.*

33:11 ***Babylon.*** For some time Babylon had been part of the Assyrian Empire, though it had broken free on occasion, especially under the leadership of Berodach-Baladan, Hezekiah's contemporary (2 Kin. 20:12). Ashurbanipal brought Babylon back under Assyrian domination. He was the king who took Manasseh to Babylon as a prisoner.

33:14 ***wall outside the city of David.*** The term "city of David" originally referred to Mount Zion alone (1 Chr. 11:5) but eventually designated the entire city, including Mount Ophel, the original Jebusite settlement. ***Gihon.*** Gihon was the spring that was the main source of water for Jerusalem (33:2,4,30). It was in the Kidron valley near the northeastern brow of Mount Zion. ***Fish Gate.*** The Fish Gate was in the center of the wall north of the temple. Manasseh's construction was a total distance of about 750 yards.

33:20 ***buried him in his own house.*** Manasseh had truly converted (v. 13), but his prior sin had been so heinous that he was denied burial in the royal cemetery.

34:3 ***carved images.*** See note at 14:3.

34:5 ***burned the bones of the priests.*** This act of Josiah, which took place at Bethel, fulfilled the words of the prophet of Judah in the days of Jeroboam I, king of Israel (1 Kin. 13:1–2; 2 Kin. 23:15–16). The prophet had mentioned Josiah by name three hundred years before.

33:11 [n] Deut. 28:36 [o] 2 Chr. 36:6 **33:12** [p] 2 Chr. 7:14; 32:26 **33:13** [q] Ezra 8:23 [r] Dan. 4:25 **33:14** [s] 1 Kin. 1:33 [t] 2 Chr. 27:3 **33:15** [u] 2 Chr. 33:3, 5, 7 **33:16** [v] Lev. 7:12 **33:17** [w] 2 Chr. 32:12 **33:18** [x] 1 Sam. 9:9 **33:20** [y] 2 Kin. 21:18 **33:21** [z] 2 Kin. 21:19–24 **33:23** [a] 2 Chr. 33:12, 19 **33:24** [b] 2 Chr. 24:25 [c] 2 Chr. 25:27 **34:1** [a] 2 Kin. 22:1, 2 **34:3** [b] Eccl. 12:1 [c] 2 Chr. 15:2 [d] 1 Kin. 13:2 [e] 2 Chr. 33:17–19, 22 **34:4** [f] Lev. 26:30 [g] 2 Kin. 23:6 **34:5** [h] 1 Kin. 13:2 [i] 2 Kin. 23:20

and Jerusalem. 6And *so he did* in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes.* 7When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had [j]beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law

8[k]In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the temple,* he sent [l]Shaphan the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the [m]governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. 9When they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered [n]the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites who kept the doors had gathered from the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, from all the [o]remnant of Israel, from all Judah and Benjamin, and *which* they had brought back to Jerusalem. 10Then they put *it* in the hand of the foremen who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; and they gave it to the workmen who worked in the house of the LORD, to repair and restore the house. 11They gave *it* to the craftsmen and builders to buy hewn stone and timber for beams, and to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed. 12And the men did the work faithfully. Their overseers *were* Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to supervise. *Others of* the Levites, all of whom were skillful with instruments of music, 13*were* [p]over the burden bearers and *were* overseers of all who did work in any kind of service. [q]And *some* of the Levites *were* scribes, officers, and gatekeepers.

14Now when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest [r]found the Book of the Law of the LORD *given* by Moses. 15Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the [s]book to Shaphan. 16So Shaphan carried the book to the king, bringing the king word, saying, "All that was committed to your servants they are doing. 17And they have gathered the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen." 18Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

19Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes. 20Then the king commanded Hilkiah, [t]Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon* the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, 21"Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for those who are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not [u]kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book."

22So Hilkiah and those the king *had appointed* went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath,* the son of Hasrah,* keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke to her to that *effect*.

23Then she answered them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to Me, 24"Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will [v]bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the [w]book which they have read before the king of Judah, 25because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place, and not be quenched.'"' 26But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "*Concerning* the words which you have heard— 27because your heart was

*34:6 Literally *swords* *34:8 Literally *house* *34:20 *Achbor the son of Michaiah* in 2 Kings 22:12 *34:22 Spelled *Tikvah* in 2 Kings 22:14 • Spelled *Harhas* in 2 Kings 22:14

34:8 *Shaphan.* Shaphan was a scribe or secretary of the king (v. 15). He was responsible for state records that must have included the original temple plans and specifications. The temple was repaired strictly according to its original pattern. ***Joahaz the recorder.*** The recorder kept the royal diaries. Official happenings were duly noted and recorded for posterity. The work of men like Joahaz provided sources for later historians such as the author of Chronicles (1 Chr. 18:15).

34:22 *Huldah the prophetess.* Huldah is one of four female prophets named in the Old Testament. The other three are Miriam (Ex. 15:20), Deborah (Judg. 4:4), and Noadiah (Neh. 6:14).

34:24 *all the curses that are written in the book.* Both Deuteronomy and Leviticus had long lists of blessings for obedience and curses for rebellion, which were part of the conditions attached to the covenant with Israel (Deut. 28–30).

34:25 Apostasy—In all of life, no greater sin, no more serious or sadder error could be made than to forsake God and believe other gods. Such an act cuts one off from all of the loving care, wisdom, and discipline of the Creator God. Apostasy grieves God, and it grieves those who love God.

34:7 *j* Deut. 9:21 **34:8** *k* 2 Kin. 22:3–20 *l* 2 Kin. 25:22 *m* 2 Chr. 18:25 **34:9** *n* 2 Kin. 12:4 *o* 2 Chr. 30:6 **34:13** *p* 2 Chr. 8:10 *q* 1 Chr. 23:4, 5 **34:14** *r* 2 Kin. 22:8 **34:15** *s* Deut. 31:24, 26 **34:20** *t* Jer. 26:24 **34:21** *u* 2 Kin. 17:15–19 **34:24** *v* 2 Chr. 36:14–20 *w* Deut. 28:15–68

tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard *you,*" says the [x]LORD. **28**"Surely I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants."'" So they brought back word to the king.

Josiah Restores True Worship

29[y]Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. **30**The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the Levites, and all the people, great and small. And he [z]read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD. **31**Then the king [a]stood in [b]his place and made a [c]covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. **32**And he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin take a stand. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. **33**Thus Josiah removed all the [d]abominations from all the country that *belonged* to the children of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel diligently serve the LORD their God. [e]All his days they did not depart from following the LORD God of their fathers.

Josiah Keeps the Passover

35 Now [a]Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover *lambs* on the [b]fourteenth *day* of the first month. **2**And he set the priests in their [c]duties and [d]encouraged them for the service of the house of the LORD. **3**Then he said to the Levites [e]who taught all Israel, who were holy to the LORD: [f]"Put the holy ark [g]in the house which Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built. [h]*It shall* no longer *be* a burden on *your* shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel. **4**Prepare *yourselves* [i]according to your fathers' houses, according to your divisions, following the [j]written instruction of David king of Israel and the [k]written instruction of Solomon his son. **5**And [l]stand in the holy *place* according to the divisions of the fathers' houses of your brethren the *lay* people, and *according to* the division of the father's house of the Levites. **6**So slaughter the Passover *offerings,* [m]consecrate yourselves, and prepare *them* for your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses."

7Then Josiah [n]gave the *lay* people lambs and young goats from the flock, all for Passover *offerings* for all who were present, to the number of thirty thousand, as well as three thousand cattle; these *were* from the king's [o]possessions. **8**And his [p]leaders gave willingly to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover *offerings* two thousand six hundred *from the flock,* and three hundred cattle. **9**Also [q]Conaniah, his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave to the Levites for Passover *offerings* five thousand *from the flock* and five hundred cattle.

10So the service was prepared, and the priests [r]stood in their places, and the [s]Levites in their divisions, according to the king's command. **11**And they slaughtered the Passover *offerings;* and the priests [t]sprinkled *the blood* with their hands, while the Levites [u]skinned *the animals.* **12**Then they removed the burnt offerings that *they* might give them to the divisions of the fathers' houses of the *lay* people, to offer to the LORD, as *it is* written [v]in the Book of Moses. And so *they did* with the cattle. **13**Also they [w]roasted the Passover *offerings* with fire according to the ordinance; but the *other* holy *offerings* they [x]boiled in

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34:31 ***a covenant . . . to follow the LORD.*** Very few of the kings of Judah promised to follow the Lord as Josiah did. After David, only Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah made such public commitments (23:3; 29:10; 1 Chr. 17:7–14).

35:3 ***Put the holy ark in the house . . . It shall no longer be a burden on your shoulders.*** The ark had apparently been removed from the temple. Who removed it and when or why is not known, but plenty of wicked kings could have done it. Manasseh's vehement opposition to God must have kept the ark in constant jeopardy, so perhaps it had been removed for protection. The only proper way to carry the ark was on the shoulders of the priests (Num. 4:5; 6:1).

35:6 ***slaughter the Passover offerings.*** The Levites were standing in for the people in the sacrifice of the Passover lambs. This became the tradition from that time on, with the result that the priests gained influence and power.

35:13 ***holy offerings.*** The other holy offerings, distinguished from the Passover offering, were

34:27 [x] 2 Chr. 12:7; 30:6; 33:12, 13 **34:29** [y] 2 Kin. 23:1–3 **34:30** [z] Neh. 8:1–3 **34:31** [a] 2 Chr. 6:13 [b] 2 Kin. 11:14; 23:3 [c] 2 Chr. 23:16; 29:10 **34:33** [d] 1 Kin. 11:5 [e] Jer. 3:10 **35:1** [a] 2 Kin. 23:21, 22 [b] Ex. 12:6 **35:2** [c] 2 Chr. 23:18 [d] 2 Chr. 29:5–15 **35:3** [e] Deut. 33:10 [f] 2 Chr. 34:14 [g] 2 Chr. 5:7 [h] 1 Chr. 23:26 **35:4** [i] 1 Chr. 9:10–13 [j] 1 Chr. 23–26 [k] 2 Chr. 8:14 **35:5** [l] Ps. 134:1 **35:6** [m] 2 Chr. 29:5, 15 **35:7** [n] 2 Chr. 30:24 [o] 2 Chr. 31:3 **35:8** [p] Num. 7:2 **35:9** [q] 2 Chr. 31:12 **35:10** [r] Ezra 6:18 [s] 2 Chr. 5:12; 7:6; 8:14, 15; 13:10; 29:25–34 **35:11** [t] 2 Chr. 29:22 [u] 2 Chr. 29:34 **35:12** [v] Ezra 6:18 **35:13** [w] Ex. 12:8, 9 [x] 1 Sam. 2:13–15

pots, in caldrons, and in pans, and divided *them* quickly among all the *lay* people. 14Then afterward they prepared portions for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, *were busy* in offering burnt offerings and fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared portions for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. 15And the singers, the sons of Asaph, *were* in their places, according to the [y]command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer. Also the gatekeepers [z]were at each gate; they did not have to leave their position, because their brethren the Levites prepared portions for them.

16So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah. 17And the children of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of [a]Unleavened Bread for seven days. 18[b]There had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 19In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.

Josiah Dies in Battle

20[c]After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against [d]Carchemish by the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. 21But he sent messengers to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? *I have* not *come* against you this day, but against the house with which I have war; for God commanded me to make haste. Refrain *from meddling with* God, who *is* with me, lest He destroy you." 22Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but [e]disguised himself so that he might fight with him, and did not heed the words of Necho from the mouth of God. So he came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo.

23And the archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am severely wounded." 24[f]His servants therefore took him out of that chariot and put him in the second chariot that he had, and they brought him to Jerusalem. So he died, and was buried in *one of* the tombs of his fathers. And [g]all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

25Jeremiah also [h]lamented for [i]Josiah. And to this day [j]all the singing men and the singing women speak of Josiah in their lamentations. [k]They made it a custom in Israel; and indeed they *are* written in the Laments.

26Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his goodness, according to *what was* written in the Law of the LORD, 27and his deeds from first to last, indeed they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz

36 Then [a]the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem. 2Jehoahaz* *was* twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. 3Now the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 4Then the king of Egypt made *Jehoahaz's** brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz* his brother and carried him off to Egypt.

36:2 Masoretic Text reads *Joahaz*. **36:4** Literally *his* • Masoretic Text reads *Joahaz*.

the cattle slaughtered for thank, or peace offerings (v. 7).

35:18 ***since the days of Samuel the prophet.*** It had been almost four hundred years since the days of Samuel.

35:20 ***to fight against Carchemish.*** Carchemish was one of the last strongholds of Assyria to resist the onslaught of the rising neo-Babylonian kingdom. The Babylonians and Medes were on their way to subdue Haran and Carchemish. Necho, more afraid of the Babylonians than the Assyrians, was hoping to get to Carchemish in time to assist his Assyrian allies in their time of need. Josiah was an ally of Babylon, so he went to Megiddo to intercept the Egyptians.

35:21 ***God commanded me.*** God sometimes spoke to pagan rulers about a course of action He wanted them to take (36:22; Gen. 20:6; 41:25; Dan. 2:28). Necho did not know the source of his divine leading, but God did direct him, displaying His sovereignty over even the wicked and unbelieving powers of this world (Is. 44:28–45).

35:22 ***Megiddo.*** The major route from Egypt to the upper Euphrates was the Via Maris, or Way of the Sea. This route went up the coast of Israel before turning inland through the mountain pass at Megiddo. It crossed the plain of Jezreel, crossed the Jordan near the Sea of Galilee, and went on through Damascus where it joined the north-south route to upper Syria. If Josiah could control the pass at Megiddo, he could control the movement of traffic on that vital route.

36:3 ***king of Egypt***. After Assyria's defeat at Haran and Carchemish, the Egyptian army withdrew south of the Euphrates, dominating Syria and Judah. Judah became an Egyptian vassal state, which explains why Necho could depose Jehoahaz and require tribute.

35:15 [y] 1 Chr. 25:1–6 [z] 1 Chr. 9:17, 18 **35:17** [a] Ex. 12:15; 13:6 **35:18** [b] 2 Kin. 23:22, 23 **35:20** [c] 2 Kin. 23:29 [d] Jer. 46:2 **35:22** [e] 2 Chr. 18:29 **35:24** [f] 2 Kin. 23:30 [g] Zech. 12:11 **35:25** [h] Lam. 4:20 [i] Jer. 22:10, 11 [j] Matt. 9:23 [k] Jer. 22:20 **36:1** [a] 2 Kin. 23:30–34

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiakim

5 [b]Jehoiakim *was* twenty-five years old
when he became king, and he reigned elev-
en years in Jerusalem. And he did [c]evil in
the sight of the LORD his God. 6 [d]Nebuchad-
nezzar king of Babylon came up against
him, and bound him in bronze *fetters* to
[e]carry him off to Babylon. 7 [f]Nebuchadnez-
zar also carried off *some* of the articles
from the house of the LORD to Babylon, and
put them in his temple at Babylon. 8 Now
the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, the abom-
inations which he did, and what was found
against him, indeed they *are* written in the
book of the kings of Israel and Judah. Then
Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiachin

9 [g]Jehoiachin *was* eight* years old when
he became king, and he reigned in Jerusa-
lem three months and ten days. And he did
evil in the sight of the LORD. 10 At the turn
of the year [h]King Nebuchadnezzar sum-
moned *him* and took him to Babylon, [i]with
the costly articles from the house of the
LORD, and made [j]Zedekiah, *Jehoiakim's**
brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem.

Zedekiah Reigns in Judah

11 [k]Zedekiah *was* twenty-one years old
when he became king, and he reigned
eleven years in Jerusalem. 12 He did evil in
the sight of the LORD his God, *and* [l]did not
humble himself before Jeremiah the proph-
et, *who spoke* from the mouth of the LORD.
13 And he also [m]rebelled against King Neb-
uchadnezzar, who had made him swear
an oath by God; but he [n]stiffened his neck
and hardened his heart against turning
to the LORD God of Israel. 14 Moreover all
the leaders of the priests and the people
transgressed more and more, *according*
to all the abominations of the nations, and
defiled the house of the LORD which He had
consecrated in Jerusalem.

The Fall of Jerusalem

15 [o]And the LORD God of their fathers
sent *warnings* to them by His messengers,
rising up early and sending *them*, because
He had compassion on His people and on
His dwelling place. 16 But [p]they mocked the
messengers of God, [q]despised His words,
and [r]scoffed at His prophets, until the
[s]wrath of the LORD arose against His peo-
ple, till *there was* no remedy.
17 [t]Therefore He brought against them
the king of the Chaldeans, who [u]killed
their young men with the sword in the
house of their sanctuary, and had no com-
passion on young man or virgin, on the
aged or the weak; He gave *them* all into his
hand. 18 [v]And all the articles from the house
of God, great and small, the treasures of
the house of the LORD, and the treasures
of the king and of his leaders, all *these*
he took to Babylon. 19 [w]Then they burned
the house of God, broke down the wall of
Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire,

* **36:9** Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and 2 Kings 24:8 read *eighteen*. * **36:10** Literally *his* (compare 2 Kings 24:17)

36:6 ***Nebuchadnezzar.*** Nebuchadnezzar was leading a campaign against Carchemish when he succeeded his father. He drove Egypt out of Syria and Judah and took some Jewish captives, including Daniel, back to Babylon (Dan. 1:1). At the same time, Jehoiakim changed his loyalty from Necho to Nebuchadnezzar and remained a trusted vassal for three years (2 Kin. 24:1). But then Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon, and in about 602 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem to punish him. ***to carry him off to Babylon.*** Jehoiakim was not actually taken to Babylon since he reigned until 598 B.C. and died of natural causes in Jerusalem (2 Kin. 26:6; Jer. 22:18).

36:7 ***carried off some of the articles from the house of the LORD.*** The Babylonian king looted the temple of much of its treasure, fulfilling the prophecy made to Hezekiah a century earlier (32:31). ***his temple.*** His temple was the temple of the Babylonians' patron god Marduk.

36:10 ***Zedekiah.*** Zedekiah was the youngest of the four sons of Josiah, and the third to rule over Judah (v. 1). He became king by Nebuchadnezzar's appointment, showing Judah's status as a Babylonian vassal (v. 3).

36:12 ***Jeremiah.*** Jeremiah was the famous prophet who composed the Book of Jeremiah, which included his words to Zedekiah (Jer. 21:3–7; 32:5).

36:14 ***all the abominations of the nations.*** This statement refers primarily to idolatry and all the immorality and perversity that went with it. God's covenant with Israel required them to be different from the nations in this key respect (Ex. 23:24; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 4:15–20,25–28; 18:9–14; 27:14–15).

36:16 Unbelief—There is a line of divine patience that a nation can cross, bringing doom upon that country. In 586 B.C. Judah stepped over that mark. Prior to this God had graciously given His people many opportunities to repent of their unbelief. When we earnestly pray for our country as commanded by God (1 Tim. 2:1–2) we are asking to be kept from overstepping the limit of God's patience. About three thousand years ago, Solomon succinctly said, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

36:17 ***king of the Chaldeans.*** The Chaldean, or Babylonian, king was Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned from 605 to 562 B.C. He became an instrument of God's judgment all through Judah's last years and well into the exile (Dan. 2:37–38; 5:18–19).

36:5 [b] 2 Kin. 23:36, 37 [c] [Jer. 22:13–19] **36:6** [d] 2 Kin. 24:1 [e] Jer. 36:30 **36:7** [f] Dan. 1:1, 2 **36:9** [g] 2 Kin. 24:8–17 **36:10** [h] 2 Kin. 24:10–17 [i] Dan. 1:1, 2 [j] Jer. 37:1 **36:11** [k] Jer. 52:1 **36:12** [l] Jer. 21:3–7; 44:10 **36:13** [m] Ezek. 17:15 [n] 2 Kin. 17:14 **36:15** [o] Jer. 7:13; 25:3, 4 **36:16** [p] Jer. 5:12, 13 [q] [Prov. 1:24–32] [r] Jer. 38:6 [s] Ps. 79:5 **36:17** [t] 2 Kin. 25:1 [u] Ps. 74:20 **36:18** [v] 2 Kin. 25:13–15 **36:19** [w] 2 Kin. 25:9

and destroyed all its precious possessions.
20 And [x]those who escaped from the sword
he carried away to Babylon, [y]where they
became servants to him and his sons until
the rule of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of
[z]Jeremiah, until the land [a]had enjoyed her
Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate [b]she
kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

The Proclamation of Cyrus

22 [c]Now in the first year of Cyrus king
of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the
mouth of [d]Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the
LORD stirred up the spirit of [e]Cyrus king
of Persia, so that he made a proclamation
throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it*
in writing, saying,

23 [f]Thus says Cyrus king of Persia:
All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD
God of heaven has given me. And He
has commanded me to build Him a
house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.
Who *is* among you of all His people?
May the LORD his God *be* with him,
and let him go up!

36:20 ***until the rule of the kingdom of Persia.*** Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem the following year.

36:21 ***Jeremiah.*** In two places (Jer. 25:12; 29:10) Jeremiah predicted the exile and its length (Dan. 9:2). ***Sabbath.*** According to the law of Moses, the land was to lie fallow every seventh year (Lev. 25:4). Judah's exile in Babylon allowed the land to enjoy the sabbaths it had missed because of disobedience (Lev. 26:33–35).

36:22 ***the first year of Cyrus.*** The first year refers to the first year of Cyrus' rule over Babylon, not his first year over Media and Persia. He began to rule Media and Persia in 550 B.C. Twelve years later he brought Babylon under his control and issued his famous decree, known from the Old Testament (Ezra 1:2–4) and from his own records, the Cylinder of Cyrus. Jeremiah's seventy years were from about 609 to 539 B.C. ***the LORD stirred up.*** Cyrus was both a mighty monarch and the instrument by whom God delivered His people from exile, returned them to their land, and rebuilt the temple (Is. 44:28–45). Like many rulers who encountered the living God, Cyrus recognized and even extolled His power as the God of Israel, but this was not the same as abandoning all other gods and following the Lord alone.

36:23 Providence—God is the Lord of the universe. He not only rules over those who are called by His name, but He also moves upon the hearts and minds of others whom He chooses to use in the fulfillment of His purpose. It was part of God's plan for the Jews to be taken captive by Babylon, and for Babylon to be taken by Persia. Cyrus had been chosen and ordained for his role in returning the Jews to their own land, and was even called by name by Isaiah the prophet (Is. 44:28; 45:1). It is not always possible to understand the things that the Lord is doing, but we can still rejoice in His providence, confident that the Judge of all the earth will do right (Gen. 18:25).

36:20 [x] 2 Kin. 25:11 [y] Jer. 17:4; 27:7 **36:21** [z] Jer. 25:9–12; 27:6–8; 29:10 [a] Lev. 26:34–43 [b] Lev. 25:4, 5 **36:22** [c] Ezra 1:1–3 [d] Jer. 29:10 [e] Is. 44:28; 45:1 **36:23** [f] Ezra 1:2, 3

THE BOOK OF
EZRA

▶ **AUTHOR:** Although Ezra is not specifically named as the author, Jewish tradition attributes the book to him. This seems appropriate as portions of the book are written in the first person, from Ezra's point of view (7:28—9:15). Similar to Chronicles, this book has a strong priestly emphasis. Ezra was a direct descendant of Aaron through Eleazar, Phinehas, and Zadok, and so came from a long and illustrious priestly line. It is believed that Ezra had access to the extensive library of written documents gathered by Nehemiah and that this was one of the sources used in writing this book as well as Chronicles.

▶ **TIME:** c. 538–457 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Ezra 1:3

▶ **THEME:** Many scholars think Ezra and Nehemiah belong together as one book. Together they tell parts of the same story. The exile is over and the temple is to be rebuilt along with the wall of Jerusalem despite considerable opposition. While Nehemiah's perspective is that of a civil servant and building contractor, Ezra is a teacher of the law and a priest, and as such, provides leadership by bringing God's Word to the people and by restoring proper worship. When the people respond to the Word and reestablish their relationship with God through worship, the building process is renewed and completed.

End of the Babylonian Captivity

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD [a]by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, [b]so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying,

2 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia:
All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has [c]commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which *is* in Judah.
3 Who *is* among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel [d](He *is* God), which *is* in Jerusalem.
4 And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem.

5 Then the heads of the fathers' *houses* of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits [e]God had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem.
6 And all those who *were* around them encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all *that* was [f]willingly offered.
7 [g]King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, [h]which

1:1 ***first year of Cyrus.*** This refers to the first year of Cyrus' reign over Babylon. Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Persian Empire and the Achaemenid dynasty, conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. The events in the Book of Ezra were taking place at the same time as the latter part of the Book of Daniel, after the overthrow of Belshazzar by the Medes and Persians, and the absorption of Babylon into the Persian Empire (Dan. 5:28,30–31; 6:28). ***Jeremiah.*** Jeremiah had prophesied that the Babylonian captivity would last 70 years (Jer. 25:11; 29:10) after which the Lord would judge Babylon (Jer. 25:12–14). ***he made a proclamation.*** One hundred and forty years before Cyrus the Great was even born, Isaiah the prophet called him by name, foretelling the decree he would issue allowing the Israelites to return to their homeland (Is. 44:28; 45:14).

1:4 ***let the men of his place help him.*** The assistance that the Israelites were to receive from their non-Jewish neighbors in rebuilding the temple was similar to the help an earlier generation received from the Egyptians before the Exodus (Ex. 12:33–36). In a sense, the return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple was a second exodus (Is. 43:14–21; 48:20–21).

1:7 ***which Nebuchadnezzar had taken.*** See 2 Kings

1:1 [a] 2 Chr. 36:22, 23 [b] Ezra 5:13, 14 **1:2** [c] Is. 44:28; 45:1, 13 **1:3** [d] Dan. 6:26 **1:5** [e] [Phil. 2:13] **1:6** [f] Ezra 2:68 **1:7** [g] Ezra 5:14; 6:5 [h] 2 Kin. 24:13

Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and put in the temple of his gods;
8 and Cyrus king of Persia brought them
out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them out to [i]Sheshbazzar
the prince of Judah. 9 This *is* the number
of them: thirty gold platters, one thousand
silver platters, twenty-nine knives, 10 thirty
gold basins, four hundred and ten silver
basins of a similar *kind, and* one thousand
other articles. 11 All the articles of gold and
silver *were* five thousand four hundred.
All *these* Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to
Jerusalem.

The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

2 Now* [a]these *are* the people of the province who came back from the captivity, of those who had been carried away,
[b]whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and who
returned to Jerusalem and Judah, everyone to his *own* city.

2 *Those* who came with Zerubbabel *were*
Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar,* Bigvai, Rehum,*
and Baanah. The number of the men of the
people of Israel: 3 the people of Parosh, two
thousand one hundred and seventy-two;
4 the people of Shephatiah, three hundred
and seventy-two; 5 the people of Arah, [c]seven hundred and seventy-five; 6 the people
of [d]Pahath-Moab, of the people of Jeshua
and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and
twelve; 7 the people of Elam, one thousand
two hundred and fifty-four; 8 the people of
Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five; 9 the
people of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty;
10 the people of Bani,* six hundred and forty-
two; 11 the people of Bebai, six hundred and
twenty-three; 12 the people of Azgad, one
thousand two hundred and twenty-two;
13 the people of Adonikam, six hundred and
sixty-six; 14 the people of Bigvai, two thousand and fifty-six; 15 the people of Adin,
four hundred and fifty-four; 16 the people of
Ater of Hezekiah, ninety-eight; 17 the people
of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three;
18 the people of Jorah,* one hundred and
twelve; 19 the people of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three; 20 the people of Gibbar,* ninety-five; 21 the people of Bethlehem,
one hundred and twenty-three; 22 the men of
Netophah, fifty-six; 23 the men of Anathoth,
one hundred and twenty-eight; 24 the people of Azmaveth,* forty-two; 25 the people
of Kirjath Arim,* Chephirah, and Beeroth,
seven hundred and forty-three; 26 the people of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and
twenty-one; 27 the men of Michmas, one
hundred and twenty-two; 28 the men of
Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three; 29 the people of Nebo, fifty-two; 30 the
people of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six; 31 the people of the other [e]Elam, one
thousand two hundred and fifty-four; 32 the
people of Harim, three hundred and twenty; 33 the people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five; 34 the people of
Jericho, three hundred and forty-five; 35 the
people of Senaah, three thousand six hundred and thirty.

36 The priests: the sons of [f]Jedaiah, of
the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and
seventy-three; 37 the sons of [g]Immer, one
thousand and fifty-two; 38 the sons of
[h]Pashhur, one thousand two hundred and
forty-seven; 39 the sons of [i]Harim, one thousand and seventeen.

40 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and
Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah,* seventy-four.

41 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one
hundred and twenty-eight.

42 The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons
of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of
Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of
Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-nine *in* all.

43 [j]The Nethinim: the sons of Ziha, the
sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth,

* **2:1** Compare this chapter with Nehemiah 7:6–73.
* **2:2** Spelled *Mispereth* in Nehemiah 7:7 • Spelled *Nehum* in Nehemiah 7:7 * **2:10** Spelled *Binnui* in Nehemiah 7:15 * **2:18** Called *Hariph* in Nehemiah 7:24 * **2:20** Called *Gibeon* in Nehemiah 7:25
* **2:24** Called *Beth Azmaveth* in Nehemiah 7:28
* **2:25** Called *Kirjath Jearim* in Nehemiah 7:29
* **2:40** Spelled *Hodevah* in Nehemiah 7:43

24:1–7,11–13; 25:8–17; 2 Chronicles 36:5–19; and Daniel 1:2.

1:8 ***Sheshbazzar.*** Ezra 5:2 and 5:16 appear to identify Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel as one and the same person. The name Sheshbazzar occurs in only two passages (vv. 8–11; 5:14–16) and both times are related to official Persian actions. It is possible, and considered likely, that Sheshbazzar was the Persian name for Zerubbabel.

2:2 ***Nehemiah . . . Mordecai.*** The Nehemiah mentioned here is not the same man who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem 90 years later. The Mordecai in this verse is also considered to be a different man than the one who figured so prominently in the Book of Esther.

2:40–42 ***The Levites . . . The singers . . . The sons of the gatekeepers.*** The Levites assisted the priests in the temple and in teaching the people the law. The singers were also Levites and had the responsibility of praising God with music (1 Chr. 15:16). Although only 128 singers returned to Jerusalem, at one time there had been as many as four thousand who praised the Lord with musical instruments in Solomon's temple (1 Chr. 23:5). The gatekeepers were another set of Levites who prevented unauthorized people from entering the restricted area of the temple.

2:43 ***The Nethinim.*** *Nethinim* means "given ones"

1:8 [i] Ezra 5:14, 16 **2:1** [a] Neh. 7:6–73 [b] 2 Kin. 24:14–16; 25:11 **2:5** [c] Neh. 7:10 **2:6** [d] Neh. 7:11 **2:31** [e] Ezra 2:7 **2:36** [f] 1 Chr. 24:7–18 **2:37** [g] 1 Chr. 24:14 **2:38** [h] 1 Chr. 9:12 **2:39** [i] 1 Chr. 24:8 **2:43** [j] 1 Chr. 9:2

44 the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha,*
the sons of Padon, 45 the sons of Lebanah,
the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub,
46 the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shalmai,
the sons of Hanan, 47 the sons of Giddel,
the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah,
48 the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda,
the sons of Gazzam, 49 the sons of Uzza,
the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, 50 the
sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the
sons of Nephusim,* 51 the sons of Bakbuk,
the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,
52 the sons of Bazluth,* the sons of Mehida,
the sons of Harsha, 53 the sons of Barkos,
the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah, 54 the
sons of Neziah, and the sons of Hatipha.

55 The sons of [k]Solomon's servants:
the sons of Sotai, the sons of [l]Sophereth,
the sons of Peruda,* 56 the sons of Jaala, the
sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, 57 the
sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil,
the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim, and the
sons of Ami.* 58 All the [m]Nethinim and the
children of [n]Solomon's servants were three
hundred and ninety-two.

59 And these *were* the ones who came
up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub,
Addan,* and Immer; but they could not
identify their father's house or their gene-
alogy,* whether they *were* of Israel: 60 the
sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the
sons of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two;
61 and of the sons of the priests: the sons of
[o]Habaiah, the sons of Koz,* and the sons of
[p]Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters
of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called
by their name. 62 These sought their listing
among those who were registered by gene-
alogy, but they were not found; [q]therefore
they *were excluded* from the priesthood as
defiled. 63 And the governor* said to them
that they [r]should not eat of the most holy
things till a priest could consult with the
[s]Urim and Thummim.

64 [t]The whole assembly together *was*
forty-two thousand three hundred *and*
sixty, 65 besides their male and female ser-
vants, of whom *there were* seven thousand
three hundred and thirty-seven; and they
had two hundred men and women singers.
66 Their horses *were* seven hundred and
thirty-six, their mules two hundred and
forty-five, 67 their camels four hundred and
thirty-five, and *their* donkeys six thousand
seven hundred and twenty.

68 [u]*Some* of the heads of the fathers'
houses, when they came to the house of the
LORD which *is* in Jerusalem, offered freely
for the house of God, to erect it in its place:
69 According to their ability, they gave to the
[v]treasury for the work sixty-one thousand
gold drachmas, five thousand minas of sil-
ver, and one hundred priestly garments.

70 [w]So the priests and the Levites, *some*
of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers,
and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and
all Israel in their cities.

Worship Restored at Jerusalem

3 And when the [a]seventh month had come,
and the children of Israel *were* in the
cities, the people gathered together as one
man to Jerusalem. 2 Then Jeshua the son
of [b]Jozadak* and his brethren the priests,
[c]and Zerubbabel the son of [d]Shealtiel and
his brethren, arose and built the altar of the
God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on
it, as *it is* [e]written in the Law of Moses the
man of God. 3 Though fear *had come* upon
them because of the people of those coun-
tries, they set the altar on its bases; and
they offered [f]burnt offerings on it to the
LORD, *both* the morning and evening burnt
offerings. 4 [g]They also kept the Feast of

* **2:44** Spelled *Sia* in Nehemiah 7:47
* **2:50** Spelled *Nephishesim* in Nehemiah 7:52
* **2:52** Spelled *Bazlith* in Nehemiah 7:54
* **2:55** Spelled *Perida* in Nehemiah 7:57
* **2:57** Spelled *Amon* in Nehemiah 7:59
* **2:59** Spelled *Addon* in Nehemiah 7:61 • Literally *seed* * **2:61** Or *Hakkoz* * **2:63** Hebrew *Tirshatha* * **3:2** Spelled *Jehozadak* in 1 Chronicles 6:14

or "dedicated ones." In 1 Chronicles 9:2, the Nethinim are distinguished from the priests and the Levites. Jewish tradition identifies the Nethinim with the Gibeonites who had been assigned by Joshua to assist the Levites in more menial tasks (Josh. 9:27).

2:63 *Urim and Thummim.* The Urim and Thummim were somehow used to determine God's will (Ex. 28:30). It is not known exactly what they were, but it has been speculated that they were special sacred stones, used for casting lots.

2:64 *forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty.* The individual numbers listed in chapter 2 add up to only 29,818. The difference is accounted for because the larger total includes women, who are not named in the lists.

2:65 *men and women singers.* These men and women are thought to be other than the choir of the temple (v. 41). They were probably professional singers employed for banquets and feasts (2 Chr. 35:25; Eccl. 2:7–8). It could be that some of the Jews achieved prosperity and a degree of luxury in Babylon. They had not, after all, been enslaved in exile, but only restricted from returning to their land.

3:1 *seventh month.* The seventh month was a sacred month to the Jewish people. The first day of the month was the Feast of Trumpets (Num. 29:1–6), the tenth day was the Day of Atonement (Num. 29:7–11), and the fifteenth day was the Feast of Tabernacles (Num. 29:12–38).

3:2–3 *Jeshua.* This is believed to be the same person as the priest Joshua mentioned by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (Hag. 1:1; Zech. 3:1).

3:4 *Feast of Tabernacles.* The Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, was a feast instituted as a remembrance

2:55 [k] 1 Kin. 9:21 [l] Neh. 7:57–60 **2:58** [m] 1 Chr. 9:2 [n] 1 Kin. 9:21 **2:61** [o] Neh. 7:63 [p] 2 Sam. 17:27 **2:62** [q] Num. 3:10 **2:63** [r] Lev. 22:2, 10, 15, 16 [s] Ex. 28:30 **2:64** [t] Neh. 7:66 **2:68** [u] Neh. 7:70 **2:69** [v] Ezra 8:25–35 **2:70** [w] Neh. 7:73 **3:1** [a] Neh. 7:73; 8:1, 2 **3:2** [b] Neh. 12:1, 8 [c] Ezra 2:2; 4:2, 3; 5:2 [d] 1 Chr. 3:17 [e] Deut. 12:5, 6 **3:3** [f] Num. 28:3 **3:4** [g] Neh. 8:14–18

Tabernacles, [h]as *it is* written, and [i]*offered* the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. 5Afterwards *they offered* the [j]regular burnt offering, and *those* for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and *those* of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the LORD. 6From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, although the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid. 7They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and [k]food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to [l]Joppa, [m]according to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia.

Restoration of the Temple Begins

8Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, [n]Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak,* and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began *work* [o]and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the LORD. 9Then Jeshua *with* his sons and brothers, Kadmiel *with* his sons, and the sons of Judah,* arose as one to oversee those working on the house of God: the sons of Henadad *with* their sons and their brethren the Levites.

10When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, [p]the priests stood* in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the [q]ordinance of David king of Israel. 11[r]And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD:

[s]"For *He is* good,
[t]For His mercy *endures* forever toward Israel."*

Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12But many of the priests and Levites and [u]heads of the fathers' *houses*, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.

Resistance to Rebuilding the Temple

4 Now when [a]the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the descendants of the captivity were building the temple of the LORD God of Israel, 2they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' *houses*, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you *do;* and we have sacrificed to Him [b]since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here." 3But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the fathers' *houses* of Israel said to them, [c]"You may do nothing with us to build a house for our God; but we alone will build to the LORD God of Israel, as [d]King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us." 4Then [e]the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, 5and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of [f]Darius king of Persia.

* **3:8** Spelled *Jehozadak* in 1 Chronicles 6:14
* **3:9** Or *Hodaviah* (compare 2:40) * **3:10** Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *they stationed the priests.*
* **3:11** Compare Psalm 136:1

of the earlier generations' wanderings in the wilderness (Num. 29:13–38).

3:11 Patience—In spite of Israel's history of sin, leading to the broken empire, captivity, exile, the destruction of the temple and walls of Jerusalem, God still had not forgotten His people. Joy filled the hearts of the Israelites, for God's love had endured. Patiently, faithfully, He was keeping every promise. He is equally faithful and patient to each of us, even though we so often miss the mark. He does not give us up, but showers us with benefits and never ceases to show us His unchanging persistent love.

4:1 *the adversaries of Judah.* The enemies of Judah were the Samaritans. Esarhaddon (v. 2), who ruled Assyria from 681–669 B.C., had transported the conquered people of the northern kingdom to other lands. He then brought people from elsewhere into Palestine. These foreigners intermarried with the Hebrews who were left in the land. Their offspring became the Samaritans mentioned in the New Testament.

4:4–5 Persecution—Israel encountered hostility when they returned to their land. At first glance it might seem that Israel was at fault for turning down help. These people said they had been offering sacrifices to Jehovah. This did not mean, however, that they had ceased to serve their idols (2 Kin. 17:29–35). Whatever their hidden reasons for offering help, it would not have been in favor of the Israelites. Their underlying hostility became obvious as they succeeded in hindering the work on the temple.

3:4 [h] Ex. 23:16 [i] Num. 29:12, 13 **3:5** [j] Ex. 29:38
3:7 [k] Acts 12:20 [l] 2 Chr. 2:16 [m] Ezra 1:2; 6:3 **3:8** [n] Ezra 3:2; 4:3 [o] 1 Chr. 23:4, 24 **3:10** [p] 1 Chr. 16:5, 6 [q] 1 Chr. 6:31; 16:4; 25:1 **3:11** [r] Neh. 12:24 [s] Ps. 136:1 [t] Jer. 33:11
3:12 [u] Ezra 2:68 **4:1** [a] Ezra 4:7–9 **4:2** [b] 2 Kin. 17:24; 19:37 **4:3** [c] Neh. 2:20 [d] Ezra 1:1–4 **4:4** [e] Ezra 3:3
4:5 [f] Ezra 5:5; 6:1

Rebuilding of Jerusalem Opposed

6 In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

7 In the days of [g]Artaxerxes also, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabel, and the rest of their companions wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the letter *was* written in [h]Aramaic script, and translated into the Aramaic language. 8 Rehum* the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes in this fashion:

9 From* Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions—*representatives* of [i]the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the people of Persia and Erech and Babylon and Shushan,* the Dehavites, the Elamites, 10 [j]and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnapper took captive and settled in the cities of Samaria and the remainder beyond the River*—[k]and so forth.*

11 (This *is* a copy of the letter that they sent him)

To King Artaxerxes from your servants, the men *of the region* beyond the River, and so forth:*

12 Let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you have come to us at Jerusalem, and are building the [l]rebellious and evil city, and are finishing *its* [m]walls and repairing the foundations. 13 Let it now be known to the king that, if this city is built and the walls completed, they will not pay [n]tax, tribute, or custom, and the king's treasury will be diminished. 14 Now because we receive support from the palace, it was not proper for us to see the king's dishonor; therefore we have sent and informed the king, 15 that search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers. And you will find in the book of the records and know that this city *is* a rebellious city, harmful to kings and provinces, and that they have incited sedition within the city in former times, for which cause this city was destroyed.

16 We inform the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, the result will be that you will have no dominion beyond the River.

17 The king sent an answer:

To Rehum the commander, *to* Shimshai the scribe, *to* the rest of their companions who dwell in Samaria, and *to* the remainder beyond the River:

Peace, and so forth.*

18 The letter which you sent to us has been clearly read before me. 19 And I gave the command, and a search has been made, and it was found that this city in former times has revolted against kings, and rebellion and sedition have been fostered in it. 20 There have also been mighty kings over Jerusalem, who have [o]ruled over all *the region* [p]beyond the River; and tax, tribute, and custom were paid to them. 21 Now give the command to make these men cease, that this city may not be built until the command is given by me.

22 Take heed now that you do not fail to do this. Why should damage increase to the hurt of the kings?

23 Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem against the Jews, and by force of arms made them cease. 24 Thus the work of the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Restoration of the Temple Resumed

5 Then the prophet [a]Haggai and [b]Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who *were* in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, *who was* over them. 2 So [c]Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak* rose up and began to build the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem; and [d]the prophets of God *were* with them, helping them.

3 At the same time [e]Tattenai the governor of *the region* beyond the River* and Shethar-Boznai and their companions

* **4:8** The original language of Ezra 4:8 through 6:18 is Aramaic. * **4:9** Literally *Then* • Or *Susa* * **4:10** That is, the Euphrates • Literally *and now* * **4:11** Literally *and now* * **4:17** Literally *and now* * **5:2** Spelled *Jehozadak* in 1 Chronicles 6:14 * **5:3** That is, the Euphrates

4:6 *Ahasuerus.* When Darius I died (486 B.C.) his son Ahasuerus reigned (485–465 B.C.). Ahasuerus's Greek name was Xerxes. This is the same king who appears in the Book of Esther.

4:10 *the River.* This reference to simply "the River" means the River Euphrates.

4:21 *this city may not be built.* The Persian king Artaxerxes ordered the Jewish people to cease their work on the temple. Years later at the request of Nehemiah the decision was reviewed (Neh. 2:1–8).

4:24 *Darius king of Persia.* This is not the same Darius as the Darius of Daniel 5 and 6.

4:7 [g] Ezra 7:1, 7, 21 [h] 2 Kin. 18:26 **4:9** [i] 2 Kin. 17:30, 31 **4:10** [j] 2 Kin. 17:24 [k] Ezra 4:11, 17; 7:12 **4:12** [l] 2 Chr. 36:13 [m] Ezra 5:3, 9 **4:13** [n] Ezra 4:20; 7:24 **4:20** [o] Ps. 72:8 [p] Gen. 15:18 **5:1** [a] Hag. 1:1 [b] Zech. 1:1 **5:2** [c] Ezra 3:2 [d] Hag. 2:4 **5:3** [e] Ezra 5:6; 6:6

came to them and spoke thus to them: [f]"Who has commanded you to build this temple and finish this wall?" [4][g]Then, accordingly, we told them the names of the men who were constructing this building. [5]But [h]the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, so that they could not make them cease till a report could go to Darius. Then a [i]written answer was returned concerning this *matter.* [6]This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai sent:

The governor of *the region* beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, [j]and his companions, the Persians who *were in the region* beyond the River, to Darius the king.

[7](They sent a letter to him, in which was written thus)

To Darius the king:

All peace.

[8] Let it be known to the king that we went into the province of Judea, to the temple of the great God, which is being built with heavy stones, and timber is being laid in the walls; and this work goes on diligently and prospers in their hands.

[9] Then we asked those elders, *and* spoke thus to them: [k]"Who commanded you to build this temple and to finish these walls?" [10]We also asked them their names to inform you, that we might write the names of the men who *were* chief among them.

[11] And thus they returned us an answer, saying: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built [l]and completed. [12]But [m]because our fathers provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of [n]Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, *who* destroyed this temple and [o]carried the people away to Babylon. [13]However, in the first year of [p]Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to build this house of God. [14]Also, [q]the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple that *was* in Jerusalem and carried into the temple of Babylon—those King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to [r]one named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. [15]And he said to him, 'Take these articles; go, carry them to the temple *site* that *is* in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its former site.' [16]Then the same Sheshbazzar came *and* [s]laid the foundation of the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem; but from that time even until now it has been under construction, and [t]it is not finished."

[17] Now therefore, if *it seems* good to the king, [u]let a search be made in the king's treasure house, which *is* there in Babylon, whether it is *so* that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send us his pleasure concerning this *matter.*

The Decree of Darius

6 Then King Darius issued a decree, [a]and a search was made in the archives,* where the treasures were stored in Babylon. [2]And at Achmetha,* in the palace that *is* in the province of [b]Media, a scroll was found, and in it a record *was* written thus:

[3] In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued a [c]decree *concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem: "Let the house be rebuilt, the place where they offered sacrifices; and let the foundations of it be firmly laid, its height sixty cubits *and* its width sixty cubits, [4][d]*with* three rows of heavy stones and one row of new timber. Let the [e]expenses be paid from the king's treasury. [5]Also let [f]the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple which *is* in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and taken back to the temple which *is* in Jerusalem, *each* to its place; and deposit *them* in the house of God"—

[6] [g]Now *therefore,* Tattenai, governor of *the region* beyond the River, and

* **6:1** Literally *house of the scrolls* * **6:2** Probably *Ecbatana,* the ancient capital of Media

5:12 ***our fathers provoked the God of heaven.*** Although the Jewish people acknowledged that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the first temple, they traced the cause not to his power, but to their sin and God's judgment.
6:2 ***Achmetha.*** This city, also called "Ecbatana," was the summer residence of the Persian kings.
6:3 ***its height sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits.*** Though the complete dimensions are not given, it is likely that the second temple was built on the foundation stones that were still in place from the time of Solomon (1 Kin. 6:2).

5:3 [f] Ezra 1:3; 5:9 **5:4** [g] Ezra 5:10 **5:5** [h] Ps. 33:18 [i] Ezra 6:6 **5:6** [j] Ezra 4:7–10 **5:9** [k] Ezra 5:3, 4 **5:11** [l] 1 Kin. 6:1, 38 **5:12** [m] 2 Chr. 34:25; 36:16, 17 [n] 2 Kin. 24:2; 25:8–11 [o] Jer. 13:19 **5:13** [p] Ezra 1:1 **5:14** [q] Ezra 1:7, 8; 6:5 [r] Hag. 1:14; 2:2, 21 **5:16** [s] Ezra 3:8–10 [t] Ezra 6:15 **5:17** [u] Ezra 6:1, 2 **6:1** [a] Ezra 5:17 **6:2** [b] 2 Kin. 17:6 **6:3** [c] Ezra 1:1; 5:13 **6:4** [d] 1 Kin. 6:36 [e] Ezra 3:7 **6:5** [f] Ezra 1:7, 8; 5:14 **6:6** [g] Ezra 5:3, 6

Shethar-Boznai, and your companions the Persians who *are* beyond the River, keep yourselves far from there. 7Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site.

8 Moreover I issue a decree *as to* what you shall do for the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God: Let the cost be paid at the king's expense from taxes *on the region* beyond the River; this is to be given immediately to these men, so that they are not hindered. 9And whatever they need—young bulls, rams, and lambs for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the request of the priests who *are* in Jerusalem—let it be given them day by day without fail, 10[h]that they may offer sacrifices of sweet aroma to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

11 Also I issue a decree that whoever alters this edict, let a timber be pulled from his house and erected, and let him be hanged on it; [i]and let his house be made a refuse heap because of this. 12And may the God who causes His [j]name to dwell there destroy any king or people who put their hand to alter it, or to destroy this house of God which is in Jerusalem. I Darius issue a decree; let it be done diligently.

The Temple Completed and Dedicated

13Then Tattenai, governor of *the region* beyond the River, Shethar-Boznai, and their companions diligently did according to what King Darius had sent. 14[k]So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished *it,* according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of [l]Cyrus, [m]Darius, and [n]Artaxerxes king of Persia. 15Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. 16Then the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the descendants of the captivity, celebrated [o]the dedication of this house of God with joy. 17And they [p]offered sacrifices at the dedication of this house of God, one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. 18They assigned the priests to their [q]divisions and the Levites to their [r]divisions, over the service of God in Jerusalem, [s]as it is written in the Book of Moses.

The Passover Celebrated

19And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover [t]on the fourteenth *day* of the first month. 20For the priests and the Levites had [u]purified themselves; all of them *were ritually* clean. And they [v]slaughtered the Passover *lambs* for all the descendants of the captivity, for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. 21Then the children of Israel who had returned from the captivity ate together with all who had separated themselves from the [w]filth of the nations of the land in order to seek the LORD God of Israel. 22And they kept the [x]Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy; for the LORD made them joyful, and [y]turned the heart [z]of the king of Assyria toward them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

The Arrival of Ezra

7 Now after these things, in the reign of [a]Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the [b]son of Seraiah, [c]the son of Azariah, the son of [d]Hilkiah, 2the son of Shallum, the

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6:8–10 ***Moreover.*** Not only could Tattenai not stop reconstruction of the temple, he also had to fund its completion.

6:16 ***celebrated the dedication . . . with joy.*** Some have suggested that Psalms 145–148 were used to celebrate the completion of the rebuilding of the temple.

6:19 ***kept the Passover.*** This celebration must have been exceptionally memorable; it was the first time since the captivity that the people were able to celebrate according to the law, with sacrifices offered in the temple (v. 20).

6:21 ***the nations of the land.*** The term probably refers to the people who had been transplanted into Palestine by the Assyrians.

6:22 Providence—The situation the Jews faced seemed hopeless. But God in His providence caused Cyrus to look favorably upon the Jews and allow them to return to their homeland. What seemed impossible became possible through God. Sometimes it is easy for us to forget that even in the worst of times and circumstances God is still on His throne.

7:1–5 ***after these things.*** The events of chapter 6 took place during the reign of King Darius. The temple was completed and dedicated in 515 B.C. Chapter 7 jumps forward many years to the reign of Artaxerxes (464–424 B.C.). Thus, between chapters 6 and 7 there is a gap of approximately 60 years. During this period the events of the Book of Esther took place.

6:10 [h] Ezra 7:23 **6:11** [i] Dan. 2:5; 3:29 **6:12** [j] 1 Kin. 9:3 **6:14** [k] Ezra 5:1, 2 [l] Ezra 1:1; 5:13; 6:3 [m] Ezra 4:24; 6:12 [n] Ezra 7:1, 11 **6:16** [o] 1 Kin. 8:63 **6:17** [p] Ezra 8:35 **6:18** [q] 1 Chr. 24:1 [r] 1 Chr. 23:6 [s] Num. 3:6; 8:9 **6:19** [t] Ex. 12:6 **6:20** [u] 2 Chr. 29:34; 30:15 [v] 2 Chr. 35:11 **6:21** [w] Ezra 9:11 **6:22** [x] Ex. 12:15; 13:6, 7 [y] Prov. 21:1] [z] Ezra 1:1; 6:1 **7:1** [a] Neh. 2:1 [b] 1 Chr. 6:14 [c] Jer. 52:24 [d] 2 Chr. 35:8

son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, 3the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, 4the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, 5the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest— 6this Ezra came up from Babylon; and he *was* [e]a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given. The king granted him all his request, [f]according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. 7[g]*Some* of the children of Israel, the priests, [h]the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and [i]the Nethinim came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. 8And Ezra came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which *was* in the seventh year of the king. 9On the first *day* of the first month he began *his* journey from Babylon, and on the first *day* of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, [j]according to the good hand of his God upon him. 10For Ezra had prepared his heart to [k]seek the Law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to [l]teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

The Letter of Artaxerxes to Ezra

11This *is* a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave Ezra the priest, the scribe, expert in the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of His statutes to Israel:

12 Artaxerxes,* [m]king of kings,

To Ezra the priest, a scribe of the Law of the God of heaven:

Perfect *peace*, [n]and so forth.*

13 I issue a decree that all those of the people of Israel and the priests and Levites in my realm, who volunteer to go up to Jerusalem, may go with you. 14And whereas you are being sent by the king and his [o]seven counselors to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, with regard to the Law of your God which *is* in your hand; 15and *whereas you are* to carry the silver and gold which the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, [p]whose dwelling *is* in Jerusalem; 16[q]and *whereas* all the silver and gold that you may find in all the province of Babylon, along with the freewill offering of the people and the priests, *are to be* [r]freely offered for the house of their God in Jerusalem— 17now therefore, be careful to buy with this money bulls, rams, and lambs, with their [s]grain offerings and their drink offerings, and [t]offer them on the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem.

18 And whatever seems good to you and your brethren to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, do it according to the will of your God. 19Also the articles that are given to you for the service of the house of your God, deliver in full before the God of Jerusalem. 20And whatever more may be needed for the house of your God, which you may have occasion to provide, pay *for it* from the king's treasury.

21 And I, *even* I, Artaxerxes the king, issue a decree to all the treasurers who *are in the region* beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, may require of you, let it be done diligently, 22up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred kors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribed limit. 23Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it diligently be done for the house of the God of heaven. For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

24 Also we inform you that it shall not be lawful to impose tax, tribute, or custom on any of the priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, Nethinim, or servants of this house of God. 25And you, Ezra, according to your God-given wisdom, [u]set magistrates and judges who may judge all the people who *are in the region* beyond the River, all such as know the laws of your God; and [v]teach those

* **7:12** The original language of Ezra 7:12–26 is Aramaic. • Literally *and now*

7:6 ***a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses.*** A scribe was one who copied and studied the law. After the exile, the office of scribe came into prominence, in some ways replacing the prophet in importance, and eventually eclipsing the role of the priest. In the Gospels, numerous references are made to the scribes as ones who were considered spiritual leaders of the people.
7:9 ***first month . . . fifth month.*** The first month corresponds to March-April, the fifth month to July-August. ***the good hand of his God.*** Ezra was grateful for God's protection even more since the route he traveled was dangerous because of rebellion in Egypt and the fact that spring was the time armies began their campaigns.
7:9–10 Obedience—Ezra followed God's command and made his paramount exercise the study, practice, and teaching of God's law. The "good hand of his God" was upon Ezra, for he "had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD." That same command is for us also. We don't always know when we as Christians are being watched by others, but if we are diligent to obey, our lives will point to Christ.
7:22 ***one hundred talents of silver.*** One hundred talents of silver weighed nearly four tons. One hundred kors of wheat amounted to about 625 bushels; one hundred baths of wine or oil equaled about six hundred gallons each.

7:6 [e] Ezra 7:11, 12, 21 [f] Ezra 7:9, 28; 8:22 **7:7** [g] Ezra 8:1–14 [h] Ezra 8:15 [i] Ezra 2:43; 8:20 **7:9** [j] Neh. 2:8, 18 **7:10** [k] Ps. 119:45 [l] Deut. 33:10 **7:12** [m] Dan. 2:37 [n] Ezra 4:10 **7:14** [o] Esth. 1:14 **7:15** [p] Ezra 6:12 **7:16** [q] Ezra 8:25 [r] 1 Chr. 29:6, 9 **7:17** [s] Num. 15:4–13 [t] Deut. 12:5–11 **7:25** [u] Ex. 18:21, 22 [v] [Mal. 2:7]

who do not know *them*. 26Whoever will not observe the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily on him, whether *it be* death, or banishment, or confiscation of goods, or imprisonment.

27[w]Blessed *be* the LORD God of our fathers, [x]who has put *such a thing* as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem, 28and [y]has extended mercy to me before the king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty princes.

So I was encouraged, as [z]the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me; and I gathered leading men of Israel to go up with me.

Heads of Families Who Returned with Ezra

8 These *are* the heads of their fathers' *houses*, and *this is* the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of King Artaxerxes: 2of the sons of Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of David, [a]Hattush; 3of the sons of Shecaniah, of the sons of [b]Parosh, Zechariah; and registered with him *were* one hundred and fifty males; 4of the sons of [c]Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males; 5of the sons of Shechaniah,* Ben-Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males; 6of the sons of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males; 7of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males; 8of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him eighty males; 9of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males; 10of the sons of Shelomith,* Ben-Josiphiah, and with him one hundred and sixty males; 11of the sons of [d]Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males; 12of the sons of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred and ten males; 13of the last sons of Adonikam, whose names *are* these—Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah—and with them sixty males; 14also of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and Zabbud, and with them seventy males.

Servants for the Temple

15Now I gathered them by the river that flows to Ahava, and we camped there three days. And I looked among the people and the priests, and found none of the [e]sons of Levi there. 16Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and [f]Meshullam, leaders; also for Joiarib and Elnathan, men of understanding. 17And I gave them a command for Iddo the chief man at the place Casiphia, and I told them what they should say to Iddo *and* his brethren* the Nethinim at the place Casiphia—that they should bring us servants for the house of our God. 18Then, by the good hand of our God upon us, they [g]brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli the son of Levi, the son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and brothers, eighteen men; 19and [h]Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brothers and their sons, twenty men; 20[i]also of the Nethinim, whom David and the leaders had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinim. All of them were designated by name.

Fasting and Prayer for Protection

21Then I [j]proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might [k]humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the [l]right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. 22For [m]I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, [n]"The hand of our God *is* upon all those for [o]good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath *are* [p]against all those who [q]forsake Him." 23So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He [r]answered our prayer.

Gifts for the Temple

24And I separated twelve of the leaders of the priests—Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them—25and weighed out to them [s]the silver, the gold, and the articles, the offering for the house of our God which the king and his counselors and his princes, and all Israel *who were* present, had offered. 26I weighed into their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, silver

* **8:5** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *the sons of Zatho, Shechaniah.*
* **8:10** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *the sons of Banni, Shelomith.*
* **8:17** Following Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *to Iddo his brother;* Septuagint reads *to their brethren.*

8:17 ***Casiphia.*** The significance of Casiphia is uncertain, but it is thought that there may have been a Jewish sanctuary or temple there.

8:22 ***seek Him.*** Ezra knew that God would protect him; he wasn't afraid to "stick his neck out" even though it might have been more comfortable to have the security of soldiers as escorts. In our own lives, it is the same. Our responsibility is obedience, no matter what. Our safety is God's responsibility.

7:27 [w] 1 Chr. 29:10 [x] Ezra 6:22 **7:28** [y] Ezra 9:9 [z] Ezra 5:5; 7:6, 9; 8:18 **8:2** [a] 1 Chr. 3:22 **8:3** [b] Ezra 2:3 **8:4** [c] Ezra 10:30 **8:11** [d] Ezra 10:28 **8:15** [e] Ezra 7:7; 8:2 **8:16** [f] Ezra 10:15 **8:18** [g] Neh. 8:7 **8:19** [h] Neh. 12:24 **8:20** [i] Ezra 2:43; 7:7 **8:21** [j] 1 Sam. 7:6 [k] Is. 58:3, 5 [l] Ps. 5:8 **8:22** [m] 1 Cor. 9:15 [n] Ezra 7:6, 9, 28 [o] [Rom. 8:28] [p] [Ps. 34:16] [q] [2 Chr. 15:2] **8:23** [r] 2 Chr. 33:13 **8:25** [s] Ezra 7:15, 16

articles *weighing* one hundred talents, one hundred talents of gold, 27twenty gold basins *worth* a thousand drachmas, and two vessels of fine polished bronze, precious as gold. 28And I said to them, "You *are* [t]holy to the LORD; the articles *are* [u]holy also; and the silver and the gold *are* a freewill offering to the LORD God of your fathers. 29Watch and keep *them* until you weigh *them* before the leaders of the priests and the Levites and [v]heads of the fathers' *houses* of Israel in Jerusalem, *in* the chambers of the house of the LORD." 30So the priests and the Levites received the silver and the gold and the articles by weight, to bring *them* to Jerusalem to the house of our God.

The Return to Jerusalem

31Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth *day* of the first month, to go to Jerusalem. And [w]the hand of our God was upon us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambush along the road. 32So we [x]came to Jerusalem, and stayed there three days.

33Now on the fourth day the silver and the gold and the articles were [y]weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him *was* Eleazar the son of Phinehas; with them *were* the Levites, [z]Jozabad the son of Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui, 34with the number *and* weight of everything. All the weight was written down at that time.

35The children of those who had been [a]carried away captive, who had come from the captivity, [b]offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve male goats *as* a sin offering. All *this was* a burnt offering to the LORD.

36And they delivered the king's [c]orders to the king's satraps and the governors *in the region* beyond the River. So they gave support to the people and the house of God.

Intermarriage with Pagans

9 When these things were done, the leaders came to me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not [a]separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, [b]with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2For they have [c]taken some of their daughters *as wives* for themselves and their sons, so that the [d]holy seed is [e]mixed with the peoples of *those* lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass." 3So when I heard this thing, [f]I tore my garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down [g]astonished. 4Then everyone who [h]trembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me, because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the [i]evening sacrifice.

5At the evening sacrifice I arose from my fasting; and having torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and [j]spread out my hands to the LORD my God. 6And I said: "O my God, I am too [k]ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for [l]our iniquities have risen higher than *our* heads, and our guilt has [m]grown up to the heavens. 7Since the days of our fathers to this day [n]we *have been* very guilty, and for our iniquities [o]we, our kings, *and* our priests have been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the [p]sword, to captivity, to plunder, and to [q]humiliation, as *it is* this day. 8And now for a little while grace has been *shown* from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may [r]enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage. 9[s]For we *were* slaves. [t]Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage; but [u]He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us [v]a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. 10And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments, 11which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, 'The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with the [w]uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity. 12Now therefore, [x]do not give your daughters as wives for their sons, nor take their daughters to your sons; and [y]never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of the land, and [z]leave *it* as an inheritance to your children forever.' 13And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, since You our God [a]have punished us

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9:2 ***taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves.*** Intermarrying with people who did not worship the One True God was expressly forbidden (Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3). While there are instances of marriages to non-Israelites being blessed (Rahab, Ruth), these were cases where the woman had clearly taken a stand as a believer in Yahweh, renouncing her old religion.

9:13–14 ***punished us less than our iniquities deserve.*** Israel was guilty and deserved whatever punishment God gave them. God would have been

8:28 [t] Lev. 21:6–9 [u] Lev. 22:2, 3 **8:29** [v] Ezra 4:3 **8:31** [w] Ezra 7:6, 9, 28 **8:32** [x] Neh. 2:11 **8:33** [y] Ezra 8:26, 30 [z] Neh. 11:16 **8:35** [a] Ezra 2:1 [b] Ezra 6:17 **8:36** [c] Ezra 7:21–24 **9:1** [a] Neh. 9:2 [b] Deut. 12:30, 31 **9:2** [c] [Deut. 7:3] [d] Ex. 22:31 [e] [2 Cor. 6:14] **9:3** [f] Job 1:20 [g] Ps. 143:4 **9:4** [h] Ezra 10:3 [i] Ex. 29:39 **9:5** [j] Ex. 9:29 **9:6** [k] Dan. 9:7, 8 [l] Ps. 38:4 [m] Rev. 18:5 **9:7** [n] Dan. 9:5, 6 [o] Deut. 28:36 [p] Deut. 32:25 [q] Dan. 9:7, 8 **9:8** [r] Ps. 34:5 **9:9** [s] Neh. 9:36 [t] Ps. 136:23 [u] Ezra 7:28 [v] Is. 5:2 **9:11** [w] Ezra 6:21 **9:12** [x] [Deut. 7:3, 4] [y] Deut. 23:6 [z] [Prov. 13:22; 20:7] **9:13** [a] [Ps. 103:10]

less than our iniquities *deserve,* and have given us *such* deliverance as this, 14should we [b]again break Your commandments, and [c]join in marriage with the people *committing* these abominations? Would You not be [d]angry with us until You had consumed *us,* so that *there would be* no remnant or survivor? 15O LORD God of Israel, [e]You *are* righteous, for we are left as a remnant, as *it is* this day. [f]Here we *are* before You, [g]in our guilt, though no one can stand before You because of this!"

Confession of Improper Marriages

10 Now [a]while Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing, weeping, and bowing down [b]before the house of God, a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very [c]bitterly. 2And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, *one* of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, "We have [d]trespassed against our God, and have taken pagan wives from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope in Israel in spite of this. 3Now therefore, let us make [e]a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them, according to the advice of my master and of those who [f]tremble at [g]the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the [h]law. 4Arise, for *this* matter *is* your *responsibility.* We also *are* with you. [i]Be of good courage, and do *it*."

5Then Ezra arose, and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel [j]swear an oath that they would do according to this word. So they swore an oath. 6Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib; and *when* he came there, he [k]ate no bread and drank no water, for he mourned because of the guilt of those from the captivity.

7And they issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the descendants of the captivity, that they must gather at Jerusalem, 8and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the instructions of the leaders and elders, all his property would be confiscated, and he himself would be separated from the assembly of those from the captivity.

9So all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered at Jerusalem within three days. It *was* the ninth month, on the twentieth of the month; and [l]all the people sat in the open square of the house of God, trembling because of *this* matter and because of heavy rain. 10Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel. 11Now therefore, [m]make confession to the LORD God of your fathers, and do His will; [n]separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives."

12Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, "Yes! As you have said, so we must do. 13But *there are* many people; *it is* the season for heavy rain, and we are not able to stand outside. Nor *is this* the work of one or two days, for *there are* many of us who have transgressed in this matter. 14Please, let the leaders of our entire assembly stand; and let all those in our cities who have taken pagan wives come at appointed times, together with the elders and judges of their cities, until [o]the fierce wrath of our God is turned away from us in this matter." 15Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and [p]Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite gave them support.

16Then the descendants of the captivity

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just in consuming them, even to the point of leaving no remnant or survivor. But in His great mercy, God provided a way out for Israel. In an even greater way, He provided a way out for all mankind. Sin is always sin, no matter how small it may seem to us. God would be justified in destroying us all for only one sin. God is just. This means that He cannot tolerate sin even a little bit. But He is also more loving, kind, and compassionate than we can comprehend. In His mercy, He provided the way out. He sent His son to pay the price of our sin for us. In this way His justice was satisfied, and at the same time His love provided a way to save us.

9:15 ***we are left as a remnant.*** It is true that Israel was rebellious and evil at times in her history. Kings and Chronicles record how wicked they had become. But the people who returned to rebuild the temple were a chastened and different generation from the one taken into captivity. The men and women who went back were determined to obey God's laws and would not tolerate idolatry. While the returning Jews succeeded in ridding themselves of heathen idol worship, they created another problem. They set in motion a legalistic system that culminated with a people who valued their interpretation of the law over the Scriptures. The condition progressed until Jesus spoke out against their extremism and their lack of mercy and compassion (Matt. 23:1–36).

10:3 Fear of God—When one thinks of fear, usually what comes to mind is dread and alarm—an unpleasant emotion caused by the anticipation of danger or a threat. But the fear of God is another thing. We tremble and obey Him, not out of dread but out of deep reverence for an almighty God. The covenant the men of Israel made with God was the most binding form of covenant a person could make. They were pledging "in the fear of God" to do as they promised.

10:9 ***the ninth month.*** The ninth month, Chislev, corresponds to November-December.

9:14 [b] [John 5:14] [c] Neh. 13:23 [d] Deut. 9:8 **9:15** [e] Dan. 9:14 [f] [Rom. 3:19] [g] 1 Cor. 15:17 **10:1** [a] Dan. 9:4, 20 [b] 2 Chr. 20:9 [c] Neh. 8:1–9 **10:2** [d] Neh. 13:23–27 **10:3** [e] 2 Chr. 34:31 [f] Ezra 9:4 [g] Deut. 7:2, 3 [h] Deut. 24:1, 2 **10:4** [i] 1 Chr. 28:10 **10:5** [j] Neh. 5:12; 13:25 **10:6** [k] Deut. 9:18 **10:9** [l] 1 Sam. 12:18 **10:11** [m] [Prov. 28:13] [n] Ezra 10:3 **10:14** [o] 2 Chr. 28:11–13; 29:10; 30:8 **10:15** [p] Neh. 3:4

did so. And Ezra the priest, *with* certain [q]heads of the fathers' *households,* were set apart by the fathers' households, each of them by name; and they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. 17By the first day of the first month they finished *questioning* all the men who had taken pagan wives.

Pagan Wives Put Away

18And among the sons of the priests who had taken pagan wives *the following* were found of the sons of [r]Jeshua the son of Jozadak,* and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. 19And they [s]gave their promise that they would put away their wives; and *being* [t]guilty, *they presented* a ram of the flock as their [u]trespass offering.

20Also of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah; 21of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah; 22of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

23Also of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (the same *is* Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24Also of the singers: Eliashib; and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

25And others of Israel: of the [v]sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Jeziah, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah; 26of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Eliah; 27of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza; 28of the [w]sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, *and* Athlai; 29of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, *and* Ramoth;* 30of the [x]sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh; 31*of* the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32Benjamin, Malluch, *and* Shemariah; 33of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, *and* Shimei; 34of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, 35Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluh,* 36Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai,* 38Bani, Binnui, Shimei, 39Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, 40Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42Shallum, Amariah, *and* Joseph; 43of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai,* Joel, *and* Benaiah.

44All these had taken pagan wives, and *some* of them had wives *by whom* they had children.

* **10:18** Spelled *Jehozadak* in 1 Chronicles 6:14
* **10:29** Or *Jeremoth* * **10:35** Or *Cheluhi,* or *Cheluhu* * **10:37** Or *Jaasu* * **10:43** Or *Jaddu*

10:16 [q] Ezra 4:3 **10:18** [r] Ezra 5:2 **10:19** [s] 2 Kin. 10:15 [t] Lev. 6:4, 6 [u] Lev. 5:6, 15 **10:25** [v] Ezra 2:3; 8:3

10:28 [w] Ezra 8:11 **10:30** [x] Ezra 8:4

THE BOOK OF
NEHEMIAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** It is apparent that much of this book came from Nehemiah's personal memoirs. The account is extremely vivid and frank. Obviously, 1:1—7:5; 12:27–43; and 13:4–31 are the "words of Nehemiah." Some scholars state that Nehemiah composed the above portions and compiled the rest. Others feel that Ezra wrote 7:6—12:26 and 12:44—13:3, then put together the rest using Nehemiah's diary. Nehemiah 7:5–73 and Ezra 2:1–70 are almost identical, but both lists may have been pulled from an existing record of the same period.

▶ **TIME:** 444–425 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Neh. 6:15

▶ **THEME:** Nehemiah's role in rebuilding the temple and the walls of Jerusalem is more political than physical, as he deals with the new political situation arising in Persia and in Jerusalem. He also serves as the general contractor who pulls together the raw materials and the workers while orchestrating the rebuilding process. Within all his work, there is an underlying understanding that he has been called by God to do this work and is fulfilling God's purposes. When the people don't follow through with adhering to the law, Nehemiah is just as forceful as Ezra in calling the people back to repentance and obedience.

Nehemiah Prays for His People

1 The words of [a]Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.

It came to pass in the month of Chislev, *in* the [b]twentieth year, as I was in [c]Shushan* the citadel, **2**that [d]Hanani one of my brethren came with men from Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. **3**And they said to me, "The survivors who are left from the captivity in the [e]province *are* there in great distress and [f]reproach. [g]The wall of Jerusalem [h]*is* also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire."

4So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *for many* days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

5And I said: "I pray, [i]LORD God of heaven, O great and [j]awesome God, [k]*You* who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with those who love You* and observe Your* commandments, **6**please let Your ear be attentive and [l]Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and [m]confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned. **7**[n]We have acted very corruptly against You, and have [o]not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. **8**Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your

* **1:1** Or *Susa* * **1:5** Literally *Him* • Literally *His*

1:1 ***Nehemiah.*** Nehemiah, whose name means "the Lord comforts," was a highly placed statesman associated with Ezra in the work of reestablishing the people of Judah in the Promised Land. ***the twentieth year.*** This is a reference to the twentieth year of rule of Artaxerxes I Longimanus (456–424 B.C.). It was he who had commissioned Ezra to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:1). ***Shushan the citadel.*** The capital, or fortified royal palace, was built on an acropolis about 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf, in present day Iran. This is the city where Daniel received his vision about the rams and goats (Dan. 8:2) and the home of Mordecai and Esther (Esth. 1:2).

1:2 ***men from Judah . . . Jerusalem.*** The journey from Susa to Jerusalem, which covered nearly one thousand miles, probably took about four months.

1:5 Obedience—The covenant of God with the Israelites had been made with the understanding that obedience would bring God's great blessings, and the result of rebellion would be curses, one of which was captivity (Deut. 28–30). God had been patient for a long time, but eventually the nation was overpowered, and many of the people taken into captivity. Nehemiah acknowledged not only the necessity of obedience, but the confidence that he had that God would answer his prayer because God said He would hear and bless the obedient.

1:1 [a] Neh. 10:1 [b] Neh. 2:1 [c] Esth. 1:1, 2, 5 **1:2** [d] Neh. 7:2 **1:3** [e] Neh. 7:6 [f] Neh. 2:17 [g] Neh. 2:17 [h] 2 Kin. 25:10 **1:5** [i] Dan. 9:4 [j] Neh. 4:14 [k] [Ex. 20:6; 34:6, 7] **1:6** [l] 2 Chr. 6:40 [m] Dan. 9:20 **1:7** [n] Dan. 9:5 [o] Deut. 28:15

servant Moses, saying, [p]'*If* you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations;* [9][q]but *if* you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, [r]though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, *yet* I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.'* [10][s]Now these *are* Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand. [11]O Lord, I pray, please [t]let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who [u]desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

For I was the king's [v]cupbearer.

Nehemiah Sent to Judah

2 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of [a]King Artaxerxes, *when* wine *was* before him, that [b]I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. [2]Therefore the king said to me, "Why *is* your face sad, since you *are* not sick? This *is* nothing but [c]sorrow of heart."

So I became dreadfully afraid, [3]and said to the king, [d]"May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when [e]the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, *lies* waste, and its gates are burned with [f]fire?"

[4]Then the king said to me, "What do you request?"

So I [g]prayed to the God of heaven. [5]And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."

[6]Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him [h]a time.

[7]Furthermore I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the [i]governors *of the region* beyond the River,* that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, [8]and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which *pertains* [j]to the temple,* for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy." And the king granted *them* to me [k]according to the good hand of my God upon me.

[9]Then I went to the governors *in the region* beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. [10]When [l]Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official* heard *of it*, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

Nehemiah Views the Wall of Jerusalem

[11]So I [m]came to Jerusalem and was there three days. [12]Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode. [13]And I went out by night [n]through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the Refuse Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were [o]broken down and its gates which were burned with fire. [14]Then I went on to the [p]Fountain Gate and to the [q]King's Pool, but *there was* no room for the animal under me to pass. [15]So I went up in the night by the [r]valley, and viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. [16]And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.

[17]Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lies*

* **1:8** Leviticus 26:33 * **1:9** Deuteronomy 30:2–5 * **2:7** That is, the Euphrates, and so elsewhere in this book * **2:8** Literally *house* * **2:10** Literally *servant*, and so elsewhere in this book.

1:11 ***the king's cupbearer.*** As the king's cupbearer, Nehemiah held an honored position. His constant proximity to the king of Persia made him privy to the state secrets and personal affairs of the king.

2:2 ***face sad.*** Persian monarchs believed that just being in their presence would make any person happy. Yet, Nehemiah was about to request the emperor's permission to go to Jerusalem, suggesting that he would rather be somewhere other than in the emperor's presence. In addition to this, it was Artaxerxes himself who had ordered the work on the wall to be stopped (Ezra 4:21–23). Nehemiah had reason to be afraid.

2:4 ***I prayed.*** Even though Nehemiah had come into the presence of the king, he never left the presence of God.

2:8 ***the king's forest . . . timber.*** Jerusalem had plenty of limestone for building projects, but timber was scarce.

2:10 ***the Ammonite.*** At the time of Nehemiah, the Ammonites (Gen. 19:38) had pushed west into the land vacated by Judah. The prospect of a strong Jewish community in newly fortified Jerusalem would have seemed threatening.

1:8 [p] Lev. 26:33 **1:9** [q] [Deut. 4:29–31; 30:2–5] [r] Deut. 30:4 **1:10** [s] Deut. 9:29 **1:11** [t] Neh. 1:6 [u] Is. 26:8 [v] Neh. 2:1 **2:1** [a] Ezra 7:1 [b] Neh. 1:11 **2:2** [c] Prov. 15:13 **2:3** [d] Dan. 2:4; 5:10; 6:6, 21 [e] 2 Chr. 36:19 [f] Neh. 1:3 **2:4** [g] Neh. 1:4 **2:6** [h] Neh. 5:14; 13:6 **2:7** [i] Ezra 7:21; 8:36 **2:8** [j] Neh. 3:7 [k] Ezra 5:5; 7:6, 9, 28 **2:10** [l] Neh. 2:19; 4:1 **2:11** [m] Ezra 8:32 **2:13** [n] Neh. 3:13 [o] Neh. 1:3; 2:17 **2:14** [p] Neh. 3:15 [q] 2 Kin. 20:20 **2:15** [r] 2 Sam. 15:23

waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be [s]a reproach."
18And I told them of [t]the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me.

So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they [u]set their hands to *this* good *work*.

19But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *of it*, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What *is* this thing that you are doing? [v]Will you rebel against the king?"

20So I answered them, and said to them, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, [w]but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."

Rebuilding the Wall

3 Then [a]Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests [b]and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built [c]as far as the Tower of the Hundred,* *and* consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of [d]Hananel. 2Next to *Eliashib** [e]the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

3Also the sons of Hassenaah built [f]the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and [g]hung its doors with its bolts and bars. 4And next to them [h]Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz,* made repairs. Next to them [i]Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs. Next to them Zadok the son of Baana made repairs. 5Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their shoulders* to [j]the work of their Lord.

6Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired [k]the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors, with its bolts and bars. 7And next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite, Jadon the Meronothite, the [l]men of Gibeon and Mizpah, repaired the [m]residence* of the governor *of the region* beyond the River. 8Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Also next to him Hananiah, one* of the perfumers, made repairs; and they fortified Jerusalem as far as the [n]Broad Wall. 9And next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, leader of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. 10Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs in front of his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabniah made repairs.

11Malchijah the son of Harim and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section, [o]as well as the Tower of the Ovens. 12And next to him was Shallum the son of Hallohesh, leader of half the district of Jerusalem; he and his daughters made repairs.

13Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired [p]the Valley Gate. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and *repaired* a thousand cubits of the wall as far as [q]the Refuse Gate.

14Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of [r]Beth Haccerem, repaired the Refuse Gate; he built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.

15Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired [s]the Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of [t]Shelah by the [u]King's Garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. 16After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zur, made repairs as far as *the place* in front of the tombs* of David, to the [v]man-made pool, and as far as the House of the Mighty.

17After him the Levites, *under* Rehum the son of Bani, made repairs. Next to him Hashabiah, leader of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district. 18After him their brethren, *under* Bavai* the son of Henadad, leader of the *other* half of the district of Keilah, made repairs. 19And next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the leader of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the Ascent to the Armory at the [w]buttress. 20After him Baruch the son of Zabbai* carefully repaired the other section, from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. 21After him Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz,* repaired another section, from the

* **3:1** Hebrew *Hammeah*, also at 12:39 * **3:2** Literally *On his hand* * **3:4** Or *Hakkoz* * **3:5** Literally *necks* * **3:7** Literally *throne* * **3:8** Literally *the son* * **3:16** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *tomb*. * **3:18** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Syriac read *Binnui* (compare verse 24). * **3:20** A few Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Zaccai*. * **3:21** Or *Hakkoz*

2:18 ***God which had been good.*** Nehemiah emphasized that it was not just his own idea to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. The idea had come to him from the Lord (vv. 8,12).

3:8 ***the Broad Wall.*** The Broad Wall was probably built in the seventh century B.C. by Hezekiah to accommodate the influx of refugees from the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. (2 Chr. 32:5).

3:15 ***Pool of Shelah.*** This pool is also known as the Pool of Siloam.

2:17 [s] Neh. 1:3 **2:18** [t] Neh. 2:8 [u] 2 Sam. 2:7 **2:19** [v] Neh. 6:6 **2:20** [w] Ezra 4:3 **3:1** [a] Neh. 3:20; 12:10; 13:4, 7, 28 [b] John 5:2 [c] Neh. 12:39 [d] Jer. 31:38 **3:2** [e] Neh. 7:36 **3:3** [f] Zeph. 1:10 [g] Neh. 6:1; 7:1 **3:4** [h] Ezra 8:33 [i] Ezra 10:15 **3:5** [j] [Judg. 5:23] **3:6** [k] Neh. 12:39 **3:7** [l] Neh. 7:25 [m] Neh. 2:7–9 **3:8** [n] Neh. 12:38 **3:11** [o] Neh. 12:38 **3:13** [p] Neh. 2:13, 15 [q] Neh. 2:13 **3:14** [r] Jer. 6:1 **3:15** [s] Neh. 2:14 [t] Is. 8:6 [u] 2 Kin. 25:4 **3:16** [v] 2 Kin. 20:20 **3:19** [w] 2 Chr. 26:9

door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib.

22And after him the priests, the men of the plain, made repairs. 23After him Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs by his house. 24After him [x]Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to [y]the buttress, even as far as the corner. 25Palal the son of Uzai *made repairs* opposite the buttress, and on the tower which projects from the king's upper house that *was* by the [z]court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh *made repairs.*

26Moreover [a]the Nethinim who dwelt in [b]Ophel *made repairs* as far as *the place* in front of [c]the Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower. 27After them the Tekoites repaired another section, next to the great projecting tower, and as far as the wall of Ophel.

28Beyond the [d]Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each in front of his *own* house. 29After them Zadok the son of Immer made repairs in front of his *own* house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. 30After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah made repairs in front of his dwelling. 31After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants, in front of the Miphkad* Gate, and as far as the upper room at the corner. 32And between the upper room at the corner, as far as the [e]Sheep Gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

The Wall Defended Against Enemies

4 But it so happened, [a]when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. 2And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—*stones* that are burned?"

3Now [b]Tobiah the Ammonite *was* beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up *on it,* he will break down their stone wall."

4[c]Hear, O our God, for we are despised; [d]turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! 5[e]Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked *You* to anger before the builders.

6So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its *height,* for the people had a mind to work.

7Now it happened, [f]when Sanballat, Tobiah, [g]the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, 8and all of them [h]conspired together to come *and* attack Jerusalem and create confusion. 9Nevertheless [i]we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

10Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and *there is* so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall."

11And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease."

12So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, *they will be* upon us."

13Therefore I positioned *men* behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. 14And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, [j]"Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, [k]great and awesome, and [l]fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

15And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and [m]*that* God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. 16So it was, from that time on, *that* half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the

* **3:31** Literally *Inspection* or *Recruiting*

4:2 ***revive the stones.*** When limestone is subjected to intense heat, it becomes unsuitable for building. The stones from the burned wall would not be useable.

4:9 Prayer—It is difficult to work in a hostile environment. Ambition, courage, and preparation are important in a situation like this, and so is prayer. If we are not careful to ask God to protect us, our fear can cripple us as much as the animosity of our enemies. No matter how prepared we may be for a crisis, the power of God is the ultimate factor in determining whether we win or lose.

3:24 [x] Ezra 8:33 [y] Neh. 3:19 **3:25** [z] Jer. 32:2; 33:1; 37:21 **3:26** [a] Neh. 11:21 [b] 2 Chr. 27:3 [c] Neh. 8:1, 3; 12:37 **3:28** [d] 2 Chr. 23:15 **3:32** [e] Neh. 3:1; 12:39 **4:1** [a] Neh. 2:10, 19 **4:3** [b] Neh. 2:10, 19 **4:4** [c] Ps. 123:3, 4 [d] Ps. 79:12 **4:5** [e] Jer. 18:23 **4:7** [f] Neh. 4:1 [g] Neh. 2:19 **4:8** [h] Ps. 83:3–5 **4:9** [i] [Ps. 50:15] **4:14** [j] Deut. 1:29 [k] [Deut. 10:17] [l] 2 Sam. 10:12 **4:15** [m] Job 5:12

spears, the shields, the bows, and *wore* armor; and the leaders *were* behind all the house of Judah. 17Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. 18Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet *was* beside me.

19Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work *is* great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. 20Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. [n]Our God will fight for us."

21So we labored in the work, and half of *the men** held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared. 22At the same time I also said to the people, "Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day." 23So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, *except* that everyone took them off for washing.

Nehemiah Deals with Oppression

5 And there was a great [a]outcry of the people and their wives against their [b]Jewish brethren. 2For there were those who said, "We, our sons, and our daughters *are* many; therefore let us get grain, that we may eat and live."

3There were also *some* who said, "We have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses, that we might buy grain because of the famine."

4There were also those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax *on* our lands and vineyards. 5Yet now [c]our flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and indeed we [d]are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and *some* of our daughters have been brought into slavery. *It is* not in our power *to redeem them*, for other men have our lands and vineyards."

6And I became very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. 7After serious thought, I rebuked the nobles and rulers, and said to them, [e]"Each of you is exacting usury from his brother." So I called a great assembly against them. 8And I said to them, "According to our ability we have [f]redeemed our Jewish brethren who were sold to the nations. Now indeed, will you even sell your brethren? Or should they be sold to us?"

Then they were silenced and found nothing *to say*. 9Then I said, "What you are doing *is* not good. Should you not walk [g]in the fear of our God [h]because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies? 10I also, *with* my brethren and my servants, am lending them money and grain. Please, let us stop this usury! 11Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them."

12So they said, "We will restore *it,* and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say."

Then I called the priests, [i]and required an oath from them that they would do according to this promise. 13Then [j]I shook out the fold of my garment* and said, "So may God shake out each man from his house, and from his property, who does not perform this promise. Even thus may he be shaken out and emptied."

And all the assembly said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD. [k]Then the people did according to this promise.

The Generosity of Nehemiah

14Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year [l]until the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers [m]ate the governor's provisions. 15But the former governors who *were* before me laid burdens on the people, and took from them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. Yes, even their servants bore rule over the people, but [n]I did not do so,

*4:21 Literally *them* *5:13 Literally *my lap*

5:7 *exacting usury.* It was not wrong to lend money to a fellow Jew, or even to lend money at interest to a non-Jewish person, but it was forbidden to charge interest to a fellow Jew (Ex. 22:25; Deut. 23:19–20). The people had already fallen back into disobedience.

5:9 Fear of God—Fear of God is the knowledge that God has the right to judge our actions for good or evil. It is the basis for keeping the commandments which concern other men. We do not murder because it is taking the life of one who bears the image and likeness of God. We deal honestly with one another, we do not covet our neighbor's possessions, or abridge any of his rights, because those things are given to him by God, and our neighbor belongs to God who created him. If we do not walk in the fear of the Lord, we demonstrate our pride and presumption to those who are watching us.

5:11 *hundredth.* This is probably a reference to the interest the nobles and rulers had been charging.

5:15 *former governors.* Several former governors had paid their own expenses with the people's taxes. During his twelve year administration (444–432 B.C.), Nehemiah did not collect taxes from the people, although as the governor he had the right to.

4:20 [n] Ex. 14:14, 25 **5:1** [a] Neh. 5:7, 8 [b] Deut. 15:7 **5:5** [c] Is. 58:7 [d] Ex. 21:7 **5:7** [e] [Ex. 22:25] **5:8** [f] Lev. 25:48 **5:9** [g] Lev. 25:36 [h] 2 Sam. 12:14 **5:12** [i] Ezra 10:5 **5:13** [j] Acts 13:51; 18:6 [k] 2 Kin. 23:3 **5:14** [l] Neh. 2:1; 13:6 [m] [1 Cor. 9:4–15] **5:15** [n] 2 Cor. 11:9; 12:13

because of the [o]fear of God. 16Indeed, I also continued the [p]work on this wall, and we* did not buy any land. All my servants *were* gathered there for the work.

17And [q]at my table *were* one hundred and fifty Jews and rulers, besides those who came to us from the nations around us. 18Now *that* [r]which was prepared daily *was* one ox *and* six choice sheep. Also fowl were prepared for me, and once every ten days an abundance of all kinds of wine. Yet in spite of this I [s]did not demand the governor's provisions, because the bondage was heavy on this people.

19[t]Remember me, my God, for good, *according to* all that I have done for this people.

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

6 Now it happened [a]when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* there were no breaks left in it [b](though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), 2that Sanballat and Geshem [c]sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of [d]Ono." But they [e]thought to do me harm.

3So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"

4But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.

5Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand. 6In it *was* written:

> It is reported among the nations, and Geshem* says, *that* you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall, [f]that you may be their king. 7And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "*There is* a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.

8Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart."

9For they all *were trying to* make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done."

Now therefore, *O God,* strengthen my hands.

10Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who *was* a secret informer; and he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you."

11And I said, "Should such a man as I flee? And who *is there* such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!" 12Then I perceived that God had not sent him at all, but that [g]he pronounced *this* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13For this reason he *was* hired, that I should be afraid and act that way and sin, so *that* they might have *cause* for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14[h]My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the [i]prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

The Wall Completed

15So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth *day* of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16And it happened, [j]when all our enemies heard *of it,* and all the nations around us saw *these things,* that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for [k]they perceived that this work was done by our God.

17Also in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and *the letters of* Tobiah came to them. 18For many in Judah were pledged to him, because he was the [l]son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of [m]Meshullam the son of Berechiah. 19Also they reported his good deeds before me, and reported my words to him. Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

7 Then it was, when the wall was built and I had [a]hung the doors, when the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites

* **5:16** Following Masoretic Text; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *I.* * **6:6** Hebrew *Gashmu*

6:2 ***the plain of Ono.*** The plain of Ono was about twenty miles northwest of Jerusalem.

6:10 ***Shemaiah.*** Shemaiah was a false prophet, not the Levite of the same name who helped build the wall (3:29) or the priest who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah (10:8). Whether he was pretending to represent God, or was speaking with "authority" because he claimed that he had inside information, Shemaiah's strategy was to get Nehemiah sidetracked.

6:16 Providence—The fact that the Jews were able to finish the wall so quickly and with such singleness of purpose said even to their enemies that it was God who had helped them. God always provides everything we need to do His work. It is when we get off on our own agendas that we are short of energy and resources. Like Nehemiah, we need to pray for God's direct guidance, and then pray to keep our focus on His plan.

7:1 ***gatekeepers . . . singers . . . Levites.*** The Levites were assistants to the priests (Num. 18:1–4) who guarded and cleaned the sanctuary. The gatekeepers

5:15 [o] Neh. 5:9 **5:16** [p] Neh. 4:1; 6:1 **5:17** [q] 1 Kin. 18:19 **5:18** [r] 1 Kin. 4:22 [s] Neh. 5:14, 15 **5:19** [t] Neh. 13:14, 22, 31 **6:1** [a] Neh. 2:10, 19; 4:1, 7; 13:28 [b] Neh. 3:1, 3 **6:2** [c] Prov. 26:24, 25 [d] 1 Chr. 8:12 [e] Ps. 37:12, 32 **6:6** [f] Neh. 2:19 **6:12** [g] Ezek. 13:22 **6:14** [h] Neh. 13:29 [i] Ezek. 13:17 **6:16** [j] Neh. 2:10, 20; 4:1, 7; 6:1 [k] Ps. 126:2 **6:18** [l] Neh. 13:4, 28 [m] Ezra 10:15 **7:1** [a] Neh. 6:1, 15

had been appointed, 2that I gave the charge
of Jerusalem to my brother [b]Hanani, and
Hananiah the leader [c]of the citadel, for he
was a faithful man and [d]feared God more
than many.
3And I said to them, "Do not let the gates
of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is
hot; and while they stand *guard,* let them
shut and bar the doors; and appoint guards
from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
one at his watch station and another in
front of his own house."

The Captives Who Returned to Jerusalem

4Now the city *was* large and spacious,
but the people in it *were* [e]few, and the houses *were* not rebuilt. 5Then my God put it
into my heart to gather the nobles, the rulers, and the people, that they might be registered by genealogy. And I found a register
of the genealogy of those who had come up
in the first *return,* and found written in it:

6 [f]These* *are* the people of the province
who came back from the captivity,
of those who had been carried away,
whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of
Babylon had carried away, and who
returned to Jerusalem and Judah,
everyone to his city.

7 Those who came with [g]Zerubbabel
were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan,
Mispereth,* Bigvai, Nehum, and
Baanah.

The number of the men of the people
of Israel: 8the sons of Parosh, two thousand one hundred and seventy-two;
9the sons of Shephatiah, three hundred
and seventy-two;
10the sons of Arah, six hundred and
fifty-two;
11the sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons
of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight
hundred and eighteen;
12the sons of Elam, one thousand two
hundred and fifty-four;
13the sons of Zattu, eight hundred and
forty-five;
14the sons of Zaccai, seven hundred
and sixty;
15the sons of Binnui,* six hundred and
forty-eight;
16the sons of Bebai, six hundred and
twenty-eight;
17the sons of Azgad, two thousand
three hundred and twenty-two;
18the sons of Adonikam, six hundred
and sixty-seven;
19the sons of Bigvai, two thousand and
sixty-seven;
20the sons of Adin, six hundred and
fifty-five;
21the sons of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety-eight;
22the sons of Hashum, three hundred
and twenty-eight;
23the sons of Bezai, three hundred and
twenty-four;
24the sons of Hariph,* one hundred and
twelve;
25the sons of Gibeon,* ninety-five;
26the men of Bethlehem and Netophah,
one hundred and eighty-eight;
27the men of Anathoth, one hundred
and twenty-eight;
28the men of Beth Azmaveth,* forty-two;
29the men of Kirjath Jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and
forty-three;
30the men of Ramah and Geba, six
hundred and twenty-one;
31the men of Michmas, one hundred
and twenty-two;
32the men of Bethel and Ai, one hundred and twenty-three;
33the men of the other Nebo, fifty-two;
34the sons of the other [h]Elam, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;
35the sons of Harim, three hundred and
twenty;
36the sons of Jericho, three hundred
and forty-five;
37the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono,
seven hundred and twenty-one;
38the sons of Senaah, three thousand
nine hundred and thirty.

39 The priests: the sons of [i]Jedaiah, of
the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and
seventy-three;

* **7:6** Compare verses 6–72 with Ezra 2:1–70
* **7:7** Spelled *Mispar* in Ezra 2:2 * **7:15** Spelled *Bani* in Ezra 2:10 * **7:24** Called *Jorah* in Ezra 2:18
* **7:25** Called *Gibbar* in Ezra 2:20 * **7:28** Called *Azmaveth* in Ezra 2:24

and singers were also Levites (1 Chr. 9:17–19; 26:12–19).

7:3 *gates.* The gates of a city normally opened at sunrise. If an enemy mounted a surprise attack at sunrise, he would find a city just beginning to wake up. By keeping the gates closed a little longer, the city was safer.

7:4 *people . . . were few.* For the size of the city, Jerusalem was underpopulated. Even though it had been 90 years since people had returned under Zerubbabel to live there, Jerusalem still had a lot of undeveloped space within the walls renewed by Nehemiah.

7:5 *my God put it into my heart.* Nehemiah attributed to the Lord the idea of a census that would show the distribution of the population. If he knew the population pattern in the capital and the countryside, he could then determine which districts could best afford to lose a portion of their inhabitants to Jerusalem.

7:2 [b] Neh. 1:2 [c] Neh. 2:8; 10:23 [d] Ex. 18:21 **7:4** [e] Deut. 4:27 **7:6** [f] Ezra 2:1–70 **7:7** [g] Ezra 5:2 **7:34** [h] Neh. 7:12 **7:39** [i] 1 Chr. 24:7

40 the sons of [j]Immer, one thousand and
fifty-two;
41 the sons of [k]Pashhur, one thousand
two hundred and forty-seven;
42 the sons of [l]Harim, one thousand and
seventeen.

43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of
Kadmiel,
and of the sons of Hodevah,* seventy-
four.

44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, one
hundred and forty-eight.

45 The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum,
the sons of Ater,
the sons of Talmon,
the sons of Akkub,
the sons of Hatita,
the sons of Shobai, one hundred and
thirty-eight.

46 The Nethinim: the sons of Ziha,
the sons of Hasupha,
the sons of Tabbaoth,
47 the sons of Keros,
the sons of Sia,*
the sons of Padon,
48 the sons of Lebana,*
the sons of Hagaba,*
the sons of Salmai,*
49 the sons of Hanan,
the sons of Giddel,
the sons of Gahar,
50 the sons of Reaiah,
the sons of Rezin,
the sons of Nekoda,
51 the sons of Gazzam,
the sons of Uzza,
the sons of Paseah,
52 the sons of Besai,
the sons of Meunim,
the sons of Nephishesim,*
53 the sons of Bakbuk,
the sons of Hakupha,
the sons of Harhur,
54 the sons of Bazlith,*
the sons of Mehida,
the sons of Harsha,
55 the sons of Barkos,
the sons of Sisera,
the sons of Tamah,
56 the sons of Neziah,
and the sons of Hatipha.

57 The sons of Solomon's servants: the
sons of Sotai,
the sons of Sophereth,
the sons of Perida,*
58 the sons of Jaala,
the sons of Darkon,
the sons of Giddel,
59 the sons of Shephatiah,
the sons of Hattil,
the sons of Pochereth of Zebaim,
and the sons of Amon.*
60 All the Nethinim, and the sons of Sol-
omon's servants, *were* three hundred
and ninety-two.

61 And these *were* the ones who came up
from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Cherub,
Addon,* and Immer, but they could not
identify their father's house nor their
lineage, whether they *were* of Israel:
62 the sons of Delaiah,
the sons of Tobiah,
the sons of Nekoda, six hundred and
forty-two;
63 and of the priests: the sons of Habaiah,
the sons of Koz,*
the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of
the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite,
and was called by their name.
64 These sought their listing *among*
those who were registered by genealo-
gy, but it was not found; therefore they
were excluded from the priesthood as
defiled. 65 And the governor* said to
them that they should not eat of the
most holy things till a priest could
consult with the Urim and Thummim.

66 Altogether the whole assembly *was*
forty-two thousand three hundred and
sixty, 67 besides their male and female
servants, of whom *there were* seven
thousand three hundred and thirty-
seven; and they had two hundred and
forty-five men and women singers.
68 Their horses were seven hundred and
thirty-six, their mules two hundred and
forty-five, 69 *their* camels four hundred
and thirty-five, *and* donkeys six thou-
sand seven hundred and twenty.

70 And some of the heads of the fathers'
houses gave to the work. [m]The gover-
nor* gave to the treasury one thousand
gold drachmas, fifty basins, and five
hundred and thirty priestly garments.
71 Some of the heads of the fathers'
houses gave to the treasury of the work
[n]twenty thousand gold drachmas,
and two thousand two hundred silver
minas. 72 And that which the rest of the
people gave *was* twenty thousand gold
drachmas, two thousand silver minas,
and sixty-seven priestly garments.

* **7:43** Spelled *Hodaviah* in Ezra 2:40
* **7:47** Spelled *Siaha* in Ezra 2:44 * **7:48** Masoretic Text reads *Lebanah.* • Masoretic Text reads *Hogabah.* • Or *Shalmai*, or *Shamlai*
* **7:52** Spelled *Nephusim* in Ezra 2:50
* **7:54** Spelled *Bazluth* in Ezra 2:52 * **7:57** Spelled *Peruda* in Ezra 2:55 * **7:59** Spelled *Ami* in Ezra 2:57 * **7:61** Spelled *Addan* in Ezra 2:59
* **7:63** Or *Hakkoz* * **7:65** Hebrew *Tirshatha*
* **7:70** Hebrew *Tirshatha*

7:70 ***drachmas.*** One thousand gold drachmas would weigh about nine pounds.

7:40 [j] 1 Chr. 9:12 **7:41** [k] Ezra 2:38; 10:22 **7:42** [l] 1 Chr. 24:8 **7:70** [m] Neh. 8:9 **7:71** [n] Ezra 2:69

73So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, *some* of the people, the Nethinim, and all Israel dwelt in their cities.

Ezra Reads the Law

[o]When the seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

8 Now all [a]the people gathered together as one man in the open square that *was* [b]in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the [c]scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel. 2So Ezra the priest brought [d]the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who *could* hear with understanding [e]on the first day of the seventh month. 3Then he [f]read from it in the open square that *was* in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people *were attentive* to the Book of the Law.

4So Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood which they had made for the purpose; and beside him, at his right hand, stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Urijah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah; and at his left hand Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbadana, Zechariah, *and* Meshullam. 5And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was *standing* above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people [g]stood up. 6And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God.

Then all the people [h]answered, "Amen, Amen!" while [i]lifting up their hands. And they [j]bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.

7Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, [k]helped the people to understand the Law; and the people [l]*stood* in their place. 8So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.

9[m]And Nehemiah, who *was* the governor,* Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the

* **8:9** Hebrew *Tirshatha*

8:2 ***men and women, and all who could hear with understanding.*** This is a more specific list of those gathered than is usual. "All who could hear" includes older children, as well as adults. ***first day of the seventh month.*** The wall had been completed on the twenty-fifth day of the sixth month (6:15) so this event took place just a few days after the completion of the wall.

8:3 Reading God's Word—There are many parts of the world today that still have limited access to the Bible and below-average literacy rates. Even if they could obtain a Bible they might not be able to read it. Other areas of the world have a well-educated population and freedom to pursue any religion they choose. Throughout much of history, the only access to Scripture was through someone who read it in a public or church setting. Today most of the western world has access to audio recordings of the Bible or to numerous printed versions. Here are some suggestions to aid you in receiving the greatest benefit from reading or listening to the Bible:

- *Read the Bible prayerfully.* Ask the Spirit of God to meet your heart's need as you read (Ps. 119:18).
- *Read the Bible thoughtfully.* Think about the meaning and implications of what you are reading.
- *Read the Bible carefully.* Take careful note not only of the words that are used but also of how they relate to one another.
- *Read the Bible repeatedly.* It may be of great help to read the same portion over and over again each day for a month's time. This is a good way for the words to take root in your heart. If you are reading a short book, read it every day. Divide longer books up into manageable portions of two or three chapters and read that portion through every day.
- *Read the Bible extensively.* Sometimes it is of great help to read large portions of the Word of God through at one sitting. If you do this, do it at a time when you are alert and not likely to be disturbed during your reading.
- *Read the Bible regularly.* It is good to have a particular time every day when you habitually give yourself to the reading of the Word of God.
- *Read the Bible faithfully.* Inevitably there will be days when you will fail to read the Bible. Do not let your momentary lapse discourage you. Faithfully resume your practice of reading God's Word.
- *Read the Bible obediently.* Because the Bible is God's Word written to you, it is essential to obey it (Ex. 42:3).
- *Read the Bible thankfully.* Thank God for the gift He has given us in Scripture. Thank Him that you have the freedom or the opportunity to read the Bible at all.

8:5 ***all the people stood up.*** Standing signified their reverence for the Word. This gesture later became characteristic of the Jewish people in synagogue services.

8:6 ***lifting up their hands.*** The people answered "Amen" and lifted their hands, indicating their participation with Ezra in prayer.

8:9 God's Word Convicts—One of the great proofs that the Bible is really God's inspired Word is its unique ability to convict men and women of their sins. There are many biblical stories that point to this phenomenon where people realize the extent of their sin and the need to repent of it.

Under Josiah's rule a copy of God's Word is found in the temple. When it is read both the king and the people are convicted of their sins in not keeping God's law. Afterwards a great revival occurs (2 Chr. 34:14–28).

When Nehemiah returns to Israel to help the returning Jews rebuild the gates of Jerusalem, he assembles the people and has the Scriptures read to them for three hours a day. This soon causes them to confess their sin (Neh. 9:3).

In the New Testament we see many instances where the Holy Spirit uses God's Word to convict

7:73 [o] Ezra 3:1 **8:1** [a] Ezra 3:1 [b] Neh. 3:26 [c] Ezra 7:6
8:2 [d] [Deut. 31:11, 12] [e] Lev. 23:24 **8:3** [f] 2 Kin. 23:2
8:5 [g] Judg. 3:20 **8:6** [h] Neh. 5:13 [i] Ps. 28:2 [j] 2 Chr. 20:18
8:7 [k] [Mal. 2:7] [l] Neh. 9:3 **8:9** [m] Neh. 7:65, 70; 10:1

Levites who taught the people said to all the people, [n]"This day *is* holy to the LORD your God; [o]do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.

10Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, [p]and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

11So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day *is* holy; do not be grieved." 12And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to [q]send portions and rejoice greatly, because they [r]understood the words that were declared to them.

The Feast of Tabernacles

13Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' *houses* of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. 14And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in [s]booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15and [t]that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and [u]in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and [v]bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as *it is* written."

16Then the people went out and brought *them* and made themselves booths, each one on the [w]roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the [x]Water Gate [y]and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. 17So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very [z]great gladness. 18Also [a]day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast [b]seven days; and on the [c]eighth day *there was* a sacred assembly, according to the *prescribed* manner.

The People Confess Their Sins

9 Now on the twenty-fourth day of [a]this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, [b]and with dust on their heads.* 2Then [c]those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and [d]confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. 3And they stood up in their place and [e]read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God *for one*-fourth of the day; and *for another* fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.

4Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God. 5And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said:

"Stand up *and* bless the LORD your God
Forever and ever!

"Blessed be [f]Your glorious name,
Which is exalted above all blessing and praise!

6 [g]You alone *are* the LORD;
[h]You have made heaven,
[i]The heaven of heavens, with [j]all their host,
The earth and everything on it,
The seas and all that is in them,
And You [k]preserve them all.
The host of heaven worships You.

* **9:1** Literally *earth on them*

people of their sin. At Pentecost Peter uses the Scriptures to rebuke Israel for crucifying its Messiah. The result of his sermon is three thousand souls being convicted and accepting Christ (Acts 2:37,41).

8:9–10 Repentance—Once the people understood the Word of God, they wept. They had heard the high standard of the law, recognized their low standing before the Lord, and were convicted. Weeping and sorrow for sin are part of repentance. But the other part of repentance is change. With change comes joy. The joy of the Lord is the joy that springs up in our hearts because of our relationship to the Lord. It is a God-given gladness found when we are in communion with God. When our goal is to know more about the Lord, the byproduct is His joy.

8:17 *since the days of Joshua.* The reference here is to the construction of booths. The people of Israel had celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles since the days of Joshua (1 Kin. 8:65; 2 Chr. 7:9; Ezra 3:4).

9:1 *the twenty-fourth day of this month.* The people's public worship had begun on the first day of the seventh month (8:2). More than three weeks later, the people were still engaged in public worship. ***fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust.*** These are all traditional signs of mourning.

9:2 *separated . . . from all foreigners.* The separation was a sacred separation from foreign persons who worshiped other gods and whose practices might have brought harm to the integrity of the worship of the Lord.

9:3 *confessed.* When this word is used with God as its object, as in this verse, it refers to the praise of God. They were acknowledging His attributes and worthiness of praise.

9:6 *You alone are the LORD.* One of the fundamental teachings of Scripture is that God is not one among many. He alone is the living God (Deut. 6:4).

8:9 [n] Num. 29:1 [o] Deut. 16:14 **8:10** [p] Rev. 11:10 **8:12** [q] Neh. 8:10 [r] Neh. 8:7, 8 **8:14** [s] Lev. 23:34, 40, 42 **8:15** [t] Lev. 23:4 [u] Deut. 16:16 [v] Lev. 23:40 **8:16** [w] Deut. 22:8 [x] Neh. 12:37 [y] 2 Kin. 14:13 **8:17** [z] 2 Chr. 30:21 **8:18** [a] Deut. 31:11 [b] Lev. 23:36 [c] Num. 29:35 **9:1** [a] Neh. 8:2 [b] 1 Sam. 4:12 **9:2** [c] Neh. 13:3, 30 [d] Neh. 1:6 **9:3** [e] Neh. 8:7, 8 **9:5** [f] 1 Chr. 29:13 **9:6** [g] 2 Kin. 19:15, 19 [h] Rev. 14:7 [i] [Deut. 10:14] [j] Gen. 2:1 [k] [Ps. 36:6]

7 "You *are* the LORD God,
Who chose [l]Abram,
And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans,
And gave him the name [m]Abraham;
8 You found his heart [n]faithful before You,
And made a [o]covenant with him
To give the land of the Canaanites,
The Hittites, the Amorites,
The Perizzites, the Jebusites,
And the Girgashites—
To give *it* to his descendants.
You [p]have performed Your words,
For You *are* righteous.

9 "You[q] saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,
And [r]heard their cry by the Red Sea.
10 You [s]showed signs and wonders against Pharaoh,
Against all his servants,
And against all the people of his land.
For You knew that they [t]acted proudly against them.
So You [u]made a name for Yourself, as *it is* this day.
11 [v]And You divided the sea before them,
So that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land;
And their persecutors You threw into the deep,
[w]As a stone into the mighty waters.
12 Moreover You [x]led them by day with a cloudy pillar,
And by night with a pillar of fire,
To give them light on the road
Which they should travel.

13 "You[y] came down also on Mount Sinai,
And spoke with them from heaven,
And gave them [z]just ordinances and true laws,
Good statutes and commandments.
14 You made known to them Your [a]holy Sabbath,
And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws,
By the hand of Moses Your servant.
15 You [b]gave them bread from heaven for their hunger,
And [c]brought them water out of the rock for their thirst,
And told them to [d]go in to possess the land
Which You had sworn to give them.

16 "But[e] they and our fathers acted proudly,
[f]Hardened their necks,
And did not heed Your commandments.
17 They refused to obey,
And [g]they were not mindful of Your wonders
That You did among them.
But they hardened their necks,
And in their rebellion*
They appointed [h]a leader
To return to their bondage.
But You *are* God,
Ready to pardon,
[i]Gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger,
Abundant in kindness,
And did not forsake them.

18 "Even [j]when they made a molded calf for themselves,
And said, 'This *is* your god
That brought you up out of Egypt,'
And worked great provocations,
19 Yet in Your [k]manifold mercies
You did not forsake them in the wilderness.
The [l]pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day,
To lead them on the road;
Nor the pillar of fire by night,
To show them light,
And the way they should go.
20 You also gave Your [m]good Spirit to instruct them,
And did not withhold Your [n]manna from their mouth,
And gave them [o]water for their thirst.
21 [p]Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness;
They lacked nothing;

* **9:17** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *in Egypt*.

9:7 ***You are the LORD God.*** The word order of the Hebrew text is striking: "You are He, Yahweh (the) God." The use of the definite article marks Him as "the true God."

9:9 ***affliction of our fathers in Egypt.*** The Book of Exodus tells about the plight of the Israelites in Egypt and their complaint to the Lord for deliverance. It then speaks of God's mercy in His response to the people's need. This verse suggests that before the people expressed their hurt, the Lord was already aware of their troubles.

9:11 Persecution—No one asks for or welcomes persecution. But history has borne out the fact that when believers are persecuted they draw close to the Lord. They are keenly aware that they are dependent on Him for strength, endurance, and even sustenance. Some of the sweetest times with the Lord are the times when unbelievers pity us for our tribulation. Times of rest bring independence of spirit. This is when it helps to go back and remember the things that the Lord has done in the past and rejoice, and to remember that He is sufficient for future persecution as well.

9:7 [l] Gen. 11:31 [m] Gen. 17:5 **9:8** [n] Gen. 15:6; 22:1–3 [o] Gen. 15:18 [p] Josh. 23:14 **9:9** [q] Ex. 2:25; 3:7 [r] Ex. 14:10 **9:10** [s] Ex. 7–14 [t] Ex. 18:11 [u] Jer. 32:20 **9:11** [v] Ex. 14:20–28 [w] Ex. 15:1, 5 **9:12** [x] Ex. 13:21, 22 **9:13** [y] Ex. 20:1–18 [z] [Rom. 7:12] **9:14** [a] Gen. 2:3 **9:15** [b] Ex. 16:14–17 [c] Ex. 17:6 [d] Deut. 1:8 **9:16** [e] Ps. 106:6 [f] Deut. 1:26–33; 31:27 **9:17** [g] Ps. 78:11, 42–45 [h] Num. 14:4 [i] Joel 2:13 **9:18** [j] Ex. 32:4–8, 31 **9:19** [k] Ps. 106:45 [l] 1 Cor. 10:1 **9:20** [m] Num. 11:17 [n] Ex. 16:14–16 [o] Ex. 17:6 **9:21** [p] Deut. 2:7

Their [q]clothes did not wear out*
And their feet did not swell.

22 "Moreover You gave them kingdoms
and nations,
And divided them into districts.*
So they took possession of the land of
[r]Sihon,
The land of* the king of Heshbon,
And the land of Og king of Bashan.
23 You also multiplied [s]their children as
the stars of heaven,
And brought them into the land
Which You had told their fathers
To go in and possess.
24 So [t]the people went in
And possessed the land;
[u]You subdued before them the
inhabitants of the land,
The Canaanites,
And gave them into their hands,
With their kings
And the people of the land,
That they might do with them as they
wished.
25 And they took strong cities and a [v]rich
land,
And possessed [w]houses full of all
goods,
Cisterns *already* dug, vineyards, olive
groves,
And fruit trees in abundance.
So they ate and were filled and [x]grew
fat,
And delighted themselves in Your
great [y]goodness.

26 "Nevertheless they [z]were disobedient
And rebelled against You,
[a]Cast Your law behind their backs
And killed Your [b]prophets, who
testified against them
To turn them to Yourself;
And they worked great provocations.
27 [c]Therefore You delivered them into the
hand of their enemies,
Who oppressed them;
And in the time of their trouble,
When they cried to You,
You [d]heard from heaven;
And according to Your abundant
mercies
[e]You gave them deliverers who saved
them
From the hand of their enemies.

28 "But after they had rest,
[f]They again did evil before You.
Therefore You left them in the hand of
their enemies,
So that they had dominion over
them;
Yet when they returned and cried out
to You,
You heard from heaven;
And [g]many times You delivered them
according to Your mercies,
29 And testified against them,
That You might bring them back to
Your law.
Yet they acted proudly,
And did not heed Your
commandments,
But sinned against Your judgments,
[h]'Which if a man does, he shall live by
them.'*
And they shrugged their shoulders,
Stiffened their necks,
And would not hear.
30 Yet for many years You had patience
with them,
And testified [i]against them by Your
Spirit [j]in Your prophets.
Yet they would not listen;
[k]Therefore You gave them into the
hand of the peoples of the lands.
31 Nevertheless in Your great mercy
[l]You did not utterly consume them nor
forsake them;
For You *are* God, gracious and
merciful.

32 "Now therefore, our God,
The great, the [m]mighty, and awesome
God,
Who keeps covenant and mercy:
Do not let all the trouble seem small
before You
That has come upon us,
Our kings and our princes,
Our priests and our prophets,
Our fathers and on all Your people,
[n]From the days of the kings of Assyria
until this day.

* **9:21** Compare Deuteronomy 29:5 * **9:22** Literally *corners* • Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint omits *The land of.*
* **9:29** Leviticus 18:5

9:26 ***killed Your prophets.*** Jesus also directed this charge against the rebellious people of His time (Matt. 23:31).

9:30–31 Patience—Nehemiah writes, "You had patience with them." This is the same eternal God who still patiently bears with His people. Even as born-again believers we struggle with sin, and we are thankful that He is patient with us as we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18). This patience does not mean that He is tolerant of sin, but that He knows that it takes perseverance to walk as a Christian. He gives us time to grow. Indeed, God is patient to the whole world, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).

9:32 ***covenant.*** God's covenant and loyalty are unbreakable (2 Tim. 2:11–13). ***this day.*** "This day" refers to the time of the great revival under Ezra (8:1–2).

9:21 [q] Deut. 8:4; 29:5 **9:22** [r] Num. 21:21–35 **9:23** [s] Gen. 15:5; 22:17 **9:24** [t] Josh. 1:2–4 [u] [Ps. 44:2, 3] **9:25** [v] Num. 13:27 [w] Deut. 6:11 [x] [Deut. 32:15] [y] Hos. 3:5 **9:26** [z] Judg. 2:11 [a] 1 Kin. 14:9 [b] 1 Kin. 18:4; 19:10 **9:27** [c] Judg. 2:14 [d] Ps. 106:44 [e] Judg. 2:18 **9:28** [f] Judg. 3:12 [g] Ps. 106:43 **9:29** [h] Lev. 18:5 **9:30** [i] Jer. 7:25 [j] [Acts 7:51] [k] Is. 5:5 **9:31** [l] Jer. 4:27 **9:32** [m] [Ex. 34:6, 7] [n] 2 Kin. 15:19; 17:3–6

33 However [o]You *are* just in all that has
befallen us;
For You have dealt faithfully,
But [p]we have done wickedly.
34 Neither our kings nor our princes,
Our priests nor our fathers,
Have kept Your law,
Nor heeded Your commandments and
Your testimonies,
With which You testified against them.
35 For they have [q]not served You in their
kingdom,
Or in the many good *things* that You
gave them,
Or in the large and rich land which
You set before them;
Nor did they turn from their wicked
works.
36 "Here [r]we *are,* servants today!
And the land that You gave to our
fathers,
To eat its fruit and its bounty,
Here we *are,* servants in it!
37 And [s]it yields much increase to the
kings
You have set over us,
Because of our sins;
Also they have [t]dominion over our
bodies and our cattle
At their pleasure;
And we *are* in great distress.
38 "And because of all this,
We [u]make a sure *covenant* and write
it;
Our leaders, our Levites, *and* our
priests [v]seal *it*."

The People Who Sealed the Covenant

10 Now those who placed *their* seal on *the document were:*
Nehemiah the governor, [a]the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah, 2[b]Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, 3Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, 4Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, 5Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, 6Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, 7Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, 8Maaziah, Bilgai, *and* Shemaiah. These *were* the priests.
9The Levites: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, *and* Kadmiel.
10Their brethren: Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, 11Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah, 12Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, 13Hodijah, Bani, *and* Beninu.
14The leaders of the people: [c]Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, 15Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, 16Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, 17Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, 18Hodijah, Hashum, Bezai, 19Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, 20Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, 21Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, 22Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, 23Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, 24Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, 25Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, 26Ahijah, Hanan, Anan, 27Malluch, Harim, *and* Baanah.

The Covenant That Was Sealed

28[d]Now the rest of the people—the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Nethinim, [e]and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone who had knowledge and understanding—29these joined with their brethren, their nobles, [f]and entered into a curse and an oath [g]to walk in God's Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes: 30We would not give [h]our daughters as wives to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons; 31[i]*if* the peoples of the land brought wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not buy it from them on the Sabbath, or on a holy day; and we would forego the [j]seventh year's *produce* and the [k]exacting of every debt.
32Also we made ordinances for ourselves, to exact from ourselves yearly [l]one-third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God: 33for [m]the showbread, for the regular grain offering, for the [n]regular burnt offering of the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the set feasts; for the holy things, for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God. 34We cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, [o]for bringing the wood offering into the house of our God, according to our

9:38 ***because of all this.*** The psalm ends in action, not just sentiment. The intent was to bring the participants in this time of worship and remembrance to a commitment to change behavior and to pledge to mirror God's faithfulness.
10:1 ***those who placed their seal.*** The way a person in official capacity "signed" a document in the ancient world was similar to the use of a wax seal. A personally distinctive seal was pressed into soft clay. The pattern of the seal identified the official who had issued the document.
10:30 ***would not give our daughters.*** Marriage with non-Jewish people was strictly forbidden in Scriptures (Ex. 34:12–16; Deut. 7:3; Josh. 23:12–13; Judg. 3:6). Ezra had dealt very decisively with those who had married foreign wives, and this was still in their memory (Ezra 9–10).

9:33 [o] [Dan. 9:14] [p] [Dan. 9:5, 6, 8] **9:35** [q] Deut. 28:47 **9:36** [r] Deut. 28:48 **9:37** [s] Deut. 28:33, 51 [t] Deut. 28:48 **9:38** [u] 2 Kin. 23:3 [v] Neh. 10:1 **10:1** [a] Neh. 1:1 **10:2** [b] Neh. 12:1–21 **10:14** [c] Ezra 2:3 **10:28** [d] Ezra 2:36–43 [e] Neh. 13:3 **10:29** [f] Deut. 29:12 [g] 2 Kin. 23:3 **10:30** [h] Ex. 34:16 **10:31** [i] Ex. 20:10 [j] Lev. 25:4 [k] [Deut. 15:1, 2] **10:32** [l] Matt. 17:24 **10:33** [m] Lev. 24:5 [n] Num. 28; 29 **10:34** [o] Neh. 13:31

fathers' houses, at the appointed times year by year, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God [p]as *it is* written in the Law.

35And *we made ordinances* [q]to bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the LORD; 36to bring the [r]firstborn of our sons and our cattle, as *it is* written in the Law, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks, to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; 37[s]to bring the firstfruits of our dough, our offerings, the fruit from all kinds of trees, *the* new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God; and to bring [t]the tithes of our land to the Levites, for the Levites should receive the tithes in all our farming communities. 38And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites [u]when the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to [v]the rooms of the storehouse.

39For the children of Israel and the children of Levi [w]shall bring the offering of the grain, of the new wine and the oil, to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary *are, where* the priests who minister and the gatekeepers [x]and the singers *are;* and we will not [y]neglect the house of our God.

The People Dwelling in Jerusalem

11 Now the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, [a]the holy city, and nine-tenths *were to dwell* in *other* cities. 2And the people blessed all the men who [b]willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

3[c]These *are* the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. (But in the cities of Judah everyone dwelt in his own possession in their cities—Israelites, priests, Levites, [d]Nethinim, and [e]descendants of Solomon's servants.) 4Also [f]in Jerusalem dwelt *some* of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin.

The children of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the children of [g]Perez; 5and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. 6All the sons of Perez who dwelt at Jerusalem *were* four hundred and sixty-eight valiant men.

7And these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah; 8and after him Gabbai *and* Sallai, nine hundred and twenty-eight. 9Joel the son of Zichri *was* their overseer, and Judah the son of Senuah* *was* second over the city.

10[h]Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, and Jachin; 11Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, *was* the leader of the house of God. 12Their brethren who did the work of the house *were* eight hundred and twenty-two; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah, 13and his brethren, heads of the fathers' *houses, were* two hundred and forty-two; and Amashai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, 14and their brethren, mighty men of valor, *were* one hundred and twenty-eight. Their overseer *was* Zabdiel the son of *one of* the great men.*

15Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni; 16[i]Shabbethai and [j]Jozabad, of the heads of the Levites, *had* the oversight of [k]the business outside of the house of God; 17Mattaniah the son of Micha,* the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, the leader *who* began the thanksgiving with prayer; Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. 18All the Levites in [l]the holy city *were* two hundred and eighty-four.

19Moreover the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren who kept the gates, *were* one hundred and seventy-two.

20And the rest of Israel, of the priests *and* Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, everyone in his inheritance. 21[m]But the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel. And Ziha and Gishpa *were* over the Nethinim.

22Also the overseer of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha, of the sons of Asaph, the singers in charge of the service of the house of God. 23For [n]*it was* the king's command concerning them that a certain

* **11:9** Or *Hassenuah* * **11:14** Or *the son of Haggedolim* * **11:17** Or *Michah*

11:1 ***cast lots.*** Casting lots was considered a good way to determine God's will when there was no other clear direction. Solomon wrote, "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD" (Prov. 16:33). ***one out of ten.*** This was the proportion determined in order to bring the population of Jerusalem to the level deemed necessary for its strength and viability.

10:34 [p] Lev. 6:12 **10:35** [q] Ex. 23:19; 34:26 **10:36** [r] Ex. 13:2, 12, 13 **10:37** [s] Lev. 23:17 [t] Lev. 27:30 **10:38** [u] Num. 18:26 [v] 1 Chr. 9:26 **10:39** [w] Deut. 12:6, 11 [x] Neh. 13:10, 11 [y] [Heb. 10:25] **11:1** [a] Matt. 4:5; 5:35; 27:53 **11:2** [b] Judg. 5:9 **11:3** [c] 1 Chr. 9:2, 3 [d] Ezra 2:43 [e] Ezra 2:55 **11:4** [f] 1 Chr. 9:3 [g] Gen. 38:29 **11:10** [h] 1 Chr. 9:10 **11:16** [i] Ezra 10:15 [j] Ezra 8:33 [k] 1 Chr. 26:29 **11:18** [l] Neh. 11:1 **11:21** [m] Neh. 3:26 **11:23** [n] Ezra 6:8, 9; 7:20

portion should be for the singers, a quota day by day. 24Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the children of [o]Zerah the son of Judah, *was* [p]the king's deputy* in all matters concerning the people.

The People Dwelling Outside Jerusalem

25And as for the villages with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt in [q]Kirjath Arba and its villages, Dibon and its villages, Jekabzeel and its villages; 26in Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet, 27Hazar Shual, and Beersheba and its villages; 28in Ziklag and Meconah and its villages; 29in En Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, 30Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; in Lachish and its fields; in Azekah and its villages. They dwelt from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom.

31Also the children of Benjamin from Geba *dwelt* in Michmash, Aija, and Bethel, and their villages; 32in Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah; 33in Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim; 34in Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat; 35in Lod, Ono, *and* [r]the Valley of Craftsmen. 36Some of the Judean divisions of Levites *were* in Benjamin.

The Priests and Levites

12 Now these *are* the [a]priests and the Levites who came up with [b]Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: [c]Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, 3Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, 4Iddo, Ginnethoi,* [d]Abijah, 5Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, 6Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, *and* Jedaiah.

These *were* the heads of the priests and their brethren in the days of [e]Jeshua.

8Moreover the Levites *were* Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah [f]*who led* the thanksgiving *psalms*, he and his brethren. 9Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, *stood* across from them in *their* duties.

10Jeshua begot Joiakim, Joiakim begot Eliashib, Eliashib begot Joiada, 11Joiada begot Jonathan, and Jonathan begot Jaddua.

12Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the [g]heads of the fathers' *houses were:* of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; 13of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; 14of Melichu,* Jonathan; of Shebaniah,* Joseph; 15of Harim,* Adna; of Meraioth,* Helkai; 16of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; 17of Abijah, Zichri; *the son* of Minjamin;* of Moadiah,* Piltai; 18of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 19of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; 20of Sallai,* Kallai; of Amok, Eber; 21of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; *and* of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

22During the reign of Darius the Persian, a record *was also kept* of the Levites and priests *who had been* [h]heads of their fathers' *houses* in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua. 23The sons of Levi, the heads of the fathers' *houses* until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib, *were* written in the book of the [i]chronicles.

24And the heads of the Levites *were* Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers across from them, to [j]praise *and* give thanks, [k]group alternating with group, [l]according to the command of David the man of God. 25Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub *were* gatekeepers keeping the watch at the storerooms of the gates. 26These *lived* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak,* and in the days of Nehemiah [m]the governor, and of Ezra the priest, [n]the scribe.

Nehemiah Dedicates the Wall

27Now at [o]the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, [p]both with thanksgivings and singing, *with* cymbals and stringed instruments and harps. 28And the sons of the singers gathered together from the countryside around Jerusalem, from the [q]villages of the Netophathites, 29from the house of Gilgal, and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth;

* **11:24** Literally *at the king's hand* * **12:4** Or *Ginnethon* (compare verse 16) * **12:14** Or *Malluch* (compare verse 2) • Or *Shechaniah* (compare verse 3) * **12:15** Or *Rehum* (compare verse 3) • Or *Meremoth* (compare verse 3) * **12:17** Or *Mijamin* (compare verse 5) • Or *Maadiah* (compare verse 5) * **12:20** Or *Sallu* (compare verse 7) * **12:26** Spelled *Jehozadak* in 1 Chronicles 6:14

11:25 *Kirjath Arba.* Kirjath Arba is another name for Hebron.

12:1 *Zerubbabel.* The return of Zerubbabel is recorded in Ezra 1–6. ***Jeshua.*** Jeshua is Joshua the priest. ***Ezra.*** This is not the priest who wrote the book of the same name.

12:22 *Darius.* Darius refers to Darius II (Nothus), who ruled Persia from 423 to 405 B.C.

12:23 *the book of the chronicles.* The book of the chronicles was not the biblical book, but an official record of the heads of the fathers' houses.

12:27 *dedication of the wall.* After the completion of Jerusalem's wall (ch. 6), the people repented and renewed their commitment to the Lord (chs. 8–10). The repopulation of Jerusalem was ordered, so the dedication was delayed.

11:24 [o] Gen. 38:30 [p] 1 Chr. 18:17 **11:25** [q] Josh. 14:15 **11:35** [r] 1 Chr. 4:14 **12:1** [a] Ezra 2:1, 2; 7:7 [b] Neh. 7:7 [c] Neh. 10:2–8 **12:4** [d] Luke 1:5 **12:7** [e] Zech. 3:1 **12:8** [f] Neh. 11:17 **12:12** [g] Neh. 7:70, 71; 8:13; 11:13 **12:22** [h] 1 Chr. 24:6 **12:23** [i] 1 Chr. 9:14–22 **12:24** [j] Neh. 11:17 [k] Ezra 3:11 [l] 1 Chr. 23–26 **12:26** [m] Neh. 8:9 [n] Ezra 7:6, 11 **12:27** [o] Deut. 20:5 [p] 1 Chr. 25:6 **12:28** [q] 1 Chr. 9:16

for the singers had built themselves villages all around Jerusalem. 30Then the priests and Levites [r]purified themselves, and purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

31So I brought the leaders of Judah up on the wall, and appointed two large thanksgiving choirs. [s]*One* went to the right hand on the wall [t]toward the Refuse Gate. 32After them went Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah, 33and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, 34Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, 35and some of the priests' sons [u]with trumpets—Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, 36and his brethren, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, *and* Hanani, with [v]the musical [w]instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe *went* before them. 37[x]By the Fountain Gate, in front of them, they went up [y]the stairs of the [z]City of David, on the stairway of the wall, beyond the house of David, as far as [a]the Water Gate eastward.

38[b]The other thanksgiving choir went the opposite *way,* and I *was* behind them with half of the people on the wall, going past the [c]Tower of the Ovens as far as [d]the Broad Wall, 39[e]and above the Gate of Ephraim, above [f]the Old Gate, above [g]the Fish Gate, [h]the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred, as far as [i]the Sheep Gate; and they stopped by [j]the Gate of the Prison.

40So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me; 41and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Minjamin,* Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, *and* Hananiah, with trumpets; 42also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers sang loudly with Jezrahiah the director.

43Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard [k]afar off.

Temple Responsibilities

44[l]And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the [m]tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered. 45Both the singers and the gatekeepers kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification, [n]according to the command of David *and* Solomon his son. 46For in the days of David [o]and Asaph of old *there were* chiefs of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. 47In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the portions for the singers and the gatekeepers, a portion for [p]each day. [q]They also consecrated *holy things* for the Levites, [r]and the Levites consecrated *them* for the children of Aaron.

Principles of Separation

13 On that day [a]they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written [b]that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God, 2because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but [c]hired Balaam against them to curse them. [d]However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. 3So it was, when they had heard the Law, [e]that they separated all the mixed multitude from Israel.

The Reforms of Nehemiah

4Now before this, [f]Eliashib the priest, having authority over the storerooms of the house of our God, *was* allied with [g]Tobiah. 5And he had prepared for him a large room, [h]where previously they had stored the grain offerings, the frankincense, the articles, the tithes of grain, the new wine and oil, [i]which were commanded *to be given* to the Levites and singers and gatekeepers, and the offerings for the priests. 6But during all this I was not in Jerusalem, [j]for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king.

* **12:41** Or *Mijamin* (compare verse 5)

12:31–46 Praise—Nehemiah choreographed a dramatic demonstration of praise, thanksgiving, and celebration on top of the wall. It was a wholehearted celebration to the Lord, and a visible victory dance before Israel's enemies. This time of praise had been preceded by repentance and reorganization of their duties to the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Praise that rises deep in the heart is always praise that comes from knowing that we are in good standing with God. We have repented of our sins and set our hearts and minds on obedience. God is good, His ways are infinitely right, and He is worthy of all of our enthusiastic worship.

12:43 *sacrifices.* The sacrifices offered at the dedication of the wall probably were not burnt offerings, but peace offerings in which the people shared a common meal. The dedication was an occasion for great rejoicing, and men, women, and children took part.

13:4–9 *Tobiah.* Tobiah was an Ammonite (2:10).

12:30 [r] Neh. 13:22, 30 **12:31** [s] Neh. 12:38 [t] Neh. 2:13; 3:13 **12:35** [u] Num. 10:2, 8 **12:36** [v] 1 Chr. 23:5 [w] 2 Chr. 29:26, 27 **12:37** [x] Neh. 2:14; 3:15 [y] Neh. 3:15 [z] 2 Sam. 5:7–9 [a] Neh. 3:26; 8:1, 3, 16 **12:38** [b] Neh. 12:31 [c] Neh. 3:11 [d] Neh. 3:8 **12:39** [e] 2 Kin. 14:13 [f] Neh. 3:6 [g] Neh. 3:3 [h] Neh. 3:1 [i] Neh. 3:32 [j] Jer. 32:2 **12:43** [k] Ezra 3:13 **12:44** [l] Neh. 13:5, 12, 13 [m] Neh. 10:37–39 **12:45** [n] 1 Chr. 25, 26 **12:46** [o] 2 Chr. 29:30 **12:47** [p] Neh. 11:23 [q] Num. 18:21, 24 [r] Num. 18:26 **13:1** [a] Neh. 8:3, 8; 9:3 [b] Deut. 23:3, 4 **13:2** [c] Num. 22:5 [d] Num. 23:1; 24:10 **13:3** [e] Neh. 9:2; 10:28 **13:4** [f] Neh. 12:10 [g] Neh. 2:10; 4:3; 6:1 **13:5** [h] Neh. 12:44 [i] Num. 18:21, 24 **13:6** [j] Neh. 5:14–16

Then after certain days I obtained leave
from the king, 7and I came to Jerusalem
and discovered the evil that Eliashib had
done for Tobiah, in [k]preparing a room for
him in the courts of the house of God. 8And
it grieved me bitterly; therefore I threw all
the household goods of Tobiah out of the
room. 9Then I commanded them to [l]cleanse
the rooms; and I brought back into them
the articles of the house of God, with the
grain offering and the frankincense.
10I also realized that the portions for
the Levites had [m]not been given *them;* for
each of the Levites and the singers who
did the work had gone back to [n]his field.
11So [o]I contended with the rulers, and said,
[p]"Why is the house of God forsaken?" And
I gathered them together and set them in
their place. 12[q]Then all Judah brought the
tithe of the grain and the new wine and the
oil to the storehouse. 13[r]And I appointed as
treasurers over the storehouse Shelemiah
the priest and Zadok the scribe, and of the
Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them *was* Ha-
nan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah;
for they were considered [s]faithful, and their
task *was* to distribute to their brethren.
14[t]Remember me, O my God, concerning
this, and do not wipe out my good deeds
that I have done for the house of my God,
and for its services!
15In those days I saw *people* in Judah
treading winepresses [u]on the Sabbath,
and bringing in sheaves, and loading
donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all
kinds of burdens, [v]which they brought
into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I
warned *them* about the day on which they
were selling provisions. 16Men of Tyre
dwelt there also, who brought in fish and
all kinds of goods, and sold *them* on the
Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in
Jerusalem.
17Then I contended with the nobles of
Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing
is this that you do, by which you profane
the Sabbath day? 18[w]Did not your fathers
do thus, and did not our God bring all this
disaster on us and on this city? Yet you
bring added wrath on Israel by profaning
the Sabbath."
19So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as
it [x]began to be dark before the Sabbath,
that I commanded the gates to be shut, and
charged that they must not be opened till
after the Sabbath. [y]Then I posted *some* of
my servants at the gates, *so that* no bur-
dens would be brought in on the Sabbath
day. 20Now the merchants and sellers of all
kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem
once or twice.
21Then I warned them, and said to them,
"Why do you spend the night around the
wall? If you do *so* again, I will lay hands
on you!" From that time on they came no
more on the Sabbath. 22And I commanded
the Levites that [z]they should cleanse them-
selves, and that they should go and guard
the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day.
Remember me, O my God, *concerning*
this also, and spare me according to the
greatness of Your mercy!
23In those days I also saw Jews *who* [a]had
married women of [b]Ashdod, Ammon, *and*
Moab. 24And half of their children spoke
the language of Ashdod, and could not
speak the language of Judah, but spoke
according to the language of one or the
other people.
25So I [c]contended with them and cursed
them, struck some of them and pulled out
their hair, and made them [d]swear by God,
saying, "You shall not give your daughters
as wives to their sons, nor take their daugh-
ters for your sons or yourselves. 26[e]Did not
Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?
Yet among many nations there was no king
like him, [f]who was beloved of his God; and
God made him king over all Israel. [g]Never-
theless pagan women caused even him to
sin. 27Should we then hear of your doing all
this great evil, [h]transgressing against our
God by marrying pagan women?"
28And *one* of the sons [i]of Joiada, the son
of Eliashib the high priest, *was* a son-in-
law of [j]Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I
drove him from me.
29[k]Remember them, O my God, because
they have defiled the priesthood and [l]the
covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.
30[m]Thus I cleansed them of everything
pagan. I also [n]assigned duties to the priests
and the Levites, each to his service, 31and
to bringing [o]the wood offering and the
firstfruits at appointed times.
[p]Remember me, O my God, for good!

13:23–24 *Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.* The problem of Jews marrying foreigners had been dealt with thirty years before by Ezra (Ezra 9–10).

13:25 *cursed them . . . struck . . . them . . . pulled out their hair.* It is unnerving to read this list of verbs and imagine the scene. These were not the dispassionate remarks of someone giving a seminar. Nehemiah forced them to comply to the will of God in this matter. After all, this was the principal issue that had led to Israel's captivity in the beginning.

13:28 *son-in-law of Sanballat.* The marriage was particularly offensive because it formed a treasonable alliance with Israel's enemies and compromised the purity of the high priesthood.

13:7 [k] Neh. 13:1, 5 **13:9** [l] 2 Chr. 29:5, 15, 16 **13:10** [m] Neh. 10:37 [n] Num. 35:2 **13:11** [o] Neh. 13:17, 25 [p] Neh. 10:39 **13:12** [q] Neh. 10:38; 12:44 **13:13** [r] 2 Chr. 31:12 [s] 1 Cor. 4:2 **13:14** [t] Neh. 5:19; 13:22, 31 **13:15** [u] [Ex. 20:10] [v] [Jer. 17:21] **13:18** [w] [Jer. 17:21] **13:19** [x] Lev. 23:32 [y] Jer. 17:21, 22 **13:22** [z] Neh. 12:30 **13:23** [a] Ezra 9:2 [b] Neh. 4:7 **13:25** [c] Prov. 28:4 [d] Neh. 10:29, 30 **13:26** [e] 1 Kin. 11:1, 2 [f] 2 Sam. 12:24, 25 [g] 1 Kin. 11:4–8 **13:27** [h] [Ezra 10:2] **13:28** [i] Neh. 12:10, 12 [j] Neh. 4:1, 7; 6:1, 2 **13:29** [k] Neh. 6:14 [l] Mal. 2:4, 11, 12 **13:30** [m] Neh. 10:30 [n] Neh. 12:1 **13:31** [o] Neh. 10:34 [p] Neh. 13:14, 22

THE BOOK OF
ESTHER

▶ **AUTHOR:** Even though the author's identity is not given in the text, it is obvious from the intimate knowledge of Persian customs and etiquette, the palace in Susa, and the details of the reign of King Ahasuerus, that the author lived in Persia during this period. The love expressed here for the Jewish people and the author's knowledge of Jewish customs further suggest Jewish authorship. It is also thought that this Persian Jew was either an eyewitness to the events or knew an eyewitness. It may be that this author had access to the detailed records kept by Mordecai.

▶ **TIME:** c. 483–473 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Esth. 4:14

▶ **THEME:** Esther is unique among the Scriptures for two reasons: God is not mentioned by name once, and the heroine is a woman who is part of the harem of a foreign king. The events of the book take place about 30 years before Nehemiah, after the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt but before the walls were refinished. Esther probably helped to pave the way for Nehemiah's work. The book fits well within the tapestry of the Old Testament. Just as in so many other Old Testament narratives, God provides the means to preserve His people in the face of a severe crisis. It is still read aloud as part of the Purim celebration by Jewish people.

The King Dethrones Queen Vashti

1 Now it came to pass in the days of [a]Ahasuerus* (this *was* the Ahasuerus who reigned [b]over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, [c]from India to Ethiopia), **2**in those days when King Ahasuerus [d]sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in [e]Shushan* the citadel, **3***that* in the third year of his reign he [f]made a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces *being* before him— **4**when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty for many days, one hundred and eighty days *in all.*

5And when these days were completed, the king made a feast lasting seven days for all the people who were present in Shushan the citadel, from great to small, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. **6***There were* white and blue linen *curtains* fastened with cords of fine linen and purple on silver rods and marble pillars; *and the* [g]couches *were* of gold and silver on a *mosaic* pavement of alabaster, turquoise, and white and black marble. **7**And they served drinks in golden vessels, each vessel being different from the other, with royal wine in abundance, [h]according to the generosity of the king. **8**In accordance with the law, the drinking was not compulsory; for so the king had ordered all the officers of his household, that they should do according to each man's pleasure.

9Queen Vashti also made a feast for the women *in* the royal palace which *belonged* to King Ahasuerus.

10On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, [i]Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, **11**to bring Queen Vashti before the king, *wearing* her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people

* **1:1** Generally identified with Xerxes I (485–464 B.C.) * **1:2** Or *Susa,* and so throughout this book

1:1 ***Ahasuerus.*** The kingdom of Ahasuerus extended from India (the region drained by the Indus River) to Ethiopia (northern Sudan). The Persian Kingdom under Ahasuerus was divided into smaller areas called provinces and larger divisions called satrapies.
1:6 ***white . . . blue . . . and purple.*** These were the royal colors of the Persians.
1:8 ***not compulsory.*** The usual Persian custom was that guests at a banquet were required to drink each time the king raised his cup.
1:10 ***eunuchs.*** These were eunuchs who were castrated for the purpose of acting as harem attendants. They would have had the physical strength and stamina of any man, but not be a sexual threat to the king's women.

1:1 [a] Ezra 4:6 [b] Esth. 8:9 [c] Dan. 6:1 **1:2** [d] 1 Kin. 1:46 [e] Neh. 1:1 **1:3** [f] Gen. 40:20 **1:6** [g] Amos 2:8; 6:4 **1:7** [h] Esth. 2:18 **1:10** [i] Esth. 7:9

and the officials, for she *was* beautiful to behold. 12But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command *brought* by *his* eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.

13Then the king said to the [j]wise men [k]who understood the times (for this *was* the king's manner toward all who knew law and justice, 14those closest to him *being* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the [l]seven princes of Persia and Media, [m]who had access to the king's presence, *and* who ranked highest in the kingdom): 15"What *shall we* do to Queen Vashti, according to law, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus *brought to her* by the eunuchs?"

16And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: "Queen Vashti has not only wronged the king, but also all the princes, and all the people who *are* in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. 17For the queen's behavior will become known to all women, so that they will [n]despise their husbands in their eyes, when they report, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in before him, but she did not come.' 18This very day the *noble* ladies of Persia and Media will say to all the king's officials that they have heard of the behavior of the queen. Thus *there will be* excessive contempt and wrath. 19If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will [o]not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she. 20When the king's decree which he will make is proclaimed throughout all his empire (for it is great), all wives will [p]honor their husbands, both great and small."

21And the reply pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of Memucan. 22Then he sent letters to all the king's provinces, [q]to each province in its own script, and to every people in their own language, that each man should [r]be master in his own house, and speak in the language of his own people.

Esther Becomes Queen

2 After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, [a]what she had done, and what had been decreed against her. 2Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king; 3and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai* the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given *them*. 4Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti."

This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

5In Shushan the citadel there was a certain Jew whose name *was* Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of [b]Kish, a Benjamite. 6[c]*Kish** had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah* king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. 7And *Mordecai* had brought up Hadassah, that *is*, Esther, [d]his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman *was* lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

8So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were [e]gathered at Shushan the citadel, *under* the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women. 9Now the young woman pleased

*2:3 Hebrew *Hege* *2:6 Literally *Who* • Same as *Jehoiachin*, 2 Kings 24:6 and elsewhere

1:16–18 *Memucan.* Acting as spokesman for the others, Memucan responded shrewdly by enlarging the offense beyond a personal affront to the king. The Hebrew word used for *despise* occurs only here in the Old Testament.

2:5 *Kish.* Some think this may have been the Kish who was the father of King Saul (1 Sam. 9:1–2). It was not uncommon to refer to someone as "the son of" a more distant ancestor (Matt. 15:22).

2:6 *had been carried away.* This verse is a little confusing, as the Hebrew text does not indicate the subject of the verb "had been carried away." It seems highly unlikely that it could be Mordecai, because if he had been among those carried to Babylon, he would probably not be alive in the time of Ahasuerus. If the name Kish does not refer to a more distant ancestor, he may have been the one taken into captivity. Whatever the case, it is obvious that Mordecai and his family were among those descended from the captives taken to Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar.

2:7 *Hadassah.* Hadassah is a Hebrew name that means "myrtle." Esther is a Persian name meaning "star." Jewish people in that time customarily had two names when they lived in places other than Israel. One would be their secular name, which was understood by their adopted culture, and the other would be their sacred name, given in Hebrew.

2:8 *Esther also was taken.* We cannot determine whether Esther went willingly or reluctantly to the

1:13 [j] Dan. 2:12 [k] 1 Chr. 12:32 **1:14** [l] Ezra 7:14 [m] 2 Kin. 25:19 **1:17** [n] [Eph. 5:33] **1:19** [o] Esth. 8:8 **1:20** [p] [Col. 3:18] **1:22** [q] Esth. 3:12; 8:9 [r] [Eph. 5:22–24] **2:1** [a] Esth. 1:19, 20 **2:5** [b] 1 Sam. 9:1 **2:6** [c] 2 Kin. 24:14, 15 **2:7** [d] Esth. 2:15 **2:8** [e] Esth. 2:3

him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave [f]beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best *place* in the house of the women.

10 [g]Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal *it*. 11 And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.

12 Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women. 13 Thus *prepared, each* young woman went to the king, and she was given whatever she desired to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace. 14 In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines. She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.

15 Now when the turn came for Esther [h]the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther [i]obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her. 16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which *is* the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. 17 The king loved Esther more than all the *other* women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal [j]crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. 18 Then the king [k]made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king.

Mordecai Discovers a Plot

19 When virgins were gathered together a second time, Mordecai sat within the king's gate. 20 [l]*Now* Esther had not revealed her family and her people, just as Mordecai had charged her, for Esther obeyed the command of Mordecai as when she was brought up by him.

21 In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. 22 So the matter became known to Mordecai, [m]who told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. 23 And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in [n]the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

Haman's Conspiracy Against the Jews

3 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the [a]Agagite, and [b]advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who *were* with him. 2 And all the king's servants who *were* [c]within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai [d]would not bow or pay homage. 3 Then the king's servants who *were* within the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the [e]king's command?" 4 Now it happened, when they spoke to him daily and he would not listen to them, that they told *it* to Haman, to see whether Mordecai's words would stand; for *Mordecai* had told them that he *was* a Jew. 5 When Haman saw that Mordecai [f]did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was [g]filled with wrath.

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palace complex. But perhaps God was already preparing her for the work he had for her to do.

2:14 *concubines.* These women lived unfortunate, though highly pampered lives. If the king never called them again, they were destined to remain secluded in the harem for the rest of their lives.

2:21 *sat within the king's gate.* In ancient cities, the gates were the "courthouse" of the town, where official business was carried out (Deut. 22:13–15). The "king's gate" may have served a similar purpose.

3:1 *the Agagite.* Some believe Agagite is a reference to the historical district of Agag within the Persian Empire. Others believe this term more likely links Haman's descent to the Amalekites. These descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12) were ancient enemies of the Hebrews (Ex. 17:8). Agag, a king of the Amalekites, was captured by King Saul (1 Sam. 15:8). If Haman was descended from the Amalekites, and Mordecai from the family of Saul (v. 5), then the irritation Haman had for Mordecai could have been a symptom of a long-standing family hostility.

3:2 *bowed and paid homage.* It is not known whether the bowing was required as an act of worship to the king's man, or merely as an overt sign of deep respect. If such obeisance indicated worship, Mordecai's reason for refusal is obvious. If it was merely a sign of respect, he may not have been able to bring himself to show such honor to one who was an ancestral enemy.

3:5–6 *filled with wrath.* If Haman was of Amalekite ancestry, it could be that this was the cause of his deep hatred. Also, it is possible that Haman simply

2:9 [f] Esth. 2:3, 12 **2:10** [g] Esth. 2:20 **2:15** [h] Esth. 2:7; 9:29 [i] Esth. 5:2, 8 **2:17** [j] Esth. 1:11 **2:18** [k] Esth. 1:3 **2:20** [l] Esth. 2:10 **2:22** [m] Esth. 6:1, 2 **2:23** [n] Esth. 6:1 **3:1** [a] Num. 24:7 [b] Esth. 5:11 **3:2** [c] Esth. 2:19, 21; 5:9 [d] Ps. 15:4 **3:3** [e] Esth. 3:2 **3:5** [f] Esth. 3:2; 5:9 [g] Dan. 3:19

6But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai
alone, for they had told him of the people of
Mordecai. Instead, Haman [h]sought to de-
stroy all the Jews who *were* throughout the
whole kingdom of Ahasuerus—the people
of Mordecai.
7In the first month, which is the month of
Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasu-
erus, [i]they cast Pur (that *is,* the lot), be-
fore Haman to determine the day and the
month,* until *it fell on the* twelfth *month,**
which *is* the month of Adar.
8Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus,
"There is a certain people scattered and
dispersed among the people in all the pro-
vinces of your kingdom; [j]their laws *are* dif-
ferent from all *other* people's, and they do
not keep the king's laws. Therefore it *is* not
fitting for the king to let them remain. 9If
it pleases the king, let *a decree* be written
that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten
thousand talents of silver into the hands of
those who do the work, to bring *it* into the
king's treasuries."
10So the king [k]took [l]his signet ring from
his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of
Hammedatha the Agagite, the [m]enemy of
the Jews. 11And the king said to Haman,
"The money and the people *are* given to
you, to do with them as seems good to you."
12[n]Then the king's scribes were called
on the thirteenth day of the first month,
and *a decree* was written according to all
that Haman commanded—to the king's
satraps, to the governors who *were* over
each province, to the officials of all people,
to every province [o]according to its script,
and to every people in their language. [p]In
the name of King Ahasuerus it was writ-
ten, and sealed with the king's signet ring.
13And the letters were [q]sent by couriers into
all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill,
and to annihilate all the Jews, both young
and old, little children and women, [r]in one
day, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth
month, which *is* the month of Adar, and
[s]to plunder their possessions.* 14[t]A copy
of the document was to be issued as law
in every province, being published for all
people, that they should be ready for that
day. 15The couriers went out, hastened by
the king's command; and the decree was
proclaimed in Shushan the citadel. So the
king and Haman sat down to drink, but
[u]the city of Shushan was perplexed.

Esther Agrees to Help the Jews

4 When Mordecai learned all that had
happened, he [a]tore his clothes and put
on sackcloth [b]and ashes, and went out into
the midst of the city. He [c]cried out with a
loud and bitter cry. 2He went as far as the
front of the king's gate, for no one *might*
enter the king's gate clothed with sack-
cloth. 3And in every province where the
king's command and decree arrived, *there
was* great mourning among the Jews, with
fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many
lay in sackcloth and ashes.
4So Esther's maids and eunuchs came
and told her, and the queen was deeply
distressed. Then she sent garments to
clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth
away from him, but he would not accept
them. 5Then Esther called Hathach, *one* of
the king's eunuchs whom he had appoint-
ed to attend her, and she gave him a com-
mand concerning Mordecai, to learn what
and why this *was.* 6So Hathach went out
to Mordecai in the city square that *was* in
front of the king's gate. 7And Mordecai told

* **3:7** Septuagint adds *to destroy the people of Mordecai in one day;* Vulgate adds *the nation of the Jews should be destroyed.* • Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *and the lot fell on the fourteenth of the month.* * **3:13** Septuagint adds the text of the letter here.

could not stand to see anyone who did not properly respect his position.

3:7 *Pur (that is, the lot).* The casting of lots was common in ancient times. Haman's casting a lot at the beginning of the year to determine the best time to destroy the Jewish people fits in with the culture of the day, as the Babylonians believed that the gods gathered at the beginning of each year to establish the destiny of human beings. The word *pur* is the basis for the name of the new feast in chapter 9.

3:8 Slander—Haman was sly. He devised an accusation to convince the king that the Jews were a dangerous and treasonous people. His accusation contained a clever mixture of truth and falsehood. The laws of the Jewish people were admittedly different, but this was not unusual, nor was it a threat to Persia, which contained many minorities. Not only was accusing the whole Jewish nation of civil disobedience a lie, it was also intended to lead to something much worse: murder.

3:10 *ring.* The king's signet ring symbolized his authority. He would have used this signet as a stamp to authorize official documents.

3:15 *Haman sat down to drink.* Haman was so unconcerned about the death sentence he was placing on the Jewish people that he sat down comfortably to relax while the city was in confusion.

4:1–2 *sackcloth and ashes.* Sackcloth and ashes were used as a visible sign of mourning, indicating a sense of desolation.

4:3 *fasting.* It is interesting to note that throughout the entire Book of Esther, God is not mentioned by name even once. One assumes that Esther's fasting was accompanied by prayer, but it is never mentioned. Fasting was a religious custom, and we know the Jews relied on God for their safety. Many think the author of Esther was writing the story to a secular audience, and this is the reason for God's actual name being left out.

3:6 [h] Ps. 83:4 **3:7** [i] Esth. 9:24–26 **3:8** [j] Acts 16:20, 21 **3:10** [k] Gen. 41:42 [l] Esth. 8:2, 8 [m] Esth. 7:6 **3:12** [n] Esth. 8:9 [o] Esth. 1:22 [p] Esth. 8:8–10 **3:13** [q] Esth. 8:10, 14 [r] Esth. 8:12 [s] Esth. 8:11; 9:10 **3:14** [t] Esth. 8:13, 14 **3:15** [u] Esth. 8:15 **4:1** [a] 2 Sam. 1:11 [b] Josh. 7:6 [c] Gen. 27:34

him all that had happened to him, and [d]the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. 8He also gave him [e]a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people. 9So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

10Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: 11"All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into [f]the inner court to the king, who has not been called, [g]*he has* but one law: put *all* to death, except the one [h]to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been [i]called to go in to the king these thirty days." 12So they told Mordecai Esther's words.

13And Mordecai told *them* to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. 14For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?"

15Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai: 16"Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for [j]three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; [k]and if I perish, I perish!"

17So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.*

Esther's Banquet

5 Now it happened [a]on the third day that Esther put on *her* royal *robes* and stood in [b]the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.* 2So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, *that* [c]she found favor in his sight, and [d]the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that *was* in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter.

3And the king said to her, "What do you wish, Queen Esther? What *is* your request? [e]It shall be given to you—up to half the kingdom!"

4So Esther answered, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

5Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, that he may do as Esther has said." So the king and Haman went to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6At the banquet of wine [f]the king said to Esther, [g]"What *is* your petition? It shall be granted you. What *is* your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"

7Then Esther answered and said, "My petition and request *is this:* 8If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, then let the king and Haman come to the [h]banquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said."

Haman's Plot Against Mordecai

9So Haman went out that day [i]joyful and with a glad heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, and [j]that he did not stand or tremble before him, he was filled with indignation against Mordecai. 10Nevertheless Haman [k]restrained himself and went home, and he sent and called for his friends and his wife Zeresh. 11Then Haman told them of his great riches, [l]the multitude of his children, everything in which the king had promoted him, and how he

* **4:17** Septuagint adds a prayer of Mordecai here.
* **5:1** Septuagint adds many extra details in verses 1 and 2.

4:11 *not been called.* Esther understood that Mordecai was asking her to risk her life. She would be taking her life into her hands to go uncalled to the king in any circumstances; the fact that she had not been called for a month probably meant that she was even more unsure of her reception.

4:14 *for such a time as this.* Even though this verse does not directly mention God, Mordecai obviously believed that Esther was made queen through God's design, and she would be acting as God's agent to deliver His people.

4:16 Self-Denial—Even though Esther must have been afraid, knowing that she was breaking the law, she decided to trust God. Her statement "if I perish, I perish," was not despair, but willingness to act however God willed, recognizing that the consequences were in His hands. Self-denial is not easy, but God never fails His children.

5:2 *she found favor in his sight.* When Esther illegally entered the king's court, he was pleased by her appearance and decided to overlook her offense. In this scene we again see the hand of God.

5:8 *tomorrow I will do as the king has said.* Why did Esther delay in telling the king her real request? Perhaps she was afraid, and used the intervening time to strengthen her courage. But it seems that here also is God's hand, for the delay provided time for the king's sleepless night and the events that followed.

4:7 [d] Esth. 3:9 **4:8** [e] Esth. 3:14, 15 **4:11** [f] Esth. 5:1; 6:4 [g] Dan. 2:9 [h] Esth. 5:2; 8:4 [i] Esth. 2:14 **4:16** [j] Esth. 5:1 [k] Gen. 43:14 **5:1** [a] Esth. 4:16 [b] Esth. 4:11; 6:4 **5:2** [c] [Prov. 21:1] [d] Esth. 4:11; 8:4 **5:3** [e] Mark 6:23 **5:6** [f] Esth. 7:2 [g] Esth. 9:12 **5:8** [h] Esth. 6:14 **5:9** [i] [Job 20:5] [j] Esth. 3:5 **5:10** [k] 2 Sam. 13:22 **5:11** [l] Esth. 9:7–10

had [m]advanced him above the officials and servants of the king.

12 Moreover Haman said, "Besides, Queen Esther invited no one but me to come in with the king to the banquet that she prepared; and tomorrow I am again invited by her, along with the king. 13 Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

14 Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Let a [n]gallows be made, fifty cubits high, and in the morning [o]suggest to the king that Mordecai be hanged on it; then go merrily with the king to the banquet."

And the thing pleased Haman; so he had [p]the gallows made.

The King Honors Mordecai

6 That night the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring [q]the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. 2 And it was found written that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. 3 Then the king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?"

And the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."

4 So the king said, "Who *is* in the court?" Now Haman had *just* entered [b]the outer court of the king's palace [c]to suggest that the king hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

5 The king's servants said to him, "Haman is there, standing in the court."

And the king said, "Let him come in."

6 So Haman came in, and the king asked him, "What shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?"

Now Haman thought in his heart, "Whom would the king delight to honor more than [d]me?" 7 And Haman answered the king, "*For* the man whom the king delights to honor, 8 let a royal robe be brought which the king has worn, and [e]a horse on which the king has ridden, which has a royal crest placed on its head. 9 Then let this robe and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that he may array the man whom the king delights to honor. Then parade him on horseback through the city square, [f]and proclaim before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!'"

10 Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the robe and the horse, as you have suggested, and do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits within the king's gate! Leave nothing undone of all that you have spoken."

11 So Haman took the robe and the horse, arrayed Mordecai and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!"

12 Afterward Mordecai went back to the king's gate. But Haman [g]hurried to his house, mourning [h]and with his head covered. 13 When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against [i]him but will surely fall before him."

14 While they *were* still talking with him, the king's eunuchs came, and hastened to bring Haman to [j]the banquet which Esther had prepared.

Haman Hanged Instead of Mordecai

7 So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. 2 And on the second day, [q]at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What *is* your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what *is* your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"

3 Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. 4 For we have been [b]sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as [c]male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss."

5 So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?"

5:14 ***gallows.*** The gallows height, 50 cubits, was about 75 feet.

6:1 ***the king could not sleep.*** Within this chapter we observe a series of events that point unmistakably to God's sovereign hand. Only because of the "chance happening" of his sleepless night did the king learn of Mordecai's past loyalty.

6:4 ***had just entered the outer court.*** Here again is the Lord's hand at work on behalf of His people. No sooner had Mordecai's reward been discussed than Haman appeared in the court.

6:10 ***Jew.*** The term "Jew," derived from Judah, came into use during the exile because the people were primarily from the southern kingdom of Judah.

7:3 ***my people at my request.*** Esther disclosed her real identity to the king in her plea for the lives of her people.

5:11 [m] Esth. 3:1 **5:14** [n] Esth. 7:9 [o] Esth. 6:4 [p] Esth. 7:10 **6:1** [a] Esth. 2:23; 10:2 **6:4** [b] Esth. 5:1 [c] Esth. 5:14 **6:6** [d] Prov. 16:18; 18:12 **6:8** [e] 1 Kin. 1:33 **6:9** [f] Gen. 41:43 **6:12** [g] 2 Chr. 26:20 [h] 2 Sam. 15:30 **6:13** [i] Zech. 2:8 **6:14** [j] Esth. 5:8 **7:2** [a] Esth. 5:6 **7:4** [b] Esth. 3:9; 4:7 [c] Deut. 28:68

6And Esther said, "The adversary and [d]enemy *is* this wicked Haman!"

So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

7Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine *and went* into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king. 8When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across [e]the couch where Esther *was*. Then the king said, "Will he also assault the queen while I *am* in the house?"

As the word left the king's mouth, they [f]covered Haman's face. 9Now [g]Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, "Look! [h]The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke [i]good on the king's behalf, is standing at the house of Haman."

Then the king said, "Hang him on it!"

10So [j]they [k]hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath subsided.

Esther Saves the Jews

8 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the [a]enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told [b]how he *was related* to her. 2So the king took off [c]his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. 4And [d]the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, 5and said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight and the thing *seems* right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the [e]letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who *are* in all the king's provinces. 6For how can I endure to see [f]the evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?"

7Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, [g]I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he *tried to* lay his hand on the Jews. 8You yourselves write *a decree* concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring [h]no one can revoke."

9[i]So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which *is* the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third *day;* and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces [j]from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces *in all*, to every province [k]in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. 10[l]And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed *it* with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds.*

11By these letters the king permitted the Jews who *were* in every city to [m]gather together and protect their lives—to [n]destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, *both* little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, 12[o]on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month of Adar.* 13[p]A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. 14The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Shushan the citadel.

15So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and [q]the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. 16The Jews had [r]light and gladness, joy and honor. 17And in every province and

* **8:10** Literally *sons of the swift horses*
* **8:12** Septuagint adds the text of the letter here.

7:6 ***this wicked Haman.*** In Haman's evil plan to kill his enemy he had unwittingly threatened the queen's life.
7:8 ***covered Haman's face.*** The covering of his face signified that he was condemned to death.
8:2 ***he had taken from Haman.*** Mordecai was given Haman's position as prime minister.
8:8 ***no one can revoke.*** In the Persian Empire, a royal decree could not be altered, but a second one could be written that effectively invalidated the first.
8:17 ***became Jews.*** This is the only place in the Old Testament that refers to conversion to Judaism. Before, a person was a Jew if he or she was born so, and now it appears as a religion to which one could convert.

7:6 [d] Esth. 3:10 **7:8** [e] Esth. 1:6 [f] Job 9:24 **7:9** [g] Esth. 1:10 [h] Esth. 5:14 [i] Esth. 6:2 **7:10** [j] [Ps. 7:16; 94:23] [k] Dan. 6:24 **8:1** [a] Esth. 7:6 [b] Esth. 2:7, 15 **8:2** [c] Esth. 3:10 **8:4** [d] Esth. 4:11; 5:2 **8:5** [e] Esth. 3:13 **8:6** [f] Neh. 2:3 **8:7** [g] Prov. 13:22 **8:8** [h] Dan. 6:8, 12, 15 **8:9** [i] Esth. 3:12 [j] Esth. 1:1 [k] Esth. 1:22; 3:12 **8:10** [l] 1 Kin. 21:8 **8:11** [m] Esth. 9:2 [n] Esth. 9:10, 15, 16 **8:12** [o] Esth. 3:13; 9:1 **8:13** [p] Esth. 3:14, 15 **8:15** [q] Prov. 29:2 **8:16** [r] Ps. 97:11; 112:4

city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast [s]and a holiday. Then many of the people of the land [t]became Jews, because [u]fear of the Jews fell upon them.

The Jews Destroy Their Tormentors

9 Now [a]in the twelfth month, that *is,* the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, [b]*the time* came for the king's command and his decree to be executed. On the day that the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite occurred, in that the Jews themselves [c]overpowered those who hated them. **2** The Jews [d]gathered together in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who [e]sought their harm. And no one could withstand them, [f]because fear of them fell upon all people. **3** And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and all those doing the king's work, helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. **4** For Mordecai *was* great in the king's palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for this man Mordecai [g]became increasingly prominent. **5** Thus the Jews defeated all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, with slaughter and destruction, and did what they pleased with those who hated them.

6 And in [h]Shushan the citadel the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men. **7** Also Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, **8** Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, **9** Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha— **10**[i]the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews—they killed; [j]but they did not lay a hand on the plunder.

11 On that day the number of those who were killed in Shushan the citadel was brought to the king. **12** And the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the citadel, and the ten sons of Haman. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now [k]what *is* your petition? It shall be granted to you. Or what *is* your further request? It shall be done."

13 Then Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let it be granted to the Jews who *are* in Shushan to do again tomorrow [l]according to today's decree, and let Haman's ten sons [m]be hanged on the gallows."

14 So the king commanded this to be done; the decree was issued in Shushan, and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

15 And the Jews who *were* in Shushan [n]gathered together again on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and killed three hundred men at Shushan; [o]but they did not lay a hand on the plunder.

16 The remainder of the Jews in the king's provinces [p]gathered together and protected their lives, had rest from their enemies, and killed seventy-five thousand of their enemies; [q]but they did not lay a hand on the plunder. **17** *This was* on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. And on the fourteenth of *the month** they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

The Feast of Purim

18 But the Jews who *were* at Shushan assembled together [r]on the thirteenth *day,* as well as on the fourteenth; and on the fifteenth of *the month** they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. **19** Therefore the Jews of the villages who dwelt in the unwalled towns celebrated the fourteenth day of the month of Adar [s]*with* gladness and feasting, [t]as a holiday, and for [u]sending presents to one another.

20 And Mordecai wrote these things and sent letters to all the Jews, near and far, who *were* in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, **21** to establish among them that they should celebrate yearly the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, **22** as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, as the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them, and from mourning to a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, of [v]sending presents to one another and gifts to the [w]poor. **23** So the Jews accepted the custom which they had begun, as Mordecai had written to them, **24** because Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, [x]had plotted against the Jews to annihilate them, and had cast Pur (that *is,* the lot), to consume them and destroy them; **25** but [y]when *Esther** came before the king, he commanded by letter that this* wicked plot which *Haman* had devised against the Jews should [z]return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

26 So they called these days Purim, after the name Pur. Therefore, because of all the words of [a]this letter, what they had

* **9:17** Literally *it* * **9:18** Literally *it* * **9:25** Literally *she* or *it* • Literally *his*

9:7–10 ***ten sons of Haman.*** The patterns of reprisal and revenge were so deeply ingrained in the culture of the ancient Middle East that the survival of even one of these sons might mean trouble for the next generation of Jews.

9:26–28 ***Purim.*** Purim (from the word *pur,* referring to the lots Haman cast to determine the best day for destroying the Jews; 3:7) reminds the Jews of God's deliverance from their day of destruction.

8:17 [s] Esth. 9:19 [t] Ps. 18:43 [u] Gen. 35:5 **9:1** [a] Esth. 8:12 [b] Esth. 3:13 [c] 2 Sam. 22:41 **9:2** [d] Esth. 8:11; 9:15–18 [e] Ps. 71:13, 14 [f] Esth. 8:17 **9:4** [g] 2 Sam. 3:1 **9:6** [h] Esth. 1:2; 3:15; 4:16 **9:10** [i] Esth. 5:11; 9:7–10 [j] Esth. 8:11 **9:12** [k] Esth. 5:6; 7:2 **9:13** [l] Esth. 8:11; 9:15 [m] 2 Sam. 21:6, 9 **9:15** [n] Esth. 8:11; 9:2 [o] Esth. 9:10 **9:16** [p] Esth. 9:2 [q] Esth. 8:11 **9:18** [r] Esth. 9:11, 15 **9:19** [s] Deut. 16:11, 14 [t] Esth. 8:16, 17 [u] Neh. 8:10, 12 **9:22** [v] Neh. 8:10 [w] [Deut. 15:7–11] **9:24** [x] Esth. 3:6, 7; 9:26 **9:25** [y] Esth. 7:4–10; 8:3; 9:13, 14 [z] Esth. 7:10 **9:26** [a] Esth. 9:20

seen concerning this matter, and what had happened to them, 27the Jews established and imposed it upon themselves and their descendants and all who would [b]join them, that without fail they should celebrate these two days every year, according to the written *instructions* and according to the *prescribed* time, 28*that* these days *should be* remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city, that these days of Purim should not fail *to be observed* among the Jews, and *that* the memory of them should not perish among their descendants.

29Then Queen Esther, [c]the daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this [d]second letter about Purim. 30And *Mordecai* sent letters to all the Jews, to [e]the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* words of peace and truth, 31to confirm these days of Purim at their *appointed* time, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had prescribed for them, and as they had decreed for themselves and their descendants concerning matters of their [f]fasting and lamenting. 32So the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim, and it was written in the book.

Mordecai's Advancement

10 And King Ahasuerus imposed tribute on the land and *on* [a]the islands of the sea. 2Now all the acts of his power and his might, and the account of the greatness of Mordecai, [b]to which the king advanced him, *are* they not written in the book of the [c]chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? 3For Mordecai the Jew *was* [d]second to King Ahasuerus, and was great among the Jews and well received by the multitude of his brethren, [e]seeking the good of his people and speaking peace to all his countrymen.*

* **10:3** Literally *seed*. Septuagint and Vulgate add a dream of Mordecai here; Vulgate adds six more chapters.

9:27 [b] Esth. 8:17 **9:29** [c] Esth. 2:15 [d] Esth. 8:10; 9:20, 21 **9:30** [e] Esth. 1:1 **9:31** [f] Esth. 4:3, 16 **10:1** [a] Is. 11:11; 24:15 **10:2** [b] Esth. 8:15; 9:4 [c] Esth. 6:1 **10:3** [d] Gen. 41:40, 43, 44 [e] Neh. 2:10

THE BOOK OF
JOB

▶ **AUTHOR:** The author of Job is unknown and there are no textual hints as to his identity. The non-Hebraic cultural background may point to a Gentile authorship, but an interesting school of thought maintains that Moses may have written this book. The land of Uz (1:1) is directly adjacent to Midian, where Moses lived for 40 years. Perhaps the oldest book of the Bible, set in the time of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph), it is conceivable that Moses obtained a record of the dialogue left by Job or Elihu.

▶ **TIME:** Unknown ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Job 13:15

▶ **THEME:** There are many things that set Job apart from the rest of Scripture. Its dramatic format is unique. It is a story that is not part of the flow of the history of Israel. And the thematic focus is narrower than other books of its size. A classic work of literature, its primary subject matter is the most basic question man has of God: Why do we suffer? The Book of Job is the biblical text that addresses this issue head-on, and the dramatic nature of the story intensifies the conflict of ideas and understanding between God and man.

Job and His Family in Uz

1 There was a man [a]in the land of Uz, whose name *was* [b]Job; and that man was [c]blameless and upright, and one who [d]feared God and shunned evil. **2**And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. **3**Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.

4And his sons would go and feast *in their* houses, each on his *appointed* day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. **5**So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning [e]and offer burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and [f]cursed* God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly.

Satan Attacks Job's Character

6Now [g]there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan* also came among them. **7**And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?"

* **1:5** Literally *blessed*, but used here in the evil sense, and so in verse 11 and 2:5, 9 * **1:6** Literally *the Adversary*, and so throughout this book

1:1 ***Uz.*** The precise location of Uz is unknown, but it may have been near Edom. Some of the other towns and peoples mentioned in this book are known to have been located near Edom, so it is logical to assume that Uz was in the same area.

1:2 Why Do We Suffer?—Scripture points us to multiple reasons for suffering. Here, as in Job's case, suffering somehow is involved in God's purposes, and we are to learn from it. The New Testament echoes this teaching in James 1 where it says to "count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience" (James 1:2–3). Suffering also happens as a result of our own sin. David suffered many family trials because of his sin with Bathsheba. Other times we suffer directly because of our faith, as martyrs have done for centuries. Sometimes living out our faith comes in direct conflict with the ruling powers, and we suffer because of it. Still other times we suffer because we live in a fallen world where things go wrong or natural disasters occur.

Both Peter and Paul advise us to commit our pain and suffering to God, realizing He is faithful to work out all things for our good and God's glory (Rom. 8:28; 1 Pet. 4:9). This lesson is often learned over a whole lifetime as we see in numerous psalms and in the lives of many biblical characters.

1:6 ***the sons of God.*** Celestial beings or angels are called "sons of God" because they had no parents. They were created by God to serve Him (2:1; 4:18; Ps. 103:20). This can also mean a group of saints (Gen. 6:2). Adam was also called "the son of God" (Luke 3:38) because God was his Creator rather than having a human father and mother. Here Satan is said

1:1 [a] 1 Chr. 1:17 [b] Ezek. 14:14, 20 [c] Gen. 6:9; 17:1 [d] [Prov. 16:6] **1:5** [e] [Job 42:8] [f] 1 Kin. 21:10, 13 **1:6** [g] Job 2:1

So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From [h]going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

8Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

9So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10[i]Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? [j]You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11[k]But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely [l]curse You to Your face!"

12And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*."

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job Loses His Property and Children

13Now there was a day [m]when his sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; 14and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15when the Sabeans* raided *them* and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

16While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

17While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

18While he *was* still speaking, another also came and said, [n]"Your sons and daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 19and suddenly a great wind came from across* the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!"

20Then Job arose, [o]tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he [p]fell to the ground and worshiped. 21And he said:

[q]"Naked I came from my mother's womb,
And naked shall I return there.
The LORD [r]gave, and the LORD has
[s]taken away;
[t]Blessed be the name of the LORD."

22[u]In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Satan Attacks Job's Health

2 Again [a]there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. 2And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?"

* **1:15** Literally *Sheba* (compare 6:19) * **1:19** Septuagint omits *across.*

to be among them. ***Satan.*** At some point after creation, Satan, who was the highest created angel (Ezek. 28:12–15), aspired to be as God Himself (Is. 14:13–14). As a result, he was barred from his heavenly position (Ezek. 28:16) and took a large number of angels with him in his rebellion, over whom he rules (Matt. 12:24). Jesus said that He saw Satan fall from heaven (Luke 10:18), but this chapter in Job, and the incident of the lying spirit with the false prophets of Ahab (2 Chr. 18:8–22), indicate that Satan still had access to heaven and heavenly counsels. God can and does limit Satan (1:12). The cross defeated Satan (John 12:31), but the final judgment will not occur until the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:10). In the meantime, Satan tries to thwart and defeat the work of God. God sometimes uses Satan to teach a lesson (1 Chr. 21; 2 Cor. 12:7–10), but it is still God who is in control.

1:7 ***the LORD.*** The Hebrew word Yahweh, usually translated "the LORD," is the personal name of the true God of the Old Testament (Ex. 3:14–15). It is the particular name of God in covenantal relations with His people Israel (Ex. 6:1–6; 19:3–8).

1:8 ***a blameless and upright man.*** The Lord was not saying that Job was sinless, but He was saying that Job had his priorities right. Job feared the Lord and it showed in his life.

1:10 ***hedge.*** No harm could come to Job unless the Lord permitted it (v. 12). Believers today should take great comfort from the biblical teaching that the Lord protects His people—whether by a cloud (Ex. 14:19–20), or by a wall of fiery chariots (2 Kin. 6:17), or through guardian angels (Heb. 1:14).

1:11 ***curse.*** The sin of cursing God is a pivotal issue for the Book of Job. Job feared that his children might think or speak irreverently of God (v. 5). But Satan asserted that Job would surely curse God if his prosperity and blessings were removed. Even Job's wife urged him to "curse God and die" (2:9).

1:15 ***Sabeans.*** The Sabeans were nomadic raiders from Sheba, probably located in southwestern Arabia, in present-day Yemen.

1:17 ***Chaldeans.*** The Chaldeans were part of various west Semitic marauding tribes active in the middle Euphrates from the twelfth to the ninth centuries B.C. They migrated eastward into Assyria and then Babylonia, and were the forerunners of the Chaldean or neo-Babylonian dynasty established by Nebuchadnezzar's father.

1:7 [h] [1 Pet. 5:8] **1:10** [i] Ps. 34:7 [j] [Prov. 10:22]
1:11 [k] Job 2:5; 19:21 [l] Is. 8:21 **1:13** [m] [Eccl. 9:12]
1:18 [n] Job 1:4, 13 **1:20** [o] Gen. 37:29, 34 [p] [1 Pet. 5:6]
1:21 [q] [Eccl. 5:15] [r] [James 1:17] [s] Gen. 31:16 [t] Eph. 5:20
1:22 [u] Job 2:10 **2:1** [a] Job 1:6–8

[b]Satan answered the LORD and said,
"From going to and fro on the earth, and
from walking back and forth on it."
3 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have
you considered My servant Job, that *there*
is none like him on the earth, [c]a blameless
and upright man, one who fears God and
shuns evil? And still he [d]holds fast to his
integrity, although you incited Me against
him, [e]to destroy him without cause."
4 So Satan answered the LORD and said,
"Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he
will give for his life. 5 [f]But stretch out Your
hand now, and touch his [g]bone and his
flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your
face!"
6 [h]And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold,
he *is* in your hand, but spare his life."
7 So Satan went out from the presence of
the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils
[i]from the sole of his foot to the crown of his
head. 8 And he took for himself a potsherd
with which to scrape himself [j]while he sat
in the midst of the ashes.
9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still
hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and
die!"
10 But he said to her, "You speak as one
of the foolish women speaks. [k]Shall we in-
deed accept good from God, and shall we
not accept adversity?" [l]In all this Job did
not [m]sin with his lips.

Job's Three Friends

11 Now when Job's three friends heard
of all this adversity that had come
upon him, each one came from his own
place—Eliphaz the [n]Temanite, Bildad the
[o]Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For
they had made an appointment together to
come [p]and mourn with him, and to com-
fort him. 12 And when they raised their
eyes from afar, and did not recognize
him, they lifted their voices and wept; and
each one tore his robe and [q]sprinkled dust
on his head toward heaven. 13 So they sat
down with him on the ground [r]seven days
and seven nights, and no one spoke a word
to him, for they saw that *his* grief was very
great.

Job Deplores His Birth

3 After this Job opened his mouth and
cursed the day of his *birth*. 2 And Job
spoke, and said:

3 "May[a] the day perish on which I was
born,
And the night *in which* it was said,
'A male child is conceived.'
4 May that day be darkness;
May God above not seek it,
Nor the light shine upon it.
5 May darkness and [b]the shadow of
death claim it;
May a cloud settle on it;
May the blackness of the day terrify it.
6 *As for* that night, may darkness seize
it;
May it not rejoice* among the days of
the year,
May it not come into the number of the
months.
7 Oh, may that night be barren!
May no joyful shout come into it!
8 May those curse it who curse the day,
Those [c]who are ready to arouse
Leviathan.
9 May the stars of its morning be dark;
May it look for light, but *have* none,
And not see the dawning of the day;
10 Because it did not shut up the doors of
my *mother's* womb,
Nor hide sorrow from my eyes.

11 "Why[d] did I not die at birth?
Why did I *not* perish when I came
from the womb?
12 [e]Why did the knees receive me?
Or why the breasts, that I should
nurse?
13 For now I would have lain still and
been quiet,
I would have been asleep;
Then I would have been at rest

* **3:6** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *be joined*.

2:10 ***good . . . adversity.*** This comment of Job's is one of the central themes of the whole book. A person of faith will trust in God through prosperity or adversity, even if they are unable to understand why bad things happen (Hab. 3:17–19).

2:11 ***Temanite . . . Shuhite . . . Naamathite.*** A Temanite was probably an Edomite from Teman in northern Edom, and a Naamathite probably came from Naameh, a mountainous area in northwestern Arabia. From this context, it can be assumed that a Shuhite was also a person from a certain town, unknown in modern times.

3:1 ***cursed the day.*** The Hebrew word for "cursed," meaning "to hold in contempt," is elsewhere employed of cursing God (Ex. 22:28; Lev. 24:15) or cursing one's parents (Ex. 21:17). Job expressed a strong malediction against the day of his birth and the night of his conception, but he did not commit blasphemy. He did not curse the Chaldeans, or Sabeans, much less God. Neither did he express thoughts of suicide.

3:8 ***curse.*** Job employed two separate Hebrew words translated "curse," different from the term in verse 1. He wished that the popular magicians who cast spells on the day for their clients could have cast a spell on his day so that he never could have been born. He was not endorsing pagan magic, but was speaking vividly and forcefully to express his agony and despair.

2:2 [b] Job 1:7 **2:3** [c] Job 1:1, 8 [d] Job 27:5, 6 [e] Job 9:17
2:5 [f] Job 1:11 [g] Job 19:20 **2:6** [h] Job 1:12 **2:7** [i] Is. 1:6
2:8 [j] Ezek. 27:30 **2:10** [k] Job 1:21, 22 [l] Job 1:22 [m] Ps. 39:1
2:11 [n] Gen. 36:11 [o] Gen. 25:2 [p] Rom. 12:15 **2:12** [q] Neh. 9:1
2:13 [r] Gen. 50:10 **3:3** [a] Jer. 20:14–18 **3:5** [b] Jer. 13:16
3:8 [c] Jer. 9:17 **3:11** [d] Job 10:18, 19 **3:12** [e] Gen. 30:3

14 With kings and counselors of the earth,
Who [f]built ruins for themselves,
15 Or with princes who had gold,
Who filled their houses *with* silver;
16 Or *why* was I not hidden [g]like a stillborn child,
Like infants who never saw light?
17 There the wicked cease *from* troubling,
And there the weary are at [h]rest.
18 *There* the prisoners rest together;
[i]They do not hear the voice of the oppressor.
19 The small and great are there,
And the servant *is* free from his master.

20 "Why[j] is light given to him who is in misery,
And life to the [k]bitter of soul,
21 Who [l]long for death, but it does not *come*,
And search for it more than [m]hidden treasures;
22 Who rejoice exceedingly,
And are glad when they can find the [n]grave?
23 *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hidden,
[o]And whom God has hedged in?
24 For my sighing comes before I eat,*
And my groanings pour out like water.
25 For the thing I greatly [p]feared has come upon me,
And what I dreaded has happened to me.
26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest, for trouble comes."

Eliphaz: Job Has Sinned

4 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

2 "*If* one attempts a word with you, will you become weary?
But who can withhold himself from speaking?
3 Surely you have instructed many,
And you [a]have strengthened weak hands.
4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling,
And you [b]have strengthened the feeble knees;
5 But now it comes upon you, and you are weary;
It touches you, and you are troubled.
6 *Is* not [c]your reverence [d]your confidence?
And the integrity of your ways your hope?

7 "Remember now, [e]who *ever* perished being innocent?
Or where were the upright *ever* cut off?
8 Even as I have seen,
[f]Those who plow iniquity
And sow trouble reap the same.
9 By the blast of God they perish,
And by the breath of His anger they are consumed.
10 The roaring of the lion,
The voice of the fierce lion,
And [g]the teeth of the young lions are broken.
11 [h]The old lion perishes for lack of prey,
And the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

12 "Now a word was secretly brought to me,
And my ear received a whisper of it.
13 [i]In disquieting thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falls on men,
14 Fear came upon me, and [j]trembling,
Which made all my bones shake.
15 Then a spirit passed before my face;
The hair on my body stood up.
16 It stood still,
But I could not discern its appearance.
A form *was* before my eyes;
There was silence;
Then I heard a voice *saying:*
17 'Can a mortal be more righteous than God?
Can a man be more pure than his Maker?

* **3:24** Literally *my bread*

3:20–22 *long for death.* Even though Job longed for death, he was not considering suicide. The context of the other passages indicates that Job merely wished that the Lord would let him die (7:15–21; 10:18–22).
3:23 *whom God has hedged in.* The irony is that Job perceived God's hedge as keeping him from a desirable death instead of seeing it as God's protection of his life.
4:7 *who ever perished being innocent.* Eliphaz concluded that since Job was suffering, he must have sin in his life. Eliphaz supported the retribution doctrine: God supports the righteous but abandons the wicked.
4:8 *sow trouble reap the same.* It can be true that planting wicked actions will yield a crop of trauma, but the converse is not necessarily true. Hard times can come to anyone, and the crop that is harvested in hard times depends on whether or not we continue to follow God in times of trouble.
4:13 *visions of the night.* Eliphaz appealed to a vision to authenticate his theology, but all dreams do not come from God. The reader of this book has different information, for God pulled aside the curtain of heaven to reveal the true background for Job's troubles.

3:14 [f] Job 15:28 **3:16** [g] Ps. 58:8 **3:17** [h] Job 17:16 **3:18** [i] Job 39:7 **3:20** [j] Jer. 20:18 [k] 2 Kin. 4:27 **3:21** [l] Rev. 9:6 [m] Prov. 2:4 **3:22** [n] Job 7:15, 16 **3:23** [o] Job 19:8 **3:25** [p] [Job 9:28; 30:15] **4:3** [a] Is. 35:3 **4:4** [b] Is. 35:3 **4:6** [c] Job 1:1 [d] Prov. 3:26 **4:7** [e] [Ps. 37:25] **4:8** [f] [Prov. 22:8] **4:10** [g] Ps. 58:6 **4:11** [h] Ps. 34:10 **4:13** [i] Job 33:15 **4:14** [j] Hab. 3:16

18 If He [k]puts no trust in His servants,
If He charges His angels with error,
19 How much more those who dwell in houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
Who are crushed before a moth?
20 [l]They are broken in pieces from morning till evening;
They perish forever, with no one regarding.
21 Does not their own excellence go away?
They die, even without wisdom.'

Eliphaz: Job Is Chastened by God

5 "Call out now;
Is there anyone who will answer you?
And to which of the holy ones will you turn?
2 For wrath kills a foolish man,
And envy slays a simple one.
3 [a]I have seen the foolish taking root,
But suddenly I cursed his dwelling place.
4 His sons are [b]far from safety,
They are crushed in the gate,
And [c]*there is* no deliverer.
5 Because the hungry eat up his harvest,
Taking it even from the thorns,*
And a snare snatches their substance.*
6 For affliction does not come from the dust,
Nor does trouble spring from the ground;
7 Yet man is [d]born to trouble,
As the sparks fly upward.
8 "But as for me, I would seek God,
And to God I would commit my cause—
9 Who does great things, and unsearchable,
Marvelous things without number.
10 [e]He gives rain on the earth,
And sends waters on the fields.
11 [f]He sets on high those who are lowly,
And those who mourn are lifted to safety.
12 [g]He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
So that their hands cannot carry out their plans.
13 He catches the [h]wise in their own craftiness,
And the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them.
14 They meet with darkness in the daytime,
And grope at noontime as in the night.
15 But [i]He saves the needy from the sword,
From the mouth of the mighty,
And from their hand.
16 [j]So the poor have hope,
And injustice shuts her mouth.
17 "Behold,[k] happy *is* the man whom God corrects;
Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.
18 [l]For He bruises, but He binds up;
He wounds, but His hands make whole.
19 [m]He shall deliver you in six troubles,
Yes, in seven [n]no evil shall touch you.
20 [o]In famine He shall redeem you from death,
And in war from the power of the sword.
21 [p]You shall be hidden from the scourge of the tongue,
And you shall not be afraid of destruction when it comes.
22 You shall laugh at destruction and famine,
And [q]you shall not be afraid of the [r]beasts of the earth.
23 [s]For you shall have a covenant with the stones of the field,
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you.

* **5:5** Septuagint reads *They shall not be taken from evil men;* Vulgate reads *And the armed man shall take him by violence.* • Septuagint reads *The might shall draw them off;* Vulgate reads *And the thirsty shall drink up their riches.*

4:19 Death—We live in houses of clay, and our foundations are in the dust. We may presume upon tomorrow, having illusions of permanence, but suddenly the cords of our tent are pulled up and our existence collapses. We perish, more readily than a moth encircling a flame. Surely the transience of life, the reality of death, and the certainty of judgment should move us to pray that the Eternal God will teach us to number our days so we can use them wisely (Ps. 90:12). This awareness gives us a sense of urgency in turning from sin and serving our Savior.

5:17 *chastening.* Eliphaz insinuated that since Job's suffering was a result of God's discipline for his sin, Job should not reject what God was trying to teach him. While it is true that God sometimes disciplines people for their own good (Prov. 3:11–12; Heb. 12:7), Eliphaz was suggesting that trouble in one's life necessarily means that one is being disciplined. Once again, the reader of this book has insight that the participants in the story do not have. Job's troubles do indeed teach him more about God, but the troubles originated because God was showing Satan that His followers are not following Him for what they get, but because of who He is.

5:23 *covenant with the stones of the field.* Stones in the field are a significant hindrance to farming, just as wild animals or lack of rain are a hindrance. Eliphaz was saying that one who accepts the discipline of the Almighty will not find himself fighting the

4:18 [k] Job 15:15 **4:20** [l] Ps. 90:5, 6 **5:3** [a] Jer. 12:1–3 **5:4** [b] Ps. 119:155 [c] Ps. 109:12 **5:7** [d] Job 14:1 **5:10** [e] [Job 36:27–29; 37:6–11; 38:26] **5:11** [f] Ps. 113:7 **5:12** [g] Neh. 4:15 **5:13** [h] [1 Cor. 3:19] **5:15** [i] Ps. 35:10 **5:16** [j] 1 Sam. 2:8 **5:17** [k] Ps. 94:12 **5:18** [l] [1 Sam. 2:6, 7] **5:19** [m] Ps. 34:19; 91:3 [n] Ps. 91:10 **5:20** [o] Ps. 33:19, 20; 37:19 **5:21** [p] Ps. 31:20 **5:22** [q] Ezek. 34:25 [r] Hos. 2:18 **5:23** [s] Ps. 91:12

24 You shall know that your tent *is* in peace;
You shall visit your dwelling and find nothing amiss.
25 You shall also know that [t]your descendants *shall be* many,
And your offspring [u]like the grass of the earth.
26 [v]You shall come to the grave at a full age,
As a sheaf of grain ripens in its season.
27 Behold, this we have [w]searched out;
It *is* true.
Hear it, and know for yourself."

Job: My Complaint Is Just

6 Then Job answered and said:
2 "Oh, that my grief were fully weighed,
And my calamity laid with it on the scales!
3 For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea—
Therefore my words have been rash.
4 [a]For the arrows of the Almighty *are* within me;
My spirit drinks in their poison;
[b]The terrors of God are arrayed [c]against me.
5 Does the [d]wild donkey bray when it has grass,
Or does the ox low over its fodder?
6 Can flavorless food be eaten without salt?
Or is there *any* taste in the white of an egg?
7 My soul refuses to touch them;
They *are* as loathsome food to me.
8 "Oh, that I might have my request,
That God would grant *me* the thing that I long for!
9 That it would please God to crush me,
That He would loose His hand and [e]cut me off!
10 Then I would still have comfort;
Though in anguish I would exult,
He will not spare;
For [f]I have not concealed the words of [g]the Holy One.
11 "What strength do I have, that I should hope?
And what *is* my end, that I should prolong my life?
12 *Is* my strength the strength of stones?
Or is my flesh bronze?
13 *Is* my help not within me?
And is success driven from me?
14 "To[h] him who is afflicted, kindness *should be shown* by his friend,
Even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty.
15 [i]My brothers have dealt deceitfully like a brook,
[j]Like the streams of the brooks that pass away,
16 Which are dark because of the ice,
And into which the snow vanishes.
17 When it is warm, they cease to flow;
When it is hot, they vanish from their place.
18 The paths of their way turn aside,
They go nowhere and perish.
19 The caravans of [k]Tema look,
The travelers of [l]Sheba hope for them.
20 They are [m]disappointed because they were confident;
They come there and are confused.
21 For now [n]you are nothing,
You see terror and [o]are afraid.
22 Did I ever say, 'Bring *something* to me'?
Or, 'Offer a bribe for me from your wealth'?
23 Or, 'Deliver me from the enemy's hand'?
Or, 'Redeem me from the hand of oppressors'?
24 "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue;
Cause me to understand wherein I have erred.
25 How forceful are right words!
But what does your arguing prove?

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elements of nature. It is true that God is a deliverer, a healer, and one who disciplines His followers. We can safely trust Him to care for us. But having disaster, wounds, or failure is not necessarily a sign of God's discipline.

6:9 Prayer—Job thought it would be better to die than to endure all the pain and suffering that resulted from the tragedies he had experienced. He could not know that the fact that he was alive was actually because God had protected him. This prayer should be a great comfort to believers. We cannot always see God's hedge of protection in a traumatic situation. We can cry out for relief, when God wants us to endure. He knows far more about our situation than we do, and we can trust Him, even as we anguish over unanswered prayer.

6:10 *still have comfort.* Job's single comfort was that he had not denied God, even though he believed that God was the one who had wounded him.

6:15 *streams of the brooks that pass away.* A brook is a stream that only carries water during the rainy season. Other times of the year it is a dry path. Job was likening his friends to a dry stream.

6:24 *Cause me to understand wherein.* If Job's friends could show him error in his ways, Job was willing to listen. The problem was that Job's friends were reasoning backwards. They were assuming that they knew his error, based on the extent of Job's suffering. But they had their formula wrong. Sinners may suffer, but suffering does not equal sin or the Lord's discipline.

5:25 [t] Ps. 112:2 [u] Ps. 72:16 **5:26** [v] [Prov. 9:11; 10:27] **5:27** [w] Ps. 111:2 **6:4** [a] Ps. 38:2 [b] Ps. 88:15, 16 [c] Job 30:15 **6:5** [d] Job 39:5–8 **6:9** [e] Job 7:16; 9:21; 10:1 **6:10** [f] Acts 20:20 [g] [Is. 57:15] **6:14** [h] [Prov. 17:17] **6:15** [i] Ps. 38:11 [j] Jer. 15:18 **6:19** [k] Gen. 25:15 [l] 1 Kin. 10:1 **6:20** [m] Jer. 14:3 **6:21** [n] Job 13:4 [o] Ps. 38:11

26 Do you intend to rebuke *my* words,
And the speeches of a desperate one,
which are as wind?
27 Yes, you overwhelm the fatherless,
And you [p]undermine your friend.
28 Now therefore, be pleased to look at me;
For I would never lie to your face.
29 [q]Yield now, let there be no injustice!
Yes, concede, my [r]righteousness still stands!
30 Is there injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my taste discern the unsavory?

Job: My Suffering Is Comfortless

7 "*Is there* not [a]a time of hard service for man on earth?
Are not his days also like the days of a hired man?
2 Like a servant who earnestly desires the shade,
And like a hired man who eagerly looks for his wages,
3 So I have been allotted [b]months of futility,
And wearisome nights have been appointed to me.
4 [c]When I lie down, I say, 'When shall I arise,
And the night be ended?'
For I have had my fill of tossing till dawn.
5 My flesh is [d]caked with worms and dust,
My skin is cracked and breaks out afresh.
6 "My[e] days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,
And are spent without hope.
7 Oh, remember that [f]my life *is* a breath!
My eye will never again see good.
8 [g]The eye of him who sees me will see me no *more;*
While your eyes *are* upon me, I shall no longer *be.*
9 *As* the cloud disappears and vanishes away,
So [h]he who goes down to the grave does not come up.
10 He shall never return to his house,
[i]Nor shall his place know him anymore.
11 "Therefore I will [j]not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will [k]complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12 *Am* I a sea, or a sea serpent,
That You set a guard over me?
13 [l]When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
My couch will ease my complaint,'
14 Then You scare me with dreams
And terrify me with visions,
15 So that my soul chooses strangling
And death rather than my body.*
16 [m]I loathe *my life;*
I would not live forever.
[n]Let me alone,
For [o]my days *are but* a breath.
17 "What[p] *is* man, that You should exalt him,
That You should set Your heart on him,
18 That You should visit him every morning,
And test him every moment?
19 How long?
Will You not look away from me,
And let me alone till I swallow my saliva?
20 Have I sinned?
What have I done to You, [q]O watcher of men?
Why [r]have You set me as Your target,
So that I am a burden to myself?*
21 Why then do You not pardon my transgression,
And take away my iniquity?
For now I will lie down in the dust,
And You will seek me diligently,
But I *will* no longer *be.*"

Bildad: Job Should Repent

8 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
2 "How long will you speak these *things,*
And the words of your mouth *be like* a strong wind?
3 [a]Does God subvert judgment?
Or does the Almighty pervert justice?
4 If [b]your sons have sinned against Him,

* **7:15** Literally *my bones* * **7:20** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Jewish tradition read *to You.*

7:6 ***hope.*** Job's choice of the word "hope" in the context of the weaver's shuttle may convey a double meaning. The Hebrew word for "hope" sounds like the Hebrew word that means "thread" or "cord."

7:20 ***What have I done to You.*** Job, too, was assuming that his troubles came from God. Job did not believe that he had sinned in a way that would cause God to bring trouble on him. This may sound presumptuous, as if Job thought he was without any sin at all. But we remember that God Himself referred to Job as upright and blameless. God was not finding fault with the way that Job was living out his life of faith in God.

8:3 ***Does God subvert judgment?*** Bildad was saying that Job and his children received what they deserved.

6:27 [p] Ps. 57:6 **6:29** [q] Job 17:10 [r] Job 27:5, 6; 34:5 **7:1** [a] [Job 14:5, 13, 14] **7:3** [b] [Job 15:31] **7:4** [c] Deut. 28:67 **7:5** [d] Is. 14:11 **7:6** [e] Job 9:25; 16:22; 17:11 **7:7** [f] Ps. 78:39; 89:47 **7:8** [g] Job 8:18; 20:9 **7:9** [h] 2 Sam. 12:23 **7:10** [i] Ps. 103:16 **7:11** [j] Ps. 39:1, 9 [k] 1 Sam. 1:10 **7:13** [l] Job 9:27 **7:16** [m] Job 10:1 [n] Job 14:6 [o] Ps. 62:9 **7:17** [p] Ps. 8:4; 144:3 **7:20** [q] Ps. 36:6 [r] Ps. 21:12 **8:3** [a] [Deut. 32:4] **8:4** [b] Job 1:5, 18, 19

He has cast them away for their
transgression.
5 [c]If you would earnestly seek God
And make your supplication to the
Almighty,
6 If you *were* pure and upright,
Surely now He would awake for you,
And prosper your rightful dwelling
place.
7 Though your beginning was small,
Yet your latter end would [d]increase
abundantly.

8 "For[e] inquire, please, of the former age,
And consider the things discovered by
their fathers;
9 For [f]we *were born* yesterday, and
know nothing,
Because our days on earth *are* a
shadow.
10 Will they not teach you and tell you,
And utter words from their heart?

11 "Can the papyrus grow up without a
marsh?
Can the reeds flourish without water?
12 [g]While it *is* yet green *and* not cut down,
It withers before any *other* plant.
13 So *are* the paths of all who [h]forget
God;
And the hope of the [i]hypocrite shall
perish,
14 Whose confidence shall be cut off,
And whose trust *is* a spider's web.
15 [j]He leans on his house, but it does not
stand.
He holds it fast, but it does not endure.
16 He grows green in the sun,
And his branches spread out in his
garden.
17 His roots wrap around the rock heap,
And look for a place in the stones.
18 [k]If he is destroyed from his place,
Then *it* will deny him, *saying,* 'I have
not seen you.'

19 "Behold, this is the joy of His way,
And [l]out of the earth others will grow.
20 Behold, [m]God will not cast away the
blameless,
Nor will He uphold the evildoers.
21 He will yet fill your mouth with
laughing,
And your lips with rejoicing.
22 Those who hate you will be [n]clothed
with shame,
And the dwelling place of the wicked
will come to nothing."*

Job: There Is No Mediator

9 Then Job answered and said:

2 "Truly I know *it is* so,
But how can a [a]man be [b]righteous
before God?
3 If one wished to contend with Him,
He could not answer Him one time out
of a thousand.
4 [c]*God is* wise in heart and mighty in
strength.
Who has hardened *himself* against
Him and prospered?
5 He removes the mountains, and they
do not know
When He overturns them in His
anger;
6 He [d]shakes the earth out of its place,
And its [e]pillars tremble;
7 He commands the sun, and it does not
rise;
He seals off the stars;
8 [f]He alone spreads out the heavens,
And treads on the waves of the sea;
9 [g]He made the Bear, Orion, and the
Pleiades,
And the chambers of the south;
10 [h]He does great things past finding
out,
Yes, wonders without number.
11 [i]If He goes by me, I do not see *Him;*
If He moves past, I do not perceive
Him;
12 [j]If He takes away, who can hinder
Him?
Who can say to Him, 'What are You
doing?'
13 God will not withdraw His anger,
[k]The allies of the proud* lie prostrate
beneath Him.

14 "How then can I answer Him,
And choose my words *to reason* with
Him?
15 [l]For though I were righteous, I could
not answer Him;
I would beg mercy of my Judge.
16 If I called and He answered me,
I would not believe that He was
listening to my voice.

* **8:22** Literally *will not be* * **9:13** Hebrew *rahab*

8:6 ***If you were pure and upright.*** This was actually the way God described Job (1:8; 2:3). Bildad's concept that one must "get right with God" was not erroneous. But his error was his assumption that loss of possessions was equal with loss of God's favor.

8:13 ***So are the paths of all who forget God.*** Bildad falsely deduced that one can always determine the cause by looking at the effect. We can know that the people around us suffer, but it is not given to us to know the spiritual causes, if any, behind this suffering.

9:3 ***If one wished to contend with Him.*** The word "contend" indicates a legal argument, not a quarrel. Job was seeking justice. He did not think he had sinned (as his friends indicated) so that God would punish him.

8:5 [c] [Job 5:17–27; 11:13] **8:7** [d] Job 42:12 **8:8** [e] Deut. 4:32; 32:7 **8:9** [f] Gen. 47:9 **8:12** [g] Ps. 129:6 **8:13** [h] Ps. 9:17 [i] Job 11:20; 18:14; 27:8 **8:15** [j] Job 8:22; 27:18 **8:18** [k] Job 7:10 **8:19** [l] Ps. 113:7 **8:20** [m] Job 4:7 **8:22** [n] Ps. 35:26; 109:29 **9:2** [a] [Job 4:17; 15:14–16] [b] [Hab. 2:4] **9:4** [c] Job 36:5 **9:6** [d] Heb. 12:26 [e] Job 26:11 **9:8** [f] Ps. 104:2, 3 **9:9** [g] Amos 5:8 **9:10** [h] Job 5:9 **9:11** [i] [Job 23:8, 9; 35:14] **9:12** [j] [Is. 45:9] **9:13** [k] Job 26:12 **9:15** [l] Job 10:15; 23:1–7

17 For He crushes me with a tempest,
And multiplies my wounds [m]without cause.
18 He will not allow me to catch my breath,
But fills me with bitterness.
19 If *it is a matter* of strength, indeed *He is* strong;
And if of justice, who will appoint my day *in court*?
20 Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me;
Though I *were* blameless, it would prove me perverse.
21 "I am blameless, yet I do not know myself;
I despise my life.
22 It *is* all one *thing;*
Therefore I say, [n]'He destroys the blameless and the wicked.'
23 If the scourge slays suddenly,
He laughs at the plight of the innocent.
24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.
He covers the faces of its judges.
If it is not *He,* who else could it be?
25 "Now [o]my days are swifter than a runner;
They flee away, they see no good.
26 They pass by like swift ships,
[p]Like an eagle swooping on its prey.
27 [q]If I say, 'I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my sad face and wear a smile,'
28 [r]I am afraid of all my sufferings;
I know that You [s]will not hold me innocent.
29 *If* I am condemned,
Why then do I labor in vain?
30 [t]If I wash myself with snow water,
And cleanse my hands with soap,
31 Yet You will plunge me into the pit,
And my own clothes will abhor me.
32 "For [u]*He is* not a man, as I *am,*
That I may answer Him,
And that we should go to court together.
33 [v]Nor is there any mediator between us,
Who may lay his hand on us both.
34 [w]Let Him take His rod away from me,
And do not let dread of Him terrify me.
35 *Then* I would speak and not fear Him,
But it is not so with me.

Job: I Would Plead with God

10 "My [a]soul loathes my life;
I will give free course to my complaint,
[b]I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2 I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me;
Show me why You contend with me.
3 *Does it* seem good to You that You should oppress,
That You should despise the work of Your hands,
And smile on the counsel of the wicked?
4 Do You have eyes of flesh?
Or [c]do You see as man sees?
5 *Are* Your days like the days of a mortal man?
Are Your years like the days of a mighty man,
6 That You should seek for my iniquity
And search out my sin,
7 Although You know that I am not wicked,
And *there is* no one who can deliver from Your hand?
8 'Your[d] hands have made me and fashioned me,
An intricate unity;
Yet You would [e]destroy me.
9 Remember, I pray, [f]that You have made me like clay.
And will You turn me into dust again?
10 [g]Did You not pour me out like milk,
And curdle me like cheese,
11 Clothe me with skin and flesh,
And knit me together with bones and sinews?
12 You have granted me life and favor,
And Your care has preserved my spirit.
13 'And these *things* You have hidden in Your heart;
I know that this *was* with You:

9:17 ***crushes me with a tempest.*** Job saw God as Lord of the heavens (vv. 7–8) and assumed that it was God who sent the tempest that destroyed his children. Job did not know that it was Satan who sought to destroy him, and that God drew a line of protection around him.

10:1–3 Affliction—In the face of his adversities, Job despaired of life, but he continued to plead with God in prayer for an answer. Job's friends saw all suffering in a mathematical equation with sin. If these friends were right, that would reduce our relationship with God to a formula that says, "If you are good, God will rescue you, and if you are bad, God will abandon you to suffering." The converse of that statement says, "If you are suffering, you are bad, and because I am not suffering, I am good." It is often in the converse that a formula is shown to be faulty. Who can really claim to be good? We are all sinners in need of a savior.

10:7 ***I am not wicked . . . there is no one who can deliver.*** Job thought that God was unjust in oppressing him, yet he realized that there is no one higher than God to deliver him from God. Job's thinking was twisted in much the same way that his friends' was. He was equating innocence with peace, and he could not imagine any reason why God would not rescue him.

9:17 [m] Job 2:3 **9:22** [n] Ezek. 21:3 **9:25** [o] Job 7:6, 7 **9:26** [p] Hab. 1:8 **9:27** [q] Job 7:13 **9:28** [r] Ps. 119:120 [s] Ex. 20:7 **9:30** [t] [Jer. 2:22] **9:32** [u] [Is. 45:9] **9:33** [v] [1 Sam. 2:25] **9:34** [w] Job 13:20, 21 **10:1** [a] Job 7:16 [b] Job 7:11 **10:4** [c] [1 Sam. 16:7] **10:8** [d] Ps. 119:73 [e] [Job 9:22] **10:9** [f] Gen. 2:7 **10:10** [g] [Ps. 139:14–16]

14 If I sin, then [h]You mark me,
And will not acquit me of my iniquity.
15 If I am wicked, [i]woe to me;
[j]Even *if* I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head.
I am full of disgrace;
[k]See my misery!
16 If *my head* is exalted,
[l]You hunt me like a fierce lion,
And again You show Yourself awesome against me.
17 You renew Your witnesses against me,
And increase Your indignation toward me;
Changes and war are *ever* with me.
18 'Why[m] then have You brought me out of the womb?
Oh, that I had perished and no eye had seen me!
19 I would have been as though I had not been.
I would have been carried from the womb to the grave.
20 [n]Are not my days few?
Cease! [o]Leave me alone, that I may take a little comfort,
21 Before I go *to the place from which* I shall not return,
[p]To the land of darkness [q]and the shadow of death,
22 A land as dark as darkness *itself,*
As the shadow of death, without any order,
Where even the light *is* like darkness.'"

Zophar Urges Job to Repent

11 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

2 "Should not the multitude of words be answered?
And should a man full of talk be vindicated?
3 Should your empty talk make men hold their peace?
And when you mock, should no one rebuke you?
4 For you have said,
[a]'My doctrine *is* pure,
And I am clean in your eyes.'
5 But oh, that God would speak,
And open His lips against you,
6 That He would show you the secrets of wisdom!
For *they would* double *your* prudence.
Know therefore that [b]God exacts from you
Less than your iniquity *deserves.*
7 "Can[c] you search out the deep things of God?
Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?
8 *They are* higher than heaven—what can you do?
Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?
9 Their measure *is* longer than the earth
And broader than the sea.
10 "If[d] He passes by, imprisons, and gathers *to judgment,*
Then who can hinder Him?
11 For [e]He knows deceitful men;
He sees wickedness also.
Will He not then consider *it?*
12 For an [f]empty-headed man will be wise,
When a wild donkey's colt is born a man.
13 "If you would [g]prepare your heart,
And [h]stretch out your hands toward Him;
14 If iniquity *were* in your hand, *and you* put it far away,
And [i]would not let wickedness dwell in your tents;
15 [j]Then surely you could lift up your face without spot;
Yes, you could be steadfast, and not fear;
16 Because you would [k]forget *your* misery,
And remember *it* as waters *that have* passed away,
17 And *your* life [l]would be brighter than noonday.
Though you were dark, you would be like the morning.

10:18 ***brought me out of the womb.*** Job wondered how the God who so carefully fashioned him in the womb (vv. 9–11) could turn against him. This was the desperate cry of a sufferer blind to the fact that God was working good out of all the tragic events of his life.

11:4 ***My doctrine is pure.*** Zophar exaggerated what Job had said about his innocence (9:14–21) to make Job look foolish.

11:7 ***Can you search out the deep things of God?*** Zophar was correct in saying that understanding the depths of God is beyond man. But the fact that we cannot know everything about God does not mean that we cannot know anything about Him, nor that it is wrong to try to know and understand Him better.

11:13 ***stretch out your hands toward Him.*** Stretching out the hands was a posture of prayer as well as of praise (Ps. 134:2). Assuming that Job was suffering because of his iniquity, this was not bad advice.

11:15 ***steadfast, and not fear.*** There is peace and comfort for those who have repented of their sin and turned to God. This is true and important to remember. But Zophar's presupposition that iniquity causes suffering kept him from understanding what Job's struggle was.

10:14 [h] Ps. 139:1 **10:15** [i] Is. 3:11 [j] [Job 9:12, 15] [k] Ps. 25:18 **10:16** [l] Is. 38:13 **10:18** [m] Job 3:11–13 **10:20** [n] Ps. 39:5 [o] Job 7:16, 19 **10:21** [p] Ps. 88:12 [q] Ps. 23:4 **11:4** [a] Job 6:30 **11:6** [b] [Ezra 9:13] **11:7** [c] [Eccl. 3:11] **11:10** [d] [Rev. 3:7] **11:11** [e] [Ps. 10:14] **11:12** [f] Rom. 1:22 **11:13** [g] [1 Sam. 7:3] [h] Ps. 88:9 **11:14** [i] Ps. 101:3 **11:15** [j] Ps. 119:6 **11:16** [k] Is. 65:16 **11:17** [l] Is. 58:8, 10

18 And you would be secure, because there is hope;
Yes, you would dig *around you, and* [m]take your rest in safety.
19 You would also lie down, and no one would make *you* afraid;
Yes, many would court your favor.
20 But [n]the eyes of the wicked will fail,
And they shall not escape,
And [o]their hope—loss of life!"

Job Answers His Critics

12 Then Job answered and said:
2 "No doubt you *are* the people,
And wisdom will die with you!
3 But I have understanding as well as you;
I *am* not [a]inferior to you.
Indeed, who does not *know* such things as these?
4 "I[b] am one mocked by his friends,
Who [c]called on God, and He answered him,
The just and blameless *who is* ridiculed.
5 A lamp* is despised in the thought of one who is at ease;
It is made ready for [d]those whose feet slip.
6 [e]The tents of robbers prosper,
And those who provoke God are secure—
In what God provides by His hand.
7 "But now ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
And the birds of the air, and they will tell you;
8 Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you;
And the fish of the sea will explain to you.
9 Who among all these does not know
That the hand of the LORD has done this,
10 [f]In whose hand *is* the life of every living thing,
And the [g]breath of all mankind?
11 Does not the ear test words
And the mouth taste its food?
12 Wisdom *is* with aged men,
And with length of days, understanding.
13 "With Him *are* [h]wisdom and strength,
He has counsel and understanding.
14 If [i]He breaks *a thing* down, it cannot be rebuilt;
If He imprisons a man, there can be no release.
15 If He [j]withholds the waters, they dry up;
If He [k]sends them out, they overwhelm the earth.
16 With Him *are* strength and prudence.
The deceived and the deceiver *are* His.
17 He leads counselors away plundered,
And makes fools of the judges.
18 He loosens the bonds of kings,
And binds their waist with a belt.
19 He leads princes* away plundered,
And overthrows the mighty.
20 [l]He deprives the trusted ones of speech,
And takes away the discernment of the elders.
21 [m]He pours contempt on princes,
And disarms the mighty.
22 He [n]uncovers deep things out of darkness,
And brings the shadow of death to light.
23 [o]He makes nations great, and destroys them;
He enlarges nations, and guides them.
24 He takes away the understanding* of the chiefs of the people of the earth,
And [p]makes them wander in a pathless wilderness.
25 [q]They grope in the dark without light,
And He makes them [r]stagger like a drunken *man.*

13 "Behold, my eye has seen all *this,*
My ear has heard and understood it.
2 [a]What you know, I also know;
I *am* not inferior to you.
3 [b]But I would speak to the Almighty,
And I desire to reason with God.
4 But you forgers of lies,
[c]You *are* all worthless physicians.
5 Oh, that you would be silent,
And [d]it would be your wisdom!
6 Now hear my reasoning,
And heed the pleadings of my lips.
7 [e]Will you speak wickedly for God,
And talk deceitfully for Him?
8 Will you show partiality for Him?
Will you contend for God?
9 Will it be well when He searches you out?
Or can you mock Him as one mocks a man?

* **12:5** Or *disaster* * **12:19** Literally *priests,* but not in a technical sense * **12:24** Literally *heart*

12:13 ***He has counsel and understanding.*** Job was sure that he did not understand what was happening to him, but he knew that God did know the answer.
13:4 ***forgers of lies.*** Job's friends were accusing him of hidden sin, offering a false formula for peace with God, and assuming that they had a greater understanding both of Job and of God's ways than they really did. False doctrine, even if held with sincerity, is still a lie.

11:18 [m] Lev. 26:5, 6 **11:20** [n] Deut. 28:65 [o] [Prov. 11:7] **12:3** [a] Job 13:2 **12:4** [b] Job 21:3 [c] Ps. 91:15 **12:5** [d] Prov. 14:2 **12:6** [e] [Job 9:24; 21:6–16] **12:10** [f] [Acts 17:28] [g] Job 27:3; 33:4 **12:13** [h] Job 9:4; 36:5 **12:14** [i] Job 11:10 **12:15** [j] [1 Kin. 8:35, 36] [k] Gen. 7:11–24 **12:20** [l] Job 32:9 **12:21** [m] Ps. 107:40 **12:22** [n] [1 Cor. 4:5] **12:23** [o] Is. 9:3; 26:15 **12:24** [p] Ps. 107:4 **12:25** [q] Job 5:14; 15:30; 18:18 [r] Ps. 107:27 **13:2** [a] Job 12:3 **13:3** [b] Job 23:3; 31:35 **13:4** [c] Job 6:21 **13:5** [d] Prov. 17:28 **13:7** [e] Job 27:4; 36:4

10 He will surely rebuke you
If you secretly show partiality.
11 Will not His excellence make you afraid,
And the dread of Him fall upon you?
12 Your platitudes *are* proverbs of ashes,
Your defenses are defenses of clay.

13 "Hold your peace with me, and let me speak,
Then let come on me what *may!*
14 Why [f]do I take my flesh in my teeth,
And put my life in my hands?
15 [g]Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.
[h]Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.
16 He also *shall* be my salvation,
For a [i]hypocrite could not come before Him.
17 Listen carefully to my speech,
And to my declaration with your ears.
18 See now, I have prepared *my* case,
I know that I shall be [j]vindicated.
19 [k]Who *is* he *who* will contend with me?
If now I hold my tongue, I perish.

Job's Despondent Prayer

20 "Only[l] two *things* do not do to me,
Then I will not hide myself from You:
21 [m]Withdraw Your hand far from me,
And let not the dread of You make me afraid.
22 Then call, and I will [n]answer;
Or let me speak, then You respond to me.
23 How many *are* my iniquities and sins?
Make me know my transgression and my sin.
24 [o]Why do You hide Your face,
And [p]regard me as Your enemy?
25 [q]Will You frighten a leaf driven to and fro?
And will You pursue dry stubble?
26 For You write bitter things against me,
And [r]make me inherit the iniquities of my youth.
27 [s]You put my feet in the stocks,
And watch closely all my paths.
You set a limit* for the soles of my feet.

28 "*Man** decays like a rotten thing,
Like a garment that is moth-eaten.

14 "Man *who is* born of woman
Is of few days and [a]full of trouble.
2 [b]He comes forth like a flower and fades away;
He flees like a shadow and does not continue.
3 And [c]do You open Your eyes on such a one,
And [d]bring me* to judgment with Yourself?
4 Who [e]can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean?
No one!
5 [f]Since his days *are* determined,
The number of his months *is* with You;
You have appointed his limits, so that he cannot pass.
6 [g]Look away from him that he may rest,
Till [h]like a hired man he finishes his day.

7 "For there is hope for a tree,
If it is cut down, that it will sprout again,
And that its tender shoots will not cease.
8 Though its root may grow old in the earth,
And its stump may die in the ground,
9 *Yet* at the scent of water it will bud
And bring forth branches like a plant.
10 But man dies and is laid away;
Indeed he breathes his last
And where *is* [i]he?
11 *As* water disappears from the sea,
And a river becomes parched and dries up,
12 So man lies down and does not rise.
[j]Till the heavens *are* no more,
They will not awake
Nor be roused from their sleep.

13 "Oh, that You would hide me in the grave,
That You would conceal me until Your wrath is past,
That You would appoint me a set time, and remember me!

* **13:27** Literally *inscribe a print* * **13:28** Literally *He* * **14:3** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *him.*

13:12 ***platitudes . . . defenses.*** The quickest way to make ourselves look silly is to try to explain something that we don't understand. Prayer is far more helpful than worthless counsel.

13:21 ***Withdraw Your hand . . . make me afraid.*** Job was not cocky as he turned to plead his case before God. His requests were safe and wise for any believer who struggles with what life has handed him. Job asked God not to give up on him, and he asked God to keep him from being overpowered by the terror and majesty of God. Job knew very well that he was far below God, and that all that God is and does could be totally overwhelming to him.

14:13 ***hide me . . . until Your wrath is past.*** Job's wish for the grave to be a temporary hiding place from God's wrath differed dramatically from his earlier remarks concerning the grave (7:9–10; 10:18–22). He attributed the cause of his suffering to God's wrath because he assumed the retribution dogma that the righteous are always blessed and the wicked will eventually experience God's judgment. It did not occur to Job that he was being tested.

13:14 [f] Job 18:4 **13:15** [g] Ps. 23:4 [h] Job 27:5 **13:16** [i] Job 8:13 **13:18** [j] [Rom. 8:34] **13:19** [k] Is. 50:8 **13:20** [l] Job 9:34 **13:21** [m] Ps. 39:10 **13:22** [n] Job 9:16; 14:15 **13:24** [o] [Deut. 32:20] [p] Lam. 2:5 **13:25** [q] Is. 42:3 **13:26** [r] Job 20:11 **13:27** [s] Job 33:11 **14:1** [a] Eccl. 2:23 **14:2** [b] Job 8:9 **14:3** [c] Ps. 8:4; 144:3 [d] [Ps. 143:2] **14:4** [e] [Ps. 51:2, 5, 10] **14:5** [f] Job 7:1; 21:21 **14:6** [g] Ps. 39:13 [h] Job 7:1 **14:10** [i] Job 10:21, 22 **14:12** [j] [Is. 51:6; 65:17; 66:22]

14 If a man dies, shall he live *again?*
All the days of my hard service [k]I will wait,
Till my change comes.
15 [l]You shall call, and I will answer You;
You shall desire the work of Your hands.
16 For now [m]You number my steps,
But do not watch over my sin.
17 [n]My transgression *is* sealed up in a bag,
And You cover* my iniquity.

18 "But *as* a mountain falls *and* crumbles away,
And *as* a rock is moved from its place;
19 *As* water wears away stones,
And as torrents wash away the soil of the earth;
So You destroy the hope of man.
20 You prevail forever against him, and he passes on;
You change his countenance and send him away.
21 His sons come to honor, and [o]he does not know *it;*
They are brought low, and he does not perceive *it*.
22 But his flesh will be in pain over it,
And his soul will mourn over it."

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Folly

15 Then [a]Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

2 "Should a wise man answer with empty knowledge,
And fill himself with the east wind?
3 Should he reason with unprofitable talk,
Or by speeches with which he can do no good?
4 Yes, you cast off fear,
And restrain prayer before God.
5 For your iniquity teaches your mouth,
And you choose the tongue of the crafty.
6 [b]Your own mouth condemns you, and not I;
Yes, your own lips testify against you.

7 "*Are* you the first man *who* was born?
[c]Or were you made before the hills?
8 [d]Have you heard the counsel of God?
Do you limit wisdom to yourself?
9 [e]What do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that *is* not in us?
10 [f]Both the gray-haired and the aged *are* among us,
Much older than your father.
11 *Are* the consolations of God too small for you,
And the word *spoken* gently* with you?
12 Why does your heart carry you away,
And what do your eyes wink at,
13 That you turn your spirit against God,
And let *such* words go out of your mouth?

14 "What[g] *is* man, that he could be pure?
And *he who is* born of a woman, that he could be righteous?
15 [h]If *God* puts no trust in His saints,
And the heavens are not pure in His sight,
16 [i]How much less man, *who is* abominable and filthy,
[j]Who drinks iniquity like water!

17 "I will tell you, hear me;
What I have seen I will declare,
18 What wise men have told,
Not hiding *anything received* [k]from their fathers,
19 To whom alone the land was given,
And [l]no alien passed among them:
20 The wicked man writhes with pain all *his* days,
[m]And the number of years is hidden from the oppressor.
21 Dreadful sounds *are* in his ears;
[n]In prosperity the destroyer comes upon him.
22 He does not believe that he will [o]return from darkness,
For a sword is waiting for him.
23 He [p]wanders about for bread, *saying,* 'Where *is it?*'
He knows [q]that a day of darkness is ready at his hand.
24 Trouble and anguish make him afraid;

* **14:17** Literally *plaster over*
* **15:11** Septuagint reads *a secret thing.*

14:14 ***live again.*** Job had some understanding of man's potential for immortality. The answer to his question comes in the New Testament with an emphatic "Yes!" by Jesus (John 11:23–26; 1 Cor. 15:3–57).

15:21 ***Dreadful sounds.*** Eliphaz began his subtle argument to prove that Job was a wicked man. He alluded to Job's dread, the same word translated *feared* in 3:25, as an implicit indicator that Job was wicked.

15:24 ***Trouble . . . afraid.*** In contrast to 14:20 where Job complained to God that He overpowered people, Eliphaz said that the wicked man's (by implication, Job's) own fears overpower him. Eliphaz's statement may have been true, but that did not mean it applied to Job. Job did not understand God's ways correctly, but neither did Eliphaz. Job was overpowered by Satan's attacks, and he could not see what God was doing. Eliphaz assumed that because Job was overpowered, it was because he had behaved arrogantly towards God.

14:14 [k] Job 13:15 **14:15** [l] Job 13:22 **14:16** [m] Prov. 5:21 **14:17** [n] Deut. 32:32–34 **14:21** [o] Eccl. 9:5 **15:1** [a] Job 4:1 **15:6** [b] [Luke 19:22] **15:7** [c] Prov. 8:25 **15:8** [d] Rom. 11:34 **15:9** [e] Job 12:3; 13:2 **15:10** [f] Job 8:8–10; 12:12; 32:6, 7 **15:14** [g] Prov. 20:9 **15:15** [h] Job 4:18; 25:5 **15:16** [i] Ps. 14:3; 53:3 [j] Prov. 19:28 **15:18** [k] Job 8:8; 20:4 **15:19** [l] Joel 3:17 **15:20** [m] Ps. 90:12 **15:21** [n] 1 Thess. 5:3 **15:22** [o] Job 14:10–12 **15:23** [p] Ps. 59:15; 109:10 [q] Job 18:12

They overpower him, like a king ready
for battle.
25 For he stretches out his hand against
God,
And acts defiantly against the
Almighty,
26 Running stubbornly against Him
With his strong, embossed shield.

27 "Though[r] he has covered his face with
his fatness,
And made *his* waist heavy with fat,
28 He dwells in desolate cities,
In houses which no one inhabits,
Which are destined to become ruins.
29 He will not be rich,
Nor will his wealth [s]continue,
Nor will his possessions overspread
the earth.
30 He will not depart from darkness;
The flame will dry out his branches,
And [t]by the breath of His mouth he
will go away.
31 Let him not [u]trust in futile *things*,
deceiving himself,
For futility will be his reward.
32 It will be accomplished [v]before his
time,
And his branch will not be green.
33 He will shake off his unripe grape like
a vine,
And cast off his blossom like an olive
tree.
34 For the company of hypocrites *will be*
barren,
And fire will consume the tents of
bribery.
35 [w]They conceive trouble and bring forth
futility;
Their womb prepares deceit."

Job Reproaches His Pitiless Friends

16 Then Job answered and said:

2 "I have heard many such things;
[a]Miserable comforters *are* you all!
3 Shall words of wind have an end?
Or what provokes you that you
answer?
4 I also could speak as you *do*,
If your soul were in my soul's place.
I could heap up words against you,
And [b]shake my head at you;
5 *But* I would strengthen you with my
mouth,
And the comfort of my lips would
relieve *your grief*.
6 "Though I speak, my grief is not
relieved;
And *if* I remain silent, how am I eased?
7 But now He has [c]worn me out;
You [d]have made desolate all my
company.
8 You have shriveled me up,
And it is a [e]witness *against me;*
My leanness rises up against me
And bears witness to my face.
9 [f]He tears *me* in His wrath, and hates me;
He gnashes at me with His teeth;
[g]My adversary sharpens His gaze
on me.
10 They [h]gape at me with their mouth,
They [i]strike me reproachfully on the
cheek,
They gather together against me.
11 God [j]has delivered me to the ungodly,
And turned me over to the hands of
the wicked.
12 I was at ease, but He has [k]shattered me;
He also has taken *me* by my neck, and
shaken me to pieces;
He has [l]set me up for His target,
13 His archers surround me.
He pierces my heart* and does not
pity;
He pours out my gall on the ground.
14 He breaks me with wound upon
wound;
He runs at me like a warrior.*
15 "I have sewn sackcloth over my skin,
And [m]laid my head* in the dust.
16 My face is flushed from weeping,
And on my eyelids *is* the shadow of
death;

* **16:13** Literally *kidneys* * **16:14** Vulgate reads *giant*. * **16:15** Literally *horn*

15:31 ***trust in futile things.*** Eliphaz was entirely right in his comments about the fruitlessness of a wicked life, and that the Lord will bring the wicked into judgment. But Eliphaz did not have the concept that in this life the wicked can appear to prosper, and the righteous can appear to struggle. Judgment may not fall in this life.

15:34 ***fire will consume.*** In mentioning the fire that consumes the tents of the wicked, Eliphaz implied that the fire of God that destroyed Job's sheep and servants (1:16) was a direct result of Job's corruption.

16:7–17 Afflictions—One of the clear lessons of the Book of Job is that it is possible to give false and insensitive counsel to one who is experiencing affliction and testing. When we suffer, some of the lessons learned are for us, some of the lessons are for others who are watching, and some are for the kingdom of God. We may not know in this life what all of the implications are. Our afflictions are designed by God to drive us out of ourselves to the Eternal God who is our refuge and who supports us with His everlasting arms (Deut. 33:27). As friends of the afflicted, we must be sympathetic, loving, and kind, remembering that often only God has the answers. If we have suffered similarly, we have comfort to offer (2 Cor. 1:6–7), and if we have not suffered similarly, we can support our friends in prayer and practical service.

15:27 [r] Ps. 17:10; 73:7; 119:70 **15:29** [s] Job 20:28; 27:16, 17 **15:30** [t] Job 4:9 **15:31** [u] Is. 59:4 **15:32** [v] Job 22:16 **15:35** [w] Is. 59:4 **16:2** [a] Job 13:4; 21:34 **16:4** [b] Ps. 22:7; 109:25 **16:7** [c] Job 7:3 [d] Job 16:20; 19:13–15 **16:8** [e] Job 10:17 **16:9** [f] Hos. 6:1 [g] Job 13:24; 33:10 **16:10** [h] Ps. 22:13; 35:21 [i] Lam. 3:30 **16:11** [j] Job 1:15, 17 **16:12** [k] Job 9:17 [l] Job 7:20 **16:15** [m] Ps. 7:5

17 Although no violence *is* in my hands,
And my prayer *is* pure.

18 "O earth, do not cover my blood,
And [n]let my cry have no *resting* place!
19 Surely even now [o]my witness *is* in heaven,
And my evidence *is* on high.
20 My friends scorn me;
My eyes pour out *tears* to God.
21 [p]Oh, that one might plead for a man with God,
As a man *pleads* for his neighbor!
22 For when a few years are finished,
I shall [q]go the way of no return.

Job Prays for Relief

17 "My spirit is broken,
My days are extinguished,
[a]The grave *is ready* for me.
2 *Are* not mockers with me?
And does not my eye dwell on their [b]provocation?

3 "Now put down a pledge for me with Yourself.
Who *is* he *who* [c]will shake hands with me?
4 For You have hidden their heart from [d]understanding;
Therefore You will not exalt *them.*
5 He who speaks flattery to *his* friends,
Even the eyes of his children will [e]fail.

6 "But He has made me [f]a byword of the people,
And I have become one in whose face men spit.
7 [g]My eye has also grown dim because of sorrow,
And all my members *are* like shadows.
8 Upright *men* are astonished at this,
And the innocent stirs himself up against the hypocrite.
9 Yet the righteous will hold to his [h]way,
And he who has [i]clean hands will be stronger and stronger.

10 "But please, [j]come back again, all of you,*
For I shall not find *one* wise *man* among you.
11 [k]My days are past,
My purposes are broken off,
Even the thoughts of my heart.
12 They change the night into day;
'The light *is* near,' *they say,* in the face of darkness.
13 If I wait *for* the grave *as* my house,
If I make my bed in the darkness,
14 If I say to corruption, 'You *are* my father,'
And to the worm, 'You *are* my mother and my sister,'
15 Where then *is* my [l]hope?
As for my hope, who can see it?
16 *Will* they go down [m]to the gates of Sheol?
Shall *we have* [n]rest together in the dust?"

Bildad: The Wicked Are Punished

18 Then [a]Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

2 "How long *till* you put an end to words?
Gain understanding, and afterward we will speak.
3 Why are we counted [b]as beasts,
And regarded as stupid in your sight?
4 [c]You who tear yourself in anger,
Shall the earth be forsaken for you?
Or shall the rock be removed from its place?

5 "The[d] light of the wicked indeed goes out,
And the flame of his fire does not shine.
6 The light is dark in his tent,
[e]And his lamp beside him is put out.
7 The steps of his strength are shortened,
And [f]his own counsel casts him down.
8 For [g]he is cast into a net by his own feet,
And he walks into a snare.

* **17:10** Following some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text and Targum read *all of them.*

16:21 ***one might plead.*** Job was expressing the need for an intercessor. This need anticipated Jesus Christ, who is our Intercessor (Heb. 7:25) and Advocate (1 John 2:1).

17:3 ***pledge.*** In another legal metaphor, Job appealed to God by laying down a pledge, that is, by providing bail. The use of the same metaphor in Psalm 119:121–122 to indicate the psalmist's request for relief from his oppressors may suggest that Job was pleading for God to demonstrate confidence in his innocence.

17:9 ***the righteous will hold to his way.*** Job seems to be entertaining a little sarcasm here. He had referred to himself as a byword, one at whom men spit. Then he said that the righteous will grow stronger, which was not a reference to himself, even though he still did not think he deserved the trouble that had fallen upon him. He was probably referring to his friends, who considered themselves righteous, with clean hands, and who repeatedly strengthened their position and arguments.

18:4 ***who tear yourself in anger.*** This may be Bildad's response to Job's allegation that God had torn Job in His anger (16:13).

18:8–10 ***net . . . snare.*** Six different Hebrew synonyms for various types of nets and snares emphasize the many imminent dangers that God has designed

16:18 [n] [Ps. 66:18] **16:19** [o] Rom. 1:9 **16:21** [p] Job 31:35 **16:22** [q] Ecc. 12:5 **17:1** [a] Ps. 88:3, 4 **17:2** [b] Job 12:4; 17:6; 30:1, 9; 34:7 **17:3** [c] Prov. 6:1; 17:18; 22:26 **17:4** [d] Job 12:20; 32:9 **17:5** [e] Job 11:20 **17:6** [f] Job 30:9 **17:7** [g] Ps. 6:7; 31:9 **17:9** [h] Prov. 4:18 [i] Ps. 24:4 **17:10** [j] Job 6:29 **17:11** [k] Job 7:6 **17:15** [l] Job 7:6; 13:15; 14:19; 19:10 **17:16** [m] Jon. 2:6 [n] Job 3:17–19; 21:33 **18:1** [a] Job 8:1 **18:3** [b] Ps. 73:22 **18:4** [c] Job 13:14 **18:5** [d] Prov. 13:9; 20:20; 24:20 **18:6** [e] Job 21:17 **18:7** [f] Job 5:12, 13; 15:6 **18:8** [g] Job 22:10

9 The net takes *him* by the heel,
And [h]a snare lays hold of him.
10 A noose *is* hidden for him on the ground,
And a trap for him in the road.
11 [i]Terrors frighten him on every side,
And drive him to his feet.
12 His strength is starved,
And [j]destruction *is* ready at his side.
13 It devours patches of his skin;
The firstborn of death devours his limbs.
14 He is uprooted from [k]the shelter of his tent,
And they parade him before the king of terrors.
15 They dwell in his tent *who are* none of his;
Brimstone is scattered on his dwelling.
16 [l]His roots are dried out below,
And his branch withers above.
17 [m]The memory of him perishes from the earth,
And he has no name among the renowned.*
18 He is driven from light into darkness,
And chased out of the world.
19 [n]He has neither son nor posterity among his people,
Nor any remaining in his dwellings.
20 Those in the west are astonished [o]at his day,
As those in the east are frightened.
21 Surely such *are* the dwellings of the wicked,
And this *is* the place *of him who* [p]does not know God."

Job Trusts in His Redeemer

19 Then Job answered and said:

2 "How long will you torment my soul,
And break me in pieces with words?
3 These ten times you have reproached me;
You are not ashamed *that* you have wronged me.*
4 And if indeed I have erred,
My error remains with me.
5 If indeed you [q]exalt *yourselves* against me,
And plead my disgrace against me,
6 Know then that [b]God has wronged me,
And has surrounded me with His net.
7 "If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard.
If I cry aloud, *there is* no justice.
8 [c]He has fenced up my way, so that I cannot pass;
And He has set darkness in my paths.
9 [d]He has stripped me of my glory,
And taken the crown *from* my head.
10 He breaks me down on every side,
And I am gone;
My [e]hope He has uprooted like a tree.
11 He has also kindled His wrath against me,
And [f]He counts me as *one of* His enemies.
12 His troops come together
And build up their road against me;
They encamp all around my tent.
13 "He[g] has removed my brothers far from me,
And my acquaintances are completely estranged from me.
14 My relatives have failed,
And my close friends have forgotten me.
15 Those who dwell in my house, and my maidservants,
Count me as a stranger;
I am an alien in their sight.
16 I call my servant, but he gives no answer;
I beg him with my mouth.
17 My breath is offensive to my wife,
And I am repulsive to the children of my own body.
18 Even [h]young children despise me;
I arise, and they speak against me.

* **18:17** Literally *before the outside*, meaning distinguished, famous * **19:3** A Jewish tradition reads *make yourselves strange to me.*

for the wicked to ensure that they will be caught in their wickedness.

18:21 *wicked.* Bildad believed that the evidence he had exhibited in verses 5–20 implicated Job himself as the wicked one. Bildad was right that, in the end, the wicked will perish dramatically. But in this life they are not necessarily judged. If it were that simple, that the wicked never prospered and the righteous always thrived, people might try to be followers of God just for the blessings. The whole thrust of the Book of Job is that God Himself is reason enough to follow God, whether or not there is prosperity (1:9–11).

19:7 Despondency—The despondency of Job was a swollen river into which many streams had poured. He had experienced the loss of family, property, and health. Wife and friends had misunderstood him. The suffering saint felt tormented, crushed with the irrelevant words of critics who should have comforted instead of corrected him. Crying out for help, Job received none and came to the conclusion that there is no justice anywhere. The interesting thing about Job is that while he may have despaired of hearing from God, he never doubted that God was there and knew what was going on.

19:8 *He has fenced up my way.* Job felt fenced in by God, when it was really Satan who had been mistreating him (1:10; 3:23). The only fence from God was a hedge of protection.

18:9 [h] Job 5:5 **18:11** [i] Jer. 6:25 **18:12** [j] Job 15:23 **18:14** [k] Job 11:20 **18:16** [l] Job 29:19 **18:17** [m] [Ps. 34:16] **18:19** [n] Is. 14:22 **18:20** [o] Ps. 37:13 **18:21** [p] Jer. 9:3 **19:5** [q] Ps. 35:26; 38:16; 55:12, 13 **19:6** [b] Job 16:11 **19:8** [c] Job 3:23 **19:9** [d] Ps. 89:44 **19:10** [e] Job 17:14–16 **19:11** [f] Job 13:24; 33:10 **19:13** [g] Ps. 31:11; 38:11; 69:8; 88:8, 18 **19:18** [h] 2 Kin. 2:23

19 [i]All my close friends abhor me,
And those whom I love have turned against me.
20 [j]My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh,
And I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.
21 "Have pity on me, have pity on me,
O you my friends,
For the hand of God has struck me!
22 Why do you [k]persecute me as God *does*,
And are not satisfied with my flesh?
23 "Oh, that my words were written!
Oh, that they were inscribed in a book!
24 That they were engraved on a rock
With an iron pen and lead, forever!
25 For I know *that* my [l]Redeemer lives,
And He shall stand at last on the earth;
26 And after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*,
That [m]in my flesh I shall see God,
27 Whom I shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!
28 If you should say, 'How shall we persecute him?'—
Since the root of the matter is found in me,
29 Be afraid of the sword for yourselves;
For wrath *brings* the punishment of the sword,
That you may know *there is* a judgment."

Zophar's Sermon on the Wicked Man

20 Then [a]Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

2 "Therefore my anxious thoughts make me answer,
Because of the turmoil within me.
3 I have heard the rebuke that reproaches me,
And the spirit of my understanding causes me to answer.
4 "Do you *not* know this of [b]old,
Since man was placed on earth,
5 [c]That the triumphing of the wicked is short,
And the joy of the hypocrite is *but* for a [d]moment?
6 [e]Though his haughtiness mounts up to the heavens,
And his head reaches to the clouds,
7 *Yet* he will perish forever like his own refuse;
Those who have seen him will say,
'Where is he?'
8 He will fly away [f]like a dream, and not be found;
Yes, he [g]will be chased away like a vision of the night.
9 The eye *that* saw him will *see him* no more,
Nor will his place behold him anymore.
10 His children will seek the favor of the poor,
And his hands will restore his wealth.
11 His bones are full of [h]his youthful vigor,
[i]But it will lie down with him in the dust.
12 "Though evil is sweet in his mouth,
And he hides it under his tongue,
13 *Though* he spares it and does not forsake it,
But still keeps it in his mouth,
14 *Yet* his food in his stomach turns sour;
It becomes cobra venom within him.
15 He swallows down riches
And vomits them up again;
God casts them out of his belly.
16 He will suck the poison of cobras;
The viper's tongue will slay him.
17 He will not see [j]the streams,
The rivers flowing with honey and cream.
18 He will restore that for which he labored,
And will not swallow *it* down;
From the proceeds of business
He will get no enjoyment.
19 For he has oppressed *and* forsaken the poor,
He has violently seized a house which he did not build.

19:25 ***I know that my Redeemer lives.*** Job's longing for a mediator (9:33) and his desire for someone to plead on his behalf with God (16:19–21) may suggest that he was thinking of someone other than God. Here was a strong, resolute hope for a mediator between God and humanity. Ultimately Job's longing for a vindicator or mediator was fulfilled in Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5).
19:26 ***in my flesh I shall see God.*** Job was stating his strong belief in the eternality of the soul, and even of the resurrected body, although it was not until Christ's resurrection that followers of the Living God understood all the implications of this belief (1 Cor. 15:12–19).
19:29 ***Be afraid of the sword.*** Job anticipated the reaction of his friends to his stated confidence that some day he would see God face-to-face.
20:7 ***refuse.*** The word "refuse" may also be translated *dung*. This was a scathing comment.

19:19 [i] Ps. 38:11; 55:12, 13 **19:20** [j] Ps. 102:5 **19:22** [k] Ps. 69:26 **19:25** [l] 1 Cor. 1:31; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:12 **19:26** [m] [Ps. 17:15] **20:1** [a] Job 11:1 **20:4** [b] Job 8:8; 15:10 **20:5** [c] Ps. 37:35, 36 [d] [Job 8:13; 13:16; 15:34; 27:8] **20:6** [e] Is. 14:13, 14 **20:8** [f] Ps. 73:20; 90:5 [g] Job 18:18; 27:21–23 **20:11** [h] Job 13:26 [i] Job 21:26 **20:17** [j] Jer. 17:8

20 "Because[k] he knows no quietness in his heart,*
He will not save anything he desires.
21 Nothing is left for him to eat;
Therefore his well-being will not last.
22 In his self-sufficiency he will be in distress;
Every hand of misery will come against him.
23 *When* he is about to fill his stomach,
God will cast on him the fury of His wrath,
And will rain *it* on him while he is eating.
24 [l]He will flee from the iron weapon;
A bronze bow will pierce him through.
25 It is drawn, and comes out of the body;
Yes, [m]the glittering *point comes* out of his gall.
[n]Terrors *come* upon him;
26 Total darkness *is* reserved for his treasures.
[o]An unfanned fire will consume him;
It shall go ill with him who is left in his tent.
27 The heavens will reveal his iniquity,
And the earth will rise up against him.
28 The increase of his house will depart,
And his goods will flow away in the day of His [p]wrath.
29 [q]This *is* the portion from God for a wicked man,
The heritage appointed to him by God."

Job's Discourse on the Wicked

21 Then Job answered and said:

2 "Listen carefully to my speech,
And let this be your consolation.
3 Bear with me that I may speak,
And after I have spoken, keep [a]mocking.
4 "As for me, *is* my complaint against man?
And if *it were*, why should I not be impatient?
5 Look at me and be astonished;
[b]Put *your* hand over *your* mouth.
6 Even when I remember I am terrified,
And trembling takes hold of my flesh.
7 [c]Why do the wicked live *and* become old,
Yes, become mighty in power?
8 Their descendants are established with them in their sight,
And their offspring before their eyes.
9 Their houses *are* safe from fear,
[d]Neither *is* the rod of God upon them.
10 Their bull breeds without failure;
Their cow calves [e]without miscarriage.
11 They send forth their little ones like a flock,
And their children dance.
12 They sing to the tambourine and harp,
And rejoice to the sound of the flute.
13 They [f]spend their days in wealth,
And in a moment go down to the grave.*
14 [g]Yet they say to God, 'Depart from us,
For we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways.
15 [h]Who *is* the Almighty, that we should serve Him?
And [i]what profit do we have if we pray to Him?'
16 Indeed their prosperity *is* not in their hand;
[j]The counsel of the wicked is far from me.
17 "How often is the lamp of the wicked put out?
How often does their destruction come upon them,
The sorrows *God* [k]distributes in His anger?
18 [l]They are like straw before the wind,
And like chaff that a storm carries away.

* **20:20** Literally *belly* * **21:13** Or *Sheol*

20:20 ***no quietness.*** In stating that the wicked person knows no quietness, Zophar implied that Job had received what he deserved.

20:27 ***heavens will reveal his iniquity.*** Zophar apparently reversed Job's appeal to the earth and heavens (16:18–19) for vindication. He argued that the heavens and earth would bear witness not to Job's innocence, but to his iniquity.

20:29 ***heritage appointed to him by God.*** In contrast to his previous words (11:13–20) Zophar seemed to be suggesting that it was too late for Job to repent. It is true, as Zophar says (v. 5) that the wicked and godless will be judged. But that does not mean either that Job was one of the wicked, or that the judgment of the wicked would be in this life (Luke 16:19–25).

21:7 ***wicked live.*** With a rhetorical question, Job began exposing the loopholes in the retribution dogma—the belief that suffering always indicates God's punishment of a person. Other biblical writers also agonized over the prosperity of the wicked (Ps. 37; 73; Jer. 12:1–4), but Scriptures affirm that God is controlling everything to accomplish His good purpose (Rom. 8:28).

21:9 ***safe from fear.*** Job reacted to Eliphaz's argument (15:21–24) that although the wicked live peacefully for a while, they live in terror of inevitable destruction.

21:17 ***lamp of the wicked put out.*** The rhetorical questions introduced by "how often" expected the answer, "not very often." Job challenged Bildad's belief that the wicked person's light does go out (18:5–6).

20:20 [k] Eccl. 5:13–15 **20:24** [l] Amos 5:19 **20:25** [m] Job 16:13 [n] Job 18:11, 14 **20:26** [o] Ps. 21:9 **20:28** [p] Job 20:15; 21:30 **20:29** [q] Job 27:13; 31:2, 3 **21:3** [a] Job 16:10 **21:5** [b] Judg. 18:19 **21:7** [c] [Jer. 12:1] **21:9** [d] Ps. 73:5 **21:10** [e] Ex. 23:26 **21:13** [f] Job 21:23; 36:11 **21:14** [g] Job 22:17 **21:15** [h] Ex. 5:2 [i] Mal. 3:14 **21:16** [j] Prov. 1:10 **21:17** [k] [Luke 12:46] **21:18** [l] Ps. 1:4; 35:5

19 *They say,* 'God lays up one's* iniquity
[m]for his children';
Let Him recompense him, that he may
know *it.*
20 Let his eyes see his destruction,
And [n]let him drink of the wrath of the
Almighty.
21 For what does he care about his
household after him,
When the number of his months is cut
in half?

22 "Can[o] *anyone* teach God knowledge,
Since He judges those on high?
23 One dies in his full strength,
Being wholly at ease and secure;
24 His pails* are full of milk,
And the marrow of his bones is
moist.
25 Another man dies in the bitterness of
his soul,
Never having eaten with pleasure.
26 They [p]lie down alike in the dust,
And worms cover them.

27 "Look, I know your thoughts,
And the schemes *with which* you
would wrong me.
28 For you say,
'Where *is* the house of the prince?
And where *is* the tent,*
The dwelling place of the wicked?'
29 Have you not asked those who travel
the road?
And do you not know their signs?
30 [q]For the wicked are reserved for the
day of doom;
They shall be brought out on the day
of wrath.
31 Who condemns his way to his face?
And who repays him *for what* he has
done?
32 Yet he shall be brought to the grave,
And a vigil kept over the tomb.
33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet
to him;
[r]Everyone shall follow him,
As countless *have gone* before him.
34 How then can you comfort me with
empty words,
Since falsehood remains in your
answers?"

Eliphaz Accuses Job of Wickedness

22 Then [a]Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

2 "Can[b] a man be profitable to God,
Though he who is wise may be
profitable to himself?
3 *Is it* any pleasure to the Almighty that
you are righteous?
Or *is it* gain *to Him* that you make
your ways blameless?

4 "Is it because of your fear of Him that
He corrects you,
And enters into judgment with you?
5 *Is* not your wickedness great,
And your iniquity without end?
6 For you have [c]taken pledges from your
brother for no reason,
And stripped the naked of their
clothing.
7 You have not given the weary water to
drink,
And you [d]have withheld bread from
the hungry.
8 But the mighty man possessed the
land,
And the honorable man dwelt in it.
9 You have sent widows away empty,
And the strength of the fatherless was
crushed.
10 Therefore snares *are* all around you,
And sudden fear troubles you,
11 Or darkness *so that* you cannot see;
And an abundance of [e]water covers
you.

12 "Is not God in the height of heaven?
And see the highest stars, how lofty
they are!
13 And you say, [f]'What does God know?
Can He judge through the deep
darkness?
14 [g]Thick clouds cover Him, so that He
cannot see,
And He walks above the circle of
heaven.'
15 Will you keep to the old way
Which wicked men have trod,

* **21:19** Literally *his* * **21:24** Septuagint and Vulgate read *bowels*; Syriac reads *sides*; Targum reads *breasts.* * **21:28** Vulgate omits *the tent.*

21:19 ***iniquity for his children.*** Job denied the dogma that even if a wicked person prospers temporarily, his children will be punished. Job's position is sustained by other passages in the Bible (Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:1–28; John 9:1–3).

22:2 ***man be profitable to God.*** The implication of Eliphaz's rhetorical question—that man cannot put God under any obligation that God must repay—was a valid theological principle that the Lord Himself corroborates in 41:11. However, his application of that principle to Job's circumstances (vv. 3–5) was invalid, for it was based on the faulty assumption that the righteous are always blessed and the wicked always experience God's judgment on earth.

22:3–4 ***blameless . . . fear.*** The same Hebrew root words ("reverence" and "integrity") had earlier been used by Eliphaz in his courteous remarks about Job (4:6). In these verses Eliphaz is being sarcastic.

22:6–9 ***naked . . . weary . . . widows.*** These trumped up charges were categorically denied by Job (29:11–17; 31:13–22), and God's own witness to Satan revealed to the reader that the charges were false (1:8).

21:19 [m] [Ex. 20:5] **21:20** [n] Is. 51:17 **21:22** [o] [Is. 40:13; 45:9] **21:26** [p] Eccl. 9:2 **21:30** [q] [Prov. 16:4] **21:33** [r] Heb. 9:27 **22:1** [a] Job 4:1; 15:1; 42:9 **22:2** [b] [Luke 17:10] **22:6** [c] [Ex. 22:26, 27] **22:7** [d] Deut. 15:7 **22:11** [e] Ps. 69:1, 2; 124:5 **22:13** [f] Ps. 73:11 **22:14** [g] Ps. 139:11, 12

16 Who [h]were cut down before their time,
Whose foundations were swept away by a flood?
17 [i]They said to God, 'Depart from us!
What can the Almighty do to them?'*
18 Yet He filled their houses with good *things;*
But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

19 "The[j] righteous see *it* and are glad,
And the innocent laugh at them:
20 'Surely our adversaries* are cut down,
And the fire consumes their remnant.'

21 "Now acquaint yourself with Him, and [k]be at peace;
Thereby good will come to you.
22 Receive, please, [l]instruction from His mouth,
And [m]lay up His words in your heart.
23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up;
You will remove iniquity far from your tents.
24 Then you will [n]lay your gold in the dust,
And the *gold* of Ophir among the stones of the brooks.
25 Yes, the Almighty will be your gold*
And your precious silver;
26 For then you will have your [o]delight in the Almighty,
And lift up your face to God.
27 [p]You will make your prayer to Him,
He will hear you,
And you will pay your vows.
28 You will also declare a thing,
And it will be established for you;
So light will shine on your ways.
29 When they cast *you* down, and you say, 'Exaltation *will come!*'
Then [q]He will save the humble *person.*
30 He will *even* deliver one who is not innocent;
Yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands."

Job Proclaims God's Righteous Judgments

23 Then Job answered and said:

2 "Even today my [a]complaint is bitter;
My* hand is listless because of my groaning.
3 [b]Oh, that I knew where I might find Him,
That I might come to His seat!
4 I would present *my* case before Him,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
5 I would know the words *which* He would answer me,
And understand what He would say to me.
6 [c]Would He contend with me in His great power?
No! But He would take *note* of me.
7 There the upright could reason with Him,
And I would be delivered forever from my Judge.

8 "Look,[d] I go forward, but He is not *there,*
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;
9 When He works on the left hand, I cannot behold *Him;*
When He turns to the right hand, I cannot see *Him.*
10 But [e]He knows the way that I take;
When [f]He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.
11 [g]My foot has held fast to His steps;
I have kept His way and not turned aside.
12 I have not departed from the [h]commandment of His lips;
[i]I have treasured the words of His mouth
More than my necessary *food.*

13 "But He *is* unique, and who can make Him change?
And *whatever* [j]His soul desires, *that* He does.
14 For He performs *what is* [k]appointed for me,
And many such *things are* with Him.
15 Therefore I am terrified at His presence;
When I consider *this,* I am afraid of Him.
16 For God [l]made my heart weak,
And the Almighty terrifies me;
17 Because I was not [m]cut off from the presence of darkness,
And He did *not* hide deep darkness from my face.

* **22:17** Septuagint and Syriac read *us.*
* **22:20** Septuagint reads *substance.* * **22:25** The ancient versions suggest *defense;* Hebrew reads *gold* as in verse 24. * **23:2** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *His.*

22:18 ***the counsel of the wicked is far from me.*** Eliphaz was repeating Job (21:16).
22:30 ***purity of your hands.*** This was actually fulfilled through Job's prayer for the three friends (42:8–10).
23:13 ***unique.*** When Job contemplated the unique power and sovereign freedom of God, he was terrified (13:21).

22:16 [h] Job 14:19; 15:32 **22:17** [i] Job 21:14, 15 **22:19** [j] Ps. 52:6; 58:10; 107:42 **22:21** [k] Is. 27:5 **22:22** [l] Prov. 2:6 [m] [Ps. 119:11] **22:24** [n] 2 Chr. 1:15 **22:26** [o] Job 27:10; Ps. 37:4; Is. 58:14 **22:27** [p] [Is. 58:9–11] **22:29** [q] [1 Pet. 5:5] **23:2** [a] Job 7:11 **23:3** [b] Job 13:3, 18; 16:21; 31:35 **23:6** [c] Is. 57:16 **23:8** [d] Job 9:11; 35:14 **23:10** [e] [Ps. 1:6; 139:1–3] [f] [James 1:12] **23:11** [g] Ps. 17:5 **23:12** [h] Job 6:10; 22:22 [i] Ps. 44:18 **23:13** [j] [Ps. 115:3] **23:14** [k] [1 Thess. 3:2–4] **23:16** [l] Ps. 22:14 **23:17** [m] Job 10:18, 19

Job Complains of Violence on the Earth

24 "*Since* [a]times are not hidden from the Almighty,
Why do those who know Him see not His [b]days?

2 "*Some* remove [c]landmarks;
They seize flocks violently and feed *on them;*
3 They drive away the donkey of the fatherless;
They [d]take the widow's ox as a pledge.
4 They push the needy off the road;
All the [e]poor of the land are forced to hide.
5 Indeed, *like* wild donkeys in the desert,
They go out to their work, searching for food.
The wilderness *yields* food for them *and* for *their* children.
6 They gather their fodder in the field
And glean in the vineyard of the wicked.
7 They [f]spend the night naked, without clothing,
And have no covering in the cold.
8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains,
And [g]huddle around the rock for want of shelter.

9 "*Some* snatch the fatherless from the breast,
And take a pledge from the poor.
10 They cause *the poor* to go naked, without [h]clothing;
And they take away the sheaves from the hungry.
11 They press out oil within their walls,
And tread winepresses, yet suffer thirst.
12 The dying groan in the city,
And the souls of the wounded cry out;
Yet God does not charge *them* with wrong.

13 "There are those who rebel against the light;
They do not know its ways
Nor abide in its paths.
14 [i]The murderer rises with the light;
He kills the poor and needy;
And in the night he is like a thief.
15 [j]The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight,
[k]Saying, 'No eye will see me';
And he disguises *his* face.
16 In the dark they break into houses
Which they marked for themselves in the daytime;
[l]They do not know the light.
17 For the morning is the same to them as the shadow of death;
If *someone* recognizes *them,*
They are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

18 "They *should be* swift on the face of the waters,
Their portion *should be* cursed in the earth,
So that no *one would* turn into the way of their vineyards.
19 As drought and heat consume the snow waters,
So the grave* *consumes those who* have sinned.
20 The womb *should* forget him,
The worm *should* feed sweetly on him;
[m]He *should* be remembered no more,
And wickedness *should* be broken like a tree.
21 For he preys on the barren *who* do not bear,
And does no good for the widow.

22 "But *God* draws the mighty away with His power;
He rises up, but no *man* is sure of life.
23 He gives them security, and they rely *on it;*
Yet [n]His eyes *are* on their ways.
24 They are exalted for a little while,
Then they are gone.
They are brought low;
They are taken out of the way like all *others;*
They dry out like the heads of grain.

25 "Now if *it is* not *so,* who will prove me a liar,
And make my speech worth nothing?"

Bildad: How Can Man Be Righteous?

25 Then [a]Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

2 "Dominion and fear *belong* to Him;
He makes peace in His high places.
3 Is there any number to His armies?
Upon whom does [b]His light not rise?
4 [c]How then can man be righteous before God?

* **24:19** Or *Sheol*

24:2 ***remove landmarks.*** Removing landmarks was tantamount to stealing land. The landmarks set boundaries, and moving them would have been like moving surveyor's stakes (Deut. 27:17).
24:16 ***break into houses.*** The walls of houses were built of mud bricks, through which thieves could dig.
24:24 ***brought low.*** Job was not so much arguing that the wicked would not prosper (vv. 18–25), as he was saying that everyone is brought low.

24:1 [a] [Acts 1:7] [b] [Is. 2:12] **24:2** [c] [Deut. 19:14; 27:17] **24:3** [d] [Deut. 24:6, 10, 12, 17] **24:4** [e] Prov. 28:28 **24:7** [f] Ex. 22:26, 27 **24:8** [g] Lam. 4:5 **24:10** [h] Job 31:19 **24:14** [i] Ps. 10:8 **24:15** [j] Prov. 7:7–10 [k] Ps. 10:11 **24:16** [l] [John 3:20] **24:20** [m] Prov. 10:7 **24:23** [n] [Prov. 15:3] **25:1** [a] Job 8:1; 18:1 **25:3** [b] James 1:17 **25:4** [c] Job 4:17; 15:14

Or how can he be [d]pure *who is* born of a woman?
5 If even the moon does not shine,
And the stars are not pure in His [e]sight,
6 How much less man, *who is* [f]a maggot,
And a son of man, *who is* a worm?"

Job: Man's Frailty and God's Majesty

26 But Job answered and said:
2 "How have you helped *him who is* without power?
How have you saved the arm *that has* no strength?
3 How have you counseled *one who has* no wisdom?
And *how* have you declared sound advice to many?
4 To whom have you uttered words?
And whose spirit came from you?
5 "The dead tremble,
Those under the waters and those inhabiting them.
6 [a]Sheol *is* naked before Him,
And Destruction has no covering.
7 [b]He stretches out the north over empty space;
He hangs the earth on nothing.
8 [c]He binds up the water in His thick clouds,
Yet the clouds are not broken under it.
9 He covers the face of *His* throne,
And spreads His cloud over it.
10 [d]He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters,
At the boundary of light and darkness.
11 The pillars of heaven tremble,
And are astonished at His rebuke.
12 [e]He stirs up the sea with His power,
And by His understanding He breaks up the storm.
13 [f]By His Spirit He adorned the heavens;
His hand pierced [g]the fleeing serpent.
14 Indeed these *are* the mere edges of His ways,
And how small a whisper we hear of Him!
But the thunder of His power who can understand?"

Job Maintains His Integrity

27 Moreover Job continued his discourse, and said:
2 "*As* God lives, [a]*who* has taken away my justice,
And the Almighty, *who* has made my soul bitter,
3 As long as my breath *is* in me,
And the breath of God in my nostrils,
4 My lips will not speak wickedness,
Nor my tongue utter deceit.
5 Far be it from me
That I should say you are right;
Till I die [b]I will not put away my integrity from me.
6 My righteousness I [c]hold fast, and will not let it go;
[d]My heart shall not reproach *me* as long as I live.
7 "May my enemy be like the wicked,
And he who rises up against me like the unrighteous.
8 [e]For what is the hope of the hypocrite,
Though he may gain *much*,
If God takes away his life?
9 [f]Will God hear his cry
When trouble comes upon him?
10 [g]Will he delight himself in the Almighty?
Will he always call on God?
11 "I will teach you about the hand of God;
What *is* with the Almighty I will not conceal.
12 Surely all of you have seen *it;*
Why then do you behave with complete nonsense?

25:6 *worm.* What a contrast to the words of God (Gen. 1:26–31) when He made humans in His own image and declared them "very good." Bildad was conscious of the great gap between God and man, but unlike Job, he did not feel that he could make the connection of communication that Job was striving for.

26:4 *whose spirit came from you.* The contrast between Bildad's comments about God (ch. 25) and Job's worshipful declaration of God's majesty (vv. 7–14) indicate the difference in the level of their understanding of who God is.

26:6 *Sheol is naked.* This is the place of the dead and "destruction," which were fearful hidden concepts to Job and his contemporaries, but they held no secrets for the all-knowing God.

26:7 *hangs the earth on nothing.* Job's comments on the suspension of the earth, the manner of clouds (v. 8) and the horizon (v. 10) speak much for his powers of observation as well as the inspiration of Scripture.

27:2 *who has made my soul bitter.* Though Job repeatedly complained of a bitter spirit (7:11; 10:1), the Lord did not cause him to respond that way. Job's responses only exposed the attitude that lay deep within his being. The message of the Lord for Job was that no matter what the circumstances, one should resolutely trust in God (40:8; 42:1–6).

27:5 *say you are right.* Job maintained that his friends were erroneous in their reasoning, and to agree with them would be to compromise his integrity.

27:12 *complete nonsense.* Job maintained that the actions of his friends were foolish, considering the knowledge of God that they should have had.

25:4 [d] Job 14:4] **25:5** [e] Job 15:15 **25:6** [f] Ps. 22:6 **26:6** [a] Prov. 15:11 **26:7** [b] Job 9:8 **26:8** [c] Prov. 30:4 **26:10** [d] Prov. 8:29 **26:12** [e] Is. 51:15 **26:13** [f] Ps. 33:6 [g] Is. 27:1 **27:2** [a] Job 34:5 **27:5** [b] Job 2:9; 13:15 **27:6** [c] Job 2:3; 33:9 [d] Acts 24:16 **27:8** [e] Matt. 16:26 **27:9** [f] Jer. 14:12 **27:10** [g] Job 22:26, 27

13 "This[h] is the portion of a wicked man
with God,
And the heritage of oppressors,
received from the Almighty:
14 [i]If his children are multiplied, *it is* for
the sword;
And his offspring shall not be satisfied
with bread.
15 Those who survive him shall be buried
in death,
And [j]their* widows shall not weep,
16 Though he heaps up silver like dust,
And piles up clothing like clay—
17 He may pile *it* up, but [k]the just will
wear *it,*
And the innocent will divide the silver.
18 He builds his house like a moth,*
[l]Like a booth *which* a watchman
makes.
19 The rich man will lie down,
But not be gathered *up;**
He opens his eyes,
And he *is* [m]no more.
20 [n]Terrors overtake him like a flood;
A tempest steals him away in the
night.
21 The east wind carries him away, and
he is gone;
It sweeps him out of his place.
22 It hurls against him and does not
[o]spare;
He flees desperately from its power.
23 *Men* shall clap their hands at him,
And shall hiss him out of his place.

Job's Discourse on Wisdom

28 "Surely there is a mine for silver,
And a place *where* gold is refined.
2 Iron is taken from the earth,
And copper *is* smelted *from* ore.
3 *Man* puts an end to darkness,
And searches every recess
For ore in the darkness and the
shadow of death.
4 He breaks open a shaft away from
people;
In places forgotten by feet
They hang far away from men;
They swing to and fro.
5 *As for* the earth, from it comes bread,
But underneath it is turned up as by fire;
6 Its stones *are* the source of sapphires,
And it contains gold dust.
7 *That* path no bird knows,
Nor has the falcon's eye seen it.
8 The proud lions* have not trodden it,
Nor has the fierce lion passed over it.
9 He puts his hand on the flint;
He overturns the mountains at the
roots.
10 He cuts out channels in the rocks,
And his eye sees every precious thing.
11 He dams up the streams from
trickling;
What is hidden he brings forth to
light.
12 "But[a] where can wisdom be found?
And where *is* the place of
understanding?
13 Man does not know its [b]value,
Nor is it found in the land of the living.
14 [c]The deep says, *'It is* not in me';
And the sea says, *'It is* not with me.'
15 It [d]cannot be purchased for gold,
Nor can silver be weighed *for* its
price.
16 It cannot be valued in the gold of
Ophir,
In precious onyx or sapphire.
17 Neither [e]gold nor crystal can equal it,
Nor can it be exchanged for jewelry of
fine gold.
18 No mention shall be made of coral or
quartz,
For the price of wisdom *is* above
[f]rubies.
19 The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it,
Nor can it be valued in pure [g]gold.
20 "From[h] where then does wisdom come?
And where *is* the place of
understanding?
21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living,
And concealed from the birds of the
air.
22 [i]Destruction and Death say,
'We have heard a report about it with
our ears.'
23 God understands its way,
And He knows its place.
24 For He looks to the ends of the earth,
And [j]sees under the whole heavens,

* **27:15** Literally *his* * **27:18** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *spider* (compare 8:14); Targum reads *decay.* * **27:19** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Syriac read *But shall not add* (that is, do it again); Vulgate reads *But take away nothing.* * **28:8** Literally *sons of pride,* figurative of the great lions

27:13 ***portion of a wicked man.*** Job likened the foolishness of his friends to wickedness, and indeed it is wicked to knowingly misrepresent God. The rest of the chapter is a satirical paraphrase of the friends' teaching about the fate of the wicked (24:18–25), which Job has thrown back in his friends' faces.

28:13–19 ***not.*** Every verse in this whole stanza has the Hebrew word for "not" at least once, stressing the absence of wisdom or even the desire for wisdom. The rhetorical questions concerning the whereabouts of wisdom and understanding (v. 12) receive an emphatic answer: not anywhere in the land of the living or dead.

27:13 [h] Job 20:29 **27:14** [i] Deut. 28:41 **27:15** [j] Ps. 78:64 **27:17** [k] Prov. 28:8 **27:18** [l] Is. 1:8 **27:19** [m] Job 7:8, 21; 20:7 **27:20** [n] Job 18:11 **27:22** [o] Jer. 13:14 **28:12** [a] Eccl. 7:24 **28:13** [b] Prov. 3:15 **28:14** [c] Job 28:22 **28:15** [d] Prov. 3:13–15; 8:10, 11, 19 **28:17** [e] Prov. 8:10; 16:16 **28:18** [f] Prov. 3:15; 8:11 **28:19** [g] Prov. 8:19 **28:20** [h] Job 28:12 **28:22** [i] Job 28:14 **28:24** [j] [Prov. 15:3]

25 [k]To establish a weight for the wind,
And apportion the waters by measure.
26 When He [l]made a law for the rain,
And a path for the thunderbolt,
27 Then He saw *wisdom** and declared it;
He prepared it, indeed, He searched it out.
28 And to man He said,
'Behold, [m]the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom,
And to depart from evil *is* understanding.'"

Job's Summary Defense

29 Job further continued his discourse, and said:

2 "Oh, that I were as *in* months [a]past,
As *in* the days *when* God [b]watched over me;
3 [c]When His lamp shone upon my head,
And when by His light I walked *through* darkness;
4 Just as I was in the days of my prime,
When [d]the friendly counsel of God *was* over my tent;
5 When the Almighty *was* yet with me,
When my children *were* around me;
6 When [e]my steps were bathed with cream,*
And [f]the rock poured out rivers of oil for me!
7 "When I went out to the gate by the city,
When I took my seat in the open square,
8 The young men saw me and hid,
And the aged arose *and* stood;
9 The princes refrained from talking,
And [g]put *their* hand on their mouth;
10 The voice of nobles was hushed,
And their [h]tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth.
11 When the ear heard, then it blessed me,
And when the eye saw, then it approved me;
12 Because [i]I delivered the poor who cried out,
The fatherless and *the one who* had no helper.
13 The blessing of a perishing *man* came upon me,
And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
14 [j]I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
My justice *was* like a robe and a turban.
15 I *was* [k]eyes to the blind,
And I *was* feet to the lame.
16 I *was* a father to the poor,
And [l]I searched out the case *that* I did not know.
17 I broke [m]the fangs of the wicked,
And plucked the victim from his teeth.
18 "Then I said, [n]'I shall die in my nest,
And multiply *my* days as the sand.
19 [o]My root *is* spread out [p]to the waters,
And the dew lies all night on my branch.
20 My glory *is* fresh within me,
And my [q]bow is renewed in my hand.'
21 "*Men* listened to me and waited,
And kept silence for my counsel.
22 After my words they did not speak again,
And my speech settled on them *as* dew.
23 They waited for me *as* for the rain,
And they opened their mouth wide *as* for [r]the spring rain.
24 *If* I mocked at them, they did not believe *it*,
And the light of my countenance they did not cast down.
25 I chose the way for them, and sat as chief;
So I dwelt as a king in the army,
As one *who* comforts mourners.

30 "But now they mock at me, *men* younger than I,
Whose fathers I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock.
2 Indeed, what *profit* is the strength of their hands to me?
Their vigor has perished.
3 *They are* gaunt from want and famine,
Fleeing late to the wilderness, desolate and waste,
4 Who pluck mallow by the bushes,
And broom tree roots *for* their food.
5 They were driven out from among *men*,
They shouted at them as *at* a thief.

* **28:27** Literally *it* * **29:6** Masoretic Text reads *wrath*; ancient versions and some Hebrew manuscripts read *cream* (compare 20:17).

28:28 ***fear of the Lord.*** To fear God is to acknowledge that God has the right to judge our actions for good or evil. Job had talked a lot about injustice and his innocence, but he was solidly aware that only God has wisdom, and in the end, his fear of the Lord was greater than his protestations of blamelessness.
29:12 ***delivered the poor.*** Considering Job's account of his life when he was prosperous, Eliphaz's accusations of Job sending the widows away empty and crushing the orphans (22:9) was a calculated insult.
29:14 ***put on righteousness . . . a turban.*** This vivid portrait of Job was a stark contrast to his present condition, with his flesh being "clothed" in worms and dust.

28:25 [k] Ps. 135:7 **28:26** [l] Job 37:3; 38:25
28:28 [m] [Prov. 1:7; 9:10] **29:2** [a] Job 1:1–5 [b] Job 1:10
29:3 [c] Job 18:6 **29:4** [d] [Ps. 25:14] **29:6** [e] Deut. 32:14; Job 20:17 [f] Ps. 81:16 **29:9** [g] Job 21:5 **29:10** [h] Ps. 137:6 **29:12** [i] [Ps. 72:12] **29:14** [j] [Is. 59:17; 61:10]
29:15 [k] Num. 10:31 **29:16** [l] Prov. 29:7 **29:17** [m] Prov. 30:14 **29:18** [n] Ps. 30:6 **29:19** [o] Job 18:16 [p] Ps. 1:3
29:20 [q] Gen. 49:24 **29:23** [r] [Zech. 10:1]

6 *They had* to live in the clefts of the
valleys,
In caves of the earth and the rocks.
7 Among the bushes they brayed,
Under the nettles they nestled.
8 *They were* sons of fools,
Yes, sons of vile men;
They were scourged from the land.

9 "And[a] now I am their taunting song;
Yes, I am their byword.
10 They abhor me, they keep far from me;
They do not hesitate [b]to spit in my
face.
11 Because [c]He has loosed my* bowstring
and afflicted me,
They have cast off restraint before me.
12 At *my* right *hand* the rabble arises;
They push away my feet,
And [d]they raise against me their ways
of destruction.
13 They break up my path,
They promote my calamity;
They have no helper.
14 They come as broad breakers;
Under the ruinous storm they roll
along.
15 Terrors are turned upon me;
They pursue my honor as the wind,
And my prosperity has passed like a
cloud.

16 "And[e] now my soul is [f]poured out
because of my *plight;*
The days of affliction take hold of me.
17 My bones are pierced in me at night,
And my gnawing pains take no rest.
18 By great force my garment is
disfigured;
It binds me about as the collar of my
coat.
19 He has cast me into the mire,
And I have become like dust and
ashes.

20 "I [g]cry out to You, but You do not
answer me;
I stand up, and You regard me.
21 *But* You have become cruel to me;
With the strength of Your hand You
[h]oppose me.
22 You lift me up to the wind and cause
me to ride *on it;*
You spoil my success.
23 For I know *that* You will bring me *to*
death,
And *to* the house [i]appointed for all
living.

24 "Surely He would not stretch out *His*
hand against a heap of ruins,
If they cry out when He destroys *it.*
25 [j]Have I not wept for him who was in
trouble?
Has *not* my soul grieved for the poor?
26 [k]But when I looked for good, evil came
to me;
And when I waited for light, then came
darkness.
27 My heart is in turmoil and cannot rest;
Days of affliction confront me.
28 [l]I go about mourning, but not in the
sun;
I stand up in the assembly *and* cry out
for help.
29 [m]I am a brother of jackals,
And a companion of ostriches.
30 [n]My skin grows black and falls from
me;
[o]My bones burn with fever.
31 My harp is *turned* to mourning,
And my flute to the voice of those who
weep.

31 "I have made a covenant with my
eyes;
Why then should I look upon a [a]young
woman?
2 For what *is* the [b]allotment of God from
above,
And the inheritance of the Almighty
from on high?
3 *Is* it not destruction for the wicked,
And disaster for the workers of
iniquity?
4 [c]Does He not see my ways,
And count all my steps?

5 "If I have walked with falsehood,
Or if my foot has hastened to deceit,
6 Let me be weighed on honest scales,
That God may know my [d]integrity.
7 If my step has turned from the way,
Or [e]my heart walked after my eyes,
Or if any spot adheres to my hands,

* **30:11** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *His.*

30:11 ***loosed my bowstring.*** A bow that is not strung up is not ready for use. This was a terrible contrast to his former life, described in 29:20, where Job referred to himself as having his bowstring renewed. A bow that is being used has its string replaced regularly so that the bow can operate at its maximum strength.
30:21 ***strength of Your hand.*** Job blamed God's strong hand, which Satan could not move, for calamities that were actually caused by the hand of Satan (1:11–12,18–19).
31:5 ***If.*** The word "if" was a part of a formula used by accused persons to swear their innocence. The full oath formula was, in effect, "If I am guilty of this crime, may God impose that curse." Because of hesitation about speaking a curse, the person swearing the oath would normally use an abbreviated version. By contrast, Job used the full formula four times, which demonstrated his confidence that he would be acquitted.

30:9 [a] Job 17:6 **30:10** [b] Is. 50:6 **30:11** [c] Job 12:18 **30:12** [d] Job 19:12 **30:16** [e] Ps. 42:4 [f] Ps. 22:14 **30:20** [g] Job 19:7 **30:21** [h] Job 10:3; 16:9, 14; 19:6, 22 **30:23** [i] [Heb. 9:27] **30:25** [j] Ps. 35:13, 14 **30:26** [k] Jer. 8:15 **30:28** [l] Ps. 38:6; 42:9; 43:2 **30:29** [m] Mic. 1:8 **30:30** [n] Ps. 119:83 [o] Ps. 102:3 **31:1** [a] [Matt. 5:28] **31:2** [b] Job 20:29 **31:4** [c] [2 Chr. 16:9] **31:6** [d] Job 23:10; 27:5, 6 **31:7** [e] Ezek. 6:9

8 *Then* [f]let me sow, and another eat;
Yes, let my harvest be rooted out.

9 "If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
Or *if* I have lurked at my neighbor's door,
10 *Then* let my wife grind for [g]another,
And let others bow down over her.
11 For that *would be* wickedness;
Yes, [h]it *would be* iniquity *deserving of* judgment.
12 For that *would be* a fire *that* consumes to destruction,
And would root out all my increase.

13 "If I have [i]despised the cause of my male or female servant
When they complained against me,
14 What then shall I do when [i]God rises up?
When He punishes, how shall I answer Him?
15 [k]Did not He who made me in the womb make them?
Did not the same One fashion us in the womb?

16 "If I have kept the poor from *their* desire,
Or caused the eyes of the widow to [l]fail,
17 Or eaten my morsel by myself,
So that the fatherless could not eat of it
18 (But from my youth I reared him as a father,
And from my mother's womb I guided *the widow**);
19 If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing,
Or any poor *man* without covering;
20 If his heart* has not [m]blessed me,
And *if* he was *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;
21 If I have raised my hand [n]against the fatherless,
When I saw I had help in the gate;
22 *Then* let my arm fall from my shoulder,
Let my arm be torn from the socket.
23 For [o]destruction *from* God *is* a terror to me,
And because of His magnificence I cannot endure.

24 "If[p] I have made gold my hope,
Or said to fine gold, '*You are* my confidence';
25 [q]If I have rejoiced because my wealth *was* great,
And because my hand had gained much;
26 [r]If I have observed the sun* when it shines,
Or the moon moving *in* brightness,
27 So that my heart has been secretly enticed,
And my mouth has kissed my hand;
28 This also *would be* an iniquity *deserving of* judgment,
For I would have denied God *who is* above.

29 "If[s] I have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me,
Or lifted myself up when evil found him
30 [t](Indeed I have not allowed my mouth to sin
By asking for a curse on his soul);
31 If the men of my tent have not said,
'Who is there that has not been satisfied with his meat?'
32 [u](*But* no sojourner had to lodge in the street,
For I have opened my doors to the traveler*);
33 If I have covered my transgressions [v]as Adam,
By hiding my iniquity in my bosom,
34 Because I feared the great [w]multitude,
And dreaded the contempt of families,
So that I kept silence
And did not go out of the door—
35 [x]Oh, that I had one to hear me!
Here is my mark.
Oh, [y]*that* the Almighty would answer me,
That my Prosecutor had written a book!
36 Surely I would carry it on my shoulder,
And bind it on me *like* a crown;
37 I would declare to Him the number of my steps;
Like a prince I would approach Him.

38 "If my land cries out against me,
And its furrows weep together;
39 If [z]I have eaten its fruit* without money,
Or [a]caused its owners to lose their lives;
40 *Then* let [b]thistles grow instead of wheat,
And weeds instead of barley."

The words of Job are ended.

* **31:18** Literally *her* (compare verse 16)
* **31:20** Literally *loins* * **31:26** Literally *light*
* **31:32** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *road*. * **31:39** Literally *its strength*

31:27 ***mouth has kissed my hand.*** This phrase refers to the apparent ancient custom of kissing the hand as a prelude to the superstitious and idolatrous act of throwing a kiss to the heavenly bodies.

31:8 [f] Lev. 26:16 **31:10** [g] Jer. 8:10 **31:11** [h] Gen. 38:24 **31:13** [i] [Deut. 24:14, 15] **31:14** [j] [Ps. 44:21] **31:15** [k] Job 34:19 **31:16** [l] Job 29:12 **31:20** [m] [Deut. 24:13] **31:21** [n] Job 22:9 **31:23** [o] Is. 13:6 **31:24** [p] [Mark 10:23–25] **31:25** [q] Ps. 62:10 **31:26** [r] Ezek. 8:16 **31:29** [s] [Prov. 17:5; 24:17] **31:30** [t] [Matt. 5:44] **31:32** [u] Gen. 19:2, 3 **31:33** [v] [Prov. 28:13] **31:34** [w] Ex. 23:2 **31:35** [x] Job 19:7; 30:20, 24, 28 [y] Job 13:22, 24; 33:10 **31:39** [z] Job 24:6, 10–12 [a] 1 Kin. 21:19 **31:40** [b] Gen. 3:18

Elihu Contradicts Job's Friends

32 So these three men ceased answering Job, because he *was* [a]righteous in his own eyes. 2 Then the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel the [b]Buzite, of the family of Ram, was aroused against Job; his wrath was aroused because he [c]justified himself rather than God. 3 Also against his three friends his wrath was aroused, because they had found no answer, and *yet* had condemned Job.

4 Now because they *were* years older than he, Elihu had waited to speak to Job.* 5 When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was aroused.

6 So Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said:

"I *am* [d]young in years, and you *are* very old;
Therefore I was afraid,
And dared not declare my opinion to you.
7 I said, 'Age* should speak,
And multitude of years should teach wisdom.'
8 But *there is* a spirit in man,
And [e]the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.
9 [f]Great men* are not *always* wise,
Nor do the aged *always* understand justice.

10 "Therefore I say, 'Listen to me,
I also will declare my opinion.'
11 Indeed I waited for your words,
I listened to your reasonings, while you searched out what to say.
12 I paid close attention to you;
And surely not one of you convinced Job,
Or answered his words—
13 [g]Lest you say,
'We have found wisdom';
God will vanquish him, not man.
14 Now he has not directed *his* words against me;
So I will not answer him with your words.

15 "They are dismayed and answer no more;
Words escape them.
16 And I have waited, because they did not speak,
Because they stood still *and* answered no more.
17 I also will answer my part,
I too will declare my opinion.
18 For I am full of words;
The spirit within me compels me.
19 Indeed my belly *is* like wine *that* has no vent;
It is ready to burst like new wineskins.
20 I will speak, that I may find relief;
I must open my lips and answer.
21 Let me not, I pray, show partiality to anyone;
Nor let me flatter any man.
22 For I do not know how to flatter,
Else my Maker would soon take me [h]away.

Elihu Contradicts Job

33 "But please, Job, hear my speech,
And listen to all my words.
2 Now, I open my mouth;
My tongue speaks in my mouth.
3 My words *come* from my upright heart;
My lips utter pure knowledge.
4 [a]The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.
5 If you can answer me,
Set *your words* in order before me;
Take your stand.
6 [b]Truly I *am* as your spokesman* before God;
I also have been formed out of clay.
7 [c]Surely no fear of me will terrify you,
Nor will my hand be heavy on you.

8 "Surely you have spoken in my hearing,
And I have heard the sound of *your* words, *saying,*
9 'I[d] *am* pure, without transgression;
I *am* innocent, and *there is* no iniquity in me.
10 Yet He finds occasions against me,
[e]He counts me as His enemy;
11 [f]He puts my feet in the stocks,
He watches all my paths.'

12 "Look, *in* this you are not righteous.
I will answer you,
For God is greater than man.

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* **32:4** Vulgate reads *till Job had spoken.*
* **32:7** Literally *Days,* that is, years * **32:9** Or *Men of many years* * **33:6** Literally *as your mouth*

32:1 ***righteous in his own eyes.*** Job's friends accused him of self-righteousness because of his denial of the sins they ascribed to him. Job considered himself blameless (and so did God), but he was not without sin. Job needed to see how he compared to God's utter holiness, in spite of the fact that he had none of the unconfessed sins that his friends accused him of.

32:2 ***wrath was aroused.*** Elihu's first mistake was in dealing with a delicate situation while he was angry. He did use the same arguments as the three friends, but he did not understand the whole situation any better than they did. Only the reader is aware of the counsel that took place in heaven (ch. 1).

33:12 ***in this you are not righteous.*** Elihu was correct in saying that God was not answerable to Job. God does not ever have to explain Himself to us,

32:1 [a] Job 6:29; 31:6; 33:9 **32:2** [b] Gen. 22:21 [c] Job 27:5, 6 **32:6** [d] Lev. 19:32 **32:8** [e] [Prov. 2:6] **32:9** [f] [1 Cor. 1:26] **32:13** [g] [Jer. 9:23] **32:22** [h] Job 27:8 **33:4** [a] [Gen. 2:7] **33:6** [b] Job 4:19 **33:7** [c] Job 9:34 **33:9** [d] Job 10:7 **33:10** [e] Job 13:24; 16:9 **33:11** [f] Job 13:27; 19:8

13 Why do you [g]contend with Him?
For He does not give an accounting of
any of His words.
14 [h]For God may speak in one way, or in
another,
Yet man does not perceive it.
15 [i]In a dream, in a vision of the night,
When deep sleep falls upon men,
While slumbering on their beds,
16 [j]Then He opens the ears of men,
And seals their instruction.
17 In order to turn man *from his* deed,
And conceal pride from man,
18 He keeps back his soul from the Pit,
And his life from perishing by the
sword.

19 "*Man* is also chastened with pain on his
[k]bed,
And with strong *pain* in many of his
bones,
20 [l]So that his life abhors [m]bread,
And his soul succulent food.
21 His flesh wastes away from sight,
And his bones stick out *which once*
were not seen.
22 Yes, his soul draws near the Pit,
And his life to the executioners.

23 "If there is a messenger for him,
A mediator, one among a thousand,
To show man His uprightness,
24 Then He is gracious to him, and says,
'Deliver him from going down to the
Pit;
I have found a ransom';
25 His flesh shall be young like a
child's,
He shall return to the days of his
youth.
26 He shall pray to God, and He will
delight in him,
He shall see His face with joy,
For He restores to man His
righteousness.
27 Then he looks at men and [n]says,
'I have sinned, and perverted *what was*
right,
And it [o]did not profit me.'
28 He will [p]redeem his* soul from going
down to the Pit,
And his* life shall see the light.
29 "Behold, God works all these *things,*
Twice, *in fact,* three *times* with a man,
30 [q]To bring back his soul from the Pit,
That he may be enlightened with the
light of life.

31 "Give ear, Job, listen to me;
Hold your peace, and I will speak.
32 If you have anything to say, answer
me;
Speak, for I desire to justify you.
33 If not, [r]listen to me;
Hold your peace, and I will teach you
wisdom."

Elihu Proclaims God's Justice

34 Elihu further answered and said:
2 "Hear my words, you wise *men;*
Give ear to me, you who have
knowledge.
3 [a]For the ear tests words
As the palate tastes food.
4 Let us choose justice for ourselves;
Let us know among ourselves what *is*
good.

5 "For Job has said, [b]'I am righteous,
But [c]God has taken away my justice;
6 [d]Should I lie concerning my right?
My wound *is* incurable, *though I am*
without transgression.'
7 What man *is* like Job,
[e]*Who* drinks scorn like water,
8 Who goes in company with the
workers of iniquity,
And walks with wicked men?
9 For [f]he has said, 'It profits a man nothing
That he should delight in God.'

10 "Therefore listen to me, you men of
understanding:
[g]Far be it from God *to do* wickedness,
And *from* the Almighty to *commit*
iniquity.
11 [h]For He repays man *according to* his
work,
And makes man to find a reward
according to *his* way.
12 Surely God will never do wickedly,
Nor will the Almighty [i]pervert justice.

* **33:28** Or *my* (Kethib) • Or *my* (Kethib)

even though He often graciously does so. Job had great respect for God, and understood the fear of the Lord (28:28). He was persistent in asking God for an answer, and in the end, God did reply.

33:29–30 ***To bring back his soul from the Pit.*** Again, one of Job's advisors had some correct understanding of God, but he mistakenly applied it to Job. It is true that the chastening of pain or trouble sometimes causes men to turn to God and repent of wickedness. But Job's problem was not perverting what was right (v. 27). For him, the answer for the purpose of his pain could not be "to bring back his soul from the Pit." Without claiming that Job was sin free, God had called him blameless and upright (1:8).

34:8 ***walks with wicked men.*** There was no justice in this charge against Job.

34:12 ***do wickedly . . . pervert justice.*** Elihu was unhappy with Job's persistent charges that God was unjust (9:22–24; 24:1–25), and this was a proper concern. The judge of all the earth will always do right (Rev. 15:3).

33:13 [g] [Is. 45:9] **33:14** [h] Ps. 62:11 **33:15** [i] [Num. 12:6] **33:16** [j] [Job 36:10, 15] **33:19** [k] Job 30:17 **33:20** [l] Ps. 107:18 [m] Job 3:24; 6:7 **33:27** [n] [Luke 15:21] [o] [Rom. 6:21] **33:28** [p] Is. 38:17 **33:30** [q] Ps. 56:13 **33:33** [r] Ps. 34:11 **34:3** [a] Job 6:30; 12:11 **34:5** [b] Job 13:18; 33:9 [c] Job 27:2 **34:6** [d] Job 6:4; 9:17 **34:7** [e] Job 15:16 **34:9** [f] Mal. 3:14 **34:10** [g] Job 8:3; 36:23 **34:11** [h] Ps. 62:12 **34:12** [i] Job 8:3

13 Who gave Him charge over the earth?
Or who appointed *Him over* the whole world?
14 If He should set His heart on it,
If He should [j]gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath,
15 [k]All flesh would perish together,
And man would return to dust.

16 "If *you have* understanding, hear this;
Listen to the sound of my words:
17 [l]Should one who hates justice govern?
Will you [m]condemn *Him who is* most just?
18 [n]*Is it fitting* to say to a king, '*You are* worthless,'
And to nobles, '*You are* wicked'?
19 Yet He [o]is not partial to princes,
Nor does He regard the rich more than the poor;
For [p]they *are* all the work of His hands.
20 In a moment they die, [q]in the middle of the night;
The people are shaken and pass away;
The mighty are taken away without a hand.

21 "For[r] His eyes *are* on the ways of man,
And He sees all his steps.
22 [s]There is no darkness nor shadow of death
Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
23 For He need not further consider a man,
That he should go before God in judgment.
24 [t]He breaks in pieces mighty men without inquiry,
And sets others in their place.
25 Therefore He knows their works;
He overthrows *them* in the night,
And they are crushed.
26 He strikes them as wicked *men*
In the open sight of others,
27 Because they [u]turned back from Him,
And [v]would not consider any of His ways,
28 So that they [w]caused the cry of the poor to come to Him;
For He [x]hears the cry of the afflicted.
29 When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble?
And when He hides *His* face, who then can see Him,
Whether *it is* against a nation or a man alone?—
30 That the hypocrite should not reign,
Lest the people be ensnared.

31 "For has *anyone* said to God,
'I have borne *chastening;*
I will offend no more;
32 Teach me *what* I do not see;
If I have done iniquity, I will do no more'?
33 Should He repay *it* according to your *terms,*
Just because you disavow it?
You must choose, and not I;
Therefore speak what you know.

34 "Men of understanding say to me,
Wise men who listen to me:
35 'Job[y] speaks without knowledge,
His words *are* without wisdom.'
36 Oh, that Job were tried to the utmost,
Because *his* answers *are like* those of wicked men!
37 For he adds [z]rebellion to his sin;
He claps *his hands* among us,
And multiplies his words against God."

Elihu Condemns Self-Righteousness

35 Moreover Elihu answered and said:
2 "Do you think this is right?
Do you say,
'My righteousness is more than God's'?
3 For [a]you say,
'What advantage will it be to You?
What profit shall I have, more than *if* I had sinned?'

4 "I will answer you,
And [b]your companions with you.
5 [c]Look to the heavens and see;
And behold the clouds—
They are higher than you.
6 If you sin, what do you accomplish [d]against Him?
Or, *if* your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him?

34:16 ***hear this.*** As indicated by the singular Hebrew verb translated "hear," Elihu was addressing Job directly in verses 16–33.

34:24 ***breaks in pieces mighty men.*** Job was a mighty man who was broken. Elihu's implication is that Job was a worker of iniquity (v. 22).

34:37 ***adds rebellion to his sin.*** Job was stubborn, but he was not rebellious. He was willing to accept punishment if he deserved it (31:5–6).

35:6 ***If you sin.*** This is the same argument used by Eliphaz (22:2). The point that Elihu was making here and through verse 8, is that God's stature is not affected either by the sinfulness or righteousness of man. He cannot be diminished by sin nor made greater by righteousness. This is a true and important point. But it leaves out the understanding that God created man to be in His image, and He does care about the actions of man. God wants men to live blamelessly (ch. 1), and it is good to want to please God.

34:14 [j] Ps. 104:29 **34:15** [k] [Gen. 3:19] **34:17** [l] 2 Sam. 23:3 [m] Job 40:8 **34:18** [n] Ex. 22:28 **34:19** [o] [Deut. 10:17] [p] Job 31:15 **34:20** [q] Ex. 12:29 **34:21** [r] Job 31:4 **34:22** [s] [Amos 9:2, 3] **34:24** [t] [Dan. 2:21] **34:27** [u] 1 Sam. 15:11 [v] Is. 5:12 **34:28** [w] Job 35:9 [x] [Ex. 22:23] **34:35** [y] Job 35:16; 38:2 **34:37** [z] Job 7:11; 10:1 **35:3** [a] Job 21:15; 34:9 **35:4** [b] Job 34:8 **35:5** [c] [Job 22:12] **35:6** [d] [Jer. 7:19]

7 [e]If you are righteous, what do you give Him?
Or what does He receive from your hand?
8 Your wickedness affects a man such as you,
And your righteousness a son of man.
9 "Because[f] of the multitude of oppressions they cry out;
They cry out for help because of the arm of the mighty.
10 But no one says, [g]'Where *is* God my Maker,
[h]Who gives songs in the night,
11 Who [i]teaches us more than the beasts of the earth,
And makes us wiser than the birds of heaven?'
12 [j]There they cry out, but He does not answer,
Because of the pride of evil men.
13 [k]Surely God will not listen to empty *talk*,
Nor will the Almighty regard it.
14 [l]Although you say you do not see Him,
Yet justice *is* before Him, and [m]you must wait for Him.
15 And now, because He has not [n]punished in His anger,
Nor taken much notice of folly,
16 [o]Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain;
He multiplies words without knowledge."

Elihu Proclaims God's Goodness

36 Elihu also proceeded and said:
2 "Bear with me a little, and I will show you
That *there are* yet words to speak on God's behalf.
3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar;
I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
4 For truly my words *are* not false;
One who is perfect in knowledge *is* with you.
5 "Behold, God *is* mighty, but despises *no one;*
[a]*He is* mighty in strength of understanding.
6 He does not preserve the life of the wicked,
But gives justice to the [b]oppressed.
7 [c]He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous;
But [d]*they are* on the throne with kings,
For He has seated them forever,
And they are exalted.
8 And [e]if *they are* bound in fetters,
Held in the cords of affliction,
9 Then He tells them their work and their transgressions—
That they have acted defiantly.
10 [f]He also opens their ear to instruction,
And commands that they turn from iniquity.
11 If they obey and serve *Him,*
They shall [g]spend their days in prosperity,
And their years in pleasures.
12 But if they do not obey,
They shall perish by the sword,
And they shall die without [h]knowledge.*
13 "But the hypocrites in heart [i]store up wrath;
They do not cry for help when He binds them.
14 [j]They die in youth,
And their life *ends* among the perverted persons.*
15 He delivers the poor in their affliction,
And opens their ears in oppression.
16 "Indeed He would have brought you out of dire distress,
[k]*Into* a broad place where *there is* no restraint;
And [l]what is set on your table *would be* full of [m]richness.
17 But you are filled with the judgment due the [n]wicked;
Judgment and justice take hold *of you.*

* **36:12** Masoretic Text reads *as one without knowledge.* * **36:14** Hebrew *qedeshim*, that is, those practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals

35:12 Pride—Elihu accused Job of pride because Job had declared his own righteousness (32:1). But Elihu's presumption and self-righteousness became even more excessive than Job's as he developed his pompous speech against Job (36:4). Later Elihu would understand that God had accepted Job, while his "friends" were condemned. Even knowledge about God and commitment to God can become a source of pride that blinds us to other things that God is doing, both in ourselves and in others.
35:13 *empty talk.* Elihu was assuming that Job had no answer from God because God knew that Job's cry was empty.
36:2 *speak on God's behalf.* Elihu believed that he was speaking for God and that he was setting Job straight. It is interesting to note that God asked Job to pray for the other three friends (42:7–10), but no word, either of censure or praise, was said about Elihu.
36:6–14 *does not preserve the life of the wicked.* Elihu repeats the concept that the wicked are judged by being cut off and the repentant are rewarded.

35:7 [e] Prov. 9:12 **35:9** [f] Job 34:28 **35:10** [g] Is. 51:13 [h] Acts 16:25 **35:11** [i] Ps. 94:12 **35:12** [j] Prov. 1:28 **35:13** [k] [Is. 1:15] **35:14** [l] Job 9:11 [m] [Ps. 37:5, 6] **35:15** [n] Ps. 89:32 **35:16** [o] Job 34:35; 38:2 **36:5** [a] Job 12:13, 16; 37:23 **36:6** [b] Job 5:15 **36:7** [c] [Ps. 33:18; 34:15] [d] Ps. 113:8 **36:8** [e] Ps. 107:10 **36:10** [f] Job 33:16; 36:15 **36:11** [g] [Is. 1:19, 20] **36:12** [h] Job 4:21 **36:13** [i] [Rom. 2:5] **36:14** [j] Ps. 55:23 **36:16** [k] Ps. 18:19; 31:8; 118:5 [l] Ps. 23:5 [m] Ps. 36:8 **36:17** [n] Job 22:5, 10, 11

18 Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest He take you away with *one* blow;
For [o]a large ransom would not help you avoid *it*.
19 [p]Will your riches,
Or all the mighty forces,
Keep you from distress?
20 Do not desire the night,
When people are cut off in their place.
21 Take heed, [q]do not turn to iniquity,
For [r]you have chosen this rather than affliction.

22 "Behold, God is exalted by His power;
Who teaches like Him?
23 [s]Who has assigned Him His way,
Or who has said, 'You have done [t]wrong'?

Elihu Proclaims God's Majesty

24 "Remember to [u]magnify His work,
Of which men have sung.
25 Everyone has seen it;
Man looks on *it* from afar.

26 "Behold, God *is* great, and we [v]do not know *Him;*
[w]Nor can the number of His years *be* discovered.
27 For He [x]draws up drops of water,
Which distill as rain from the mist,
28 [y]Which the clouds drop down
And pour abundantly on man.
29 Indeed, can *anyone* understand the spreading of clouds,
The thunder from His canopy?
30 Look, He [z]scatters His light upon it,
And covers the depths of the sea.
31 For [a]by these He judges the peoples;
He [b]gives food in abundance.
32 [c]He covers *His* hands with lightning,
And commands it to strike.
33 [d]His thunder declares it,
The cattle also, concerning the rising *storm.*

37 "At this also my heart trembles,
And leaps from its place.
2 Hear attentively the thunder of His voice,
And the rumbling *that* comes from His mouth.
3 He sends it forth under the whole heaven,
His lightning to the ends of the earth.
4 After it [a]a voice roars;
He thunders with His majestic voice,
And He does not restrain them when His voice is heard.
5 God thunders marvelously with His voice;
[b]He does great things which we [c]cannot comprehend.
6 For [c]He says to the snow, 'Fall *on* the earth';
Likewise to the gentle rain and the heavy rain of His strength.
7 He seals the hand of every man,
[d]That [e]all men may know His work.
8 The beasts [f]go into dens,
And remain in their lairs.
9 From the chamber *of the south* comes the whirlwind,
And cold from the scattering winds *of the north.*
10 [g]By the breath of God ice is given,
And the broad waters are frozen.
11 Also with moisture He saturates the thick clouds;
He scatters His bright clouds.
12 And they swirl about, being turned by His guidance,
That they may [h]do whatever He commands them
On the face of the whole earth.*
13 [i]He causes it to come,
Whether for correction,
Or [j]for His land,
Or [k]for mercy.

14 "Listen to this, O Job;
Stand still and [l]consider the wondrous works of God.

* **37:12** Literally *the world of the earth*

36:23 ***You have done wrong.*** This is probably the most accurate warning that Elihu gives to Job. Even though Job was sure that God would vindicate his actions (and the reader knows that God saw Job as blameless and upright), he could not defend his position without telling God that He had done wrong. God cannot sin, nor will He tempt people to sin.
36:24 ***magnify His work.*** This is the best advice that Elihu gave Job, and indeed, it was something that Job had already done (26:5–14; 28:1–28). Exalting God for who He is and what He has done is one of the best ways to gain perspective when we are in trouble or despair.
36:26 ***Behold, God is great.*** As Elihu begins to praise God, his anger with Job disappears, and he speaks accurately and joyfully of the things that he knows about God. From here to the end of chapter 37 Elihu is praising God. The speeches of Elihu are the most difficult of the friends' admonitions to analyze, and scholars are not in total agreement about which charges by Elihu are discerning and which charges are misapplied "conventional wisdom." Like all mixtures of truth and misunderstanding, Elihu's discourse needs careful sorting.
37:7 ***seals the hand of every man.*** God uses the winter storm to stop man so that he cannot work, but instead may recognize the work of God.
37:12 ***guidance.*** This is a nautical term which literally means "steerings" or "rope-pullings" (Prov. 15) and portrays God as the wise Captain who skillfully charts

36:18 [o] Ps. 49:7 **36:19** [p] [Prov. 11:4] **36:21** [q] [Ps. 31:6; 66:18] [r] [Heb. 11:25] **36:23** [s] Job 34:13; [Is. 40:13, 14] [t] Job 8:3 **36:24** [u] [Rev. 15:3] **36:26** [v] [1 Cor. 13:12] [w] Heb. 1:12 **36:27** [x] Ps. 147:8 **36:28** [y] [Prov. 3:20] **36:30** [z] Job 37:3 **36:31** [a] [Acts 14:17] [b] Ps. 104:14, 15 **36:32** [c] Ps. 147:8 **36:33** [d] 1 Kin. 18:41 **37:4** [a] Ps. 29:3 **37:5** [b] Job 5:9; 9:10; 36:26 **37:6** [c] Ps. 147:16, 17 **37:7** [d] Ps. 109:27 [e] Ps. 19:3, 4 **37:8** [f] Ps. 104:21, 22 **37:10** [g] Ps. 147:17, 18 **37:12** [h] Job 36:32 **37:13** [i] Ex. 9:18, 23 [j] Job 38:26, 27 [k] 1 Kin. 18:41–46 **37:14** [l] Ps. 111:2

15 Do you know when God dispatches them,
And causes the light of His cloud to shine?
16 [m]Do you know how the clouds are balanced,
Those wondrous works of [n]Him who is perfect in knowledge?
17 Why *are* your garments hot,
When He quiets the earth by the south *wind?*
18 With Him, have you [o]spread out the [p]skies,
Strong as a cast metal mirror?
19 "Teach us what we should say to Him,
For we can prepare nothing because of the darkness.
20 Should He be told that I *wish to* speak?
If a man were to speak, surely he would be swallowed up.
21 Even now *men* cannot look at the light *when it is* bright in the skies,
When the wind has passed and cleared them.
22 He comes from the north *as* golden *splendor;*
With God *is* awesome majesty.
23 *As for* the Almighty, [q]we cannot find Him;
[r]*He is* excellent in power,
In judgment and abundant justice;
He does not oppress.
24 Therefore men [s]fear Him;
He shows no partiality to any *who are* [t]wise of heart."

The LORD Reveals His Omnipotence to Job

38 Then the LORD answered Job [a]out of the whirlwind, and said:

2 "Who[b] *is* this who darkens counsel
By [c]words without knowledge?
3 [d]Now prepare yourself like a man;
I will question you, and you shall answer Me.
4 "Where[e] were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Tell *Me,* if you have understanding.
5 Who determined its measurements?
Surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
6 To what were its foundations fastened?
Or who laid its cornerstone,
7 When the morning stars sang together,
And all [f]the sons of God shouted for joy?
8 "Or[g] *who* shut in the sea with doors,
When it burst forth *and* issued from the womb;
9 When I made the clouds its garment,
And thick darkness its swaddling band;
10 When [h]I fixed My limit for it,
And set bars and doors;
11 When I said,
'This far you may come, but no farther,
And here your proud waves [i]must stop!'
12 "Have you [j]commanded the morning since your days *began,*
And caused the dawn to know its place,
13 That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,
And [k]the wicked be shaken out of it?
14 It takes on form like clay *under* a seal,
And stands out like a garment.
15 From the wicked their [l]light is withheld,
And [m]the upraised arm is broken.
16 "Have you [n]entered the springs of the sea?
Or have you walked in search of the depths?
17 Have [o]the gates of death been revealed to you?
Or have you seen the doors of the shadow of death?
18 Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth?
Tell *Me,* if you know all this.
19 "Where *is* the way *to* the dwelling of light?
And darkness, where *is* its place,
20 That you may take it to its territory,
That you may know the paths *to* its home?

the course for the clouds, which respond obediently to His hand at the helm.

37:18 ***Strong . . . cast metal mirror.*** Ancient mirrors were firm and unbreakable because they were made of polished bronze.

37:24 ***partiality . . . wise of heart.*** Even though Elihu had claimed earlier to be one who "is perfect in knowledge" (36:4), he knew that God does not give preferential treatment, even to the wise.

38:2 ***words without knowledge.*** The theme of the first speech of the Lord is given here. Job did not know what he was talking about. God quite quickly points out that there is a wide gap in understanding between God and man. God was not saying that Job had sinned in the way that his friends had accused him, but He was saying that Job had been presumptuous with his superficial knowledge of divine things. Job, along with his friends, had to learn that suffering may serve a purpose known only to God. In that case, a follower of God will submit even to loss and trauma, without complaint, for the glory of God.

38:10 ***My limit.*** If God controls the sea and places boundaries on it, He can place boundaries on anything else that will affect mankind.

37:16 [m] Job 36:29 [n] Job 36:4 **37:18** [o] [Is. 44:24] [p] Ps. 104:2 **37:23** [q] [1 Tim. 6:16] [r] [Job 9:4; 36:5] **37:24** [s] [Matt. 10:28] [t] [Matt. 11:25] **38:1** [a] Ex. 19:16 **38:2** [b] Job 34:35; 42:3 [c] 1 Tim. 1:7 **38:3** [d] Job 40:7 **38:4** [e] Ps. 104:5 **38:7** [f] Job 1:6 **38:8** [g] Gen. 1:9 **38:10** [h] Job 26:10 **38:11** [i] [Ps. 89:9; 93:4] **38:12** [j] [Ps. 74:16; 148:5] **38:13** [k] Ps. 104:35 **38:15** [l] Job 18:5 [m] Ps. 10:15; 37:17 **38:16** [n] [Ps. 77:19] **38:17** [o] Ps. 9:13

21 Do you know *it*, because you were
born then,
Or *because* the number of your days
is great?

22 "Have you entered [p]the treasury of
snow,
Or have you seen the treasury of hail,
23 [q]Which I have reserved for the time of
trouble,
For the day of battle and war?
24 By what way is light diffused,
Or the east wind scattered over the
earth?

25 "Who [r]has divided a channel for the
overflowing *water*,
Or a path for the thunderbolt,
26 To cause it to rain on a land *where
there is* no one,
A wilderness in which *there is* no man;
27 [s]To satisfy the desolate waste,
And cause to spring forth the growth
of tender grass?
28 [t]Has the rain a father?
Or who has begotten the drops of dew?
29 From whose womb comes the ice?
And the [u]frost of heaven, who gives it
birth?
30 The waters harden like stone,
And the surface of the deep is [v]frozen.

31 "Can you bind the cluster of the [w]Pleiades,
Or loose the belt of Orion?
32 Can you bring out Mazzaroth* in its
season?
Or can you guide the Great Bear with
its cubs?
33 Do you know [x]the ordinances of the
heavens?
Can you set their dominion over the
earth?

34 "Can you lift up your voice to the
clouds,
That an abundance of water may cover
you?
35 Can you send out lightnings, that they
may go,
And say to you, 'Here we *are!*'?
36 [y]Who has put wisdom in the mind?*
Or who has given understanding to
the heart?
37 Who can number the clouds by
wisdom?
Or who can pour out the bottles of
heaven,
38 When the dust hardens in clumps,
And the clods cling together?

39 "Can[z] you hunt the prey for the lion,
Or satisfy the appetite of the young
lions,
40 When they crouch in *their* dens,
Or lurk in their lairs to lie in wait?
41 [a]Who provides food for the raven,
When its young ones cry to God,
And wander about for lack of food?

39 "Do you know the time when the
wild [a]mountain goats bear
young?
Or can you mark when [b]the deer gives
birth?
2 Can you number the months *that* they
fulfill?
Or do you know the time when they
bear young?
3 They bow down,
They bring forth their young,
They deliver their offspring.*
4 Their young ones are healthy,
They grow strong with grain;
They depart and do not return to them.

5 "Who set the wild donkey free?
Who loosed the bonds of the onager,
6 [c]Whose home I have made the
wilderness,
And the barren land his dwelling?
7 He scorns the tumult of the city;
He does not heed the shouts of the
driver.
8 The range of the mountains *is* his
pasture,
And he searches after [d]every green
thing.

9 "Will the [e]wild ox be willing to serve
you?
Will he bed by your manger?
10 Can you bind the wild ox in the furrow
with ropes?
Or will he plow the valleys behind you?
11 Will you trust him because his
strength *is* great?
Or will you leave your labor to him?
12 Will you trust him to bring home your
grain,
And gather it to your threshing floor?

* **38:32** Literally *Constellations* * **38:36** Literally *inward parts* * **39:3** Literally *pangs*, figurative of offspring

38:26 ***where there is no one.*** Though God utilizes meteorological elements to intervene in human affairs, He also uses them in areas that lie outside the human realm, for the sake of the land itself.
38:32 ***Great Bear.*** This is a reference to the constellation known as Ursa Major, also called the Big Dipper.
39:1 ***Do you know.*** God continues His probing of Job. He has shown His control of the earth and seas, the elements and the heavens, and now He shows the splendor and mysteries of the wild forces of nature, which are also all in God's control.

39:5 ***loosed the bands of the onager.*** God shows His compassion even for beasts of burden. This contrasts sharply with Job's complaints about God not noticing the oppression by the wicked (24:1–12).

38:22 [p] Ps. 135:7 **38:23** [q] Is. 30:30 **38:25** [r] Job 28:26 **38:27** [s] Ps. 104:13, 14; 107:35 **38:28** [t] Job 36:27, 28 **38:29** [u] Ps. 147:16, 17 **38:30** [v] [Job 37:10] **38:31** [w] Amos 5:8 **38:33** [x] Jer. 31:35, 36 **38:36** [y] [Ps. 51:6] **38:39** [z] Ps. 104:21 **38:41** [a] [Matt. 6:26] **39:1** [a] Ps. 104:18 [b] Ps. 29:9 **39:6** [c] Jer. 2:24 **39:8** [d] Gen. 1:29 **39:9** [e] Num. 23:22

13 "The wings of the ostrich wave proudly,
But are her wings and pinions *like the*
kindly stork's?
14 For she leaves her eggs on the ground,
And warms them in the dust;
15 She forgets that a foot may crush them,
Or that a wild beast may break them.
16 She [f]treats her young harshly, as
though *they were* not hers;
Her labor is in vain, without concern,
17 Because God deprived her of wisdom,
And did not [g]endow her with
understanding.
18 When she lifts herself on high,
She scorns the horse and its rider.

19 "Have you given the horse strength?
Have you clothed his neck with thunder?*
20 Can you frighten him like a locust?
His majestic snorting strikes terror.
21 He paws in the valley, and rejoices in
his strength;
[h]He gallops into the clash of arms.
22 He mocks at fear, and is not
frightened;
Nor does he turn back from the sword.
23 The quiver rattles against him,
The glittering spear and javelin.
24 He devours the distance with
fierceness and rage;
Nor does he come to a halt because the
trumpet *has* sounded.
25 At *the blast of* the trumpet he says,
'Aha!'
He smells the battle from afar,
The thunder of captains and shouting.

26 "Does the hawk fly by your wisdom,
And spread its wings toward the
south?
27 Does the [i]eagle mount up at your
command,
And [j]make its nest on high?
28 On the rock it dwells and resides,
On the crag of the rock and the
stronghold.
29 From there it spies out the prey;
Its eyes observe from afar.
30 Its young ones suck up blood;
And [k]where the slain *are*, there it *is*."

40 Moreover the LORD [a]answered Job, and said:

2 "Shall [b]the one who contends with the
Almighty correct *Him*?
He who [c]rebukes God, let him answer it."

Job's Response to God

3 Then Job answered the LORD and said:

4 "Behold,[d] I am vile;
What shall I answer You?
[e]I lay my hand over my mouth.
5 Once I have spoken, but I will not
answer;
Yes, twice, but I will proceed no
further."

God's Challenge to Job

6 [f]Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:

7 "Now[g] prepare yourself like a man;
[h]I will question you, and you shall
answer Me:

8 "Would[i] you indeed annul My judgment?
Would you condemn Me that you may
be justified?
9 Have you an arm like God?
Or can you thunder with [j]a voice like
His?
10 [k]Then adorn yourself *with* majesty and
splendor,
And array yourself with glory and
beauty.
11 Disperse the rage of your wrath;
Look on everyone *who is* proud, and
humble him.
12 Look on everyone *who is* [l]proud, *and*
bring him low;
Tread down the wicked in their place.
13 Hide them in the dust together,
Bind their faces in hidden *darkness*.
14 Then I will also confess to you
That your own right hand can save you.

15 "Look now at the behemoth,* which I
made *along* with you;
He eats grass like an ox.
16 See now, his strength *is* in his hips,
And his power *is* in his stomach
muscles.
17 He moves his tail like a cedar;
The sinews of his thighs are tightly
knit.
18 His bones *are like* beams of bronze,
His ribs like bars of iron.
19 He *is* the first of the [m]ways of God;
Only He who made him can bring near
His sword.

* **39:19** Or *a mane* * **40:15** A large animal, exact identity unknown

39:30 ***where the slain are, there it is.*** The animals that feed on the blood of the slain prevent the spread of disease. This too is part of God's intricate plan.
40:8 ***condemn Me that You may be justified.*** Because Job had been arguing against the inflexible retribution dogma, which views suffering as God's punishment for sin, Job had to condemn God in order to maintain his own innocence.
40:15 ***behemoth.*** Suggestions for the identity of this beast include the elephant, the hippopotamus, or a dinosaur. The name means "great beast," and the description most nearly fits a dinosaur, as neither the elephant nor the hippo has a tail like a cedar.

39:16 [f] Lam. 4:3 **39:17** [g] Job 35:11 **39:21** [h] Jer. 8:6 **39:27** [i] Prov. 30:18, 19 [j] Jer. 49:16 **39:30** [k] Matt. 24:28 **40:1** [a] Job 38:1 **40:2** [b] Job 9:3; 10:2; 33:13 [c] Job 13:3; 23:4 **40:4** [d] Ezra 9:6 [e] Job 29:9 **40:6** [f] Job 38:1 **40:7** [g] Job 38:3 [h] Job 42:4 **40:8** [i] [Rom. 3:4] **40:9** [j] [Ps. 29:3, 4] **40:10** [k] Ps. 93:1; 104:1 **40:12** [l] Dan. 4:37 **40:19** [m] Job 26:14

20 Surely the mountains [n]yield food for him,
And all the beasts of the field play there.
21 He lies under the lotus trees,
In a covert of reeds and marsh.
22 The lotus trees cover him *with* their shade;
The willows by the brook surround him.
23 Indeed the river may rage,
Yet he is not disturbed;
He is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth,
24 *Though* he takes it in his eyes,
Or one pierces *his* nose with a snare.

41 "Can you draw out [a]Leviathan* with a hook,
Or *snare* his tongue with a line *which* you lower?
2 Can you [b]put a reed through his nose,
Or pierce his jaw with a hook?
3 Will he make many supplications to you?
Will he speak softly to you?
4 Will he make a covenant with you?
Will you take him as a servant forever?
5 Will you play with him as *with* a bird,
Or will you leash him for your maidens?
6 Will *your* companions make a banquet* of him?
Will they apportion him among the merchants?
7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons,
Or his head with fishing spears?
8 Lay your hand on him;
Remember the battle—
Never do it again!
9 Indeed, *any* hope of *overcoming* him is false;
Shall *one not* be overwhelmed at the sight of him?
10 No one *is so* fierce that he would dare stir him up.
Who then is able to stand against Me?
11 [c]Who has preceded Me, that I should pay *him*?
[d]Everything under heaven is Mine.

12 "I will not conceal* his limbs,
His mighty power, or his graceful proportions.
13 Who can remove his outer coat?
Who can approach *him* with a double bridle?
14 Who can open the doors of his face,
With his terrible teeth all around?
15 *His* rows of scales are *his* pride,
Shut up tightly *as with* a seal;
16 One is so near another
That no air can come between them;
17 They are joined one to another,
They stick together and cannot be parted.
18 His sneezings flash forth light,
And his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning.
19 Out of his mouth go burning lights;
Sparks of fire shoot out.
20 Smoke goes out of his nostrils,
As *from* a boiling pot and burning rushes.
21 His breath kindles coals,
And a flame goes out of his mouth.
22 Strength dwells in his neck,
And sorrow dances before him.
23 The folds of his flesh are joined together;
They are firm on him and cannot be moved.
24 His heart is as hard as stone,
Even as hard as the lower *millstone.*
25 When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid;
Because of his crashings they are beside* themselves.
26 *Though* the sword reaches him, it cannot avail;
Nor does spear, dart, or javelin.
27 He regards iron as straw,
And bronze as rotten wood.
28 The arrow cannot make him flee;
Slingstones become like stubble to him.
29 Darts are regarded as straw;
He laughs at the threat of javelins.
30 His undersides *are* like sharp potsherds;
He spreads pointed *marks* in the mire.
31 He makes the deep boil like a pot;
He makes the sea like a pot of ointment.
32 He leaves a shining wake behind him;
One would think the deep had white hair.
33 On earth there is nothing like him,
Which is made without fear.
34 He beholds every high *thing*;
He *is* king over all the children of pride."

Job's Repentance and Restoration

42 Then Job answered the LORD and said:

2 "I know that You [a]can do everything,
And that no purpose *of Yours* can be withheld from You.

* **41:1** A large sea creature, exact identity unknown * **41:6** Or *bargain over him* * **41:12** Literally *keep silent about* * **41:25** Or *purify themselves*

41:1 ***Leviathan.*** The identity of Leviathan, which is a transliteration for the Hebrew word "sea monster," or "sea serpent," is disputed. His description (vv. 12–18) sounds like the traditional dragon. He is a sea animal, an uncontrollable giant.

40:20 [n] Ps. 104:14 **41:1** [a] Is. 27:1 **41:2** [b] Is. 37:29 **41:11** [c] [Rom. 11:35] [d] Ps. 24:1; 50:12 **42:2** [a] [Matt. 19:26]

3 *You asked,* [b]'Who *is* this who hides
counsel without knowledge?'
Therefore I have uttered what I did not
understand,
[c]Things too wonderful for me, which I
did not know.
4 Listen, please, and let me speak;
You said, [d]'I will question you, and you
shall answer Me.'
5 "I have [e]heard of You by the hearing of
the ear,
But now my eye sees You.
6 Therefore I [f]abhor *myself,*
And repent in dust and ashes."

7And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me *what is* right, as My servant Job *has.* 8Now therefore, take for yourselves [g]seven bulls and seven rams, [h]go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall [i]pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you *according to your* folly; because you have not spoken of Me *what is* right, as My servant Job *has.*"

9So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD commanded them; for the LORD had accepted Job. 10[j]And the LORD restored Job's losses* when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the LORD gave Job [k]twice as much as he had before. 11Then [l]all his brothers, all his sisters, and all those who had been his acquaintances before, came to him and ate food with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversity that the LORD had brought upon him. Each one gave him a piece of silver and each a ring of gold.

12Now the LORD blessed [m]the latter *days* of Job more than his beginning; for he had [n]fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. 13[o]He also had seven sons and three daughters. 14And he called the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-Happuch. 15In all the land were found no women *so* beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers.

16After this Job [p]lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren *for* four generations. 17So Job died, old and [q]full of days.

* **42:10** Literally *Job's captivity,* that is, what was captured from Job

42:4 ***you shall answer Me.*** Job was completely done with his complaints of injustice. He knew that his presuppositions were wrong, and that he needed God's wisdom.

42:5 Conviction—Job was not convicted of a particular sin, but of too small a view of God. In the Bible, the revelation of the character and person of God is the criterion for proper self-evaluation (Is. 6:5). Job regretted that his trust in God had been so imperfect, for he now understood God in a new way.

42:6 ***repent in dust and ashes.*** Dust and ashes were a sign of mourning. Job could not retract more fully.

42:7 ***spoken of Me . . . as My servant Job has.*** Even though God had just shown Job his presumption, God still validated Job's doggedly held position that God had not brought suffering on him because of sin in his life.

42:10 ***restored Job's losses when he prayed.*** Not only did God deal with Job's presumption and the wrong ideas of his friends, but He provided the perfect way to restore their relationship with each other, as well as with God.

42:3 [b] Job 38:2 [c] Ps. 40:5; 131:1; 139:6 **42:4** [d] Job 38:3; 40:7 **42:5** [e] Job 26:14 **42:6** [f] Ezra 9:6 **42:8** [g] Num. 23:1 [h] [Matt. 5:24] [i] Gen. 20:17 **42:10** [j] Deut. 30:3 [k] Is. 40:2 **42:11** [l] Job 19:13 **42:12** [m] James 5:11 [n] Job 1:3 **42:13** [o] Job 1:2 **42:16** [p] Job 5:26; Prov. 3:16 **42:17** [q] Gen. 15:15; 25:8

THE BOOK OF
PSALMS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Seventy-five of the psalms in the book are designated as Davidic: 3–9; 11–32; 34–41; 51–65; 68–70; 86; 101; 103; 108–110; 122; 124; 131; 133; and 138–145. The New Testament tells us that the "anonymous" Psalms 2 and 95 were also written by David. In addition to these, twelve are by Asaph, a priest who headed the service of music; ten are by the sons of Korah, a guild of singers and composers; two are by Solomon, Israel's most powerful king; one is by Moses; one by Heman, a wise man; and one is by Ethan, another wise man. The remaining fifty psalms are anonymous, but tradition attributes them to Ezra.

▶ **TIME:** c. 1410–430 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Ps. 19:14

▶ **THEME:** A collection of songs that literally covers hundreds of years of Jewish history from the patriarchs down through the postexilic period, the Book of Psalms is practical and personal as well as scenic and magnificently beautiful. The Psalms teach us how to pray, how to grieve, how to rejoice, and how to worship. Any Christian who makes building a relationship with God a priority in his or her life will find great spiritual nourishment in the Psalms. It is the prayer book for all who believe in the God of the universe. Jesus used it as such, and so should we.

BOOK ONE

Psalms 1–41

Psalm 1

The Way of the Righteous and the End of the Ungodly

1 Blessed [a]*is* the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
[b]Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
2 But [c]his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,
[d]And in His law he meditates day and night.
3 He shall be like a tree
[e]Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall [f]prosper.
4 The ungodly *are* not so,
But *are* [g]like the chaff which the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

1:1 Success—Psalm 1 sets the tone for the whole Book of Psalms. It contrasts the ways of life of the blessed man and the wicked man. Being blessed or successful is not a once for all time, dramatic event, but rather a lifetime of choosing to follow God and His commandments. Success happens when we move from grudging acceptance to enthusiastic delight in absorbing and then following God's laws and mandates. Nothing provides more resources. No motivational speakers will set us on a better course. No degrees will give us more of a life-changing education.

At first glance this kind of lifestyle may not look like the most exciting way to live. We can go through life, plodding along this way, without anybody even noticing. It's a lifestyle that doesn't fill up trophy cases or result in monuments being created. It can, however, end with "Well done, good and faithful servant" from our Lord. The excitement is in the results of being in a position to help family and friends grow. Success comes from being in a relationship with God that means fruitfulness by His definition.

1:1 ***Blessed is the man.*** Hebrew wisdom literature and poetry is filled with descriptions of two favorite characters: "the righteous man" and "wisdom" (often personified as "she"). In this context, "the righteous man" is a literary tool used to represent those who love and desire to please God, rather than an actual individual.

1:2 ***meditates.*** Biblical meditation is focusing the mind on Scripture or the attributes and actions of God.

1:3 ***shall prosper.*** This is not a guarantee of the future financial worth of the righteous; rather, the righteous person is always useful and productive to the Lord.

1:1 [a] Prov. 4:14 [b] Jer. 15:17 **1:2** [c] Ps. 119:14, 16, 35 [d] [Josh. 1:8] **1:3** [e] Jer. 17:8 [f] Gen. 39:2, 3, 23 **1:4** [g] Job 21:18

6 For [h]the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 2

The Messiah's Triumph and Kingdom

1 Why [a]do the nations rage,
And the people plot a vain thing?
2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the [b]rulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against His [c]Anointed, *saying*,
3 "Let [d]us break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us."
4 He who sits in the heavens [e]shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.
5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,
And distress them in His deep displeasure:
6 "Yet I have set My King
On My holy hill of Zion."
7 "I will declare the decree:
The LORD has said to Me,
[f]'You *are* My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
8 Ask of Me, and I will give *You*
The nations *for* Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.
9 [g]You shall break* them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"
10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.
11 Serve the LORD with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.
12 Kiss the Son,* lest He* be angry,
And you perish *in* the way,
When [h]His wrath is kindled but a little.
[i]Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

Psalm 3

The LORD Helps His Troubled People

A Psalm of David [a]when he fled from Absalom his son.

1 LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!
Many *are* they who rise up against me.
2 Many *are* they who say of me,
"*There is* no help for him in God." *Selah*
3 But You, O LORD, *are* [b]a shield for me,
My glory and [c]the One who lifts up my head.
4 I cried to the LORD with my voice,
And [d]He heard me from His [e]holy hill. *Selah*
5 [f]I lay down and slept;
I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.
6 [g]I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
Who have set *themselves* against me all around.
7 Arise, O LORD;
Save me, O my God!
[h]For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.
8 [i]Salvation *belongs* to the LORD.
Your blessing *is* upon Your people. *Selah*

* **2:9** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *rule* (compare Revelation 2:27). * **2:12** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Embrace discipline*; Targum reads *Receive instruction*. • Septuagint reads *the* LORD.

1:6 ***knows the way.*** The verb "knows" in this context refers not just to God's awareness, but to an intimate, personal knowledge (101:4). God is intimately involved with the way of the righteous, but has no connection with the way of the ungodly, except in judgment (146:9).

2:1 ***Why do the nations rage.*** David, the human author of this psalm (Acts 4:24–26), was probably referring to the nations that confronted him and his legitimate heirs to the throne of Israel. But the Davidic kings were mere shadows of the coming great King, the Savior Jesus. Consequently, in a larger sense, this verse refers to any attack on Jesus and His divine kingdom. This assault occurred in its most dramatic form at the cross, but resistance to God's kingdom has continued.

2:12 ***Kiss the Son.*** All peoples are presented with a clear choice. They can either love and respect the Lord's anointed, and so experience His great blessing, or they can refuse to submit, and incur God's wrath.

3:title ***when he fled from Absalom.*** The history behind this psalm is recorded in 1 Samuel 15.

3:2 ***Selah.*** This is probably a literary or musical term, perhaps indicating a pause in the lyrics for a musical interlude.

3:7 ***struck . . . on the cheekbone.*** In the poetic imagery that David uses, his enemies are like powerful beasts whose strength is in their jaws and whose terror is in their teeth. God's strike at the source of their strength means that they are no longer a threat.

1:6 [h] Ps. 37:18 **2:1** [a] Acts 4:25, 26 **2:2** [b] [Matt. 12:14; 26:3, 4, 59–66; 27:1, 2; Mark 3:6; 11:18]; Acts 4:25–28 [c] [John 1:41] **2:3** [d] Luke 19:14 **2:4** [e] Ps. 37:13 **2:7** [f] [Heb. 1:5; 5:5] **2:9** [g] Ps. 89:23; 110:5, 6 **2:12** [h] [Rev. 6:16, 17] [i] [Ps. 5:11; 34:22] **3:title** [a] 2 Sam. 15:13–17 **3:3** [b] Ps. 5:12; 28:7 [c] Ps. 9:13; 27:6 **3:4** [d] Ps. 4:3; 34:4 [e] Ps. 2:6; 15:1; 43:3 **3:5** [f] Lev. 26:6 **3:6** [g] Ps. 23:4; 27:3 **3:7** [h] Job 16:10 **3:8** [i] [Is. 43:11]

Psalm 4

The Safety of the Faithful

To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

1 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness!
You have relieved me in *my* distress;
Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

2 How long, O you sons of men,
Will you turn my glory to shame?
How long will you love worthlessness
And seek falsehood? *Selah*

3 But know that [a]the LORD has set apart* for Himself him who is godly;
The LORD will hear when I call to Him.

4 [b]Be angry, and do not sin.
[c]Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. *Selah*

5 Offer [d]the sacrifices of righteousness,
And [e]put your trust in the LORD.

6 *There are* many who say,
"Who will show us *any* good?"
[f]LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.

7 You have put [g]gladness in my heart,
More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.

8 [h]I will both lie down in peace, and sleep;
[i]For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 5

A Prayer for Guidance

To the Chief Musician. With flutes.*
A Psalm of David.

1 Give [a]ear to my words, O LORD,
Consider my meditation.

2 Give heed to the voice of my cry,
My King and my God,
For to You I will pray.

3 My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD;
[b]In the morning I will direct *it* to You,
And I will look up.

4 For You *are* not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness,
Nor shall evil dwell with You.

5 The [c]boastful shall not [d]stand in Your sight;
You hate all workers of iniquity.

6 You shall destroy those who speak falsehood;
The LORD abhors the [e]bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

7 But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy;
In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

8 [f]Lead me, O LORD, in Your righteousness because of my enemies;
Make Your way straight before my face.

9 For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth;
Their inward part *is* destruction;
[g]Their throat *is* an open tomb;
They flatter with their tongue.

10 Pronounce them guilty, O God!
Let them fall by their own counsels;
Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions,
For they have rebelled against You.

11 But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You;
Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them;
Let those also who love Your name
Be joyful in You.

12 For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous;
With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.

* **4:3** Many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *made wonderful.*
* **5:title** Hebrew *nehiloth*

4:1 ***O God of my righteousness.*** This phrase can also be translated "O my righteous God." It has two meanings: only God is righteous, and all of a person's righteousness is found in Him alone.
4:4 ***Be angry, and do not sin.*** These words are cited by Paul in the New Testament (Eph. 4:26). This is a good description of what righteous indignation should look like.
4:7 ***their grain and wine.*** The joy God gives transcends the joy of the harvest. Agricultural produce, the result of abundant rain on fertile soil, was a blessing of God on His people. But there is something greater than full barns and overflowing cisterns—the joy of God's presence.
5:7 ***Your holy temple.*** David was a leader in reforming the worship of God in Jerusalem, and he established a structure for the worship that would take place in the temple to be built by Solomon. David uses the word "temple" in anticipation of the future glorious building; all later generations of Hebrew worshipers would understand their own worship better because of the use of this word in these psalms.
5:9 ***Their throat is an open tomb.*** Paul echoed the words of these verses in describing the depravity of all people (Rom. 3:13).

4:3 [a] [2 Tim. 2:19] **4:4** [b] [Eph. 4:26] [c] Ps. 77:6
4:5 [d] Deut. 33:19 [e] Ps. 37:3, 5; 62:8 **4:6** [f] Num. 6:26
4:7 [g] Is. 9:3 **4:8** [h] Ps. 3:5 [i] [Lev. 25:18] **5:1** [a] Ps. 4:1
5:3 [b] Ps. 55:17; 88:13 **5:5** [c] [Hab. 1:13] [d] Ps. 1:5 **5:6** [e] Ps. 55:23 **5:8** [f] Ps. 25:4, 5; 27:11; 31:3 **5:9** [g] Rom. 3:13

Psalm 6

A Prayer of Faith in Time of Distress

To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. [a]On an eight-stringed harp.* A Psalm of David.

1 O LORD, [b]do not rebuke me in Your anger,
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.
2 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I *am* weak;
O LORD, [c]heal me, for my bones are troubled.
3 My soul also is greatly [d]troubled;
But You, O LORD—how long?
4 Return, O LORD, deliver me!
Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!
5 [e]For in death *there is* no remembrance of You;
In the grave who will give You thanks?
6 I am weary with my groaning;
All night I make my bed swim;
I drench my couch with my tears.
7 [f]My eye wastes away because of grief;
It grows old because of all my enemies.
8 [g]Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity;
For the LORD has [h]heard the voice of my weeping.
9 The LORD has heard my supplication;
The LORD will receive my prayer.
10 Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled;
Let them turn back *and* be ashamed suddenly.

Psalm 7

Prayer and Praise for Deliverance from Enemies

A [a]Meditation* of David, which he sang to the LORD [b]concerning the words of Cush, a Benjamite.

1 O LORD my God, in You I put my trust;
[c]Save me from all those who persecute me;
And deliver me,
2 [d]Lest they tear me like a lion,
[e]Rending *me* in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.
3 O LORD my God, [f]if I have done this:
If there is [g]iniquity in my hands,
4 If I have repaid evil to him who was at peace with me,
Or [h]have plundered my enemy without cause,
5 Let the enemy pursue me and overtake *me;*
Yes, let him trample my life to the earth,
And lay my honor in the dust. *Selah*
6 Arise, O LORD, in Your anger;
[i]Lift Yourself up because of the rage of my enemies;
[j]Rise up for me* *to* the judgment You have commanded!
7 So the congregation of the peoples shall surround You;
For their sakes, therefore, return on high.
8 The LORD shall judge the peoples;
[k]Judge me, O LORD, [l]according to my righteousness,
And according to my integrity within me.
9 Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end,
But establish the just;
[m]For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds.
10 My defense *is* of God,
Who saves the [n]upright in heart.
11 God *is* a just judge,
And God is angry *with the wicked* every day.
12 If he does not turn back,
He will [o]sharpen His sword;
He bends His bow and makes it ready.
13 He also prepares for Himself instruments of death;
He makes His arrows into fiery shafts.

* **6:title** Hebrew *sheminith* * **7:title** Hebrew *Shiggaion* * **7:6** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *O LORD my God.*

6:4 *for Your mercies' sake.* Perhaps the most significant single term in the Hebrew text regarding the character of God is the word rendered "mercies" here. The Hebrew word describes what some prefer to call the "loyal love" or "lovingkindness" of God.

6:6–7 *grief.* The sighing and tears of this psalm are to be understood as responses to the psalmist's physical afflictions experienced at the hands of his enemies, and also to reflect the seriousness with which he felt the weight and burden of his own sinfulness. All affliction is not directly related to sin; however, it is an occasion when a spiritual accounting with God should be taken and in which the believer should be inclined to strengthen himself in God.

7:1 *in You I put my trust.* The dominant message in the Book of Psalms is twofold: (1) God is good, and (2) life is difficult. The life of faith is lived between these two realities.

7:12 *If he does not turn back.* God abhors sin, but He is also merciful, giving people the opportunity to repent before they are punished for their wickedness.

6:title [a] Ps. 12:title **6:1** [b] Ps. 38:1; 118:18 **6:2** [c] [Hos. 6:1] **6:3** [d] Ps. 88:3 **6:5** [e] [Eccl. 9:10] **6:7** [f] Job 17:7 **6:8** [g] [Matt. 25:41] [h] Ps. 3:4; 28:6 **7:title** [a] Hab. 3:1 [b] 2 Sam. 16 **7:1** [c] Ps. 31:15 **7:2** [d] Is. 38:13 [e] Ps. 50:22 **7:3** [f] 2 Sam. 16:7 [g] 1 Sam. 24:11 **7:4** [h] 1 Sam. 24:7; 26:9 **7:6** [i] Ps. 94:2 [j] Ps. 35:23; 44:23 **7:8** [k] Ps. 26:1; 35:24; 43:1 [l] Ps. 18:20; 35:24 **7:9** [m] [1 Sam. 16:7] **7:10** [n] Ps. 97:10, 11; 125:4 **7:12** [o] Deut. 32:41

14 [p]Behold, *the wicked* brings forth
iniquity;
Yes, he conceives trouble and brings
forth falsehood.
15 He made a pit and dug it out,
[q]And has fallen into the ditch *which* he
made.
16 [r]His trouble shall return upon his own
head,
And his violent dealing shall come
down on his own crown.
17 I will praise the LORD according to His
righteousness,
And will sing praise to the name of the
LORD Most High.

Psalm 8

The Glory of the LORD in Creation

To the Chief Musician. On the
instrument of Gath.* A Psalm of David.

1 O LORD, our Lord,
How [a]excellent *is* Your name in all the
earth,
Who have [b]set Your glory above the
heavens!
2 [c]Out of the mouth of babes and nursing
infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence [d]the enemy and
the avenger.
3 When I [e]consider Your heavens, the
work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You
have ordained,
4 [f]What is man that You are mindful of
him,
And the son of man that You [g]visit
him?
5 For You have made him a little lower
than the angels,*
And You have crowned him with glory
and honor.
6 [h]You have made him to have dominion
over the works of Your hands;
[i]You have put all *things* under his feet,
7 All sheep and oxen—
Even the beasts of the field,
8 The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.
9 [j]O LORD, our Lord,
How excellent *is* Your name in all the
earth!

Psalm 9

Prayer and Thanksgiving for the LORD's Righteous Judgments

To the Chief Musician. To *the tune of*
"Death of the Son."* A Psalm of David.

1 I will praise *You,* O LORD, with my
whole heart;
I will tell of all Your marvelous works.
2 I will be glad and [a]rejoice in You;
I will sing praise to Your name,
[b]O Most High.
3 When my enemies turn back,
They shall fall and perish at Your
presence.
4 For You have maintained my right and
my cause;
You sat on the throne judging in
righteousness.
5 You have rebuked the nations,
You have destroyed the wicked;
You have [c]blotted out their name
forever and ever.
6 O enemy, destructions are finished
forever!
And you have destroyed cities;
Even their memory has [d]perished.

* **8:title** Hebrew *Al Gittith* * **8:5** Hebrew *Elohim, God;* Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Jewish tradition translate as *angels.* * **9:title** Hebrew *Muth Labben*

7:14 ***he conceives trouble.*** These words are echoed in the apostle James' description of the progress of sin (James 1:14–15).

8:5 ***a little lower than the angels.*** Mankind stands at the summit of God's creation. The Septuagint, an ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, translates the Hebrew word meaning "God" (*elohim*) as "angels." The author of Hebrews bases his argument in 2:5–9 on this translation, and both readings are true. God made man (human beings) in His own image, just a little lower than angels. God created human beings as majestic creatures who were to rule over His creation. In our fallen state, we are profoundly disfigured, a perversion of the majesty God intended. However, Jesus restores those who put their trust in Him. In Christ, we recover majesty; in Him, we become the people that God wants us to be. Whenever we feel worthless, the words of this psalm should encourage us. We and all other human beings are valuable because God Himself created us in His own glorious image.

8:9 ***O LORD, our Lord.*** The first word is the divine name Yahweh. The second Hebrew word translated "our Lord" speaks of the One in control: "our Sovereign."

9:1 ***with my whole heart.*** Real praise is not half-hearted; it involves one's whole being (146:2). The words of these two verses are characteristic of the praise of God in the Psalms. He is to be praised for His works and His name. His name represents who He is; His works represent what He does.

7:14 [p] Is. 59:4 **7:15** [q] [Job 4:8] **7:16** [r] Esth. 9:25 **8:1** [a] Ps. 148:13 [b] Ps. 113:4 **8:2** [c] [1 Cor. 1:27] [d] Ps. 44:16 **8:3** [e] Ps. 111:2 **8:4** [f] Job 7:17, 18 [g] [Job 10:12] **8:6** [h] [Gen. 1:26, 28] [i] [Heb. 2:8] **8:9** [j] Ps. 8:1 **9:2** [a] Ps. 5:11; 104:34 [b] [Ps. 83:18; 92:1] **9:5** [c] Prov. 10:7 **9:6** [d] [Ps. 34:16]

7 [e]But the LORD shall endure forever;
He has prepared His throne for judgment.
8 [f]He shall judge the world in righteousness,
And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

9 The LORD also will be a [g]refuge for the oppressed,
A refuge in times of trouble.
10 And those who [h]know Your name will put their trust in You;
For You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.

11 Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion!
[i]Declare His deeds among the people.
12 [j]When He avenges blood, He remembers them;
He does not forget the cry of the humble.

13 Have mercy on me, O LORD!
Consider my trouble from those who hate me,
You who lift me up from the gates of death,
14 That I may tell of all Your praise
In the gates of the daughter of Zion.
I will [k]rejoice in Your salvation.

15 [l]The nations have sunk down in the pit *which* they made;
In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught.
16 The LORD is [m]known *by* the judgment He executes;
The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.
[n]Meditation.* *Selah*

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell,
And all the nations [o]that forget God.
18 [p]For the needy shall not always be forgotten;
[q]The expectation of the poor shall *not* perish forever.

19 Arise, O LORD,
Do not let man prevail;
Let the nations be judged in Your sight.
20 Put them in fear, O LORD,
That the nations may know themselves *to be but* men. *Selah*

Psalm 10

A Song of Confidence in God's Triumph over Evil

1 Why do You stand afar off, O LORD?
Why do You hide in times of trouble?
2 The wicked in *his* pride persecutes the poor;
[a]Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.

3 For the wicked [b]boasts of his heart's desire;
He [c]blesses the greedy *and* renounces the LORD.
4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek *God;*
God *is* in none of his [d]thoughts.

5 His ways are always prospering;
Your judgments *are* far above, out of his sight;
As for all his enemies, he sneers at them.
6 [e]He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved;
[f]I shall never be in adversity."
7 [g]His mouth is full of cursing and [h]deceit and oppression;
Under his tongue *is* trouble and iniquity.

8 He sits in the lurking places of the villages;
In the secret places he murders the innocent;
His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless.
9 He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den;
He lies in wait to catch the poor;
He catches the poor when he draws him into his net.
10 So he crouches, he lies low,
That the helpless may fall by his strength.

* **9:16** Hebrew *Higgaion*

9:10 *those who know Your name.* Those in Old Testament times who "knew the name of the Lord" were those who looked forward with saving faith to God's promised redemption, just as we look back with saving faith to the redemption accomplished.
9:14 *the daughter of Zion.* This endearing term for Jerusalem indicated the close relationship and nurturing care God had for His people.
10:1 *Why.* Psalm 10 is found as the second half of Psalm 9 in the Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Scripture.
10:3 *the greedy.* The verb "to boast," as translated here, is most commonly rendered "praise." The wicked offer praise, but not to the Lord. Rather, their hearts offer praise and worship to their own greedy desires. Their desires know no divinely set limits, since the wicked do not seek Him, but live with the conscious thought that there is no God (v. 4).

9:7 [e] Heb. 1:11 **9:8** [f] [Ps. 96:13; 98:9] **9:9** [g] Ps. 32:7; 46:1; 91:2 **9:10** [h] Ps. 91:14 **9:11** [i] Ps. 66:16; 107:22 **9:12** [j] [Ps. 72:14] **9:14** [k] Ps. 13:5; 20:5; 35:9 **9:15** [l] Ps. 7:15, 16 **9:16** [m] Ex. 7:5 [n] Ps. 92:3 **9:17** [o] Job 8:13 **9:18** [p] Ps. 9:12; 12:5 [q] Prov. 23:18 **10:2** [a] Ps. 7:16; 9:16 **10:3** [b] Ps. 49:6; 94:3, 4 [c] Prov. 28:4 **10:4** [d] Ps. 14:1; 36:1 **10:6** [e] [Eccl. 8:11] [f] Rev. 18:7 **10:7** [g] [Rom. 3:14] [h] Ps. 55:10, 11

11 He has said in his heart,
"God has forgotten;
He hides His face;
He will never see."

12 Arise, O LORD!
O God, [i]lift up Your hand!
Do not forget the [j]humble.
13 Why do the wicked renounce God?
He has said in his heart,
"You will not require *an account*."

14 But You have [k]seen, for You observe
trouble and grief,
To repay *it* by Your hand.
The helpless [l]commits himself to You;
[m]You are the helper of the fatherless.
15 Break the arm of the wicked and the
evil *man;*
Seek out his wickedness *until* You find
none.

16 [n]The LORD *is* King forever and ever;
The nations have perished out of His
land.
17 LORD, You have heard the desire of the
humble;
You will prepare their heart;
You will cause Your ear to hear,
18 To do justice to the fatherless and the
oppressed,
That the man of the earth may oppress
no more.

Psalm 11

Faith in the LORD's Righteousness

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of David.

1 In [a]the LORD I put my trust;
How can you say to my soul,
"Flee *as* a bird to your mountain"?
2 For look! [b]The wicked bend *their* bow,
They make ready their arrow on the
string,
That they may shoot secretly at the
upright in heart.
3 [c]If the foundations are destroyed,
What can the righteous do?
4 The LORD *is* in His holy temple,
The LORD's [d]throne *is* in heaven;
[e]His eyes behold,
His eyelids test the sons of men.
5 The LORD [f]tests the righteous,
But the wicked and the one who loves
violence His soul hates.
6 Upon the wicked He will rain coals;
Fire and brimstone and a burning wind
[g]*Shall be* the portion of their cup.

7 For the LORD *is* righteous,
He [h]loves righteousness;
His countenance beholds the upright.*

Psalm 12

Man's Treachery and God's Constancy

To the Chief Musician. [a]On an eight-stringed harp.* A Psalm of David.

1 Help, LORD, for the godly man [b]ceases!
For the faithful disappear from among
the sons of men.
2 [c]They speak idly everyone with his
neighbor;
With flattering lips *and* a double heart
they speak.

3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips,
And the tongue that speaks proud
things,
4 Who have said,
"With our tongue we will prevail;
Our lips *are* our own;
Who *is* lord over us?"

5 "For the oppression of the poor, for the
sighing of the needy,
Now I will arise," says the LORD;
"I will set *him* in the safety for which he
yearns."

6 The words of the LORD *are* [d]pure words,
Like silver tried in a furnace of earth,
Purified seven times.

* **11:7** Or *The upright beholds His countenance*
* **12:title** Hebrew *sheminith*

10:11 ***God has forgotten.*** The wicked behave the way they do because they doubt that the Lord knows, cares, or will act. They want to believe that there will be no final judgment, so they feel free to do as they please. But the truth is that God will establish justice.
11:1 ***In the LORD I put my trust.*** In contrast to the surrounding psalms of lament (9; 10; 12), this psalm expresses great trust in the Almighty Lord.
11:3 ***If the foundations are destroyed.*** The wicked may taunt, but in fact the foundations are not destroyed and will never be.
11:5 ***The LORD tests.*** Undergoing trials and suffering is not necessarily a mark of sin or of God's disfavor. Such tests will show the true allegiance of our hearts.
12:2 ***idly.*** The very foundation of a nation is undermined when falsehood prevails. Every aspect of life—home, business, social life—is based on truth. Falsehood breeds suspicion and distrust, which will destroy the very fabric of society and civilization.
12:6 ***pure words.*** In contrast to the idle words of the wicked, the words of God are altogether trustworthy. The eternal and steadfast nature of the Lord Himself stands behind His words. He will establish justice just as He has promised to David (v. 5).

10:12 [i] Mic. 5:9 [j] Ps. 9:12 **10:14** [k] [Ps. 11:4] [l] [2 Tim. 1:12] [m] Ps. 68:5 **10:16** [n] Ps. 29:10 **11:1** [a] Ps. 56:11 **11:2** [b] Ps. 64:3, 4 **11:3** [c] Ps. 82:5; 87:1; 119:152 **11:4** [d] [Is. 66:1] [e] [Ps. 33:18; 34:15, 16] **11:5** [f] Gen. 22:1 **11:6** [g] Ps. 75:8 **11:7** [h] Ps. 33:5; 45:7 **12:title** [a] Ps. 6:title **12:1** [b] [Is. 57:1] **12:2** [c] Ps. 10:7; 41:6 **12:6** [d] 2 Sam. 22:31; Ps. 18:30; 119:140

7 You shall keep them, O LORD,
You shall preserve them from this generation forever.

8 The wicked prowl on every side,
When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.

Psalm 13

Trust in the Salvation of the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?
[a]How long will You hide Your face from me?
2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God;
[b]Enlighten my eyes,
[c]Lest I sleep the *sleep of* death;
4 Lest my enemy say,
"I have prevailed against him";
Lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

5 But I have trusted in Your mercy;
My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.
6 I will sing to the LORD,
Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

Psalm 14

Folly of the Godless, and God's Final Triumph

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of David.

1 The [a]fool has said in his heart,
"*There is* no God."
They are corrupt,
They have done abominable works,
There is none who does good.
2 [b]The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.
3 [c]They have all turned aside,
They have together become corrupt;
There is none who does good,
No, not one.

4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge,
Who eat up my people *as* they eat bread,
And [d]do not call on the LORD?
5 There they are in great fear,
For God *is* with the generation of the righteous.
6 You shame the counsel of the poor,
But the LORD *is* his [e]refuge.

7 [f]Oh, that the salvation of Israel *would come* out of Zion!
[g]When the LORD brings back the captivity of His people,
Let Jacob rejoice *and* Israel be glad.

Psalm 15

The Character of Those Who May Dwell with the LORD

A Psalm of David.

1 LORD, [a]who may abide in Your tabernacle?
Who may dwell in Your holy hill?

2 He who walks uprightly,
And works righteousness,
And speaks the [b]truth in his heart;
3 He *who* [c]does not backbite with his tongue,
Nor does evil to his neighbor,
[d]Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend;

13:1 ***How long, O LORD?*** The Lord allows David to pour out his anxiety before Him. But by the end of David's prayer, the Lord has granted him a correct perspective on his situation. David's only option is to trust in the sovereign mercy of his loving God.
13:5 ***Your mercy.*** This word refers to God's loyal love or lovingkindness, His faithfulness to His commitment to take care of His people.
14:1 ***fool.*** This word does not refer to mental inability, but to moral and spiritual insensitivity. A fool is one who lives a life of "practical atheism," the view that even if there is a God, it really does not matter to one's life.
14:4 ***no knowledge.*** The wicked lack knowledge of God's truth. Although people may be brilliant in their chosen fields, they can still be morally insensitive and spiritually closed to the issues that have eternal consequences.
15:1 ***who may abide in Your tabernacle.*** No one except Jesus the Messiah is righteous enough to approach God. But there have always been those who stand before God as forgiven sinners, whose righteousness comes as a gift from God. We may come boldly into God's presence because our sins have been covered by Christ's blood.
15:2 ***He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness.*** The Lord commands us to be holy (1 Pet. 1:15–16), and He also gives us the power to become holy (2 Thess. 2:16–17).

13:1 [a] Job 13:24 **13:3** [b] Ezra 9:8 [c] Jer. 51:39 **14:1** [a] Ps. 10:4; 53:1 **14:2** [b] Ps. 33:13, 14; 102:19 **14:3** [c] Rom. 3:12 **14:4** [d] Is. 64:7 **14:6** [e] Ps. 9:9; 40:17; 46:1; 142:5 **14:7** [f] Ps. 53:6 [g] Job 42:10 **15:1** [a] Ps. 24:3–5 **15:2** [b] [Eph. 4:25] **15:3** [c] [Lev. 19:16–18] [d] Ex. 23:1

4 [e]In whose eyes a vile person is despised,
But he honors those who fear the LORD;
He *who* [f]swears to his own hurt and does not change;
5 He *who* does not put out his money at usury,
Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these *things* [g]shall never be moved.

Psalm 16

The Hope of the Faithful, and the Messiah's Victory

A [a]Michtam of David.

1 Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.
2 *O my soul,* you have said to the LORD,
"You *are* my Lord,
[b]My goodness is nothing apart from You."
3 As for the saints who *are* on the earth,
"They are the excellent ones, in [c]whom is all my delight."
4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten *after* another *god;*
Their drink offerings of [d]blood I will not offer,
[e]Nor take up their names on my lips.
5 O LORD, *You are* the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
You maintain my lot.
6 The lines have fallen to me in pleasant *places;*
Yes, I have a good inheritance.
7 I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel;
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.
8 [f]I have set the LORD always before me;
Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved.
9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will rest in hope.
10 [g]For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
11 You will show me the [h]path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 17

Prayer with Confidence in Final Salvation

A Prayer of David.

1 Hear a just cause, O LORD,
Attend to my cry;
Give ear to my prayer *which is* not from deceitful lips.
2 Let my vindication come from Your presence;
Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright.
3 You have tested my heart;
You have visited *me* in the night;
[a]You have tried me and have found nothing;
I have purposed that my mouth shall not [b]transgress.
4 Concerning the works of men,
By the word of Your lips,
I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer.

16:5 *my inheritance.* This phrase refers to the Promised Land. God had given this inheritance to His people (Deut. 6:1–3). However, there was a greater inheritance for the Levites, who did not receive a share in the land (Num. 26:62); their share of the inheritance was in the Lord. David had an ancestral inheritance in the land. As king, he also had extensive royal holdings. But he realized that no inheritance was greater than his relationship with Almighty God.

16:10 *Sheol.* Sheol is "the grave," or the realm of the dead. Not much is known of the ancient Hebrew's concept of life after death. Sheol seems to be a dreaded place, shrouded in mystery.

17:3 *tested my heart.* David knew that God had done what he was requesting even before he asked. That is, God knew David's needs and what was in his heart. David's prayer helped him to focus on the source of his strength and to reaffirm his determination to live a pure life.

17:4 God's Word Corrects—There are many symbols for God's word that can be found in the Bible itself. It can be thought of as a mirror (James 1:23–25), a seed (1 Pet. 1:23), a lamp (Ps. 119:105), a sword (Eph. 6:17), and even food (Heb. 5:12–14). But the Bible also serves as a measuring rod that can be used as a standard against which to measure our beliefs.

God Himself sometimes uses His word to correct us as He did with David. "You have dealt well with Your servant, O LORD, according to Your word . . . Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word" (Ps. 119:65,67).

There are times when God's word can correct believers when they are in honest and unintentional error. Aquila and Priscilla, a godly Christian couple, used the Scriptures to help a young preacher named Apollos (Acts 18:24–28). Paul does the same thing for some former disciples of John the Baptist that he met in the city of Ephesus (Acts 19:1–7).

15:4 [e] Esth. 3:2 [f] Lev. 5:4 **15:5** [g] 2 Pet. 1:10
16:title [a] Ps. 56–60 **16:2** [b] Job 35:7 **16:3** [c] Ps. 119:63
16:4 [d] Ps. 106:37, 38 [e] [Ex. 23:13] **16:8** [f] [Acts 2:25–28]
16:10 [g] Ps. 49:15; 86:13 **16:11** [h] [Matt. 7:14] **17:3** [a] Job 23:10 [b] Ps. 39:1

5 [c]Uphold my steps in Your paths,
That my footsteps may not slip.

6 [d]I have called upon You, for You will
hear me, O God;
Incline Your ear to me, *and* hear my
speech.
7 Show Your marvelous lovingkindness
by Your right hand,
O You who save those who trust *in You*
From those who rise up *against them.*
8 Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
Hide me under the shadow of Your
wings,
9 From the wicked who oppress me,
From my deadly enemies who
surround me.

10 They have closed up their [e]fat *hearts;*
With their mouths they [f]speak
proudly.
11 They have now surrounded us in our
steps;
They have set their eyes, crouching
down to the earth,
12 As a lion is eager to tear his prey,
And like a young lion lurking in secret
places.

13 Arise, O LORD,
Confront him, cast him down;
Deliver my life from the wicked with
Your sword,
14 With Your hand from men, O LORD,
From men of the world *who have* their
portion in *this* life,
And whose belly You fill with Your
hidden treasure.
They are satisfied with children,
And leave the rest of their *possession*
for their babes.

15 As for me, [g]I will see Your face in
righteousness;
[h]I shall be satisfied when I [i]awake in
Your likeness.

Psalm 18

God the Sovereign Savior

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of
David [a]the servant of the LORD,
who spoke to the LORD the words of
[b]this song on the day that the LORD
delivered him from the hand of all his
enemies and from the hand of Saul.
And he said:

1 I [c]will love You, O LORD, my strength.
2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress
and my deliverer;
My God, my strength, [d]in whom I will
trust;
My shield and the horn of my
salvation, my stronghold.
3 I will call upon the LORD, [e]*who is
worthy* to be praised;
So shall I be saved from my enemies.

4 [f]The pangs of death surrounded me,
And the floods of ungodliness made
me afraid.
5 The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me;
The snares of death confronted me.
6 In my distress I called upon the
LORD,
And cried out to my God;
He heard my voice from His temple,
And my cry came before Him, *even* to
His ears.

7 [g]Then the earth shook and trembled;
The foundations of the hills also
quaked and were shaken,
Because He was angry.
8 Smoke went up from His nostrils,
And devouring fire from His mouth;
Coals were kindled by it.
9 [h]He bowed the heavens also, and came
down
With darkness under His feet.

17:14 ***who have their portion in this life.*** The wicked live their lives with only the pursuit of the pleasures of this world in mind. The righteous should not try to obtain what this life can offer, but instead pursue God and His ways.

17:15 ***I will see Your face.*** In the Old Testament there is no well-developed theology of heaven, yet there are times when the faith of the writer rises to utter statements of hope of resurrection and of life eternal with God. It would appear that such a view was always a part of godly faith, even though dim in comparison with the later revelation through Christ. Both Psalms 16 and 17 are testimonies to a growing faith that entrance into God's presence would be the fruit of a relationship with God in this life. The afflictions on earth cause faith to look forward to a time after this life when one will behold God's face in righteousness, and faith in God will be vindicated by seeing God.

18:1 ***I will love You, O LORD.*** Twice in the Psalms the poet declares a love for God (116:1). Here an unusual word for love is used, referring to compassion as deep as a mother's love. The text for this psalm is also found in 2 Samuel 22.

18:2 ***The LORD is my rock.*** This is a particularly apt image for David, who many times had to hide in the mountains for security (1 Sam. 26:1,20).

18:5–6 ***distress.*** As the title of Psalm 18 indicates, this poem of praise was composed in the midst of very trying times (2 Sam. 22:1). Once again, David had become the object of Saul's uncontrollable rage; in his bouts of paranoia, Saul mistakenly suspected that David was laying the foundation of a revolt against his own royal position. How foolish David would have been had he said, "In my distress I took the matter into my own hands." Rather he said, "In my distress I called upon the LORD." We have no other option when caught in our distressing situations. Otherwise we compound the suffering.

17:5 [c] Ps. 44:18; 119:133 **17:6** [d] Ps. 86:7; 116:2
17:10 [e] Ezek. 16:49 [f] [1 Sam. 2:3] **17:15** [g] [1 John 3:2] [h] Ps. 4:6, 7; 16:11 [i] [Is. 26:19] **18:title** [a] Ps. 36:title [b] 2 Sam. 22 **18:1** [c] Ps. 144:1 **18:2** [d] Heb. 2:13 **18:3** [e] Rev. 5:12
18:4 [f] Ps. 116:3 **18:7** [g] Acts 4:31 **18:9** [h] Ps. 144:5

10 [i]And He rode upon a cherub, and flew;
[j]He flew upon the wings of the wind.
11 He made darkness His secret place;
[k]His canopy around Him *was* dark waters
And thick clouds of the skies.
12 [l]From the brightness before Him,
His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire.

13 The LORD thundered from heaven,
And the Most High uttered [m]His voice,
Hailstones and coals of fire.*
14 [n]He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe,
Lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them.
15 Then the channels of the sea were seen,
The foundations of the world were uncovered
At Your rebuke, O LORD,
At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.

16 [o]He sent from above, He took me;
He drew me out of many waters.
17 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
From those who hated me,
For they were too strong for me.
18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
But the LORD was my support.
19 [p]He also brought me out into a broad place;
He delivered me because He delighted in me.

20 [q]The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands
He has recompensed me.
21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.
22 For all His judgments *were* before me,
And I did not put away His statutes from me.
23 I was also blameless before Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.
24 [r]Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

25 [s]With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful;
With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless;
26 With the pure You will show Yourself pure;
And [t]with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.
27 For You will save the humble people,
But will bring down [u]haughty looks.

28 [v]For You will light my lamp;
The LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.
29 For by You I can run against a troop,
By my God I can leap over a wall.
30 *As for* God, [w]His way *is* perfect;
[x]The word of the LORD is proven;
He *is* a shield [y]to all who trust in Him.

31 [z]For who *is* God, except the LORD?
And who *is* a rock, except our God?
32 *It is* God who [a]arms me with strength,
And makes my way perfect.
33 [b]He makes my feet like the *feet of* deer,
And [c]sets me on my high places.
34 [d]He teaches my hands to make war,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation;
Your right hand has held me up,
Your gentleness has made me great.
36 You enlarged my path under me,
[e]So my feet did not slip.

37 I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them;
Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed.
38 I have wounded them,
So that they could not rise;
They have fallen under my feet.
39 For You have armed me with strength for the battle;
You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.
40 You have also given me the necks of my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who hated me.
41 They cried out, but *there was* none to save;

* **18:13** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; a few Hebrew manuscripts and Septuagint omit *Hailstones and coals of fire.*

18:11–12 *darkness . . . brightness.* The references to darkness speak of the hiddenness of God. He cannot be completely understood by those whom He has created. The references to brightness speak of God's holiness.

18:35 *the shield of Your salvation.* The use of battle armor as an image of God's provision for the righteous is found in both the Old and New Testaments (Eph. 6:10–20).

18:41 *They cried out . . . to the LORD.* Apparently, in the extremes of battle, the enemies of David found no help from their gods, so they screamed aloud to David's God for deliverance. But God would not answer them.

18:10 [i] Ps. 80:1; 99:1 [j] [Ps. 104:3] **18:11** [k] Ps. 97:2 **18:12** [l] Ps. 97:3; 140:10 **18:13** [m] [Ps. 29:3–9; 104:7] **18:14** [n] Ps. 144:6 **18:16** [o] Ps. 144:7 **18:19** [p] Ps. 4:1; 31:8; 118:5 **18:20** [q] 1 Sam. 24:19 **18:24** [r] 1 Sam. 26:23 **18:25** [s] [1 Kin. 8:32] **18:26** [t] [Lev. 26:23–28] **18:27** [u] [Ps. 101:5] **18:28** [v] Job 18:6 **18:30** [w] Rev. 15:3 [x] Ps. 12:6; 119:140 [y] [Ps. 17:7] **18:31** [z] [1 Sam. 2:2] **18:32** [a] [Ps. 91:2] **18:33** [b] Hab. 3:19 [c] Deut. 32:13; 33:29 **18:34** [d] Ps. 144:1 **18:36** [e] Prov. 4:12

[f]*Even* to the LORD, but He did not
answer them.
42 Then I beat them as fine as the dust
before the wind;
I [g]cast them out like dirt in the streets.
43 You have delivered me from the
strivings of the people;
[h]You have made me the head of the
nations;
[i]A people I have not known shall
serve me.
44 As soon as they hear of me they obey me;
The foreigners submit to me.
45 [j]The foreigners fade away,
And come frightened from their
hideouts.
46 The LORD lives!
Blessed *be* my Rock!
Let the God of my salvation be exalted.
47 *It is* God who avenges me,
[k]And subdues the peoples under me;
48 He delivers me from my enemies.
[l]You also lift me up above those who
rise against me;
You have delivered me from the
violent man.
49 [m]Therefore I will give thanks to You,
O LORD, among the Gentiles,
And sing praises to Your name.
50 [n]Great deliverance He gives to His king,
And shows mercy to His anointed,
To David and his descendants
forevermore.

Psalm 19

The Perfect Revelation of the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of
David.

1 The [a]heavens declare the glory of God;
And the [b]firmament shows His
handiwork.
2 Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals
knowledge.
3 *There is* no speech nor language
Where their voice is not heard.
4 [c]Their line* has gone out through all
the earth,
And their words to the end of the
world.

In them He has set a tabernacle for
the sun,
5 Which *is* like a bridegroom coming
out of his chamber,
[d]*And* rejoices like a strong man to run
its race.
6 Its rising *is* from one end of heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;
And there is nothing hidden from its
heat.
7 [e]The law of the LORD *is* perfect,
converting the soul;
The testimony of the LORD *is* sure,
making [f]wise the simple;
8 The statutes of the LORD *are* right,
rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD *is*
pure, enlightening the eyes;
9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean,
enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD *are* true
and righteous altogether.
10 More to be desired *are they* than [g]gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the
honeycomb.
11 Moreover by them Your servant is
warned,
And in keeping them *there is* great
reward.
12 Who can understand *his* errors?
[h]Cleanse me from secret *faults*.

* **19:4** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *sound;* Targum reads *business*.

There is only one prayer from the wicked to which He gladly listens—the prayer of repentance.

18:43 *head of the nations.* David gained his empire by the work of the Lord on his behalf. But David's empire was only a picture of the kingdom of God that will one day be governed by David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus.

18:49 *among the Gentiles.* By proclaiming the victories of God to the Gentiles, David was calling for the nations to respond in faith. How fitting that Paul would cite this verse (or its parallel in 2 Sam. 22:50) in Romans 15:9 as an indicator of God's ongoing intention to bring His salvation to all people.

19:1 *The heavens declare.* All of creation reveals God's glory and majesty (Rom. 1:18–20).

19:4 *a tabernacle for the sun.* In the ancient Middle East, the sun was often thought of as a god. In this poem, the sun is but the stunning workmanship of the Creator, glorifying the God who made it.

19:7–8 *The law of the LORD.* The world reveals God's glory, and the Word reveals His saving grace. God's law (or teaching) is described as "perfect," which is best understood here as "complete." This law needs no alteration in part or in whole. It has power to bring deep and radical change in the inner life or soul. It is God's great instrument in conversion (James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23). The Word of God is spoken of as God's "testimony" because it is His own instruction concerning His person and purpose. In Scripture, God testifies concerning Himself, His Son, and sinners. God's Word is sure (2 Pet. 1:19), and may be trusted because He is faithful (1 Tim. 1:15). To those wise in their own eyes, the truth of God is hidden (Matt. 11:25), but to the simple the Scriptures give wisdom that leads to salvation (2 Tim. 3:15).

18:41 [f] Job 27:9 **18:42** [g] Zech. 10:5 **18:43** [h] 2 Sam. 8 [i] Is. 52:15 **18:45** [j] Mic. 7:17 **18:47** [k] Ps. 47:3 **18:48** [l] Ps. 27:6; 59:1 **18:49** [m] Rom. 15:9 **18:50** [n] Ps. 21:1; 144:10 **19:1** [a] Is. 40:22 [b] Gen. 1:6, 7 **19:4** [c] Rom. 10:18 **19:5** [d] Eccl. 1:5 **19:7** [e] Ps. 111:7 [f] Ps. 119:130 **19:10** [g] Ps. 119:72, 127 **19:12** [h] [Ps. 51:1, 2]

13 Keep back Your servant also from
[i]presumptuous *sins;*
Let them not have [j]dominion over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of great
transgression.

14 [k]Let the words of my mouth and the
meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O LORD, my strength and my
[l]Redeemer.

Psalm 20

The Assurance of God's Saving Work

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 May the LORD answer you in the day
of trouble;
May the name of the God of Jacob
defend you;
2 May He send you help from the
sanctuary,
And strengthen you out of Zion;
3 May He remember all your offerings,
And accept your burnt sacrifice. *Selah*

4 May He grant you according to your
heart's *desire,*
And [a]fulfill all your purpose.
5 We will rejoice in your salvation,
And in the name of our God we will
set up *our* banners!
May the LORD fulfill all your
petitions.

6 Now I know that the LORD saves His
anointed;
He will answer him from His holy
heaven
With the saving strength of His right
hand.

7 Some *trust* in chariots, and some in
[b]horses;
But we will remember the name of the
LORD our God.
8 They have bowed down and fallen;
But we have risen and stand upright.

9 Save, LORD!
May the King answer us when we call.

Psalm 21

Joy in the Salvation of the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 The king shall have joy in Your
strength, O LORD;
And in Your salvation how greatly
shall he rejoice!
2 You have given him his heart's desire,
And have not withheld the [a]request of
his lips. *Selah*

3 For You meet him with the blessings of
goodness;
You set a crown of pure gold upon his
head.
4 [b]He asked life from You, *and* You gave
it to him—
Length of days forever and ever.
5 His glory *is* great in Your salvation;
Honor and majesty You have placed
upon him.
6 For You have made him most blessed
forever;
[c]You have made him exceedingly glad
with Your presence.
7 For the king trusts in the LORD,
And through the mercy of the Most
High he shall not be moved.

8 Your hand will find all Your enemies;
Your right hand will find those who
hate You.
9 You shall make them as a fiery oven in
the time of Your anger;
The LORD shall swallow them up in
His wrath,
And the fire shall devour them.
10 Their offspring You shall destroy from
the earth,
And their descendants from among
the sons of men.
11 For they intended evil against You;
They devised a plot *which* they are not
able *to* [d]*perform.*
12 Therefore You will make them turn
their back;
You will make ready *Your arrows* on
Your string toward their faces.

13 Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own
strength!
We will sing and praise Your power.

19:14 ***my Redeemer.*** God is the One who purchases our freedom from any bondage or slavery. The principal meaning of the word is "defender of family rights."
20:5 ***salvation.*** In the immediate context, salvation is used to describe daily deliverance from the rigors of the battle and the victory over the enemy. But the Lord's deliverance of us from our spiritual troubles should prompt the same type of praise.
20:6 ***His right hand.*** This is a slogan that describes God's powerful deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt (17:7; 44:3; 118:16; Ex. 15:6).
21:2 ***his heart's desire.*** The Lord gives people their aspirations when they are derived from a fundamental desire for God's honor and glory (20:4; 37:4; 145:19).
21:9 ***the time of Your anger.*** This may refer to any period of God's judgment, but compare to "the day of the LORD" (Joel 2:1; Zeph. 1:14).

19:13 [i] Num. 15:30 [j] Ps. 119:133 **19:14** [k] Ps. 51:15 [l] Is. 47:4 **20:4** [a] Ps. 21:2 **20:7** [b] Ps. 33:16, 17 **21:2** [a] 2 Sam. 7:26–29 **21:4** [b] Ps. 61:5, 6; 133:3 **21:6** [c] Ps. 16:11; 45:7 **21:11** [d] Ps. 2:1–4

Psalm 22

The Suffering, Praise, and Posterity of the Messiah

To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Deer of the Dawn."* A Psalm of David.

1 My [a]God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?
Why are You so far from helping Me,
And from the words of My groaning?
2 O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;
And in the night season, and am not silent.

3 But You *are* holy,
Enthroned in the [b]praises of Israel.
4 Our fathers trusted in You;
They trusted, and You delivered them.
5 They cried to You, and were delivered;
[c]They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

6 But I *am* [d]a worm, and no man;
[e]A reproach of men, and despised by the people.
7 [f]All those who see Me ridicule Me;
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying,*
8 "He[g] trusted* in the LORD, let Him rescue Him;
[h]Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

9 [i]But You *are* He who took Me out of the womb;
You made Me trust *while* on My mother's breasts.
10 I was cast upon You from birth.
From My mother's womb
[j]You *have been* My God.
11 Be not far from Me,
For trouble *is* near;
For *there is* none to help.

12 [k]Many bulls have surrounded Me;
Strong *bulls* of [l]Bashan have encircled Me.
13 [m]They gape at Me *with* their mouths,
Like a raging and roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water,
[n]And all My bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
It has melted within Me.
15 [o]My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
And [p]My tongue clings to My jaws;
You have brought Me to the dust of death.

16 For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
[q]They pierced* My hands and My feet;
17 I can count all My bones.
[r]They look *and* stare at Me.
18 [s]They divide My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.

19 But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me;
O My Strength, hasten to help Me!
20 Deliver Me from the sword,
[t]My precious *life* from the power of the dog.
21 [u]Save Me from the lion's mouth
And from the horns of the wild oxen!

[v]You have answered Me.

22 [w]I will declare Your name to [x]My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
23 [y]You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!
24 For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;
But [z]when He cried to Him, He heard.

25 [a]My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;
[b]I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.

* **22:title** Hebrew *Aijeleth Hashahar* * **22:8** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *hoped;* Targum reads *praised.* * **22:16** Following some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *Like a lion.*

22:1 ***My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*** David used these words to express a painful sense of separation from God at a time of great trouble (38:21). These were the very words used by Christ while in agony on the cross (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34).
22:6 ***despised by the people.*** When David was at his lowest, his enemies ridiculed his faith in the Lord. These words also describe the experience of the Savior who endured the verbal abuse of His tormentors (Matt. 27:27–31,39–44).
22:15 ***My tongue clings to My jaws.*** Jesus' words "I thirst" (John 19:28) also expressed the pain of terrible thirst.
22:16 ***they pierced My hands and My feet.*** This verse explicitly predicts the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words were a figure of speech for David, but they were literally true for Jesus.
22:18 ***for My clothing they cast lots.*** This text was directly fulfilled by the soldiers who gambled at the

22:1 [a] [Mark 15:34] **22:3** [b] Deut. 10:21 **22:5** [c] Is. 49:23 **22:6** [d] Is. 41:14 [e] [Is. 53:3] **22:7** [f] Matt. 27:39 **22:8** [g] Matt. 27:43 [h] Ps. 91:14 **22:9** [i] [Ps. 71:5, 6] **22:10** [j] [Is. 46:3; 49:1] **22:12** [k] Ps. 22:21; 68:30 [l] Deut. 32:14 **22:13** [m] Job 16:10 **22:14** [n] Dan. 5:6 **22:15** [o] Prov. 17:22 [p] John 19:28 **22:16** [q] Matt. 27:35 **22:17** [r] Luke 23:27, 35 **22:18** [s] Matt. 27:35 **22:20** [t] Ps. 35:17 **22:21** [u] 2 Tim. 4:17 [v] Is. 34:7 **22:22** [w] Heb. 2:12 [x] [Rom. 8:29] **22:23** [y] Ps. 135:19, 20 **22:24** [z] Heb. 5:7 **22:25** [a] Ps. 35:18; 40:9, 10 [b] Eccl. 5:4

26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.
Let your heart live forever!

27 All the ends of the world
Shall remember and turn to the LORD,
And all the families of the nations
Shall worship before You.*
28 [c]For the kingdom *is* the LORD's,
And He rules over the nations.

29 [d]All the prosperous of the earth
Shall eat and worship;
[e]All those who go down to the dust
Shall bow before Him,
Even he who cannot keep himself alive.

30 A posterity shall serve Him.
It will be recounted of the Lord to the *next* generation,
31 They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,
That He has done *this*.

Psalm 23

The LORD the Shepherd of His People

A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD *is* [a]my shepherd;
[b]I shall not want.
2 [c]He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
[d]He leads me beside the still waters.
3 He restores my soul;
[e]He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of [f]the shadow of death,
[g]I will fear no evil;
[h]For You *are* with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

5 You [i]prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You [j]anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell* in the house of the LORD
Forever.

Psalm 24

The King of Glory and His Kingdom

A Psalm of David.

1 The [a]earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.
2 For He has [b]founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the waters.

3 [c]Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?
Or who may stand in His holy place?
4 He who has [d]clean hands and [e]a pure heart,

* **22:27** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Targum; Arabic, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Him*.
* **23:6** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *return*.

foot of the cross for the possession of Jesus' robe (Matt. 27:35).

22:27 *all the families of the nations.* This is speaking of the eventual spread of the gospel of redemption to the whole world, fulfilling God's promise to bless all nations through Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12:3).

23:1 *The LORD is my shepherd.* Even though the word "king" does not appear in it, this psalm is a description of what it means to be a good ruler. Moreover, the psalm prophetically speaks of Jesus. He is the Good Shepherd whose flock trusts in Him (John 10:1–18) and the King whose perfect rule will be established (Luke 23:2–3).

23:4 *the valley of the shadow of death.* The awareness of our own mortality often comes with sickness, trials, and hardship. But the Lord our protector can lead us through these dark and difficult valleys to eternal life with Him. There is no need to fear death's power (1 Cor. 15:25–27). Our Lord has already traveled this road and come through the valley of darkness. Because He lives, we too shall live. Death is not our final destiny.

23:6 *the house of the LORD forever.* God's promise for the Israelites was not just for the enjoyment of this life in the land of promise; it was also for the full enjoyment of the life to come in His presence (16:9–11; 17:15; 49:15).

24:1 Affirming God's Ownership of the World— Whose world is this anyway? David, of course, who lived in the hills with the animals, had a firm answer. It is God's world. This statement should shape our thinking about a great deal of life. We should have a heightened sense of stewardship to care for God's creation. We should look to God more to understand what is important and what is not important. Seeing God's creation every day should help make praise and thanksgiving a way of life. It should also help us desire to understand God's redemptive acts in history and in our lives.

24:4 *clean hands and a pure heart.* God looks at a person's actions and also at the attitudes of the heart.

22:28 [c] Matt. 6:13 **22:29** [d] Ps. 17:10; 45:12 [e] [Is. 26:19]
23:1 [a] [Is. 40:11] [b] [Phil. 4:19] **23:2** [c] Ezek. 34:14 [d] [Rev. 7:17] **23:3** [e] Ps. 5:8; 31:3 **23:4** [f] Job 3:5; 10:21, 22; 24:17 [g] [Ps. 3:6; 27:1] [h] [Is. 43:2] **23:5** [i] Ps. 104:15 [j] Ps. 92:10
24:1 [a] 1 Cor. 10:26, 28 **24:2** [b] Ps. 89:11 **24:3** [c] Ps. 15:1–5 **24:4** [d] [Job 17:9] [e] [Matt. 5:8]

Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,
Nor [f]sworn deceitfully.
5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
6 This *is* Jacob, the generation of those who [g]seek Him,
Who seek Your face. *Selah*

7 [h]Lift up your heads, O you gates!
And be lifted up, you everlasting doors!
[i]And the King of glory shall come in.
8 Who *is* this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in [j]battle.
9 Lift up your heads, O you gates!
Lift up, you everlasting doors!
And the King of glory shall come in.
10 Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
He *is* the King of glory. *Selah*

Psalm 25

A Plea for Deliverance and Forgiveness

A Psalm of David.

1 To [a]You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
2 O my God, I [b]trust in You;
Let me not be ashamed;
[c]Let not my enemies triumph over me.
3 Indeed, let no one who waits on You be ashamed;
Let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause.

4 [d]Show me Your ways, O LORD;
Teach me Your paths.
5 Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You *are* the God of my salvation;
On You I wait all the day.

6 Remember, O LORD, [e]Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses,
For they *are* from of old.

7 Do not remember [f]the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions;
[g]According to Your mercy remember me,
For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 Good and upright *is* the LORD;
Therefore He teaches sinners in the way.
9 The humble He guides in justice,
And the humble He teaches His way.
10 All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth,
To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.
11 [h]For Your name's sake, O LORD,
Pardon my iniquity, for it *is* great.

12 Who *is* the man that fears the LORD?
[i]Him shall He* teach in the way He* chooses.
13 [j]He himself shall dwell in prosperity,
And [k]his descendants shall inherit the earth.
14 [l]The secret of the LORD *is* with those who fear Him,
And He will show them His covenant.
15 [m]My eyes *are* ever toward the LORD,
For He shall pluck my feet out of the net.

16 [n]Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me,
For I *am* desolate and afflicted.
17 The troubles of my heart have enlarged;
Bring me out of my distresses!
18 [o]Look on my affliction and my pain,
And forgive all my sins.
19 Consider my enemies, for they are many;
And they hate me with cruel hatred.
20 Keep my soul, and deliver me;
Let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You.
21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,
For I wait for You.

22 [p]Redeem Israel, O God,
Out of all their troubles!

* **25:12** Or *he* • Or *he*

24:9 ***And the King of glory shall come in.*** When Jesus came, the meaning of this ancient poem became clear (Matt. 21:1–10; Rev. 19:11–16).
25:3 ***who waits on You.*** Waiting on the Lord is the equivalent of hoping in Him (25:5; 40:1).
25:7 ***sins of my youth.*** Both the sins of immaturity and the transgressions of adulthood need forgiveness (1 John 1:9).
25:14 ***with those who fear Him.*** Those who fear the Lord pay attention to His instructions and thus learn the secrets of God's wisdom (111:10; Prov. 1:7; 3:32).
25:19 ***they hate me.*** This psalm is a prayer for forgiveness, instruction, and protection from the forces of darkness which are oppressing the writer. His most prominent trial is hostility from enemies. The animosity which the psalmist encountered was not primarily personal, but was the result of his identification with God's cause. Therefore, he could ask the Lord to look upon him and vindicate him in the face of his afflictions. The writer's suffering had its roots in the origins of redemptive history (Gen. 3:15)—there

24:4 [f] Ps. 15:4 **24:6** [g] Ps. 27:4, 8 **24:7** [h] Is. 26:2 [i] Ps. 29:2, 9; 97:6 **24:8** [j] Rev. 19:13–16 **25:1** [a] Ps. 86:4; 143:8 **25:2** [b] Ps. 34:8 [c] Ps. 13:4; 41:11 **25:4** [d] Ex. 33:13 **25:6** [e] Ps. 103:17; 106:1 **25:7** [f] [Jer. 3:25] [g] Ps. 51:1 **25:11** [h] Ps. 31:3; 79:9; 109:21; 143:11 **25:12** [i] [Ps. 25:8; 37:23] **25:13** [j] [Prov. 19:23] [k] Matt. 5:5 **25:14** [l] [John 7:17] **25:15** [m] [Ps. 123:2; 141:8] **25:16** [n] Ps. 69:16 **25:18** [o] 2 Sam. 16:12 **25:22** [p] [Ps. 130:8]

Psalm 26

A Prayer for Divine Scrutiny and Redemption

A Psalm of David.

1 Vindicate [a]me, O LORD,
For I have [b]walked in my integrity.
[c]I have also trusted in the LORD;
I shall not slip.
2 [d]Examine me, O LORD, and prove me;
Try my mind and my heart.
3 For Your lovingkindness *is* before my eyes,
And [e]I have walked in Your truth.
4 I have not [f]sat with idolatrous mortals,
Nor will I go in with hypocrites.
5 I have [g]hated the assembly of evildoers,
And will not sit with the wicked.
6 I will wash my hands in innocence;
So I will go about Your altar, O LORD,
7 That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving,
And tell of all Your wondrous works.
8 LORD, [h]I have loved the habitation of Your house,
And the place where Your glory dwells.
9 [i]Do not gather my soul with sinners,
Nor my life with bloodthirsty men,
10 In whose hands *is* a sinister scheme,
And whose right hand is full of [j]bribes.
11 But as for me, I will walk in my integrity;
Redeem me and be merciful to me.
12 [k]My foot stands in an even place;
In the congregations I will bless the LORD.

Psalm 27

An Exuberant Declaration of Faith

A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD *is* my [a]light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The [b]LORD *is* the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
2 When the wicked came against me
To [c]eat up my flesh,
My enemies and foes,
They stumbled and fell.
3 [d]Though an army may encamp against me,
My heart shall not fear;
Though war may rise against me,
In this I *will be* confident.
4 [e]One *thing* I have desired of the LORD,
That will I seek:
That I may [f]dwell in the house of the LORD
All the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the LORD,
And to inquire in His temple.
5 For [g]in the time of trouble
He shall hide me in His pavilion;
In the secret place of His tabernacle
He shall hide me;
He shall [h]set me high upon a rock.
6 And now [i]my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me;
Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.
7 Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice!
Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
8 *When You said,* "Seek My face,"
My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek."
9 [j]Do not hide Your face from me;
Do not turn Your servant away in anger;
You have been my help;
Do not leave me nor forsake me,
O God of my salvation.
10 [k]When my father and my mother forsake me,
Then the LORD will take care of me.
11 [l]Teach me Your way, O LORD,
And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.
12 Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries;
For [m]false witnesses have risen against me,
And such as breathe out violence.

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would be enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between the godly and the ungodly. Jesus also reminded His disciples that hatred directed against His servants on His account was to be expected (John 15:18–20).

26:3 ***Your lovingkindness.*** The loyal love (13:5) of God is the recurring focus of the Book of Psalms.

26:9 ***Do not gather my soul.*** On the basis of his protests of integrity (vv. 1–2), David prays for divine discrimination (4:3). God distinguishes those who have responded to His grace from those who have not.

27:6 ***sacrifices of joy.*** These are praise offerings that the believers bring to God to celebrate the blessings He gives them (Heb. 13:15).

26:1 [a] Ps. 7:8 [b] 2 Kin. 20:3 [c] [Ps. 13:5; 28:7] **26:2** [d] Ps. 17:3; 139:23 **26:3** [e] 2 Kin. 20:3 **26:4** [f] Ps. 1:1 **26:5** [g] Ps. 31:6; 139:21 **26:8** [h] Ps. 27:4; 84:1–4, 10 **26:9** [i] Ps. 28:3 **26:10** [j] 1 Sam. 8:3 **26:12** [k] Ps. 40:2 **27:1** [a] [Mic. 7:8] [b] Ps. 62:7; 118:14 **27:2** [c] Ps. 14:4 **27:3** [d] Ps. 3:6 **27:4** [e] Ps. 26:8; 65:4 [f] Luke 2:37 **27:5** [g] Ps. 31:20; 91:1 [h] Ps. 40:2 **27:6** [i] Ps. 3:3 **27:9** [j] Ps. 69:17; 143:7 **27:10** [k] Is. 49:15 **27:11** [l] Ps. 25:4; 86:11; 119:33 **27:12** [m] Ps. 35:11

13 *I would have lost heart,* unless I had believed
That I would see the goodness of the LORD
[n]In the land of the living.

14 [o]Wait on the LORD;
Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, on the LORD!

Psalm 28

Rejoicing in Answered Prayer

A Psalm of David.

1 To You I will cry, O LORD my Rock:
[a]Do not be silent to me,
[b]Lest, if You *are* silent to me,
I become like those who go down to the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications
When I cry to You,
[c]When I lift up my hands [d]toward Your holy sanctuary.

3 Do not take me away with the wicked
And with the workers of iniquity,
[e]Who speak peace to their neighbors,
But evil *is* in their hearts.

4 [f]Give them according to their deeds,
And according to the wickedness of their endeavors;
Give them according to the work of their hands;
Render to them what they deserve.

5 Because [g]they do not regard the works of the LORD,
Nor the operation of His hands,
He shall destroy them
And not build them up.

6 Blessed *be* the LORD,
Because He has heard the voice of my supplications!

7 The LORD *is* [h]my strength and my shield;
My heart [i]trusted in Him, and I am helped;
Therefore my heart greatly rejoices,
And with my song I will praise Him.

8 The LORD *is* their strength,*
And He *is* the [j]saving refuge of His anointed.

9 Save Your people,
And bless [k]Your inheritance;
Shepherd them also,
[l]And bear them up forever.

Psalm 29

Praise to God in His Holiness and Majesty

A Psalm of David.

1 Give [a]unto the LORD, O you mighty ones,
Give unto the LORD glory and strength.

2 Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name;
Worship the LORD in [b]the beauty of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD *is* over the waters;
[c]The God of glory thunders;
The LORD *is* over many waters.

* **28:8** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *the strength of His people.*

27:14 ***Wait on the LORD.*** To wait for the Lord is to demonstrate confident expectation. The Hebrew word for "wait" may also be translated "hope." To hope in God is to wait for His timing and His action (40:1; Is. 40:31).
28:1 ***the pit.*** This is one of the terms for death in the Psalms (55:23; 143:7).
28:5 ***they do not regard.*** The language here is similar to that of Paul in Romans 1:18–32. One day even the wicked will have to acknowledge God as their Creator and give Him the glory He deserves.
28:8 ***His anointed.*** This term acknowledges God's covenant with David, His promise that He would be David's God and David would be His representative. This passage became a heritage of the monarchy, a treasure for each godly king in the Davidic line to go back to for strength and encouragement.
29:1 ***O you mighty ones.*** This means "O sons of gods." This Hebrew phrase refers to spiritual beings who are in the presence of God (see Job 1:6).
29:2 Worship by Israel—The central aspect of Israel's worship was the object of their worship, the Lord. While other nations paid homage to many gods, including inanimate objects such as trees and stones, Israel worshiped the one true God. This worship could be private, as a family, or corporate as a congregation.

Israel's worship occurred in many different contexts and many different elements. It included offering sacrifices (1 Sam. 1:3), adopting a reverent posture (2 Chr. 7:6), verbal praise—either spoken (1 Chr. 16:7) or sung (Ps. 57:7), instrumental praise (Ps. 150:3–5), prayer (2 Chr. 6:14–42), and the great feasts (Lev. 23; 25).

The first place of worship for the people of Israel was the tabernacle constructed by Moses (Ex. 25; 27; 30–31; 35; 40). Solomon's temple in Jerusalem became the permanent place for the central worship of the whole nation when it was completed. The New Testament teaching is that there is no limitation on location for worship. Access to God is direct and immediate (1 Cor. 6:19).

27:13 [n] Ezek. 26:20 **27:14** [o] Is. 25:9 **28:1** [a] Ps. 35:22; 39:12; 83:1 [b] Ps. 88:4; 143:7 **28:2** [c] Ps. 5:7 [d] Ps. 138:2 **28:3** [e] Ps. 12:2; 55:21; 62:4 **28:4** [f] [Rev. 18:6; 22:12] **28:5** [g] Is. 5:12 **28:7** [h] Ps. 18:2; 59:17 [i] Ps. 13:5; 112:7 **28:8** [j] Ps. 20:6 **28:9** [k] [Deut. 9:29; 32:9] [l] Deut. 1:31 **29:1** [a] 1 Chr. 16:28, 29 **29:2** [b] 2 Chr. 20:21 **29:3** [c] [Job 37:4, 5]

4 The voice of the LORD *is* powerful;
The voice of the LORD *is* full of majesty.
5 The voice of the LORD breaks [d]the cedars,
Yes, the LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon.
6 [e]He makes them also skip like a calf,
Lebanon and [f]Sirion like a young wild ox.
7 The voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire.
8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
The LORD shakes the Wilderness of [g]Kadesh.
9 The voice of the LORD makes the [h]deer give birth,
And strips the forests bare;
And in His temple everyone says, "Glory!"
10 The [i]LORD sat *enthroned* at the Flood,
And [j]the LORD sits as King forever.
11 [k]The LORD will give strength to His people;
The LORD will bless His people with peace.

Psalm 30

The Blessedness of Answered Prayer

A Psalm. A Song [a]at the dedication of the house of David.

1 I will extol You, O LORD, for You have [b]lifted me up,
And have not let my foes [c]rejoice over me.
2 O LORD my God, I cried out to You,
And You [d]healed me.
3 O LORD, [e]You brought my soul up from the grave;
You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.*
4 [f]Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.*
5 For [g]His anger *is but for* a moment,
[h]His favor *is for* life;
Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy *comes* in the morning.
6 Now in my prosperity I said,
"I shall never be moved."
7 LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong;
[i]You hid Your face, *and* I was troubled.
8 I cried out to You, O LORD;
And to the LORD I made supplication:
9 "What profit *is there* in my blood,
When I go down to the pit?
[j]Will the dust praise You?
Will it declare Your truth?
10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me;
LORD, be my helper!"
11 [k]You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
12 To the end that *my* glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

Psalm 31

The LORD a Fortress in Adversity

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 In [a]You, O LORD, I put my trust;
Let me never be ashamed;
Deliver me in Your righteousness.
2 [b]Bow down Your ear to me,
Deliver me speedily;
Be my rock of refuge,
A fortress of defense to save me.
3 [c]For You *are* my rock and my fortress;
Therefore, [d]for Your name's sake,
Lead me and guide me.
4 Pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me,
For You *are* my strength.

* **30:3** Following Qere and Targum; Kethib, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *from those who descend to the pit.* * **30:4** Or *His holiness*

29:6 ***Sirion.*** This was an ancient name for Mount Hermon (Deut. 3:9).
29:10 ***at the Flood.*** God is the true victor over all. He even controlled the waters at the height of their destructive power during the flood.
30:3 ***from the grave.*** David is not reporting a resurrection, but a deliverance from a nearly fatal illness. As in 28:1, the psalmist describes death as a great pit into which a person drops into the enveloping darkness of the unknown.
30:10 ***my helper.*** "Helper" can also be translated "power" or "strength" (33:20). Jesus promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would be their Helper (John 14:16).
31:1 ***I put my trust.*** This is a psalm of lament, yet David expresses deep trust in God in spite of his afflictions.

29:5 [d] Is. 2:13; 14:8 **29:6** [e] Ps. 114:4 [f] Deut. 3:9 **29:8** [g] Num. 13:26 **29:9** [h] Job 39:1 **29:10** [i] Gen. 6:17 [j] Ps. 10:16 **29:11** [k] Ps. 28:8; 68:35 **30:title** [a] Deut. 20:5 **30:1** [b] Ps. 28:9 [c] Ps. 25:2 **30:2** [d] Ps. 6:2; 103:3 **30:3** [e] Ps. 86:13 **30:4** [f] Ps. 97:12 **30:5** [g] Ps. 103:9 [h] Ps. 63:3 **30:7** [i] [Ps. 104:29; 143:7] **30:9** [j] [Ps. 6:5] **30:11** [k] Jer. 31:4 **31:1** [a] Ps. 22:5 **31:2** [b] Ps. 17:6; 71:2; 86:1; 102:2 **31:3** [c] [Ps. 18:2] [d] Ps. 23:3; 25:11

5 [e]Into Your hand I commit my spirit;
You have redeemed me, O LORD God of [f]truth.

6 I have hated those [g]who regard useless idols;
But I trust in the LORD.
7 I will be glad and rejoice in Your mercy,
For You have considered my trouble;
You have [h]known my soul in adversities,
8 And have not [i]shut me up into the hand of the enemy;
[j]You have set my feet in a wide place.

9 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble;
[k]My eye wastes away with grief,
Yes, my soul and my body!
10 For my life is spent with grief,
And my years with sighing;
My strength fails because of my iniquity,
And my bones waste away.
11 [l]I am a reproach among all my enemies,
But [m]especially among my neighbors,
And *am* repulsive to my acquaintances;
[n]Those who see me outside flee from me.
12 [o]I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind;
I am like a broken vessel.
13 [p]For I hear the slander of many;
[q]Fear *is* on every side;
While they [r]take counsel together against me,
They scheme to take away my life.

14 But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD;
I say, "You *are* my God."
15 My times *are* in Your [s]hand;
Deliver me from the hand of my enemies,
And from those who persecute me.
16 [t]Make Your face shine upon Your servant;
Save me for Your mercies' sake.
17 [u]Do not let me be ashamed, O LORD, for I have called upon You;
Let the wicked be ashamed;
[v]Let them be silent in the grave.

18 [w]Let the lying lips be put to silence,
Which [x]speak insolent things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

19 [y]Oh, how great *is* Your goodness,
Which You have laid up for those who fear You,
Which You have prepared for those who trust in You
In the presence of the sons of men!
20 [z]You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence
From the plots of man;
[a]You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion
From the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed *be* the LORD,
For [b]He has shown me His marvelous kindness in a strong city!
22 For I said in my haste,
"I am cut off from before Your eyes";
Nevertheless You heard the voice of my supplications
When I cried out to You.

23 Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints!
For the LORD preserves the faithful,
And fully repays the proud person.
24 [c]Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart,
All you who hope in the LORD.

Psalm 32

The Joy of Forgiveness

A Psalm of David. A Contemplation.*

1 Blessed *is he whose* [a]transgression *is* forgiven,
Whose sin *is* covered.
2 Blessed *is* the man to whom the LORD [b]does not impute iniquity,
And [c]in whose spirit *there is* no deceit.

3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old
Through my groaning all the day long.

* **32:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

31:5 ***Into Your hand I commit my spirit.*** With these words, David expressed his complete dependence on God. These very words were spoken by Jesus on the cross shortly before His death (Luke 23:46), and by Stephen when he was stoned (Acts 7:59).

31:15 ***My times are in Your hand.*** Even when we cannot understand the "why," we can trust that God is in control of when each life begins and ends, and also of our times of suffering.

31:22 ***I said in my haste.*** The psalmist's emotional response was to accuse God of abandoning him instead of asking for help, yet God still answered his true need.

32:1 ***Blessed.*** "Blessed" means "happy." It is appropriate that this word is used both of the righteous (1:1) and of the forgiven.

32:3 ***kept silent.*** When we refuse to admit our sin, we will suffer. David realized that it was not just his feelings that were assaulting him, but the heavy hand of God (38:1,6–8). No matter who else is hurt, the principal offense of any sin is always against the Lord.

31:5 [e] Luke 23:46 [f] [Deut. 32:4] **31:6** [g] Jon. 2:8 **31:7** [h] [John 10:27] **31:8** [i] [Deut. 32:30] [j] [Ps. 4:1; 18:19] **31:9** [k] Ps. 6:7 **31:11** [l] [Is. 53:4] [m] Job 19:13 [n] Ps. 64:8 **31:12** [o] Ps. 88:4, 5 **31:13** [p] Jer. 20:10 [q] Lam. 2:22 [r] Matt. 27:1 **31:15** [s] [Job 14:5; 24:1] **31:16** [t] Ps. 4:6; 80:3 **31:17** [u] Ps. 25:2, 20 [v] Ps. 94:17; 115:17 **31:18** [w] Ps. 109:2; 120:2 [x] Ps. 94:4 **31:19** [y] [Rom. 2:4; 11:22] **31:20** [z] [Ps. 27:5; 32:7] [a] Job 5:21 **31:21** [b] [Ps. 17:7] **31:24** [c] [Ps. 27:14] **32:1** [a] [Ps. 85:2; 103:3] **32:2** [b] [2 Cor. 5:19] [c] John 1:47

4 For day and night Your [d]hand was
heavy upon me;
My vitality was turned into the
drought of summer. *Selah*
5 I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I have not hidden.
[e]I said, "I will confess my
transgressions to the LORD,"
And You forgave the iniquity of my
sin. *Selah*

6 [f]For this cause everyone who is godly
shall [g]pray to You
In a time when You may be found;
Surely in a flood of great waters
They shall not come near him.
7 [h]You *are* my hiding place;
You shall preserve me from trouble;
You shall surround me with [i]songs of
deliverance. *Selah*

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the
way you should go;
I will guide you with My eye.
9 Do not be like the [j]horse *or* like the
mule,
Which have no understanding,
Which must be harnessed with bit and
bridle,
Else they will not come near you.

10 [k]Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked;
But [l]he who trusts in the LORD, mercy
shall surround him.
11 [m]Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you
righteous;
And shout for joy, all *you* upright in
heart!

Psalm 33

The Sovereignty of the LORD in Creation and History

1 Rejoice [a]in the LORD, O you righteous!
For praise from the upright is
beautiful.
2 Praise the LORD with the harp;
Make melody to Him with an
instrument of ten strings.
3 Sing to Him a new song;
Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

4 For the word of the LORD *is* right,
And all His work *is done* in truth.
5 He loves righteousness and justice;
The earth is full of the goodness of the
LORD.

6 [b]By the word of the LORD the heavens
were made,
And all the [c]host of them [d]by the
breath of His mouth.
7 [e]He gathers the waters of the sea
together as a heap;*
He lays up the deep in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD;
Let all the inhabitants of the world
stand in awe of Him.
9 For [f]He spoke, and it was *done;*
He commanded, and it stood fast.

10 [g]The LORD brings the counsel of the
nations to nothing;
He makes the plans of the peoples of
no effect.
11 [h]The counsel of the LORD stands
forever,
The plans of His heart to all
generations.
12 Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the
LORD,
The people He has [i]chosen as His own
inheritance.

13 [j]The LORD looks from heaven;
He sees all the sons of men.
14 From the place of His dwelling He
looks
On all the inhabitants of the earth;
15 He fashions their hearts individually;
[k]He considers all their works.

* **33:7** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *in a vessel.*

32:5 What Should Be Done About Sin—There are only two things that the believer should do about his sin: confess it and forsake it. He should never condone or attempt to excuse his sin. Here David confesses his sin and experiences forgiveness. Similarly 1 John 1:9 makes the same point. When the believer confesses his sin, he has the assurance that God "is faithful" (He can be counted on to keep His word) and "just" (He is just in dealing with our sins because He paid the price for them) "to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God is able to cleanse us completely from anything that is inconsistent with His own moral character. Having received forgiveness and cleansing, the believer is to forsake his sin and yield himself completely to God. In so doing, the believer is restored to full fellowship with God.

32:9 *bit and bridle, else they will not come near you.* God does not want to drive His people with rules and regulations, the "bit and bridle" of righteousness. Rather, He wants His people to follow Him willingly, that they desire above all to please Him, not just to appease Him.

33:5 *the earth is full.* In spite of the fallen nature of our world, much of the creation remains as it was in the beginning: "very good" (Gen. 1:31). We do have to deal with evil, but every time we see the goodness of God's creation we should rejoice.

33:9 *He spoke, and it was done.* The creation account in Genesis 1 describes God's spoken word as the controlling element in creation; John 1 shows that Word to be Jesus Christ, God's Son.

33:15 *He fashions their hearts . . . He considers.*

32:4 [d] 1 Sam. 5:6 **32:5** [e] [Prov. 28:13] **32:6** [f] [1 Tim. 1:16] [g] Is. 55:6 **32:7** [h] Ps. 9:9 [i] Ex. 15:1 **32:9** [j] Prov. 26:3 **32:10** [k] [Rom. 2:9] [l] Prov. 16:20 **32:11** [m] Ps. 64:10; 68:3; 97:12 **33:1** [a] Ps. 32:11; 97:12 **33:6** [b] [Heb. 11:3] [c] Gen. 2:1 [d] [Job 26:13] **33:7** [e] Job 26:10; 38:8 **33:9** [f] Gen. 1:3 **33:10** [g] Is. 8:10; 19:3 **33:11** [h] [Job 23:13] **33:12** [i] [Ex. 19:5] **33:13** [j] Job 28:24 **33:15** [k] [Jer. 32:19]

16 [l]No king *is* saved by the multitude of an
army;
A mighty man is not delivered by
great strength.
17 [m]A horse *is* a vain hope for safety;
Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great
strength.

18 [n]Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* on those
who fear Him,
On those who hope in His mercy,
19 To deliver their soul from death,
And [o]to keep them alive in famine.

20 Our soul waits for the LORD;
He *is* our help and our shield.
21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy
name.
22 Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us,
Just as we hope in You.

Psalm 34

The Happiness of Those Who Trust in God

A Psalm of David [a]when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.

1 I will [b]bless the LORD at all times;
His praise *shall* continually *be* in my
mouth.
2 My soul shall make its boast in the
LORD;
The humble shall hear *of it* and be
glad.
3 Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
And let us exalt His name together.

4 I [c]sought the LORD, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
5 They looked to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.
6 This poor man cried out, and the LORD
heard *him*,
And saved him out of all his troubles.

7 [d]The angel* of the LORD [e]encamps all
around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.

8 Oh, [f]taste and see that the LORD *is*
good;
[g]Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in
Him!
9 Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints!
There is no want to those who fear
Him.
10 The young lions lack and suffer
hunger;
[h]But those who seek the LORD shall not
lack any good *thing*.

11 Come, you children, listen to me;
[i]I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
12 [j]Who *is* the man *who* desires life,
And loves *many* days, that he may see
good?
13 Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking [k]deceit.
14 [l]Depart from evil and do good;
[m]Seek peace and pursue it.

15 [n]The eyes of the LORD *are* on the
righteous,
And His ears *are open* to their cry.
16 [o]The face of the LORD *is* against those
who do evil,
[p]To cut off the remembrance of them
from the earth.

17 *The righteous* cry out, and [q]the LORD
hears,
And delivers them out of all their
troubles.
18 [r]The LORD *is* near [s]to those who have a
broken heart,
And saves such as have a contrite
spirit.

19 [t]Many *are* the afflictions of the
righteous,
[u]But the LORD delivers him out of them
all.
20 He guards all his bones;
[v]Not one of them is broken.

* **34:7** Or *Angel*

When we are troubled and weary and suffering, we can never say that God does not notice or understand. He made us carefully, and He continues to watch over all that we do.

33:18 *hope.* Those who hoped for the Lord's lovingkindness were looking forward in faith to the promised redemption, the ultimate fulfillment of the covenants, just as believers today who have the same hope, based on faith in Christ's finished work of redemption.

34:1 *at all times.* The determination of David to praise God is similar to the words of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:18. The story behind this psalm may be found in 1 Samuel 21:10–15.

34:7 *The angel of the LORD.* This term is often used interchangeably with the name of God (Ex. 3). When we realize that God Himself is watching over us, there is no need to fear.

34:9 *Oh, fear the LORD.* This is a call to awe, wonder, worship, and reverence (Prov. 1:7). To fear God is to respond to Him in obedience.

34:20 *guards all his bones.* John 19:33–36 shows that the words of this verse were fulfilled in detail in the death of Jesus. Despite the terrible suffering that the Savior endured, none of His bones were broken.

33:16 [l] Ps. 44:6; 60:11 **33:17** [m] Prov. 21:31] **33:18** [n] Job 36:7] **33:19** [o] Job 5:20 **34:title** [a] 1 Sam. 21:10–15 **34:1** [b] Eph. 5:20] **34:4** [c] Matt. 7:7] **34:7** [d] Dan. 6:22 [e] 2 Kin. 6:17 **34:8** [f] 1 Pet. 2:3 [g] Ps. 2:12 **34:10** [h] Ps. 84:11] **34:11** [i] Ps. 32:8 **34:12** [j] 1 Pet. 3:10–12] **34:13** [k] Eph. 4:25] **34:14** [l] Ps. 37:27 [m] Rom. 14:19] **34:15** [n] Job 36:7 **34:16** [o] Lev. 17:10 [p] Prov. 10:7] **34:17** [q] Ps. 34:6; 145:19 **34:18** [r] Ps. 145:18] [s] Is. 57:15] **34:19** [t] Prov. 24:16 [u] Ps. 34:4, 6, 17 **34:20** [v] John 19:33, 36

21 [w]Evil shall slay the wicked,
And those who hate the righteous
shall be condemned.
22 The LORD [x]redeems the soul of His
servants,
And none of those who trust in Him
shall be condemned.

Psalm 35

The LORD the Avenger of His People

A Psalm of David.

1 Plead *my cause,* O LORD, with those
who strive with me;
Fight against those who fight
against me.
2 Take hold of shield and buckler,
And stand up for my help.
3 Also draw out the spear,
And stop those who pursue me.
Say to my soul,
"I *am* your salvation."
4 [a]Let those be put to shame and brought
to dishonor
Who seek after my life;
Let those be [b]turned back and brought
to confusion
Who plot my hurt.
5 [c]Let them be like chaff before the wind,
And let the angel* of the LORD chase
them.
6 Let their way be [d]dark and slippery,
And let the angel of the LORD pursue
them.
7 For without cause they have [e]hidden
their net for me *in* a pit,
Which they have dug without cause
for my life.
8 Let [f]destruction come upon him
unexpectedly,
And let his net that he has hidden
catch himself;
Into that very destruction let him fall.
9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD;
It shall rejoice in His salvation.
10 [g]All my bones shall say,
"LORD, [h]who *is* like You,
Delivering the poor from him who is
too strong for him,
Yes, the poor and the needy from him
who plunders him?"
11 Fierce [i]witnesses rise up;
They ask me *things* that I do not know.
12 [j]They reward me evil for good,
To the sorrow of my soul.
13 But as for me, [k]when they were sick,
My clothing *was* sackcloth;
I humbled myself with fasting;
And my prayer would return to my
own heart.
14 I paced about as though *he were* my
friend *or* brother;
I bowed down heavily, as one who
mourns *for his* mother.
15 But in my adversity they rejoiced
And gathered together;
Attackers gathered against me,
And I did not know *it;*
They tore *at me* and did not cease;
16 With ungodly mockers at feasts
They gnashed at me with their teeth.
17 Lord, how long will You [l]look on?
Rescue me from their destructions,
My precious *life* from the lions.
18 I will give You thanks in the great
assembly;
I will praise You among many people.
19 [m]Let them not rejoice over me who are
wrongfully my enemies;
Nor let them wink with the eye who
hate me without a cause.
20 For they do not speak peace,
But they devise deceitful matters
Against *the* quiet ones in the land.
21 They also opened their mouth wide
against me,
And said, "Aha, aha!
Our eyes have seen *it.*"
22 *This* You have seen, O LORD;
Do not keep silence.
O Lord, do not be far from me.
23 Stir up Yourself, and awake to my
vindication,
To my cause, my God and my Lord.

* **35:5** Or *Angel*

35:2 ***stand up for my help.*** David did not hesitate to call upon God for vindication, comfort, and justice. He placed complete dependence on the Lord.

35:8 ***Let destruction come upon him.*** David's response is certainly not an example of turning the other cheek or loving his enemies (Matt. 5:39,44), but it shows David's keen awareness of the battle between good and evil, the reality of wickedness, and his understanding that wickedness is an abomination to the Lord.

35:18 ***assembly.*** Three times a year, at three of the great annual feasts, all males were required to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem. Each brought his offering to the Lord on these occasions. When they came accompanied by their families, as was often the case, Jerusalem was flooded by a vast horde of people intent upon worshiping God. David viewed speaking before this "great assembly" or the congregation of Israel as the ultimate opportunity for testimony. A constant testimony is given to the world by believers as they give voice to praise Him for His watchful care over them.

35:19 ***hate me without a cause.*** This passage was fulfilled in the suffering of Jesus, the Savior (John 15:23–25).

34:21 [w] Ps. 94:23; 140:11 **34:22** [x] 1 Kin. 1:29 **35:4** [a] Ps. 40:14, 15; 70:2, 3 [b] Ps. 129:5 **35:5** [c] Job 21:18 **35:6** [d] Ps. 73:18 **35:7** [e] Ps. 9:15 **35:8** [f] [1 Thess. 5:3] **35:10** [g] Ps. 51:8 [h] [Ex. 15:11] **35:11** [i] Matt. 26:3–4, 59–66; 27:1–2 **35:12** [j] John 10:32 **35:13** [k] Job 30:25 **35:17** [l] [Hab. 1:13] **35:19** [m] Ps. 69:4; 109:3

24 Vindicate me, O LORD my God,
according to Your righteousness;
And let them not rejoice over me.
25 Let them not say in their hearts, "Ah,
so we would have it!"
Let them not say, "We have swallowed
him up."
26 Let them be ashamed and brought to
mutual confusion
Who rejoice at my hurt;
Let them be [n]clothed with shame and
dishonor
Who exalt themselves against me.
27 [o]Let them shout for joy and be glad,
Who favor my righteous cause;
And let them say continually,
"Let the LORD be magnified,
Who has pleasure in the prosperity of
His servant."
28 And my tongue shall speak of Your
righteousness
And of Your praise all the day long.

Psalm 36

Man's Wickedness and God's Perfections

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of David the servant of the LORD.

1 An oracle within my heart concerning
the transgression of the wicked:
[a]*There is* no fear of God before his eyes.
2 For he flatters himself in his own eyes,
When he finds out his iniquity *and*
when he hates.
3 The words of his mouth *are*
wickedness and deceit;
[b]He has ceased to be wise *and* to do
good.
4 [c]He devises wickedness on his bed;
He sets himself [d]in a way *that is* not
good;
He does not abhor [e]evil.
5 Your mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens;
Your faithfulness *reaches* to the
clouds.
6 Your righteousness *is* like the great
mountains;
[f]Your judgments *are* a great deep;
O LORD, You preserve man and
beast.
7 How precious *is* Your lovingkindness,
O God!
Therefore the children of men [g]put
their trust under the shadow of
Your wings.
8 [h]They are abundantly satisfied with the
fullness of Your house,
And You give them drink from [i]the
river of Your pleasures.
9 [j]For with You *is* the fountain of life;
[k]In Your light we see light.
10 Oh, continue Your lovingkindness to
those who know You,
And Your righteousness to the upright
in heart.
11 Let not the foot of pride come against
me,
And let not the hand of the wicked
drive me away.
12 There the workers of iniquity have
fallen;
They have been cast down and are not
able to rise.

Psalm 37

The Heritage of the Righteous and the Calamity of the Wicked

A Psalm of David.

1 Do[a] not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of
iniquity.
2 For they shall soon be cut down [b]like
the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His
faithfulness.
4 [c]Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of
your [d]heart.
5 [e]Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring *it* to pass.

35:26 ***ashamed.*** The phrase "be ashamed" does not refer just to simple embarrassment, but to the revelation of the complete emptiness of wickedness before the judgment seat of God.

36:1 ***no fear of God.*** Underlying wickedness is a complete disregard for the reality of God in a person's life and in the world.

36:9 ***fountain of life.*** God's salvation and continuing mercy to His people are often described in terms of life-giving water (Is. 12:3; Jer. 2:13; John 4:1–14).

37:1 ***Do not fret.*** When the wicked seem to prosper, the psalmist calls for patience, a renewed sense of dependence on the Lord, and a new sense of pleasure in knowing Him.

37:4 ***the desires of your heart.*** Many times, we read this verse as a promise that God will give us anything that we want because He wants us to be happy. In reality, this verse goes much deeper. When we truly delight in God, He plants in our hearts godly desires that He delights to fulfill.

35:26 [n] Ps. 109:29 **35:27** [o] Rom. 12:15 **36:1** [a] Rom. 3:18 **36:3** [b] Jer. 4:22 **36:4** [c] Prov. 4:16 [d] Is. 65:2 [e] [Rom. 12:9] **36:6** [f] [Rom. 11:33] **36:7** [g] Ps. 17:8; 57:1; 91:4 **36:8** [h] Ps. 63:5; 65:4 [i] Rev. 22:1 **36:9** [j] [Jer. 2:13] [k] [1 Pet. 2:9] **37:1** [a] Ps. 73:3 **37:2** [b] Ps. 90:5, 6; 92:7 **37:4** [c] Is. 58:14 [d] Ps. 21:2; 145:19 **37:5** [e] [Ps. 55:22]

6 [f]He shall bring forth your
righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, [g]and wait patiently
for Him;
Do not fret because of him who
[h]prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings
wicked schemes to pass.

8 [i]Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
[j]Do not fret—*it* only *causes* harm.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the LORD,
They shall [k]inherit the earth.

10 For [l]yet a little while and the wicked
shall be no *more;*
Indeed, [m]you will look carefully for
his place,
But it *shall be* no *more.*

11 [n]But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the
abundance of peace.

12 The wicked plots against the just,
[o]And gnashes at him with his teeth.

13 [p]The Lord laughs at him,
For He sees that [q]his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn the sword
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
To slay those who are of upright
conduct.

15 Their sword shall enter their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.

16 [r]A little that a righteous man has
Is better than the riches of many
wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be
broken,
But the LORD upholds the righteous.

18 The LORD knows the days of the
upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil
time,
And in the days of famine they shall
be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish;
And the enemies of the LORD,
Like the splendor of the meadows,
shall vanish.
Into smoke they shall vanish away.

21 The wicked borrows and does not
repay,
But [s]the righteous shows mercy and
gives.

22 [t]For *those* blessed by Him shall inherit
the earth,
But *those* cursed by Him shall be cut
off.

23 [u]The steps of a *good* man are ordered
by the LORD,
And He delights in his way.

24 [v]Though he fall, he shall not be utterly
cast down;
For the LORD upholds *him with* His
hand.

25 I have been young, and *now* am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous
forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.

26 [w]*He is* ever merciful, and lends;
And his descendants *are* blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell forevermore.

28 For the LORD loves justice,
And does not forsake His saints;
They are preserved forever,
But the descendants of the wicked
shall be cut off.

29 [x]The righteous shall inherit the
land,
And dwell in it forever.

30 [y]The mouth of the righteous speaks
wisdom,
And his tongue talks of justice.

31 The law of his God *is* in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.

32 The wicked [z]watches the righteous,
And seeks to slay him.

33 The LORD [a]will not leave him in his
hand,
Nor condemn him when he is
judged.

34 [b]Wait on the LORD,
And keep His way,

37:7 ***Rest in the LORD . . . do not fret.*** This is not a call to stop caring and go to sleep, but to depend actively on the living Lord, leaving our lives and times in His hands.
37:13 ***He sees that his day is coming.*** The wicked sometimes appear to prosper, but from God's perspective, the flourishing of the wicked is short (Eccl. 3:16–17).
37:21 ***the righteous shows mercy and gives.*** There are many contrasts between the wicked and the righteous in the wisdom psalms; this one is based on contrasting attitudes toward possessions (15:5; 112:5). Jesus said that such generous givers would be rewarded with "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over" (Luke 6:38).
37:25 ***begging bread.*** Some interpret these words as referring to spiritual famine—the righteous will never be deprived of the Lord's presence (John 6:35). However, many have taken these words literally and experienced God's miraculous provision for their material needs.
37:27 ***Depart from evil.*** In this life people must choose either to cling to God and righteousness or to pursue evil.

37:6 [f] Job 11:17 **37:7** [g] [Lam. 3:26] [h] [Ps. 73:3–12] **37:8** [i] [Eph. 4:26] [j] Ps. 73:3 **37:9** [k] [Is. 57:13; 60:21] **37:10** [l] [Heb. 10:37] [m] Job 7:10 **37:11** [n] [Matt. 5:5] **37:12** [o] Ps. 35:16 **37:13** [p] Ps. 2:4; 59:8 [q] 1 Sam. 26:10 **37:16** [r] Prov. 15:16; 16:8 **37:21** [s] Ps. 112:5, 9 **37:22** [t] [Prov. 3:33] **37:23** [u] [1 Sam. 2:9] **37:24** [v] Prov. 24:16 **37:26** [w] [Deut. 15:8] **37:29** [x] Prov. 2:21 **37:30** [y] [Matt. 12:35] **37:32** [z] Ps. 10:8; 17:11 **37:33** [a] [2 Pet. 2:9] **37:34** [b] Ps. 27:14; 37:9

And He shall exalt you to inherit the land;
When the wicked are cut off, you shall see *it*.
35 I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a native green tree.
36 Yet he passed away,* and behold, he
was no *more;*
Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.

37 Mark the blameless *man,* and observe the upright;
For the future of *that* man *is* peace.
38 [c]But the transgressors shall be destroyed together;
The future of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 But the salvation of the righteous *is* from the LORD;
He is their strength [d]in the time of trouble.
40 And [e]the LORD shall help them and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
And save them,
[f]Because they trust in Him.

Psalm 38

Prayer in Time of Chastening

A Psalm of David. [a]To bring to remembrance.

1 O LORD, do not [b]rebuke me in Your wrath,
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!
2 For Your arrows pierce me deeply,
And Your hand presses me down.

3 *There is* no soundness in my flesh
Because of Your anger,
Nor *any* health in my bones
Because of my sin.
4 For my iniquities have gone over my head;
Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.
5 My wounds are foul *and* festering
Because of my foolishness.

6 I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly;
I go mourning all the day long.
7 For my loins are full of inflammation,
And *there is* no soundness in my flesh.
8 I am feeble and severely broken;
I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.

9 Lord, all my desire *is* before You;
And my sighing is not hidden from You.
10 My heart pants, my strength fails me;
As for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me.

11 My loved ones and my friends [c]stand aloof from my plague,
And my relatives stand afar off.
12 Those also who seek my life lay snares *for me;*
Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction,
And plan deception all the day long.

13 But I, like a deaf *man,* do not hear;
And *I am* like a mute *who* does not open his mouth.
14 Thus I am like a man who does not hear,
And in whose mouth *is* no response.

15 For in You, O LORD, [d]I hope;
You will hear, O Lord my God.
16 For I said, "*Hear me,* lest they rejoice over me,
Lest, when my foot slips, they exalt *themselves* against me."

17 [e]For I *am* ready to fall,
And my sorrow *is* continually before me.
18 For I will [f]declare my iniquity;
I will be [g]in anguish over my sin.
19 But my enemies *are* vigorous, *and* they are strong;
And those who hate me wrongfully have multiplied.
20 Those also [h]who render evil for good,
They are my adversaries, because I follow *what is* good.

21 Do not forsake me, O LORD;
O my God, [i]be not far from me!
22 Make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation!

* **37:36** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Targum; Syriac and Vulgate read *I passed by.*

37:39 ***salvation.*** The principal issue here is not regeneration, but sanctification—the daily deliverance of God's people from temptation and evil.
38:1 ***do not rebuke me.*** David is not saying, "Don't tell me I'm wrong," but "Have mercy on my sinfulness." David's penitent psalms can serve as a model for our own prayers of confession.
38:14 ***a man who does not hear.*** David was determined not to present an opportunity for his enemies to condemn the name of the Lord. His silence foreshadowed the silence of Jesus before His accusers (Mark 14:61).
38:18 ***I will declare.*** David's silence was only before his enemies; to the Lord he willingly confessed his sins.

37:38 [c] [Ps. 1:4–6; 37:20, 28] **37:39** [d] Ps. 9:9; 37:19 **37:40** [e] Is. 31:5 [f] 1 Chr. 5:20 **38:title** [a] Ps. 70:title **38:1** [b] Ps. 6:1 **38:11** [c] Ps. 31:11; 88:18 **38:15** [d] [Ps. 39:7] **38:17** [e] Ps. 51:3 **38:18** [f] Ps. 32:5 [g] [2 Cor. 7:9, 10] **38:20** [h] Ps. 35:12 **38:21** [i] Ps. 22:19; 35:22

Psalm 39

Prayer for Wisdom and Forgiveness

To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun.
A Psalm of David.

1 I said, "I will guard my ways,
Lest I sin with my [a]tongue;
I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle,
While the wicked are before me."
2 [b]I was mute with silence,
I held my peace *even* from good;
And my sorrow was stirred up.
3 My heart was hot within me;
While I was musing, the fire burned.
Then I spoke with my tongue:

4 "LORD, [c]make me to know my end,
And what *is* the measure of my days,
That I may know how frail I *am*.
5 Indeed, You have made my days *as* handbreadths,
And my age *is* as nothing before You;
Certainly every man at his best state *is* but [d]vapor. *Selah*
6 Surely every man walks about like a shadow;
Surely they busy themselves in vain;
He heaps up *riches*,
And does not know who will gather them.

7 "And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
My [e]hope *is* in You.
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions;
Do not make me [f]the reproach of the foolish.
9 [g]I was mute, I did not open my mouth,
Because it was [h]You who did *it*.
10 [i]Remove Your plague from me;
I am consumed by the blow of Your hand.
11 When with rebukes You correct man for iniquity,
You make his beauty [j]melt away like a moth;
Surely every man *is* vapor. *Selah*

12 "Hear my prayer, O LORD,
And give ear to my cry;
Do not be silent at my tears;
For I *am* a stranger with You,
A sojourner, [k]as all my fathers *were*.
13 [l]Remove Your gaze from me, that I may regain strength,
Before I go away and [m]am no more."

Psalm 40

Faith Persevering in Trial

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 I [a]waited patiently for the LORD;
And He inclined to me,
And heard my cry.
2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,
Out of [b]the miry clay,
And [c]set my feet upon a rock,
And established my steps.
3 [d]He has put a new song in my mouth—
Praise to our God;
Many will see *it* and fear,
And will trust in the LORD.

4 [e]Blessed *is* that man who makes the LORD his trust,
And does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.
5 [f]Many, O LORD my God, *are* Your wonderful works
Which You have done;
[g]And Your thoughts toward us
Cannot be recounted to You in order;
If I would declare and speak *of them*,
They are more than can be numbered.

6 [h]Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;
My ears You have opened.
Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.
7 Then I said, "Behold, I come;
In the scroll of the book *it is* written of me.

39:1 ***I will guard my ways.*** David determined to be silent in suffering so that he would not speak out foolishly.

39:9 ***it was You who did it.*** David knows that his only chance of deliverance is in God. But he also believes that his trouble has come from God. He is in a quandary. Should he ask for God's help, or should he ask for God to leave him alone?

39:13 ***Remove Your gaze from me.*** If God is not going to deliver him, the despondent psalmist asks God to leave him alone. It is rare outside the Book of Job to find language such as this (Job 7:19). The pain of the psalmist was so far from being resolved that he remained in despair until the last verse. Yet the fact that God saves those who call upon Him is described again and again in the Book of Psalms (22:31; 118:21).

40:1 ***I waited patiently.*** The verb "to wait" expresses a confident trust or faith in the Lord (130:5). David knows that salvation comes only from the Almighty (3:8).

40:6 ***My ears You have opened.*** God allows us to hear His words, and He also gives us understanding and wisdom to internalize and apply them.

40:7 ***Behold, I come.*** According to Hebrews 10:4–7, Jesus spoke these words to the Father.

39:1 [a] [James 3:5–12] **39:2** [b] Ps. 38:13 **39:4** [c] Ps. 90:12; 119:84 **39:5** [d] Ps. 62:9 **39:7** [e] Ps. 38:15 **39:8** [f] Ps. 44:13; 79:4; 119:22 **39:9** [g] Ps. 39:2 [h] Job 2:10 **39:10** [i] Job 9:34; 13:21 **39:11** [j] Job 13:28 **39:12** [k] Gen. 47:9 **39:13** [l] Job 7:19; 10:20, 21; 14:6 [m] [Job 14:10] **40:1** [a] Ps. 25:5; 27:14; 37:7 **40:2** [b] Ps. 69:2, 14 [c] Ps. 27:5 **40:3** [d] Ps. 32:7; 33:3 **40:4** [e] Ps. 34:8; 84:12 **40:5** [f] Job 9:10 [g] [Is. 55:8] **40:6** [h] [Heb. 10:5–9]

8 [i]I delight to do Your will, O my God,
And Your law *is* [j]within my heart."

9 [k]I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness
In the great assembly;
Indeed, [l]I do not restrain my lips,
O LORD, You Yourself know.
10 [m]I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart;
I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation;
I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth
From the great assembly.

11 Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O LORD;
[n]Let Your lovingkindness and Your truth continually preserve me.
12 For innumerable evils have surrounded me;
[o]My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to look up;
They are more than the hairs of my head;
Therefore my heart fails me.

13 [p]Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;
O LORD, make haste to help me!
14 [q]Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion
Who seek to destroy my life;
Let them be driven backward and brought to dishonor
Who wish me evil.
15 Let them be [r]confounded because of their shame,
Who say to me, "Aha, aha!"

16 [s]Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
Let such as love Your salvation [t]say continually,
"The LORD be magnified!"
17 [u]But I *am* poor and needy;
[v]*Yet* the LORD thinks upon me.
You *are* my help and my deliverer;
Do not delay, O my God.

Psalm 41

The Blessing and Suffering of the Godly

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 Blessed *is* he who considers the poor;
The LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.
2 The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive,
And he will be blessed on the earth;
[a]You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies.
3 The LORD will strengthen him on his bed of illness;
You will sustain him on his sickbed.

4 I said, "LORD, be merciful to me;
[b]Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."
5 My enemies speak evil of me:
"When will he die, and his name perish?"
6 And if he comes to see *me,* he speaks lies;
His heart gathers iniquity to itself;
When he goes out, he tells *it*.

40:8 To Know God's Will—Knowing the will of God is not simply a vehicle for finding the right vocation for a life's work. While vocation is important, it is only a small part of God's will. The will of God must be thought of in more comprehensive terms. The will of God is for everyone to live in such a way as to bring honor and glory to God. For different people God may have very different things in mind. We must continually stay in God's Word so that He can make clear to us what His will is for us. We must also be still, listen, and know that He is God.

The first step towards understanding God's will is believing in Christ (John 3:14–16). If we do not accept this gift from God, we will not be saved from judgment (Matt. 7:21). Second, Scripture teaches us that it is God's will for every believer to be sanctified (2 Thess. 2:13–17). Third, the Bible declares God's will as it must be applied to our lives (Deut. 29:29). This fact involves commands to be obeyed, principles to be followed, prohibitions of things to be avoided and living examples to be imitated or shunned. God takes great joy in those who cheerfully do His will.

Although the Bible is a comprehensive revelation of God's will, there are always decisions we make that Scripture does not directly address. In order to know God's will in these situations we need to be in fellowship with the Lord (1 John 1:6–7), seek principles from the Word (1 Cor. 10:6), obtain advice from godly counselors (Prov. 11:14), use common sense, and remember that God works through our own minds and He desires for us to do His will (Phil. 2:13).

40:9 *assembly.* In Psalm 35 David prayed for deliverance from his enemies and promised to give God praise before "the great assembly," the congregation of Israel, for that deliverance. Psalm 40 is a joyful account of his deliverance from trouble, and his witness of God's righteousness before the people. The believer is obligated to speak of God's righteous acts toward him, so that others may hear of the goodness and glory of God.

40:11 *tender mercies.* This term refers to God's affection for us. David is asking God to surround him with warmth and comfort that is practically maternal.

41:4 *for I have sinned.* In the context of this psalm, this is a general acknowledgment of sin and the need for God's forgiveness and restoration (1 John 1:9).

40:8 *i* [John 4:34; 6:38] *j* [Jer. 31:33] **40:9** *k* Ps. 22:22, 25 *l* Ps. 119:13 **40:10** *m* Acts 20:20, 27 **40:11** *n* Ps. 61:7 **40:12** *o* Ps. 38:4; 65:3 **40:13** *p* Ps. 70:1 **40:14** *q* Ps. 35:4, 26; 70:2; 71:13 **40:15** *r* Ps. 73:19 **40:16** *s* Ps. 70:4 *t* Ps. 35:27 **40:17** *u* Ps. 70:5; 86:1; 109:22 *v* 1 Pet. 5:7 **41:2** *a* Ps. 27:12 **41:4** *b* Ps. 6:2; 103:3; 147:3

7 All who hate me whisper together
against me;
Against me they devise my hurt.
8 "An evil disease," *they say*, "clings to
him.
And *now* that he lies down, he will rise
up no more."
9 [c]Even my own familiar friend in whom
I trusted,
[d]Who ate my bread,
Has lifted up *his* heel against me.
10 But You, O LORD, be merciful to me,
and raise me up,
That I may repay them.
11 By this I know that You are well
pleased with me,
Because my enemy does not triumph
over me.
12 As for me, You uphold me in my
integrity,
And [e]set me before Your face forever.
13 [f]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting!
Amen and Amen.

BOOK TWO

Psalms 42–72

Psalm 42

Yearning for God in the Midst of Distresses

To the Chief Musician.
A Contemplation* of the sons of Korah.

1 As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So pants my soul for You, O God.
2 [a]My soul thirsts for God, for the [b]living
God.
When shall I come and appear before
God?*
3 [c]My tears have been my food day and
night,
While they continually say to me,
[d]"Where *is* your God?"
4 When I remember these *things*,
[e]I pour out my soul within me.
For I used to go with the multitude;
[f]I went with them to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept a pilgrim
feast.
5 [g]Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And *why* are you disquieted within
me?
[h]Hope in God, for I shall yet praise
Him
For the help of His countenance.*
6 O my God,* my soul is cast down
within me;
Therefore I will remember You from
the land of the Jordan,
And from the heights of Hermon,
From the Hill Mizar.
7 Deep calls unto deep at the noise of
Your waterfalls;
[i]All Your waves and billows have gone
over me.
8 The LORD will [j]command His
lovingkindness in the daytime,
And [k]in the night His song *shall be*
with me—
A prayer to the God of my life.
9 I will say to God my Rock,
[l]"Why have You forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning because of the
oppression of the enemy?"
10 *As* with a breaking of my bones,
My enemies reproach me,
[m]While they say to me all day long,
"Where *is* your God?"
11 [n]Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within
me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my
God.

* **42:title** Hebrew *Maschil* * **42:2** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum read *I see the face of God.* * **42:5** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; a few Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *The help of my countenance, my God.* * **42:6** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; a few Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate put *my God* at the end of verse 5.

41:9 ***my own familiar friend.*** Jesus quoted this verse, noting its fulfillment in Judas (John 13:18).
41:13 ***Blessed.*** This psalm begins with a blessing of God on the righteous; it ends with the righteous blessing their Lord. This word "blessed" is different from the word in verse 1. Here the word identifies the Lord as the source of our blessing.
42:4 ***I used to go with the multitude . . . to the house of God.*** This psalm was written in exile. The psalmist is remembering with longing and tears the times when he was able to worship God in Jerusalem.
42:5 ***I shall yet praise Him.*** As is common in the Psalms, the poet is not describing an act of private devotion, but of public praise of the goodness of God. This is praise in words and songs that would be repeated in the midst of the congregation (22:22; Eph. 5:19; Heb. 13:15).
42:6 ***the land of the Jordan . . . of Hermon.*** These are references to the Promised Land, from which the people were exiled.

41:9 [c] 2 Sam. 15:12 [d] John 13:18, 21–30 **41:12** [e] [Job 36:7] **41:13** [f] Ps. 72:18, 19; 89:52; 106:48; 150:6
42:2 [a] Ps. 63:1; 84:2; 143:6 [b] 1 Thess. 1:9 **42:3** [c] Ps. 80:5; 102:9 [d] Ps. 79:10; 115:2 **42:4** [e] Job 30:16 [f] Is. 30:29 **42:5** [g] Ps. 42:11; 43:5 [h] Lam. 3:24 **42:7** [i] Ps. 69:1, 2; 88:7 **42:8** [j] Deut. 28:8 [k] Job 35:10 **42:9** [l] Ps. 38:6
42:10 [m] Joel 2:17 **42:11** [n] Ps. 43:5

Psalm 43

Prayer to God in Time of Trouble

1 Vindicate [a]me, O God,
And [b]plead my cause against an ungodly nation;
Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!
2 For You *are* the God of my strength;
Why do You cast me off?
[c]Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
3 [d]Oh, send out Your light and Your truth!
Let them lead me;
Let them bring me to [e]Your holy hill
And to Your tabernacle.
4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
To God my exceeding joy;
And on the harp I will praise You,
O God, my God.
5 [f]Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.

Psalm 44

Redemption Remembered in Present Dishonor

To the Chief Musician.
A [a]Contemplation* of the sons of Korah.

1 We have heard with our ears,
O God,
[b]Our fathers have told us,
The deeds You did in their days,
In days of old:
2 [c]You drove out the nations with Your hand,
But them You planted;
You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out.
3 For [d]they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword,
Nor did their own arm save them;
But it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance,
[e]Because You favored them.
4 [f]You are my King, O God;*
Command* victories for Jacob.
5 Through You [g]we will push down our enemies;
Through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us.
6 For [h]I will not trust in my bow,
Nor shall my sword save me.
7 But You have saved us from our enemies,
And have put to shame those who hated us.
8 [i]In God we boast all day long,
And praise Your name forever. *Selah*
9 But [j]You have cast *us* off and put us to shame,
And You do not go out with our armies.
10 You make us [k]turn back from the enemy,
And those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves.
11 [l]You have given us up like sheep *intended* for food,
And have [m]scattered us among the nations.
12 [n]You sell Your people for *next to* nothing,
And are not enriched by selling them.
13 [o]You make us a reproach to our neighbors,
A scorn and a derision to those all around us.
14 [p]You make us a byword among the nations,

*44:title Hebrew *Maschil* *44:4 Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *and my God.* • Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Who commands.*

43:1 ***Vindicate me.*** It is believed that Psalm 43 is a continuation of Psalm 42.
43:5 ***cast down.*** Psalms 42 and 43 reflect a uniform feeling of being cut off from God, rejected and forsaken by Him. There is a common refrain in both psalms in which the author reasons with himself in order to surmount his feelings of depression and loneliness. Prayer is still possible when God seems to be absent, and we can hope in God in the face of present affliction because faith enables the believer to give thanks before the answer is experienced.
44:4 ***You are my King.*** In this community lament, it is striking that here the speaker is singular. It may be that these words are spoken by Israel's king to the King of glory. As the king of the nation, it was appropriate for him to lead the people in asking for God's renewed favor.
44:9 ***You have cast us off.*** The army of Israel was not just a group of soldiers. They were the warriors of the Almighty; their victories were the victories of God, and their defeats were losses that He allowed them to endure. If He ceased accompanying them to battle, they were doomed to failure.

43:1 [a] [Ps. 26:1; 35:24] [b] Ps. 35:1 **43:2** [c] Ps. 42:9 **43:3** [d] [Ps. 40:11] [e] Ps. 3:4 **43:5** [f] Ps. 42:5, 11 **44:title** [a] Ps. 42:title **44:1** [b] [Ex. 12:26, 27] **44:2** [c] Ex. 15:17 **44:3** [d] [Deut. 8:17, 18] [e] [Deut. 4:37; 7:7, 8] **44:4** [f] [Ps. 74:12] **44:5** [g] [Dan. 8:4] **44:6** [h] Ps. 33:16 **44:8** [i] Ps. 34:2 **44:9** [j] Ps. 60:1 **44:10** [k] Lev. 26:17 **44:11** [l] Rom. 8:36 [m] Deut. 4:27; 28:64 **44:12** [n] Is. 52:3, 4 **44:13** [o] Jer. 24:9 **44:14** [p] Deut. 28:37

[q]A shaking of the head among the peoples.
15 My dishonor *is* continually before me,
And the shame of my face has covered me,
16 Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles,
[r]Because of the enemy and the avenger.

17 [s]All this has come upon us;
But we have not forgotten You,
Nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant.
18 Our heart has not turned back,
[t]Nor have our steps departed from Your way;
19 But You have severely broken us in [u]the place of jackals,
And covered us [v]with the shadow of death.

20 If we had forgotten the name of our God,
Or [w]stretched out our hands to a foreign god,
21 [x]Would not God search this out?
For He knows the secrets of the heart.
22 [y]Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

23 [z]Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord?
Arise! Do not cast *us* off forever.
24 [a]Why do You hide Your face,
And forget our affliction and our oppression?
25 For [b]our soul is bowed down to the dust;
Our body clings to the ground.
26 Arise for our help,
And redeem us for Your mercies' sake.

Psalm 45

The Glories of the Messiah and His Bride

To the Chief Musician. [a]Set to "The Lilies."* A Contemplation* of the sons of Korah. A Song of Love.

1 My heart is overflowing with a good theme;
I recite my composition concerning the King;
My tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

2 You are fairer than the sons of men;
[b]Grace is poured upon Your lips;
Therefore God has blessed You forever.
3 Gird Your [c]sword upon *Your* thigh,
[d]O Mighty One,
With Your [e]glory and Your majesty.
4 [f]And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, *and* righteousness;
And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things.
5 Your arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the King's enemies;
The peoples fall under You.

6 [g]Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever;
A [h]scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom.
7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness;
Therefore God, Your God, has [i]anointed You
With the oil of [j]gladness more than Your companions.
8 All Your garments *are* [k]*scented* with myrrh and aloes *and* cassia,
Out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad.

* **45:title** Hebrew *Shoshannim* • Hebrew *Maschil*

44:17 ***we have not forgotten You.*** The faithful remnant had to bear the punishment of exile as well as the wicked. Human beings are so interwoven that it is impossible to sin alone. Inevitably others will have to share the burden of our just punishment.
44:22 ***as sheep.*** These words predict another beloved Son of the Most High who would also feel cast off by the Lord (Is. 53:7; Rom. 8:36).
45:3 ***O Mighty One.*** In the ancient Middle East the king was supposed to be a great warrior. The model in Israel was David, the celebrated champion who defeated the giant Goliath (1 Sam. 17). The term "most mighty" is also a messianic title.
45:6–7 ***O God . . . God, Your God.*** The words "Your throne" indicate the messianic direction of the psalm. Here the King is addressed as God, yet it is "God, Your God" who anointed Him. The writer to the Hebrews used these verses to assert Jesus' deity (Heb. 1:8–9).
45:7 ***righteousness.*** A person is known by his loves and his hates. If a person "loves" something, he will "hate" its opposite. One who loves justice will hate oppression. One who loves truth will hate falsehood. One who loves kindness will hate cruelty. The psalm deliberately uses very strong verbs: *love* righteousness, *hate* wickedness. We might prefer to be a bit more moderate and tone down the language, but the Scripture calls us to disengage ourselves radically from wickedness, for it is both a virus and a vice. ***anointed You.*** Anointing set aside a particular person for special service to God. In Old Testament times, those who were anointed for special service foreshadowed the Anointed One, the Messiah.

44:14 [q] Job 16:4 **44:16** [r] Ps. 8:2 **44:17** [s] Dan. 9:13 **44:18** [t] Job 23:11 **44:19** [u] Is. 34:13 [v] [Ps. 23:4] **44:20** [w] [Deut. 6:14] **44:21** [x] [Ps. 139:1, 2] **44:22** [y] Rom. 8:36 **44:23** [z] Ps. 7:6 **44:24** [a] Job 13:24 **44:25** [b] Ps. 119:25 **45:title** [a] Ps. 69:title **45:2** [b] Luke 4:22 **45:3** [c] [Heb. 4:12] [d] [Is. 9:6] [e] Jude 25 **45:4** [f] Rev. 6:2 **45:6** [g] [Ps. 93:2] [h] [Num. 24:17] **45:7** [i] Ps. 2:2 [j] Ps. 21:6 **45:8** [k] Song 1:12, 13

9 [l]Kings' daughters *are* among Your
honorable women;
[m]At Your right hand stands the queen in
gold from Ophir.

10 Listen, O daughter,
Consider and incline your ear;
[n]Forget your own people also, and your
father's house;
11 So the King will greatly desire your
beauty;
[o]Because He *is* your Lord, worship
Him.
12 And the daughter of Tyre *will come*
with a gift;
[p]The rich among the people will seek
your favor.

13 The royal daughter *is* all glorious
within *the palace;*
Her clothing *is* woven with gold.
14 [q]She shall be brought to the King in
robes of many colors;
The virgins, her companions who
follow her, shall be brought to
You.
15 With gladness and rejoicing they shall
be brought;
They shall enter the King's palace.

16 Instead of Your fathers shall be Your
sons,
[r]Whom You shall make princes in all
the earth.
17 [s]I will make Your name to be
remembered in all generations;
Therefore the people shall praise You
forever and ever.

Psalm 46

God the Refuge of His People and Conqueror of the Nations

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of the sons of Korah. A Song [a]for Alamoth.

1 God *is* our [b]refuge and strength,
[c]A very present help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried
into the midst of the sea;
3 [d]*Though* its waters roar *and* be
troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its
swelling. *Selah*

4 *There is* a [e]river whose streams shall
make glad the [f]city of God,
The holy *place* of the tabernacle of the
Most High.
5 God *is* [g]in the midst of her, she shall
not be moved;
God shall help her, just at the break of
dawn.
6 [h]The nations raged, the kingdoms were
moved;
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

7 The [i]LORD of hosts *is* with us;
The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. *Selah*

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD,
Who has made desolations in the
earth.
9 [j]He makes wars cease to the end of the
earth;
[k]He breaks the bow and cuts the spear
in two;
[l]He burns the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I *am* God;
[m]I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!

11 The LORD of hosts *is* with us;
The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. *Selah*

Psalm 47

Praise to God, the Ruler of the Earth

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

1 Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples!
Shout to God with the voice of
triumph!
2 For the LORD Most High *is* awesome;
He is a great [a]King over all the earth.
3 [b]He will subdue the peoples under us,
And the nations under our feet.
4 He will choose our [c]inheritance for us,
The excellence of Jacob whom He
loves. *Selah*

45:9 ***Ophir.*** Possibly located in southern Arabia or in Africa (2 Chr. 8:17–18), this place was known in the Old Testament world as a source of fine gold.

45:14 ***robes of many colors.*** In the ancient world, the beauty of the bride's gowns might be an expression of her family's wealth, their pride in her, and their love for her.

46:2 ***though the earth be removed.*** God is a refuge for His people against everything actual or imagined.

46:5 ***God is in the midst of her.*** We do not have an absentee deliverer, a defense that is only sometimes present. The Lord lives with His people and His protection can be counted on.

46:10 ***Be still, and know that I am God.*** This call for stillness before the Lord is not preparation for worship, but for impending judgment (Hab. 2:20; Zeph. 1:7; Zech. 2:13).

47:4 ***whom He loves.*** To love means "to make one's choice in." God had chosen the Israelites to be His

45:9 *l* Song 6:8 *m* 1 Kin. 2:19 **45:10** *n* Deut. 21:13 **45:11** *o* [Is. 54:5] **45:12** *p* Is. 49:23 **45:14** *q* Song 1:4 **45:16** *r* [1 Pet. 2:9] **45:17** *s* Mal. 1:11 **46:title** *a* 1 Chr. 15:20 **46:1** *b* Ps. 62:7, 8 *c* [Deut. 4:7] **46:3** *d* [Ps. 93:3, 4] **46:4** *e* [Ezek. 47:1–12] *f* Is. 60:14 **46:5** *g* [Zeph. 3:15] **46:6** *h* Ps. 2:1, 2 **46:7** *i* Num. 14:9 **46:9** *j* Is. 2:4 *k* Ps. 76:3 *l* Ezek. 39:9 **46:10** *m* [Is. 2:11, 17] **47:2** *a* Neh. 1:5 **47:3** *b* Ps. 18:47 **47:4** *c* [1 Pet. 1:4]

5 [d]God has gone up with a shout,
The LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
6 Sing praises to God, sing praises!
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
7 [e]For God *is* the King of all the earth;
[f]Sing praises with understanding.

8 [g]God reigns over the nations;
God [h]sits on His [i]holy throne.
9 The princes of the people have
gathered together,
[j]The people of the God of Abraham.
[k]For the shields of the earth *belong* to
God;
He is greatly exalted.

Psalm 48

The Glory of God in Zion

A Song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

1 Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be
praised
In the [a]city of our God,
In His holy mountain.
2 [b]Beautiful in elevation,
The joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion *on* the sides of the
north,
The city of the great King.
3 God *is* in her palaces;
He is known as her refuge.

4 For behold, [c]the kings assembled,
They passed by together.
5 They saw *it, and* so they marveled;
They were troubled, they hastened
away.
6 Fear [d]took hold of them there,
And pain, as of a woman in birth
pangs,
7 *As when* You break the [e]ships of
Tarshish
With an east wind.

8 As we have heard,
So we have seen
In the city of the LORD of hosts,
In the city of our God:
God will [f]establish it forever. *Selah*

9 We have thought, O God, on [g]Your
lovingkindness,
In the midst of Your temple.
10 According to [h]Your name, O God,
So *is* Your praise to the ends of the
earth;
Your right hand is full of
righteousness.
11 Let Mount Zion rejoice,
Let the daughters of Judah be glad,
Because of Your judgments.

12 Walk about Zion,
And go all around her.
Count her towers;
13 Mark well her bulwarks;
Consider her palaces;
That you may [i]tell *it* to the generation
following.
14 For this *is* God,
Our God forever and ever;
[j]He will be our guide
Even to death.*

Psalm 49

The Confidence of the Foolish

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the
sons of Korah.

1 Hear this, all peoples;
Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
2 Both low and high,
Rich and poor together.
3 My mouth shall speak wisdom,
And the meditation of my heart *shall
give* understanding.
4 I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will disclose my dark saying on the
harp.

* **48:14** Following Masoretic Text and Syriac; Septuagint and Vulgate read *Forever.*

holy people and, in that way, He loved them. In His dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus explained that God's love extended to all the nations as well as to Israel (John 3:16).

47:9 *The people of the God of Abraham.* This is the prophetic picture of the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1–3). One day all the peoples of the earth who have come to faith in God through Jesus will discover that they are one people. They are all the true seed of Abraham because they, like Abraham, believed in God (Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:5–8).

48:1 *Great is the LORD.* Psalm 48 unites with Psalms 46 and 47 to form three great psalms of praise to God for His kingship and His love for the holy city of Jerusalem. This emphasis on Jerusalem has led many scholars to speak of these psalms as "Songs of Zion." ***the city of our God.*** The city of Jerusalem had a particularly dear place in the heart of God's people (1 Kin. 14:21). The city was holy because of the presence of God in the temple.

48:2 *The joy of the whole earth.* As is strongly established in the Book of Psalms, the purpose of God's work in Israel was to draw all nations to Himself. ***city of the great King.*** Jesus quoted these words in Matthew 5:35, speaking of Jerusalem.

48:12 *Walk about Zion.* Praising the city of Zion was another way of praising God, whose dwelling was there.

49:4 *dark saying.* Also translated "riddle," this word refers to a perplexing moral problem. How do the righteous come to terms with oppressive rich people who seem to have no thought for God?

47:5 [d] Ps. 68:24, 25 **47:7** [e] Zech. 14:9 [f] 1 Cor. 14:15 **47:8** [g] 1 Chr. 16:31 [h] Ps. 97:2 [i] Ps. 48:1 **47:9** [j] [Rom. 4:11, 12] [k] [Ps. 89:18] **48:1** [a] Ps. 46:4; 87:3 **48:2** [b] Ps. 50:2 **48:4** [c] 2 Sam. 10:6, 14 **48:6** [d] Ex. 15:15 **48:7** [e] Ezek. 27:25 **48:8** [f] [Ps. 87:5] **48:9** [g] Ps. 26:3 **48:10** [h] Mal. 1:11 **48:13** [i] [Ps. 78:5–7] **48:14** [j] Is. 58:11

5 Why should I fear in the days of evil,
When the iniquity at my heels
surrounds me?
6 Those who [a]trust in their wealth
And boast in the multitude of their
riches,
7 None *of them* can by any means
redeem *his* brother,
Nor [b]give to God a ransom for him—
8 For [c]the redemption of their souls *is*
costly,
And it shall cease forever—
9 That he should continue to live
eternally,
And [d]not see the Pit.

10 For he sees wise men die;
Likewise the fool and the senseless
person perish,
And leave their wealth to others.
11 Their inner thought *is that* their
houses *will last* forever,*
Their dwelling places to all
generations;
They [e]call *their* lands after their own
names.
12 Nevertheless man, *though* in honor,
does not remain;*
He is like the beasts *that* perish.

13 This is the way of those who *are*
[f]foolish,
And of their posterity who approve
their sayings. *Selah*
14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave;
Death shall feed on them;
[g]The upright shall have dominion over
them in the morning;
[h]And their beauty shall be consumed in
the grave, far from their dwelling.
15 But God [i]will redeem my soul from the
power of the grave,
For He shall [j]receive me. *Selah*

16 Do not be afraid when one becomes
rich,
When the glory of his house is
increased;
17 For when he dies he shall carry
nothing away;
His glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though while he lives [k]he blesses
himself
(For *men* will praise you when you do
well for yourself),
19 He shall go to the generation of his
fathers;
They shall never see [l]light.
20 A man *who is* in honor, yet does not
understand,
[m]Is like the beasts *that* perish.

Psalm 50

God the Righteous Judge

A Psalm of Asaph.

1 The [a]Mighty One, God the LORD,
Has spoken and called the earth
From the rising of the sun to its going
down.
2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
[b]God will shine forth.
3 Our God shall come, and shall not
keep silent;
[c]A fire shall devour before Him,
And it shall be very tempestuous all
around Him.

4 [d]He shall call to the heavens from
above,
And to the earth, that He may judge
His people:
5 "Gather [e]My saints together to Me,
[f]Those who have made a covenant with
Me by sacrifice."
6 Let the [g]heavens declare His
righteousness,
For [h]God Himself *is* Judge. *Selah*

7 "Hear, O My people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will testify against you;
[i]I *am* God, your God!
8 [j]I will not rebuke you [k]for your
sacrifices

* **49:11** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *Their graves shall be their houses forever.*
* **49:12** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *understand* (compare verse 20).

49:6 ***Those who trust in their wealth.*** The accumulation of material wealth is of no value in the life to come (Mark 10:23). Money can never buy redemption. Only God has the power to deliver us from death and hell.

49:14 ***Death shall feed on them.*** Death is the great leveler. People who have beauty, riches (vv. 16–17), and power in this world will lose them all at death. They will be stripped of everything except their character or soul. This is why the Scriptures exhort us to pursue character development—God's law, holiness, wisdom, and knowledge—more than anything else.

50:1 ***The Mighty One, God the LORD.*** These three titles give a stunning introduction to the poem, a grand display of God Himself in the midst of His people.

50:8 ***rebuke you for your sacrifices.*** The sacrifices were commanded by God in Leviticus, but the people had difficulty keeping a godly perspective on the nature of sacrifices. God did not need their offerings—He is already the owner of all the earth. The sacrifices were for their sakes, so that they would understand that sin equals death, and atonement comes by blood.

49:6 [a] [Mark 10:23, 24] **49:7** [b] Job 36:18, 19 **49:8** [c] [Matt. 16:26] **49:9** [d] Ps. 89:48 **49:11** [e] Gen. 4:17 **49:13** [f] [Luke 12:20] **49:14** [g] [Dan. 7:18] [h] Job 4:21 **49:15** [i] [Hos. 13:4] [j] Ps. 73:24 **49:18** [k] Deut. 29:19 **49:19** [l] Job 33:30 **49:20** [m] Eccl. 3:19 **50:1** [a] Is. 9:6 **50:2** [b] Ps. 80:1 **50:3** [c] [Ps. 97:3] **50:4** [d] Is. 1:2 **50:5** [e] Deut. 33:3 [f] Ex. 24:7 **50:6** [g] [Ps. 97:6] [h] Ps. 75:7 **50:7** [i] Ex. 20:2 **50:8** [j] Jer. 7:22 [k] [Hos. 6:6]

Or your burnt offerings,
Which are continually before Me.
9 [l]I will not take a bull from your house,
Nor goats out of your folds.
10 For every beast of the forest *is* Mine,
And the cattle on a thousand hills.
11 I know all the birds of the mountains,
And the wild beasts of the field *are* Mine.

12 "If I were hungry, I would not tell you;
[m]For the world *is* Mine, and all its fullness.
13 [n]Will I eat the flesh of bulls,
Or drink the blood of goats?
14 [o]Offer to God thanksgiving,
And [p]pay your vows to the Most High.
15 [q]Call upon Me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me."

16 But to the wicked God says:
"What *right* have you to declare My statutes,
Or take My covenant in your mouth,
17 [r]Seeing you hate instruction
And cast My words behind you?
18 When you saw a thief, you [s]consented* with him,
And have been a [t]partaker with adulterers.
19 You give your mouth to evil,
And [u]your tongue frames deceit.
20 You sit *and* speak against your brother;
You slander your own mother's son.
21 These *things* you have done, and I kept silent;
[v]You thought that I was altogether like you;
But I will rebuke you,
And [w]set *them* in order before your eyes.

22 "Now consider this, you who [x]forget God,
Lest I tear *you* in pieces,
And *there be* none to deliver:
23 Whoever offers praise glorifies Me;
And [y]to him who orders *his* conduct *aright*
I will show the salvation of God."

Psalm 51

A Prayer of Repentance

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David [a]when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
[b]Blot out my transgressions.
2 [c]Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin *is* always before me.
4 [d]Against You, You only, have I sinned,
And done *this* evil [e]in Your sight—
[f]That You may be found just when You speak,*
And blameless when You judge.

5 [g]Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.
6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.

7 [h]Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

* **50:18** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *ran*. * **51:4** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *in Your words*.

50:12 ***If I were hungry, I would not tell you.*** God doesn't hunger for food—and even if He did, He would not need His people to bring it to Him. He hungers for the righteousness of His people.
50:18 ***have been a partaker with adulterers.*** In this psalm the Lord brings a legal case against His people for violations of the covenant (v. 4). Verses 7–15 address the formalists, whose major emphasis is on the outward and external observances of the ceremonial law. Verses 16–23 are spoken to wicked members of the community who do not put God's commandments into practice in everyday life. The believer's attitude toward evil is to be one of total rejection: "Do not love the world or the things in the world" (1 John 2:15). There is no neutrality in regard to the moral law, and no approval can be given to those who disobey God's law (Rom. 1:32).
51:1 ***Have mercy upon me.*** This psalm is associated with one of the hardest experiences of David's life, the aftermath of his affair with Bathsheba. For the account of David's sin and the prophet Nathan's rebuke, see 2 Samuel 11:1—12:15. ***the multitude of Your tender mercies.*** David's call for mercy is the only appropriate request for a confessing sinner. No sinner should ask for justice, for that would mean judgment and ruin.
51:4 ***Against You.*** David had sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, and the nation he was called to rule. But none of these indictments were as serious as David's offense against God.
51:5 ***iniquity.*** The psalmist should not be misunderstood as teaching that the pollution of human nature results from anything inherently corrupt in sexual relations between husband and wife. We are male and female by the sovereign will and creative power of God (Gen. 1:27). What David confesses, however, is the reality of human depravity (Rom. 5:12). We are inclined to gratify the cravings of our sinful nature, following its desires and thoughts,

50:9 [l] Ps. 69:31 **50:12** [m] Ex. 19:5 **50:13** [n] [Ps. 51:15–17] **50:14** [o] Heb. 13:15 [p] Deut. 23:21 **50:15** [q] [Zech. 13:9] **50:17** [r] Rom. 2:21 **50:18** [s] [Rom. 1:32] [t] 1 Tim. 5:22 **50:19** [u] Ps. 52:2 **50:21** [v] [Rom. 2:4] [w] [Ps. 90:8] **50:22** [x] [Job 8:13] **50:23** [y] Gal. 6:16 **51:title** [a] 2 Sam. 12:1 **51:1** [b] [Is. 43:25; 44:22] **51:2** [c] [Heb. 9:14] **51:4** [d] 2 Sam. 12:13 [e] [Luke 5:21] [f] Rom. 3:4 **51:5** [g] [Job 14:4] **51:7** [h] Heb. 9:19

Wash me, and I shall be [i]whiter than
snow.
8 Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken [j]may
rejoice.
9 Hide Your face from my sins,
And blot out all my iniquities.

10 [k]Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit
within me.
11 Do not cast me away from Your
presence,
And do not take Your [l]Holy Spirit
from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me *by Your* [m]generous
Spirit.
13 *Then* I will teach transgressors Your
ways,
And sinners shall be converted to You.

14 Deliver me from the guilt of
bloodshed, O God,
The God of my salvation,
And my tongue shall sing aloud of
Your righteousness.
15 O Lord, open my lips,
And my mouth shall show forth Your
praise.
16 For [n]You do not desire sacrifice, or else
I would give *it;*
You do not delight in burnt offering.
17 [o]The sacrifices of God *are* a broken
spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart—
These, O God, You will not despise.

18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion;
Build the walls of Jerusalem.
19 Then You shall be pleased with [p]the
sacrifices of righteousness,
With burnt offering and whole burnt
offering;
Then they shall offer bulls on Your
altar.

Psalm 52

The End of the Wicked and the Peace of the Godly

To the Chief Musician.
A Contemplation* of David [a]when
Doeg the Edomite went and [b]told Saul,
and said to him, "David has gone to the
house of Ahimelech."

1 Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man?
The goodness of God *endures*
continually.
2 Your tongue devises destruction,
Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.
3 You love evil more than good,
Lying rather than speaking
righteousness. *Selah*
4 You love all devouring words,
You deceitful tongue.

5 God shall likewise destroy you forever;
He shall take you away, and pluck you
out of *your* dwelling place,
And uproot you from the land of the
living. *Selah*
6 The righteous also shall see and fear,
And shall laugh at him, *saying,*
7 "Here is the man *who* did not make God
his strength,
But trusted in the abundance of his
riches,
And strengthened himself in his
wickedness."

8 But I *am* [c]like a green olive tree in the
house of God;
I trust in the mercy of God forever and
ever.
9 I will praise You forever,
Because You have done *it;*
And in the presence of Your saints
I will wait on Your name, for *it is* good.

* **52:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

contradicting God's commands. This is why we must experience radical regeneration by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. Apart from that rebirth, we can neither see nor enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3–5).

51:7 *hyssop.* Here David refers to the ritual acts of cleansing described in the law of Moses (Lev. 14:4; Num. 19:6).

51:10–13 Confession—Confession leads to forgiveness, but what does that look like? Psalm 51 gives us a picture. The results of forgiveness are a clean heart, a renewed spirit, a restored relationship with God, and a joyful experience of God's salvation. God cleans us up. He makes us presentable. He reorients us towards Himself, helping us to focus on what it is right. By forgiving us, God crosses over the canyon of sin that separates us from Him. When you put all this together there is great cause for joy on our part. Forgiveness is more than a theological abstract. It makes the salvation experience deeply personal and emotional in every sense. It takes that which is wrong in our life and makes it right.

51:16 *You do not desire sacrifice.* God's pleasure is not in the sacrificed animal, but in the willing obedience of His people (Gen. 4:1–7; John 4:21–24; Rom. 12:1–2). The motions of sacrifice not accompanied by a contrite heart are not acceptable to God (Is. 1:12–20).

52:2 *Your tongue.* This phrase refers to more than just words. These people used language as a weapon, for they believed that the gods could empower their words to a devastating effect.

52:6 *see and fear.* This fear is a deepened respect for God and a sense of awe before His throne.

52:8 *a green olive tree.* An olive tree was a symbol of beauty. In Romans 11:16–24, the olive tree is used as a symbol of the Gentiles who are grafted into the root—the people of God or the church.

51:7 [i] [Is. 1:18] **51:8** [j] [Matt. 5:4] **51:10** [k] [Ezek. 18:31] **51:11** [l] [Luke 11:13] **51:12** [m] [2 Cor. 3:17] **51:16** [n] [1 Sam. 15:22] **51:17** [o] Ps. 34:18 **51:19** [p] Ps. 4:5 **52:title** [a] 1 Sam. 22:9 [b] Ezek. 22:9 **52:8** [c] Jer. 11:16

Psalm 53

Folly of the Godless, and the Restoration of Israel

To the Chief Musician. Set to "Mahalath." A Contemplation* of David.

1 The [a]fool has said in his heart,
"*There is* no God."
They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity;
[b]*There is* none who does good.

2 God looks down from heaven upon the children of men,
To see if there are *any* who understand, who [c]seek God.

3 Every one of them has turned aside;
They have together become corrupt;
There is none who does good,
No, not one.

4 Have the workers of iniquity [d]no knowledge,
Who eat up my people *as* they eat bread,
And do not call upon God?

5 [e]There they are in great fear
Where no fear was,
For God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you;
You have put *them* to shame,
Because God has despised them.

6 [f]Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!
When God brings back the captivity of His people,
Let Jacob rejoice *and* Israel be glad.

Psalm 54

Answered Prayer for Deliverance from Adversaries

To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments.* A Contemplation* of David [a]when the Ziphites went and said to Saul, "Is David not hiding with us?"

1 Save me, O God, by Your name,
And vindicate me by Your strength.

2 Hear my prayer, O God;
Give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers have risen up against me,
And oppressors have sought after my life;
They have not set God before them.
Selah

4 Behold, God *is* my helper;
The Lord *is* with those who uphold my life.

5 He will repay my enemies for their evil.
Cut them off in Your truth.

6 I will freely sacrifice to You;
I will praise Your name, O LORD, for *it is* good.

7 For He has delivered me out of all trouble;
[b]And my eye has seen *its desire* upon my enemies.

Psalm 55

Trust in God Concerning the Treachery of Friends

To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments.* A Contemplation* of David.

1 Give ear to my prayer, O God,
And do not hide Yourself from my supplication.

2 Attend to me, and hear me;
I [a]am restless in my complaint, and moan noisily,

3 Because of the voice of the enemy,
Because of the oppression of the wicked;
[b]For they bring down trouble upon me,
And in wrath they hate me.

4 [c]My heart is severely pained within me,
And the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

*__53:title__ Hebrew *Maschil* *__54:title__ Hebrew *neginoth* • Hebrew *Maschil* *__55:title__ Hebrew *neginoth* • Hebrew *Maschil*

53:1 ***The fool.*** In the Bible, the term "fool" does not indicate mental incompetence, but moral and spiritual insensitivity.
53:5 ***scattered the bones.*** This is a prophetic pronouncement of the final judgment on the wicked.
54:3 ***They have not set God before them.*** In one of the dark moments of David's life, when the insanely jealous King Saul was bent on destroying him, David was able to lift his heart in supplication, trust, and praise to God. He had been hiding with his men in the hill country south of Jeshimon, but his location was betrayed to Saul by the people of Ziph (1 Sam. 23:19; 26:1). These were the "strangers" who doubtless stood to profit from David's death. They had no regard for covenant law, which bade the Israelites to love their neighbors as themselves (Lev. 19:18). Nor did they love the Lord their God wholeheartedly (Deut. 6:5), but instead turned their hands against His anointed. Betrayal is a supreme act of treachery, whether in terms of a human being such as David, or of Jesus (Luke 22:48), the anointed Son of God. As such, it merits the most severe punishment from God (Mark 14:21).
54:5 ***He will repay.*** David did not take vengeance into his own hands. Only the Lord can take revenge.
55:4 ***terrors of death.*** David's intense pain can be felt in his strong language. The phrase "terrors of death" is unusual. The Hebrew word for "terror" or "dread"

53:1 [a] Ps. 10:4 [b] Rom. 3:10–12 **53:2** [c] [2 Chr. 15:2] **53:4** [d] Jer. 4:22 **53:5** [e] Prov. 28:1 **53:6** [f] Ps. 14:7 **54:title** [a] 1 Sam. 23:19 **54:7** [b] Ps. 59:10 **55:2** [a] Is. 38:14; 59:11 **55:3** [b] 2 Sam. 16:7, 8 **55:4** [c] Ps. 116:3

5 Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me,
And horror has overwhelmed me.
6 So I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove!
I would fly away and be at rest.
7 Indeed, I would wander far off,
And remain in the wilderness. *Selah*
8 I would hasten my escape
From the windy storm *and* tempest."

9 Destroy, O Lord, *and* divide their tongues,
For I have seen [d]violence and strife in the city.
10 Day and night they go around it on its walls;
[e]Iniquity and trouble *are* also in the midst of it.
11 Destruction *is* in its midst;
[f]Oppression and deceit do not depart from its streets.

12 [g]For *it is* not an enemy *who* reproaches me;
Then I could bear *it*.
Nor *is it* one *who* hates me who has [h]exalted *himself* against me;
Then I could hide from him.
13 But *it was* you, a man my equal,
[i]My companion and my acquaintance.
14 We took sweet counsel together,
And [j]walked to the house of God in the throng.

15 Let death seize them;
Let them [k]go down alive into hell,
For wickedness *is* in their dwellings *and* among them.

16 As for me, I will call upon God,
And the LORD shall save me.
17 [l]Evening and morning and at noon
I will pray, and cry aloud,
And He shall hear my voice.
18 He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me,
For [m]there were many against me.
19 God will hear, and afflict them,
[n]Even He who abides from of old. *Selah*
Because they do not change,
Therefore they do not fear God.

20 He has [o]put forth his hands against those who [p]were at peace with him;
He has broken his covenant.
21 [q]*The words* of his mouth were smoother than butter,
But war *was* in his heart;
His words were softer than oil,
Yet they *were* drawn swords.

22 [r]Cast your burden on the LORD,
And [s]He shall sustain you;
He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

23 But You, O God, shall bring them down to the pit of destruction;
[t]Bloodthirsty and deceitful men [u]shall not live out half their days;
But I will trust in You.

Psalm 56

Prayer for Relief from Tormentors

To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Silent Dove in Distant Lands."*
A Michtam of David when the [a]Philistines captured him in Gath.

1 Be [b]merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up;
Fighting all day he oppresses me.
2 My enemies would [c]hound *me* all day,
For *there are* many who fight against me, O Most High.

3 Whenever I am afraid,
I will trust in You.
4 In God (I will praise His word),
In God I have put my trust;
[d]I will not fear.
What can flesh do to me?

5 All day they twist my words;
All their thoughts *are* against me for evil.
6 They gather together,
They hide, they mark my steps,
When they lie in wait for my life.
7 Shall they escape by iniquity?
In anger cast down the peoples, O God!

8 You number my wanderings;
Put my tears into Your bottle;
[e]*Are they* not in Your book?

* **56:title** Hebrew *Jonath Elem Rechokim*

is first used in Scripture to describe the horror that Abraham felt in the unnatural darkness that seized him as God was about to come near (Gen. 15:12). The word also described the horrors that would fall on the people of Canaan when the Lord gave the land to the Israelites (Ex. 15:16). To strengthen this feeling, David speaks of fear and trembling and an overwhelming horror (Ezek. 7:18).

55:15 ***Let them go down alive into hell.*** David could express his emotions to God in prayer, but judgment or revenge was in God's hands (Rom. 12:19).

55:22 ***Cast your burden on the LORD.*** The Lord is the one constant in life, and the one true Friend.

56:1 ***Be merciful to me.*** David cried out to God because of his overwhelming sense of loss during his time as a fugitive in a foreign land (1 Sam. 21:10–15).

56:8 ***Put my tears into Your bottle.*** Nothing that

55:9 [d] Jer. 6:7 **55:10** [e] Ps. 10:7 **55:11** [f] Ps. 10:7 **55:12** [g] Ps. 41:9 [h] Ps. 35:26; 38:16 **55:13** [i] 2 Sam. 15:12 **55:14** [j] Ps. 42:4 **55:15** [k] Num. 16:30, 33 **55:17** [l] Dan. 6:10 **55:18** [m] 2 Chr. 32:7, 8 **55:19** [n] [Deut. 33:27] **55:20** [o] Acts 12:1 [p] Ps. 7:4 **55:21** [q] Ps. 28:3; 57:4 **55:22** [r] [Ps. 37:5] [s] Ps. 37:24 **55:23** [t] Ps. 5:6 [u] Prov. 10:27 **56:title** [a] 1 Sam. 21:11 **56:1** [b] Ps. 57:1 **56:2** [c] Ps. 57:3 **56:4** [d] Ps. 118:6 **56:8** [e] [Mal. 3:16]

9 When I cry out *to You,*
Then my enemies will turn back;
This I know, because [f]God *is* for me.
10 In God (I will praise *His* word),
In the LORD (I will praise *His* word),
11 In God I have put my trust;
I will not be afraid.
What can man do to me?

12 Vows *made* to You *are binding* upon me, O God;
I will render praises to You,
13 [g]For You have delivered my soul from death.
Have You not *kept* my feet from falling,
That I may walk before God
In the [h]light of the living?

Psalm 57

Prayer for Safety from Enemies

To the Chief Musician. Set to "Do Not Destroy."* A Michtam of David [a]when he fled from Saul into the cave.

1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!
For my soul trusts in You;
[b]And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,
[c]Until *these* calamities have passed by.

2 I will cry out to God Most High,
To God [d]who performs *all things* for me.
3 [e]He shall send from heaven and save me;
He reproaches the one who would swallow me up. *Selah*
God [f]shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

4 My soul *is* among lions;
I lie *among* the sons of men
Who are set on fire,
[g]Whose teeth *are* spears and arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.

5 [h]Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Your glory *be* above all the earth.

6 [i]They have prepared a net for my steps;
My soul is bowed down;
They have dug a pit before me;
Into the midst of it they *themselves* have fallen. *Selah*

7 [j]My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;
I will sing and give praise.
8 Awake, [k]my glory!
Awake, lute and harp!
I will awaken the dawn.

9 [l]I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing to You among the nations.
10 [m]For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens,
And Your truth unto the clouds.

11 [n]Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;
Let Your glory *be* above all the earth.

Psalm 58

The Just Judgment of the Wicked

To the Chief Musician. Set to "Do Not Destroy."* A Michtam of David.

1 Do you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones?
Do you judge uprightly, you sons of men?
2 No, in heart you work wickedness;
You weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth.

3 [a]The wicked are estranged from the womb;
They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.
4 [b]Their poison *is* like the poison of a serpent;

*__57:title__ Hebrew *Al Tashcheth* *__58:title__ Hebrew *Al Tashcheth*

happens to us escapes God's notice and care; not a tear falls to the ground that He does not remember. When we suffer, it is a great comfort to know that God is *for* us—everything that we live through will be put to use for our good.

57:title *Saul into the cave.* The narrative of David's life indicates that he twice hid in caves—once in Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1–5) which was the setting of Psalm 142, and once in En Gedi (1 Sam. 24:1–7), the setting of this poem. In En Gedi, David spared Saul's life even though he had a perfect chance to put Saul out of the way and claim the kingship for himself.

57:1–3 *I will cry out to God.* Although he had lived a righteous life, David still realized that he did not deserve the protection of God and that if his life was saved it would be by the grace of God. He trusted God to care for him just as a mother hen protects her young by covering them with her wings.

57:5 *Be exalted.* One of the ways in which God exalts Himself is by graciously delivering the needy.

57:7 *My heart is steadfast.* Just as Paul was able to say that he had kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7), David rejoiced that his trust in God had remained strong.

58:1 *silent ones.* This may also be translated "mighty ones" or "judges." Although they were merely humans, the wicked judges were behaving as though they claimed divine authority.

56:9 [f] [Rom. 8:31] **56:13** [g] Ps. 116:8, 9 [h] Job 33:30 **57:title** [a] 1 Sam. 22:1 **57:1** [b] Ps. 17:8; 63:7 [c] Is. 26:20 **57:2** [d] [Ps. 138:8] **57:3** [e] Ps. 144:5, 7 [f] Ps. 43:3 **57:4** [g] Prov. 30:14 **57:5** [h] Ps. 108:5 **57:6** [i] Ps. 9:15 **57:7** [j] Ps. 108:1–5 **57:8** [k] Ps. 16:9 **57:9** [l] Ps. 108:3 **57:10** [m] Ps. 103:11 **57:11** [n] Ps. 57:5 **58:3** [a] [Is. 48:8] **58:4** [b] Eccl. 10:11

They are like the deaf cobra *that* stops its ear,
5 Which will not [c]heed the voice of charmers,
Charming ever so skillfully.
6 [d]Break their teeth in their mouth, O God!
Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD!
7 [e]Let them flow away as waters *which* run continually;
When he bends *his bow,*
Let his arrows be as if cut in pieces.
8 *Let them be* like a snail which melts away as it goes,
[f]*Like* a stillborn child of a woman, that they may not see the sun.
9 Before your [g]pots can feel *the burning* thorns,
He shall take them away [h]as with a whirlwind,
As in His living and burning wrath.
10 The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the [i]vengeance;
[j]He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked,
11 [k]So that men will say,
"Surely *there is* a reward for the righteous;
Surely He is God who [l]judges in the earth."

Psalm 59

The Assured Judgment of the Wicked

To the Chief Musician. Set to "Do Not Destroy."* A Michtam of David [a]when Saul sent men, and they watched the house in order to kill him.

1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
Defend me from those who rise up against me.
2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity,
And save me from bloodthirsty men.
3 For look, they lie in wait for my life;
[b]The mighty gather against me,
Not *for* my transgression nor *for* my sin, O LORD.
4 They run and prepare themselves through no fault *of mine.*
[c]Awake to help me, and behold!
5 You therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel,
Awake to punish all the nations;
Do not be merciful to any wicked transgressors. *Selah*
6 [d]At evening they return,
They growl like a dog,
And go all around the city.
7 Indeed, they belch with their mouth;
[e]Swords *are* in their lips;
For *they say,* [f]"Who hears?"
8 But [g]You, O LORD, shall laugh at them;
You shall have all the nations in derision.
9 I will wait for You, O You his Strength;*
[h]For God *is* my defense.
10 My God of mercy* shall [i]come to meet me;
God shall let [j]me see *my desire* on my enemies.
11 Do not slay them, lest my people forget;
Scatter them by Your power,
And bring them down,
O Lord our shield.

*__59:title__ Hebrew *Al Tashcheth* *__59:9__ Following Masoretic Text and Syriac; some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *my Strength.* *__59:10__ Following Qere; some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *My God, His mercy;* Kethib, some Hebrew manuscripts and Targum read *O God, my mercy;* Syriac reads *O God, Your mercy.*

58:6 *Break their teeth.* The wicked are pictured as having powerful teeth, as though they were carnivores, eating the righteous alive. Here David asks God to shatter their teeth, symbolizing the destruction of the power of the wicked over the poor and defenseless.

58:10 *wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.* We know that it is wrong to rejoice in the downfall of another human being; the picture of the righteous wading in the blood of their fallen enemies is hard for modern Western Christians to understand. Jesus clearly taught that our attitude towards our enemies should be one of compassion and forgiveness (Matt. 5:43–48; Luke 23:34), but this does not mean that we should take a soft attitude towards sin. Wickedness grieves and angers God, and when wickedness has finally been dealt with, we will rejoice.

59:1 *Deliver me from my enemies.* The story behind this psalm of lament is found in 1 Samuel 19:9–17.

59:3 *Not for my transgression.* There were times in David's life when he knew that he was suffering because of sin in his life (32:1–7), but at other times he was hounded by wicked persons even though he was innocent.

59:6 *a dog.* Dogs were unclean animals, semi-wild scavengers rather than the beloved pets of our own day. To call someone a dog or compare him to a dog was a profound insult.

59:11 *Do not slay them . . . scatter.* The imprecation or curse in this verse is unusual. Instead of asking for the destruction of the wicked, the psalmist asks

58:5 [c] Jer. 8:17 **58:6** [d] Job 4:10 **58:7** [e] Josh. 2:11; 7:5 **58:8** [f] Job 3:16 **58:9** [g] Eccl. 7:6 [h] Prov. 10:25 **58:10** [i] Jer. 11:20 [j] Ps. 68:23 **58:11** [k] Ps. 92:15 [l] Ps. 50:6; 75:7 **59:title** [a] 1 Sam. 19:11 **59:3** [b] Ps. 56:6 **59:4** [c] Ps. 35:23 **59:6** [d] Ps. 59:14 **59:7** [e] Prov. 12:18 [f] Ps. 10:11 **59:8** [g] Prov. 1:26 **59:9** [h] [Ps. 62:2] **59:10** [i] Ps. 21:3 [j] Ps. 54:7

12 [k]*For* the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips,
Let them even be taken in their pride,
And for the cursing and lying *which* they speak.
13 [l]Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them,*
That they *may* not *be;*
And [m]let them know that God rules in Jacob
To the ends of the earth. *Selah*

14 And [n]at evening they return,
They growl like a dog,
And go all around the city.
15 They [o]wander up and down for food,
And howl* if they are not satisfied.

16 But I will sing of Your power;
Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning;
For You have been my defense
And refuge in the day of my trouble.
17 To You, [p]O my Strength, I will sing praises;
For God *is* my defense,
My God of mercy.

Psalm 60

Urgent Prayer for the Restored Favor of God

To the Chief Musician. [a]Set to "Lily of the Testimony."* A Michtam of David. For teaching. [b]When he fought against Mesopotamia and Syria of Zobah, and Joab returned and killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

1 O God, [c]You have cast us off;
You have broken us down;
You have been displeased;
Oh, restore us again!
2 You have made the earth tremble;
You have broken it;
[d]Heal its breaches, for it is shaking.
3 [e]You have shown Your people hard things;
[f]You have made us drink the wine of confusion.
4 [g]You have given a banner to those who fear You,
That it may be displayed because of the truth. *Selah*
5 [h]That Your beloved may be delivered,
Save *with* Your right hand, and hear me.

6 God has [i]spoken in His holiness:
"I will rejoice;
I will [j]divide [k]Shechem
And measure out [l]the Valley of Succoth.
7 Gilead *is* Mine, and Manasseh *is* Mine;
[m]Ephraim also *is* the helmet for My head;
[n]Judah *is* My lawgiver.
8 [o]Moab *is* My washpot;
[p]Over Edom I will cast My shoe;
[q]Philistia, shout in triumph because of Me."

9 Who will bring me *to* the strong city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
10 *Is it* not You, O God, [r]*who* cast us off?
And You, O God, *who* did [s]not go out with our armies?
11 Give us help from trouble,
[t]For the help of man *is* useless.
12 Through God [u]we will do valiantly,
For *it is* He *who* shall tread down our enemies.*

Psalm 61

Assurance of God's Eternal Protection

To the Chief Musician. On a stringed instrument.* *A Psalm* of David.

1 Hear my cry, O God;
Attend to my prayer.

* **59:15** Following Septuagint and Vulgate; Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Targum read *spend the night.* * **60:title** Hebrew *Shushan Eduth*
* **60:12** Compare verses 5–12 with 108:6–13
* **61:title** Hebrew *neginah*

for them to be scattered, to be made fugitives. This would be a constant reminder of the consequences of evil.

59:16–17 ***I will sing.*** David knew that King Saul had sent a murder squad to track him down and kill him. Yet he arose in the morning with joy in his heart and a song on his lips. This was in contrast to his enemies, who would return to the city each evening after a long, fruitless search for David. They were nervous, irritable, and arrogant.

60:1 ***You have broken us down.*** This is a poetic description of an otherwise unknown defeat of the armies of Israel in a battle that was part of the campaign against Aram of Zobah and his Mesopotamian allies (2 Sam. 8). The defeat was so startling that it caused the people of Israel to feel as though God had made the earth tremble.

60:5 ***Your beloved.*** This term is particularly endearing (Is. 5:1; Jer. 11:15). God did not merely act for His people out of duty, He loved them.

60:8 ***Moab . . . Edom . . . Philistia.*** These traditional enemies of Israel were also enemies of God. The Lord would not allow them to disturb His people.

60:12 ***we will do valiantly.*** As the title records, this was what happened. David's general Joab led the battle, and under God's hand Israel's enemies were soundly defeated. When the help of man proves useless, often God dramatically provides strength and power so that our boast is solely in Him.

59:12 [k] Prov. 12:13 **59:13** [l] Ps. 104:35 [m] Ps. 83:18 **59:14** [n] Ps. 59:6 **59:15** [o] Job 15:23 **59:17** [p] Ps. 18:1 **60:title** [a] Ps. 80 [b] 2 Sam. 8:3, 13 **60:1** [c] Ps. 44:9 **60:2** [d] [2 Chr. 7:14] **60:3** [e] Ps. 71:20 [f] Jer. 25:15 **60:4** [g] Ps. 20:5 **60:5** [h] Ps. 108:6–13 **60:6** [i] Ps. 89:35 [j] Josh. 1:6 [k] Gen. 12:6 [l] Josh. 13:27 **60:7** [m] Deut. 33:17 [n] [Gen. 49:10] **60:8** [o] 2 Sam. 8:2 [p] 2 Sam. 8:14 [q] 2 Sam. 8:1 **60:10** [r] Ps. 108:11 [s] Josh. 7:12 **60:11** [t] Ps. 118:8; 146:3 **60:12** [u] Num. 24:18

2 From the end of the earth I will cry to
You,
When my heart is overwhelmed;
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

3 For You have been a shelter for me,
[a]A strong tower from the enemy.
4 I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;
[b]I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.
Selah

5 For You, O God, have heard my vows;
You have given *me* the heritage of
those who fear Your name.
6 You will prolong the king's life,
His years as many generations.
7 He shall abide before God forever.
Oh, prepare mercy [c]and truth, *which*
may preserve him!

8 So I will sing praise to Your name
forever,
That I may daily perform my vows.

Psalm 62

A Calm Resolve to Wait for the Salvation of God

To the Chief Musician. To [a]Jeduthun.
A Psalm of David.

1 Truly [b]my soul silently *waits* for God;
From Him *comes* my salvation.
2 He only *is* my rock and my salvation;
He is my defense;
I shall not be greatly [c]moved.

3 How long will you attack a man?
You shall be slain, all of you,
[d]Like a leaning wall and a tottering
fence.
4 They only consult to cast *him* down
from his high position;
They [e]delight in lies;
They bless with their mouth,
But they curse inwardly. *Selah*

5 My soul, wait silently for God alone,
For my expectation *is* from Him.

6 He only *is* my rock and my salvation;
He is my defense;
I shall not be moved.
7 [f]In God *is* my salvation and my glory;
The rock of my strength,
And my refuge, *is* in God.

8 Trust in Him at all times, you people;
[g]Pour out your heart before Him;
God *is* a refuge for us. *Selah*

9 [h]Surely men of low degree *are* a vapor,
Men of high degree *are* a lie;
If they are weighed on the scales,
They *are* altogether *lighter* than
vapor.
10 Do not trust in oppression,
Nor vainly hope in robbery;
[i]If riches increase,
Do not set *your* heart *on them.*

11 God has spoken once,
Twice I have heard this:
That power *belongs* to God.
12 Also to You, O Lord, *belongs* mercy;
For [j]You render to each one according
to his work.

Psalm 63

Joy in the Fellowship of God

A Psalm of David [a]when he was in the
wilderness of Judah.

1 O God, You *are* my God;
Early will I seek You;
[b]My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.
2 So I have looked for You in the
sanctuary,
To see [c]Your power and Your glory.

3 [d]Because Your lovingkindness *is* better
than life,
My lips shall praise You.
4 Thus I will bless You while I live;
I will [e]lift up my hands in Your name.

61:2 ***the rock that is higher than I.*** The imagery of God as a Rock for the believer was introduced by Moses (Deut. 32:4) and is developed elsewhere in the Psalms (62:2; 71:3; 144:1).
61:6 ***as many generations.*** This phrase refers to David's long rule, but more literally prophesies the eternal rule of Jesus, the King of kings.
62:title ***Jeduthun.*** Jeduthun was appointed by David as one of those in charge of the music associated with worship (1 Chr. 16:41–42).
62:8 ***Trust . . . you people.*** David addresses the righteous with his lesson of reliance on God. What is true for David is extended to all in the believing community.
62:11 ***spoken once, Twice.*** It is a convention of wisdom literature to use a number and then raise it by one (Prov. 30:15–31), emphasizing the certainty of the point made.
63:title ***in the wilderness of Judah.*** This possibly refers to an incident during the period when Saul was chasing David (1 Sam. 22–24).
63:2 ***in the sanctuary.*** The sanctuary had been at Nob (1 Sam. 21:1), and it was there that David had sought the presence of the Lord. Later it was moved to Jerusalem (76:1–2).
63:4 ***lift up my hands.*** To lift the hands to the Lord expresses dependence on Him, coupled with an acknowledgment of His power, wonder, and majesty.

61:3 [a] Prov. 18:10 **61:4** [b] Ps. 91:4 **61:7** [c] Ps. 40:11
62:title [a] 1 Chr. 25:1 **62:1** [b] Ps. 33:20 **62:2** [c] Ps. 55:22
62:3 [d] Is. 30:13 **62:4** [e] Ps. 28:3 **62:7** [f] [Jer. 3:23]
62:8 [g] 1 Sam. 1:15 **62:9** [h] Is. 40:17 **62:10** [i] [Luke 12:15]
62:12 [j] [Matt. 16:27] **63:title** [a] 1 Sam. 22:5 **63:1** [b] Ps. 42:2 **63:2** [c] Ps. 27:4 **63:3** [d] Ps. 138:2 **63:4** [e] Ps. 28:2; 143:6

5 My soul shall be satisfied as with
marrow and fatness,
And my mouth shall praise *You* with
joyful lips.
6 When [f]I remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the *night*
watches.
7 Because You have been my help,
Therefore in the shadow of Your wings
I will rejoice.
8 My soul follows close behind You;
Your right hand upholds me.
9 But those *who* seek my life, to destroy
it,
Shall go into the lower parts of the
earth.
10 They shall fall by the sword;
They shall be a portion for jackals.
11 But the king shall rejoice in God;
[g]Everyone who swears by Him shall
glory;
But the mouth of those who speak lies
shall be stopped.

Psalm 64

Oppressed by the Wicked but Rejoicing in the LORD

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of
David.

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my
meditation;
Preserve my life from fear of the
enemy.
2 Hide me from the secret plots of the
wicked,
From the rebellion of the workers of
iniquity,
3 Who sharpen their tongue like a
sword,
[a]And bend *their bows to shoot* their
arrows—bitter words,
4 That they may shoot in secret at the
blameless;
Suddenly they shoot at him and do not
fear.
5 They encourage themselves *in* an evil
matter;
They talk of laying snares secretly;
[b]They say, "Who will see them?"
6 They devise iniquities:
"We have perfected a shrewd scheme."
Both the inward thought and the heart
of man are deep.
7 But God shall shoot at them *with* an
arrow;
Suddenly they shall be wounded.
8 So He will make them stumble over
their own tongue;
[c]All who see them shall flee away.
9 All men shall fear,
And shall [d]declare the work of God;
For they shall wisely consider His
doing.
10 [e]The righteous shall be glad in the
LORD, and trust in Him.
And all the upright in heart shall
glory.

Psalm 65

Praise to God for His Salvation and Providence

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of
David. A Song.

1 Praise is awaiting You, O God, in
Zion;
And to You the vow shall be
performed.
2 O You who hear prayer,
[a]To You all flesh will come.
3 Iniquities prevail against me;
As for our transgressions,
You will [b]provide atonement for
them.
4 [c]Blessed *is the man* You [d]choose,
And cause to approach *You*,
That he may dwell in Your courts.
[e]We shall be satisfied with the
goodness of Your house,
Of Your holy temple.
5 *By* awesome deeds in righteousness
You will answer us,
O God of our salvation,
You who are the confidence of all the
ends of the earth,
And of the far-off seas;
6 Who established the mountains by His
strength,
[f]*Being* clothed with power;
7 [g]You who still the noise of the seas,
The noise of their waves,
[h]And the tumult of the peoples.

63:8 *Your right hand.* The same power of God that delivered Israel from Egypt (Ex. 15:6) would support David—and all other believers in their daily lives.

64:10 *trust in Him.* By placing our problems into God's hands, we can rest in His sovereign will for our lives. Concerns about the future can be cast aside, for the Lord controls our future and has good plans for us (Rom. 8:28).

65:3 *provide atonement for them.* David speaks of a coming day when sin will be dealt with fully, when redemption will be completely paid. This took place in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7).

63:6 [f] Ps. 42:8 **63:11** [g] Deut. 6:13 **64:3** [a] Ps. 58:7 **64:5** [b] Ps. 10:11; 59:7 **64:8** [c] Ps. 31:11 **64:9** [d] Jer. 50:28; 51:10 **64:10** [e] Ps. 32:11 **65:2** [a] [Is. 66:23] **65:3** [b] [Heb. 9:14] **65:4** [c] Ps. 33:12 [d] Ps. 4:3 [e] Ps. 36:8 **65:6** [f] Ps. 93:1 **65:7** [g] Matt. 8:26 [h] Is. 17:12, 13

8 They also who dwell in the farthest
parts are afraid of Your signs;
You make the outgoings of the
morning and evening rejoice.

9 You visit the earth and [i]water it,
You greatly enrich it;
[j]The river of God is full of water;
You provide their grain,
For so You have prepared it.
10 You water its ridges abundantly,
You settle its furrows;
You make it soft with showers,
You bless its growth.

11 You crown the year with Your
goodness,
And Your paths drip *with*
abundance.
12 They drop *on* the pastures of the
wilderness,
And the little hills rejoice on every
side.
13 The pastures are clothed with flocks;
[k]The valleys also are covered with
grain;
They shout for joy, they also sing.

Psalm 66

Praise to God for His Awesome Works

To the Chief Musician. A Song.
A Psalm.

1 Make [a]a joyful shout to God, all the
earth!
2 Sing out the honor of His name;
Make His praise glorious.
3 Say to God,
"How [b]awesome are Your works!
[c]Through the greatness of Your power
Your enemies shall submit themselves
to You.
4 [d]All the earth shall worship You
And sing praises to You;
They shall sing praises *to* Your name."
Selah

5 Come and see the works of God;
He is awesome *in His* doing toward the
sons of men.

6 [e]He turned the sea into dry *land;*
[f]They went through the river on foot.
There we will rejoice in Him.
7 He rules by His power forever;
His eyes observe the nations;
Do not let the rebellious exalt
themselves. *Selah*

8 Oh, bless our God, you peoples!
And make the voice of His praise to be
heard,
9 Who keeps our soul among the
living,
And does not allow our feet to be
moved.
10 For [g]You, O God, have tested us;
[h]You have refined us as silver is
refined.
11 [i]You brought us into the net;
You laid affliction on our backs.
12 [j]You have caused men to ride over our
heads;
[k]We went through fire and through
water;
But You brought us out to rich
fulfillment.

13 [l]I will go into Your house with burnt
offerings;
[m]I will pay You my vows,
14 Which my lips have uttered
And my mouth has spoken when I was
in trouble.
15 I will offer You burnt sacrifices of fat
animals,
With the sweet aroma of rams;
I will offer bulls with goats. *Selah*

16 Come *and* hear, all you who fear
God,
And I will declare what He has done
for my soul.
17 I cried to Him with my mouth,
And He was extolled with my
tongue.
18 [n]If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear.
19 *But* certainly God [o]has heard *me;*
He has attended to the voice of my
prayer.

20 Blessed *be* God,
Who has not turned away my prayer,
Nor His mercy from me!

65:9 ***You visit the earth.*** Rainfall is seen here as a gracious visitation of God. This is in keeping with the provisions of God's covenant with Israel (Deut. 28:12). These words have some fulfillment every time the rains bring productivity to the earth.
66:1 ***all the earth.*** As in Psalm 100:1, the call is not only for the people of Israel, but for the peoples of all the earth to join in the praises of the living God, the Most High (87:7; 96:1–6; 117:1).
66:2 ***the honor of His name.*** The Lord's name describes His character, so honoring God's name is honoring God Himself (Ex. 3:14–15).
66:8 ***O bless our God.*** To bless God is to identify Him as the source of our blessing.
66:13 ***Your house.*** This term refers to the temple in Jerusalem where God lived among His people.
66:16 ***all you who fear God.*** Those who fear God are those who respond in awe and wonder to Him.
66:18 ***regard iniquity.*** Ongoing sin tolerated in a believer's life is one of the main things that blocks effective prayer and hinders growth.

65:9 [i] Jer. 5:24 [j] Ps. 46:4; 104:13; 147:8 **65:13** [k] Is. 44:23; 55:12 **66:1** [a] Ps. 100:1 **66:3** [b] Ps. 65:5 [c] Ps. 18:44 **66:4** [d] Ps. 117:1 **66:6** [e] Ex. 14:21 [f] Josh. 3:14–16 **66:10** [g] Ps. 17:3 [h] [1 Pet. 1:7] **66:11** [i] Lam. 1:13 **66:12** [j] Is. 51:23 [k] Is. 43:2 **66:13** [l] Ps. 100:4; 116:14, 17–19 [m] [Eccl. 5:4] **66:18** [n] Is. 1:15 **66:19** [o] Ps. 116:1, 2

Psalm 67

An Invocation and a Doxology

To the Chief Musician. On stringed instruments.* A Psalm. A Song.

1 God be merciful to us and bless us,
And [a]cause His face to shine upon us,
Selah
2 That [b]Your way may be known on earth,
[c]Your salvation among all nations.
3 Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
4 Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy!
For [d]You shall judge the people righteously,
And govern the nations on earth.
Selah
5 Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
6 [e]*Then* the earth shall yield her increase;
God, our own God, shall bless us.
7 God shall bless us,
And all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

Psalm 68

The Glory of God in His Goodness to Israel

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. A Song.

1 Let [a]God arise,
Let His enemies be scattered;
Let those also who hate Him flee before Him.
2 [b]As smoke is driven away,
So drive *them* away;
[c]As wax melts before the fire,
So let the wicked perish at the presence of God.
3 But [d]let the righteous be glad;
Let them rejoice before God;
Yes, let them rejoice exceedingly.
4 Sing to God, sing praises to His name;
[e]Extol Him who rides on the clouds,*
[f]By His name YAH,
And rejoice before Him.
5 [g]A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.
6 [h]God sets the solitary in families;
[i]He brings out those who are bound into prosperity;
But [j]the rebellious dwell in a dry *land.*
7 O God, [k]when You went out before Your people,
When You marched through the wilderness, *Selah*
8 The earth shook;
The heavens also dropped *rain* at the presence of God;
Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
9 [l]You, O God, sent a plentiful rain,
Whereby You confirmed Your inheritance,
When it was weary.
10 Your congregation dwelt in it;
[m]You, O God, provided from Your goodness for the poor.
11 The Lord gave the word;
Great *was* the company of those who proclaimed *it:*
12 "Kings[n] of armies flee, they flee,
And she who remains at home divides the spoil.
13 [o]Though you lie down among the sheepfolds,
[p]*You will be* like the wings of a dove covered with silver,
And her feathers with yellow gold."

* **67:title** Hebrew *neginoth* * **68:4** Masoretic Text reads *deserts;* Targum reads *heavens* (compare verse 34 and Isaiah 19:1).

67:1 ***His face to shine.*** In the language of Aaron's benediction (Num. 6:24–26), the psalmist calls for God to smile on His people.

67:2 ***known on earth.*** From the beginning God had intended to bring His blessing to all nations, in fulfillment of the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:3). This passage anticipates the thrust of world mission that is found in the New Testament (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 1:8).

67:6 ***yield her increase.*** The coming of God's kingdom on earth will be marked by a magnificent increase in production. The curse on the land (Gen. 3:17–19; Rom. 8:22) will be lifted at that time.

68:1 ***Let God arise.*** This psalm is based in part on the Song of Deborah in Judges 5. The presence of the wicked on the earth is an assault on God's holiness and a constant threat to the righteous. Only God's mercy compels Him to delay His judgment (75:2).

68:5–6 ***father.*** The view of God as Father is not as fully developed in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament. This passage affords some insight into the character of God as Father. He is not seen in these verses as the Almighty God destroying His foes. He is pictured rather as the Father helping His children in need. He delights in kindly works which bring a happy existence to His children.

68:11 ***the company of those who proclaimed.*** This may refer to the women who gave praise to God under the direction of Miriam (Ex. 15:20–21).

67:1 [a] Num. 6:25 **67:2** [b] Acts 18:25 [c] Titus 2:11 **67:4** [d] [Ps. 96:10, 13; 98:9] **67:6** [e] Lev. 26:4 **68:1** [a] Num. 10:35 **68:2** [b] [Is. 9:18] [c] Mic. 1:4 **68:3** [d] Ps. 32:11 **68:4** [e] Deut. 33:26 [f] [Ex. 6:3] **68:5** [g] [Ps. 10:14, 18; 146:9] **68:6** [h] Ps. 107:4–7 [i] Acts 12:6–11 [j] Ps. 107:34 **68:7** [k] Ex. 13:21 **68:9** [l] Deut. 11:11 **68:10** [m] Deut. 26:5 **68:12** [n] Josh. 10:16 **68:13** [o] Ps. 81:6 [p] Ps. 105:37

14 [q]When the Almighty scattered kings in it,
It was *white* as snow in Zalmon.
15 A mountain of God *is* the mountain of Bashan;
A mountain *of many* peaks *is* the mountain of Bashan.
16 Why do you fume with envy, you mountains of *many* peaks?
[r]*This is* the mountain *which* God desires to dwell in;
Yes, the LORD will dwell *in it* forever.
17 [s]The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand,
Even thousands of thousands;
The Lord is among them *as in* Sinai, in the Holy *Place*.
18 [t]You have ascended on high,
[u]You have led captivity captive;
[v]You have received gifts among men,
Even *from* [w]the rebellious,
[x]That the LORD God might dwell *there*.
19 Blessed *be* the Lord,
Who daily loads us *with benefits*,
The God of our salvation! *Selah*
20 Our God *is* the God of salvation;
And [y]to GOD the Lord *belong* escapes from death.
21 But [z]God will wound the head of His enemies,
[a]The hairy scalp of the one who still goes on in his trespasses.
22 The Lord said, "I will bring [b]back from Bashan,
I will bring *them* back [c]from the depths of the sea,
23 [d]That your foot may crush *them** in blood,
[e]And the tongues of your dogs *may have* their portion from *your* enemies."
24 They have seen Your procession, O God,
The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.
25 [f]The singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after;
Among *them were* the maidens playing timbrels.
26 Bless God in the congregations,
The Lord, from [g]the fountain of Israel.
27 [h]There *is* little Benjamin, their leader,
The princes of Judah *and* their company,
The princes of Zebulun *and* the princes of Naphtali.
28 Your God has [i]commanded* your strength;
Strengthen, O God, what You have done for us.
29 Because of Your temple at Jerusalem,
[j]Kings will bring presents to You.
30 Rebuke the beasts of the reeds,
[k]The herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples,
Till everyone [l]submits himself with pieces of silver.
Scatter the peoples *who* delight in war.
31 [m]Envoys will come out of Egypt;
[n]Ethiopia will quickly [o]stretch out her hands to God.
32 Sing to God, you [p]kingdoms of the earth;
Oh, sing praises to the Lord, *Selah*
33 To Him [q]who rides on the heaven of heavens, *which were* of old!
Indeed, He sends out His voice, a [r]mighty voice.
34 [s]Ascribe strength to God;
His excellence *is* over Israel,
And His strength *is* in the clouds.
35 O God, [t]*You are* more awesome than Your holy places.
The God of Israel *is* He who gives strength and power to *His* people.

Blessed *be* God!

Psalm 69

An Urgent Plea for Help in Trouble

To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Lilies."* *A Psalm* of David.

1 Save me, O God!
For [a]the waters have come up to *my* neck.

* **68:23** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *you may dip your foot*. * **68:28** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *Command, O God*. * **69:title** Hebrew *Shoshannim*

68:14 ***the Almighty.*** This translates the name "Shaddai," a title that refers to the majesty and strength of the Lord (91:1).

68:18 ***You have led captivity captive.*** Paul quotes this verse in Ephesians 4:8, applying it to Jesus Christ.

received gifts. When God delivered His people from Egypt, He brought them out with great treasures from the Egyptians (Ex. 12:35–36). These gifts were used by the people of Israel to build the tabernacle (Ex. 35:20–29), where the Lord promised to dwell.

68:29 ***Kings will bring presents to You.*** Royal guests came to Solomon with gifts (1 Kin. 10:1–10); but the ultimate prophetic fulfillment of this verse was in the kings who came to Jerusalem to bring gifts to the infant Jesus (Matt. 2:1–12). One day all kings will show their obedience and humility before Jesus, the great King (2:10–12; 76:11).

69:1 ***the waters have come up to my neck.*** This highly messianic psalm presents a remarkable description of

68:14 [q] Josh. 10:10 **68:16** [r] [Deut. 12:5] **68:17** [s] Deut. 33:2 **68:18** [t] Eph. 4:8 [u] Judg. 5:12 [v] Acts 2:4, 33; 10:44–46 [w] [1 Tim. 1:13] [x] Ps. 78:60 **68:20** [y] [Deut. 32:39] **68:21** [z] Hab. 3:13 [a] Ps. 55:23 **68:22** [b] Num. 21:33 [c] Ex. 14:22 **68:23** [d] Ps. 58:10 [e] 1 Kin. 21:19 **68:25** [f] 1 Chr. 13:8 **68:26** [g] Deut. 33:28 **68:27** [h] 1 Sam. 9:21 **68:28** [i] Is. 26:12 **68:29** [j] Ps. 45:12; 72:10 **68:30** [k] Ps. 22:12 [l] 2 Sam. 8:2 **68:31** [m] Is. 19:19–23 [n] Is. 45:14 [o] Ps. 44:20 **68:32** [p] [Ps. 67:3, 4] **68:33** [q] Ps. 18:10 [r] Ps. 46:6 **68:34** [s] Ps. 29:1 **68:35** [t] Ps. 76:12 **69:1** [a] Jon. 2:5

2 [b]I sink in deep mire,
Where *there is* no standing;
I have come into deep waters,
Where the floods overflow me.
3 [c]I am weary with my crying;
My throat is dry;
[d]My eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 Those who [e]hate me without a cause
Are more than the hairs of my head;
They are mighty who would destroy me,
Being my enemies wrongfully;
Though I have stolen nothing,
I *still* must restore *it*.

5 O God, You know my foolishness;
And my sins are not hidden from You.
6 Let not those who wait for You,
O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed because of me;
Let not those who seek You be confounded because of me,
O God of Israel.
7 Because for Your sake I have borne reproach;
Shame has covered my face.
8 [f]I have become a stranger to my brothers,
And an alien to my mother's children;
9 [g]Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up,
[h]And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.
10 When I wept *and chastened* my soul with fasting,
That became my reproach.
11 I also made sackcloth my garment;
I became a byword to them.
12 Those who sit in the gate speak against me,
And I *am* the song of the [i]drunkards.

13 But as for me, my prayer *is* to You,
O LORD, *in* the acceptable time;
O God, in the multitude of Your mercy,
Hear me in the truth of Your salvation.
14 Deliver me out of the mire,
And let me not sink;
Let me be delivered from those who hate me,
And out of the deep waters.
15 Let not the floodwater overflow me,
Nor let the deep swallow me up;
And let not the pit shut its mouth on me.

16 Hear me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness *is* good;
Turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies.
17 And do not hide Your face from Your servant,
For I am in trouble;
Hear me speedily.
18 Draw near to my soul, *and* redeem it;
Deliver me because of my enemies.

19 You know [j]my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor;
My adversaries *are* all before You.
20 Reproach has broken my heart,
And I am full of heaviness;
[k]I looked *for someone* to take pity, but *there was* none;
And for [l]comforters, but I found none.
21 They also gave me gall for my food,
[m]And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

22 [n]Let their table become a snare before them,
And their well-being a trap.
23 [o]Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see;
And make their loins shake continually.
24 [p]Pour out Your indignation upon them,
And let Your wrathful anger take hold of them.
25 [q]Let their dwelling place be desolate;
Let no one live in their tents.
26 For they persecute the *ones* [r]You have struck,

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the suffering of Jesus Christ. Psalm 22 describes Jesus' physical sufferings, while Psalm 69 focuses more on His emotional and spiritual suffering. Yet, like Psalm 22, this psalm was written by David approximately a thousand years before the events it describes. Both psalms begin with the sufferings of David but have their full meaning in the sufferings of Jesus. For these reasons, the apostles in the New Testament acknowledge that David was a prophet of God (Acts 2:30).

69:4 *without a cause.* The Savior suffered affliction even though He was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and so no amount of holiness in His followers can prevent the enmity of a wicked world (John 15:19). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus promised blessing and a great reward to His followers who suffered for the sake of righteousness, a cause which is identified with Christ's own person (Matt. 5:10–11). Peter must have taken seriously Jesus' words on this subject, for he reminds believers that if they are reviled for the name of Christ, it is a blessing which indicates that the Spirit of God is resting upon them (1 Pet. 4:14).

69:9 *zeal for Your house has eaten me up.* Like Phinehas in Numbers 25, David describes himself as a zealot for the house of the Lord. Jesus' cleansing of the temple was a fulfillment of these words (John 2:17).

69:21 *gall.* "Gall" is commonly employed in Scripture as a synonym for poison, or bitterness. When Jesus hung on the cross, He actually was offered some sour wine mixed with gall (probably the bitter herb myrrh), a drink given occasionally to relieve the crucified person's thirst and pain (Matt. 27:34).

69:25 *Let their dwelling place be desolate.* These words were fulfilled in Judas Iscariot. See Acts 1:20, in which the words of this verse are joined to the words of 109:8.

69:2 [b] Ps. 40:2 **69:3** [c] Ps. 6:6 [d] Ps. 119:82, 123 **69:4** [e] John 15:25 **69:8** [f] Is. 53:3 **69:9** [g] John 2:17 [h] Rom. 15:3 **69:12** [i] Job 30:9 **69:19** [j] Ps. 22:6, 7 **69:20** [k] Is. 63:5 [l] Job 16:2 **69:21** [m] Matt. 27:34, 48 **69:22** [n] Rom. 11:9, 10 **69:23** [o] Is. 6:9, 10 **69:24** [p] [1 Thess. 2:16] **69:25** [q] Matt. 23:38 **69:26** [r] [Is. 53:4]

And talk of the grief of those You have wounded.
27 [s]Add iniquity to their iniquity,
[t]And let them not come into Your righteousness.
28 Let them [u]be blotted out of the book of the living,
[v]And not be written with the righteous.

29 But I *am* poor and sorrowful;
Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high.
30 [w]I will praise the name of God with a song,
And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.
31 [x]*This* also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bull,
Which has horns and hooves.
32 [y]The humble shall see *this and* be glad;
And you who seek God, [z]your hearts shall live.
33 For the LORD hears the poor,
And does not despise [a]His prisoners.

34 [b]Let heaven and earth praise Him,
The seas [c]and everything that moves in them.
35 [d]For God will save Zion
And build the cities of Judah,
That they may dwell there and possess it.
36 Also, [e]the descendants of His servants shall inherit it,
And those who love His name shall dwell in it.

Psalm 70

Prayer for Relief from Adversaries

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of David. [a]To bring to remembrance.

1 *Make haste*, [b]O God, to deliver me!
Make haste to help me, O LORD!

2 [c]Let them be ashamed and confounded
Who seek my life;
Let them be turned back* and confused
Who desire my hurt.
3 [d]Let them be turned back because of their shame,
Who say, "Aha, aha!"

4 Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
And let those who love Your salvation say continually,
"Let God be magnified!"

5 [e]But I *am* poor and needy;
[f]Make haste to me, O God!
You *are* my help and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not delay.

Psalm 71

God the Rock of Salvation

1 In [a]You, O LORD, I put my trust;
Let me never be put to shame.
2 [b]Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape;
[c]Incline Your ear to me, and save me.
3 [d]Be my strong refuge,
To which I may resort continually;
You have given the [e]commandment to save me,
For You *are* my rock and my fortress.

4 [f]Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked,
Out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.
5 For You are [g]my hope, O Lord GOD;
You are my trust from my youth.
6 [h]By You I have been upheld from birth;
You are He who took me out of my mother's womb.
My praise *shall be* continually of You.

7 [i]I have become as a wonder to many,
But You *are* my strong refuge.
8 Let [j]my mouth be filled *with* Your praise
And with Your glory all the day.

9 Do not cast me off in the time of old age;
Do not forsake me when my strength fails.

* **70:2** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *be appalled* (compare 40:15).

70:2 *be ashamed and confounded.* David prays that those who rejoice in his misery will be proven wrong in their assumption that the Lord is unable to help His people. In this way, the Lord's deliverance of David will result in God's name being glorified—both by the joy of God's people and the shame of His enemies.
71:2 *Your righteousness.* The psalmist is concerned with his own plight and also with the character of God. The psalmist's point is that God could display His righteousness by answering the needs of the psalmist, whose life had been lived in constant trust in God.
71:7 *a wonder.* The poet declares that the work of God in his life has made him a special sign to the people, similar to the great miracles of God through Moses and Aaron in Egypt (Ex. 7:3; 11:9).

69:27 [s] [Rom. 1:28] [t] [Is. 26:10] **69:28** [u] [Ex. 32:32] [v] Ezek. 13:9 **69:30** [w] [Ps. 28:7] **69:31** [x] Ps. 50:13, 14, 23; 51:16 **69:32** [y] Ps. 34:2 [z] Ps. 22:26 **69:33** [a] Eph. 3:1 **69:34** [b] Ps. 96:11 [c] Is. 55:12 **69:35** [d] Is. 44:26 **69:36** [e] Ps. 102:28 **70:title** [a] Ps. 38:title **70:1** [b] Ps. 40:13–17 **70:2** [c] Ps. 35:4, 26 **70:3** [d] Ps. 40:15 **70:5** [e] Ps. 72:12, 13 [f] Ps. 141:1 **71:1** [a] Ps. 25:2, 3 **71:2** [b] Ps. 31:1 [c] Ps. 17:6 **71:3** [d] Ps. 31:2, 3 [e] Ps. 44:4 **71:4** [f] Ps. 140:1, 3 **71:5** [g] Jer. 14:8; 17:7, 13, 17; 50:7 **71:6** [h] Ps. 22:9, 10 **71:7** [i] Is. 8:18 **71:8** [j] Ps. 35:28

10 For my enemies speak against me;
And those who lie in wait for my life
[k]take counsel together,
11 Saying, "God has forsaken him;
Pursue and take him, for *there is* none
to deliver *him*."

12 [l]O God, do not be far from me;
O my God, [m]make haste to help me!
13 Let them be confounded *and*
consumed
Who are adversaries of my life;
Let them be covered *with* reproach
and dishonor
Who seek my hurt.

14 But I will hope continually,
And will praise You yet more and
more.
15 My mouth shall tell of Your
righteousness
And Your salvation all the day,
For I do not know *their* limits.
16 I will go in the strength of the Lord
GOD;
I will make mention of Your
righteousness, of Yours only.

17 O God, You have taught me from my
[n]youth;
And to this *day* I declare Your
wondrous works.
18 Now also [o]when *I am* old and
grayheaded,
O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to *this*
generation,
Your power to everyone *who* is to
come.

19 Also [p]Your righteousness, O God, *is*
very high,
You who have done great things;
[q]O God, who *is* like You?
20 [r]*You*, who have shown me great and
severe troubles,
[s]Shall revive me again,
And bring me up again from the
depths of the earth.
21 You shall increase my greatness,
And comfort me on every side.

22 Also [t]with the lute I will praise You—
And Your faithfulness, O my God!
To You I will sing with the harp,
O [u]Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I
sing to You,
And [v]my soul, which You have
redeemed.
24 My tongue also shall talk of Your
righteousness all the day long;
For they are confounded,
For they are brought to shame
Who seek my hurt.

Psalm 72

Glory and Universality of the Messiah's Reign

A Psalm [a]of Solomon.

1 Give the king Your judgments,
O God,
And Your righteousness to the king's
Son.
2 [b]He will judge Your people with
righteousness,
And Your poor with justice.
3 [c]The mountains will bring peace to the
people,
And the little hills, by righteousness.
4 [d]He will bring justice to the poor of the
people;
He will save the children of the needy,
And will break in pieces the
oppressor.

5 They shall fear You*
[e]As long as the sun and moon endure,
Throughout all generations.
6 [f]He shall come down like rain upon the
grass before mowing,
Like showers *that* water the earth.
7 In His days the righteous shall
flourish,
[g]And abundance of peace,
Until the moon is no more.

8 [h]He shall have dominion also from sea
to sea,
And from the River to the ends of the
earth.
9 [i]Those who dwell in the wilderness
will bow before Him,
[j]And His enemies will lick the dust.

* **72:5** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *They shall continue.*

71:22 ***the lute . . . the harp.*** The psalmist praised God with music, both vocal and instrumental. His worship came from his inner being ("my soul," v. 23) which was filled with praises to the living God. No matter what form our worship takes, it is worthless unless it comes from the heart.

72:1 ***Give the king Your judgments.*** Solomon's prayer for his own godly reign is an intensely messianic poem, speaking in ideal terms of the coming of the great King. The psalm calls for a good king to govern Israel under God's blessing. Ultimately this king is the Savior Jesus.

72:8 ***He shall have dominion also from sea to sea.*** The promises of God to Abraham included a promise that his descendants would have dominion over the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:18–21). These verses expand the geographical dimensions to include the entire earth. ***the River.*** This refers to the Euphrates.

71:10 [k] 2 Sam. 17:1 **71:12** [l] Ps. 35:22 [m] Ps. 70:1
71:17 [n] Deut. 4:5; 6:7 **71:18** [o] Is. 46:4 **71:19** [p] Ps. 57:10 [q] Ps. 35:10 **71:20** [r] Ps. 60:3 [s] Hos. 6:1, 2 **71:22** [t] Ps. 92:1–3 [u] 2 Kin. 19:22 **71:23** [v] Ps. 103:4 **72:title** [a] Ps. 127:title **72:2** [b] Is. 9:7; 11:2–5; 32:1] **72:3** [c] Ps. 85:10 **72:4** [d] Is. 11:4 **72:5** [e] Ps. 72:7, 17; 89:36 **72:6** [f] Hos. 6:3 **72:7** [g] Is. 2:4 **72:8** [h] Ex. 23:31 **72:9** [i] Is. 23:13 [j] Is. 49:23

10 [k]The kings of Tarshish and of the isles
Will bring presents;
The kings of Sheba and Seba
Will offer gifts.
11 [l]Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him;
All nations shall serve Him.

12 For He [m]will deliver the needy when he cries,
The poor also, and *him* who has no helper.
13 He will spare the poor and needy,
And will save the souls of the needy.
14 He will redeem their life from oppression and violence;
And [n]precious shall be their blood in His sight.

15 And He shall live;
And the gold of [o]Sheba will be given to Him;
Prayer also will be made for Him continually,
And daily He shall be praised.

16 There will be an abundance of grain in the earth,
On the top of the mountains;
Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon;
[p]And *those* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 [q]His name shall endure forever;
His name shall continue as long as the sun.
And [r]*men* shall be blessed in Him;
[s]All nations shall call Him blessed.

18 [t]Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel,
[u]Who only does wondrous things!
19 And [v]blessed *be* His glorious name forever!
[w]And let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory.
Amen and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

BOOK THREE

Psalms 73–89

Psalm 73

The Tragedy of the Wicked, and the Blessedness of Trust in God

A Psalm of [a]Asaph.

1 Truly God *is* good to Israel,
To such as are pure in heart.
2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;
My steps had nearly [b]slipped.
3 [c]For I *was* envious of the boastful,
When I saw the prosperity of the [d]wicked.

4 For *there are* no pangs in their death,
But their strength *is* firm.
5 [e]They *are* not in trouble *as other* men,
Nor are they plagued like *other* men.
6 Therefore pride serves as their necklace;
Violence covers them [f]*like* a garment.
7 [g]Their eyes bulge* with abundance;
They have more than heart could wish.

* **73:7** Targum reads *face bulges;* Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *iniquity bulges.*

72:14 ***He will redeem their life.*** This verse points to Jesus' death on the cross, when He paid the price to redeem us from the oppression of sin.
72:17 ***His name shall endure forever.*** The name of the great King will be regarded as the greatest in the universe. Paul speaks this way of Jesus' name in Philippians 2:9–11.
72:20 ***The prayers of David . . . are ended.*** The superscription of this psalm attributes it to Solomon. It is possible that Solomon wrote this poem as the close of a collection of his father's psalms. Other psalms were later added to this original collection.
73:1 Walking in the Spirit—An important prerequisite to walking in the Spirit is the confession of sin. Sin must be confessed in order to restore fellowship and to continue receiving God's forgiveness (1 John 1:5–10). Confession means that we agree with God about our sin. That involves much more than simply acknowledging the sin. Confession requires an attitude of sorrow for the sin and a willingness to turn from it. It does not mean that we will never commit the same sin again, but it does mean that the attitude of repentance towards the sin is present.

Confession should be made at the moment the Christian becomes aware of sin. The Scriptures actually mention two specific times for confession: before the close of the day (Eph. 4:26) and before the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:27–32). Failure to do the latter is a special cause for discipline from the Lord.

Confession of sin should involve only those who have knowledge of the sin. This means that private sins should be confessed privately, sins between individuals confessed between those involved (Matt. 5:23–24), and public sins confessed publicly (Matt. 18:17). Public confession is normally made for the edification of the church (1 Cor. 14:26).
73:3 ***For I was envious.*** This psalmist is open with the readers concerning his own weakness and doubts; he also shows that he came to the right conclusion in the end: to trust God.

72:10 [k] 2 Chr. 9:21 **72:11** [l] Is. 49:23 **72:12** [m] Job 29:12 **72:14** [n] [Ps. 116:15] **72:15** [o] Is. 60:6 **72:16** [p] 1 Kin. 4:20 **72:17** [q] [Ps. 89:36] [r] [Gen. 12:3] [s] Luke 1:48 **72:18** [t] 1 Chr. 29:10 [u] Ex. 15:11 **72:19** [v] [Neh. 9:5] [w] Num. 14:21 **73:title** [a] Ps. 50:title **73:2** [b] Job 12:5 **73:3** [c] Ps. 37:1, 7 [d] Job 21:5–16 **73:5** [e] Job 21:9 **73:6** [f] Ps. 109:18 **73:7** [g] Jer. 5:28

8 [h]They scoff and speak wickedly
concerning oppression;
They [i]speak loftily.
9 They set their mouth [j]against the heavens,
And their tongue walks through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return here,
[k]And waters of a full *cup* are drained by them.
11 And they say, [l]"How does God know?
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"
12 Behold, these *are* the ungodly,
Who are always at ease;
They increase *in* riches.
13 Surely I have cleansed my heart *in* [m]vain,
And washed my hands in innocence.
14 For all day long I have been plagued,
And chastened every morning.

15 If I had said, "I will speak thus,"
Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.
16 When I thought *how* to understand this,
It *was* too painful for me—
17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their [n]end.

18 Surely [o]You set them in slippery places;
You cast them down to destruction.
19 Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment!
They are utterly consumed with terrors.
20 As a dream when *one* awakes,
So, Lord, when You awake,
You shall despise their image.

21 Thus my heart was grieved,
And I was vexed in my mind.
22 [p]I *was* so foolish and ignorant;
I was *like* a beast before You.

23 Nevertheless I *am* continually with You;
You hold *me* by my right hand.
24 [q]You will guide me with Your counsel,
And afterward receive me *to* glory.

25 [r]Whom have I in heaven *but You?*
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.
26 [s]My flesh and my heart fail;
But God *is* the strength of my heart and my [t]portion forever.

27 For indeed, [u]those who are far from You shall perish;
You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.
28 But *it is* good for me to [v]draw near to God;
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD,
That I may [w]declare all Your works.

Psalm 74

A Plea for Relief from Oppressors

A Contemplation* of Asaph.

1 O God, why have You cast *us* off forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?
2 Remember Your congregation, *which* You have purchased of old,
The tribe of Your inheritance, *which* You have redeemed—
This Mount Zion where You have dwelt.
3 Lift up Your feet to the perpetual desolations.
The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary.
4 [a]Your enemies roar in the midst of Your meeting place;
[b]They set up their banners *for* signs.

* **74:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

73:12 *always at ease.* It often does appear that ungodly people get away with everything, ending up on the top of the heap and leaving the godly wondering whether their own acts of righteous living are without meaning or purpose.

73:15 *would have been untrue.* Even as he struggled with the apparent lack of reward for righteousness, Asaph knew in his heart that such thoughts were wrong. Even when we can't understand the surface facts, God's witness in our spirits lets us know when we are moving down the wrong track.

73:22 *like a beast before You.* An animal has no sense of eternity or divine perspective. When the psalmist wondered about the value of righteousness, his thinking was based only on the present, like an animal, rather than understanding the bigger picture as a being with an eternal soul.

73:28 *it is good for me to draw near to God.* There are those who may enjoy great wealth and notoriety today, but nothing they have or do will last forever. Compared to a relationship with the living God, nothing else matters.

74:1 *anger.* The Babylonian destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. occasioned a crisis of faith among the ancient covenant people. Since the temple served as the external sign of God's covenant with Israel, its destruction may have caused the impression that God's promise to David had been canceled (2 Sam. 7:12–14). The psalmist is deeply conscious that God is angry with the nation, and the reason for His anger is unmistakably clear. The people had forsaken the covenant, and worshiped and served other gods (Deut. 29:25–26). God's anger reminds us of His eternal hatred of all unrighteousness. It is the holiness of God stirred into an appropriate response to sin.

73:8 [h] Ps. 53:1 [i] 2 Pet. 2:18 **73:9** [j] Rev. 13:6 **73:10** [k] [Ps. 75:8] **73:11** [l] Job 22:13 **73:13** [m] Job 21:15; 35:3 **73:17** [n] [Ps. 37:38; 55:23] **73:18** [o] Ps. 35:6 **73:22** [p] Ps. 92:6 **73:24** [q] Ps. 32:8; 48:14 **73:25** [r] [Phil. 3:8] **73:26** [s] Ps. 84:2 [t] Ps. 16:5 **73:27** [u] [Ps. 119:155] **73:28** [v] [Heb. 10:22] [w] 2 Cor. 4:13 **74:4** [a] Lam. 2:7 [b] Num. 2:2

5 They seem like men who lift up
Axes among the thick trees.
6 And now they break down its carved
work, all at once,
With axes and hammers.
7 They have set fire to Your sanctuary;
They have defiled the dwelling place
of Your name to the ground.
8 [c]They said in their hearts,
"Let us destroy them altogether."
They have burned up all the meeting
places of God in the land.

9 We do not see our signs;
[d]*There is* no longer any prophet;
Nor *is there* any among us who knows
how long.
10 O God, how long will the adversary
reproach?
Will the enemy blaspheme Your name
forever?
11 [e]Why do You withdraw Your hand,
even Your right hand?
Take it out of Your bosom and destroy
them.
12 For [f]God *is* my King from of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the
earth.
13 [g]You divided the sea by Your strength;
You broke the heads of the sea
serpents in the waters.
14 You broke the heads of Leviathan in
pieces,
And gave him *as* food to the people
inhabiting the wilderness.
15 [h]You broke open the fountain and the
flood;
[i]You dried up mighty rivers.
16 The day *is* Yours, the night also *is*
[j]Yours;
[k]You have prepared the light and the sun.
17 You have [l]set all the borders of the
earth;
[m]You have made summer and winter.

18 Remember this, *that* the enemy has
reproached, O LORD,
And *that* a foolish people has
blasphemed Your name.
19 Oh, do not deliver the life of Your
turtledove to the wild beast!
Do not forget the life of Your poor
forever.

20 [n]Have respect to the covenant;
For the dark places of the earth are
full of the haunts of cruelty.
21 Oh, do not let the oppressed return
ashamed!
Let the poor and needy praise Your
name.

22 Arise, O God, plead Your own cause;
Remember how the foolish man
reproaches You daily.
23 Do not forget the voice of Your
enemies;
The tumult of those who rise up
against You increases continually.

Psalm 75

Thanksgiving for God's Righteous Judgment

To the Chief Musician. Set to [a]"Do Not Destroy."* A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

1 We give thanks to You, O God, we give
thanks!
For Your wondrous works declare *that*
Your name is near.

2 "When I choose the proper time,
I will judge uprightly.
3 The earth and all its inhabitants are
dissolved;
I set up its pillars firmly. *Selah*

4 "I said to the boastful, 'Do not deal
boastfully,'
And to the wicked, [b]'Do not lift up the
horn.
5 Do not lift up your horn on high;
Do *not* speak with a stiff neck.'"

6 For exaltation *comes* neither from the
east
Nor from the west nor from the south.
7 But [c]God *is* the Judge:
[d]He puts down one,
And exalts another.
8 For [e]in the hand of the LORD *there is* a
cup,
And the wine is red;

* **75:title** Hebrew *Al Tashcheth*

74:12 *my King from of old.* The Lord is King by virtue of His creation of the earth (Ps. 93). He is King because of His special relationship with Israel (44:4; 99:1–3). And He is the coming King who will reign over all (96:13; 97:1–6; 98:6–9).
74:14 *Leviathan.* This creature was used to poetically describe various evil forces over which God has ultimate control and victory. Eventually the Leviathan (Job 41:1–10) became a symbol for Satan (Is. 27:1) who is "the dragon, that serpent of old" (Rev. 20:2).
74:15 *dried up mighty rivers.* God enabled His people to cross over the Red Sea (Ex. 14) and the River Jordan (Josh. 3).
75:2 *When I choose the proper time.* God will not be rushed, even by His devoted followers. When we grow impatient to see justice done, we must remember that God has a better sense of time than we do.
75:8 *a cup.* This is not a cup of blessing, but of the Lord's wrath. The biblical image of wine and judgment goes back to Jacob's blessing on Judah (Gen. 49:11) and is referred to in Christ's judgment as depicted in Revelation 19:13–15.

74:8 [c] Ps. 83:4 **74:9** [d] Amos 8:11 **74:11** [e] Lam. 2:3 **74:12** [f] Ps. 44:4 **74:13** [g] Ex. 14:21 **74:15** [h] Ex. 17:5, 6 [i] Josh. 2:10; 3:13 **74:16** [j] Job 38:12 [k] Gen. 1:14–18 **74:17** [l] Acts 17:26 [m] Gen. 8:22 **74:20** [n] Lev. 26:44, 45 **75:title** [a] Ps. 57:title **75:4** [b] [1 Sam. 2:3] **75:7** [c] Ps. 50:6 [d] 1 Sam. 2:7 **75:8** [e] Jer. 25:15

It is fully mixed, and He pours it out;
Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth
Drain *and* drink down.

9 But I will declare forever,
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 "All[f] the horns of the wicked I will also cut off,
But [g]the horns of the righteous shall be [h]exalted."

Psalm 76

The Majesty of God in Judgment

To the Chief Musician. On stringed instruments.* A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.

1 In [a]Judah God *is* known;
His name *is* great in Israel.
2 In Salem* also is His tabernacle,
And His dwelling place in Zion.
3 There He broke the arrows of the bow,
The shield and sword of battle. *Selah*

4 You *are* more glorious and excellent
[b]*Than* the mountains of prey.
5 [c]The stouthearted were plundered;
[d]They have sunk into their sleep;
And none of the mighty men have found the use of their hands.
6 [e]At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
Both the chariot and horse were cast into a dead sleep.

7 You, Yourself, *are* to be feared;
And [f]who may stand in Your presence
When once You are angry?
8 [g]You caused judgment to be heard from heaven;
[h]The earth feared and was still,
9 When God [i]arose to judgment,
To deliver all the oppressed of the earth. *Selah*

10 [j]Surely the wrath of man shall praise You;
With the remainder of wrath You shall gird Yourself.

11 [k]Make vows to the LORD your God, and pay *them;*
[l]Let all who are around Him bring presents to Him who ought to be feared.
12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes;
[m]*He is* awesome to the kings of the earth.

Psalm 77

The Consoling Memory of God's Redemptive Works

To the Chief Musician. [a]To Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

1 I cried out to God with my voice—
To God with my voice;
And He gave ear to me.
2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord;
My hand was stretched out in the night without ceasing;
My soul refused to be comforted.
3 I remembered God, and was troubled;
I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. *Selah*

4 You hold my eyelids *open;*
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
5 I have considered the days of old,
The years of ancient times.
6 I call to remembrance my song in the night;
I meditate within my heart,
And my spirit makes diligent search.

7 Will the Lord cast off forever?
And will He be favorable no more?
8 Has His mercy ceased forever?
Has *His* [b]promise failed forevermore?
9 Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has He in anger shut up His tender mercies? *Selah*

10 And I said, "This *is* my anguish;
But I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High."

* **76:title** Hebrew *neginoth* * **76:2** That is, Jerusalem

76:2 *Salem.* Salem is the shortened form of the name Jerusalem.
76:6 *chariot and horse.* This verse is referring to the defeat of the army of Pharaoh (Ex. 14:13–29; 15).
76:7 *to be feared.* For the righteous, the fear of God is a response of awe, wonder, adoration, and worship. For the wicked, the fear of God is terror, for there is no escape from Him (14:5).
76:11 *bring presents.* As one might bring gifts to a king, so the righteous should bring their gifts to God—the ultimate gift being the dedication of their lives to the service of God (Rom. 12:1).
77:3 *remembered . . . troubled.* What he knew of God contrasted with what he was experiencing. The more the psalmist thought about these things, the more troubled he became.
77:7–8 *Will the Lord cast off forever?* Even though we have put our faith in Christ and committed ourselves to obeying His will, this doesn't automatically guarantee total and perpetual immunity from trouble. There will be seasons when God seems remote and we begin to wonder about God's unfailing love. It is in these times that we must hold most firmly to what we know about God, rather than what we feel.

75:10 [f] Jer. 48:25 [g] Ps. 89:17; 148:14 [h] 1 Sam. 2:1
76:1 [a] Ps. 48:1, 3 **76:4** [b] Ezek. 38:12 **76:5** [c] Is. 10:12; 46:12 [d] Ps. 13:3 **76:6** [e] Ex. 15:1–21 **76:7** [f] [Nah. 1:6] **76:8** [g] Ex. 19:9 [h] 2 Chr. 20:29 **76:9** [i] [Ps. 9:7–9]
76:10 [j] Rom. 9:17 **76:11** [k] [Eccl. 5:4–6] [l] 2 Chr. 32:22, 23
76:12 [m] Ps. 68:35 **77:title** [a] Ps. 39:title **77:8** [b] [2 Pet. 3:8, 9]

11 I will remember the works of the LORD;
Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.
12 I will also meditate on all Your work,
And talk of Your deeds.
13 Your way, O God, *is* in the [c]sanctuary;
Who *is* so great a God as *our* God?
14 You *are* the God who does wonders;
You have declared Your strength among the peoples.
15 You have with *Your* arm redeemed Your people,
The sons of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*
16 The waters saw You, O God;
The waters saw You, they were [d]afraid;
The depths also trembled.
17 The clouds poured out water;
The skies sent out a sound;
Your arrows also flashed about.
18 The voice of Your thunder *was* in the whirlwind;
The lightnings lit up the world;
The earth trembled and shook.
19 Your way *was* in the sea,
Your path in the great waters,
And Your footsteps were not known.
20 You led Your people like a flock
By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Psalm 78

God's Kindness to Rebellious Israel

A [a]Contemplation* of Asaph.

1 Give ear, O my people, *to* my law;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
2 I will open my mouth in a [b]parable;
I will utter dark sayings of old,
3 Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.
4 [c]We will not hide *them* from their children,
[d]Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,
And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.
5 For [e]He established a testimony in Jacob,
And appointed a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers,
That [f]they should make them known to their children;
6 [g]That the generation to come might know *them*,
The children *who* would be born,

* **78:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

God has neither forgotten to show mercy nor stifled His compassion.

77:11 *I will remember.* Asaph did not *feel* any more at peace, but he made a conscious decision to turn from his pain and focus his thoughts on the person, works, and wonders of God. When we are in distress, we often feel that it is our right to vent our frustrations and complaints as long as we still feel them, but God doesn't call us to be driven by feelings. Instead, we have to consciously decide to praise God, trusting that the feelings will follow.

77:20 *You led Your people like a flock.* Lost in contemplation of the greatness of God, the poet seems thoroughly distracted from his pain. He does not mention it again, not daring to compare it to the greatness of the Almighty.

78:1 *my law.* The psalmist uses the vocabulary of the wisdom school to establish himself. "My law" is the familiar word *Torah*. The wisdom writers used this word to indicate insight; their instruction is always in accord with the law of Moses (Prov. 1:8; 3:1; 4:2).

78:2 *dark sayings.* These are riddles, or instructions with a deeper meaning beyond the surface.

78:4 Israel's History—The biblical history of Israel covers 1,800 years and represents a marvelous panorama of God's gracious working through promise, miracle, blessing, and judgment. Israel begins as only a promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:2). For over four hundred years the people of Israel maintain their belief in that promise while in bondage in Egypt. Finally, in God's perfect timing, He brings the nation out of Egypt with the greatest series of miracles recorded in the Old Testament (Ex. 7–15). This event is called the Exodus, meaning a *going out*. It is the formative event in the history of the nation. It was a great act of redemption and in the Old Testament is the foremost example of God's care for His people (Ps. 77:14–20; 78:12–55; Hos. 11:1).

Once God had redeemed Israel He established His covenant with them at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:5–8). From that point on He has been their God and they His people. The covenant foretells gracious blessings for obedience and severe judgments for disobedience. The rest of Israel's history demonstrates the certainty of that prophecy. Throughout periods of conquest, judges, monarchy, exile, restoration and Gentile domination, Israel was blessed when she obeyed and judged when she disobeyed. The nation is finally destroyed in A.D. 70, although this event is not described in the New Testament. Many prophecies appear to promise a future redemption (Rom. 11:26).

There are at least three good reasons to study the history of Israel:

1. It sets forth examples to be followed or avoided (1 Cor. 10:6).
2. It shows God's control of historical events (Ps. 78).
3. It serves as a model for all ages of God's kindness and mercy towards His people (Ps. 78).

78:5–7 *testimony.* The history of Israel is told in a series of cycles with steps in each cycle ranging from a firm, dependent hope in God to deep apostasy. One generation would seek the works of God, hope in Him, and follow Him. The next generation would forget the mighty works of God and depart from reliance and confidence in Him. To avert this endless round of making the same mistakes, God

77:13 [c] Ps. 73:17 **77:16** [d] Ex. 14:21 **78:title** [a] Ps. 74:title
78:2 [b] Matt. 13:34, 35 **78:4** [c] Deut. 4:9; 6:7 [d] Ex. 13:8, 14
78:5 [e] Ps. 147:19 [f] Deut. 4:9; 11:19 **78:6** [g] Ps. 102:18

That they may arise and declare *them*
to their children,
7 That they may set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;
8 And [h]may not be like their fathers,
[i]A stubborn and rebellious generation,
A generation [j]*that* did not set its heart
aright,
And whose spirit was not faithful to
God.

9 The children of Ephraim, *being* armed
and carrying bows,
Turned back in the day of battle.
10 [k]They did not keep the covenant of
God;
They refused to walk in His law,
11 And [l]forgot His works
And His wonders that He had shown
them.

12 [m]Marvelous things He did in the sight of
their fathers,
In the land of Egypt, [n]*in* the field of
Zoan.
13 [o]He divided the sea and caused them to
pass through;
And [p]He made the waters stand up like
a heap.
14 [q]In the daytime also He led them with
the cloud,
And all the night with a light of fire.
15 [r]He split the rocks in the wilderness,
And gave *them* drink in abundance
like the depths.
16 He also brought [s]streams out of the
rock,
And caused waters to run down like
rivers.

17 But they sinned even more against
Him
By [t]rebelling against the Most High in
the wilderness.
18 And [u]they tested God in their heart
By asking for the food of their fancy.
19 [v]Yes, they spoke against God:
They said, "Can God prepare a table in
the wilderness?
20 [w]Behold, He struck the rock,
So that the waters gushed out,
And the streams overflowed.
Can He give bread also?
Can He provide meat for His people?"

21 Therefore the LORD heard *this* and
[x]was furious;
So a fire was kindled against Jacob,
And anger also came up against
Israel,
22 Because they [y]did not believe in God,
And did not trust in His salvation.
23 Yet He had commanded the clouds
above,
[z]And opened the doors of heaven,
24 [a]Had rained down manna on them to
eat,
And given them of the bread of
[b]heaven.
25 Men ate angels' food;
He sent them food to the full.

26 [c]He caused an east wind to blow in the
heavens;
And by His power He brought in the
south wind.
27 He also rained meat on them like the
dust,
Feathered fowl like the sand of the
seas;
28 And He let *them* fall in the midst of
their camp,
All around their dwellings.
29 [d]So they ate and were well filled,
For He gave them their own desire.
30 They were not deprived of their
craving;
But [e]while their food *was* still in their
mouths,
31 The wrath of God came against them,
And slew the stoutest of them,
And struck down the choice *men* of
Israel.

32 In spite of this [f]they still sinned,
And [g]did not believe in His wondrous
works.
33 [h]Therefore their days He consumed in
futility,
And their years in fear.

34 [i]When He slew them, then they sought
Him;
And they returned and sought
earnestly for God.
35 Then they remembered that [j]God *was*
their rock,
And the Most High God [k]their
Redeemer.
36 Nevertheless they [l]flattered Him with
their mouth,

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commanded His people to make His laws a regular part of their everyday lives (Deut. 6:4–9), so that they could not forget.

78:9 ***Ephraim . . . Turned back.*** The poet may be referring to Ephraim's conflict with Jephthah (Judg. 12:1–7).

78:29 ***He gave them their own desire.*** When we turn our hearts toward the Lord, our desires will change to match His will. Then He delights to give us our desires because they are right things which will lead to wholeness and goodness (37:4). Without God, we don't have the wisdom to know what we should long for.

78:8 [h] 2 Kin. 17:14 [i] Ex. 32:9 [j] Ps. 78:37 **78:10** [k] 2 Kin. 17:15 **78:11** [l] Ps. 106:13 **78:12** [m] Ex. 7–12 [n] Num. 13:22 **78:13** [o] Ex. 14:21 [p] Ex. 15:8 **78:14** [q] Ex. 13:21 **78:15** [r] Num. 20:11 **78:16** [s] Num. 20:8, 10, 11 **78:17** [t] Heb. 3:16 **78:18** [u] Ex. 16:2 **78:19** [v] Num. 11:4; 20:3; 21:5 **78:20** [w] Num. 20:11 **78:21** [x] Num. 11:1 **78:22** [y] [Heb. 3:18] **78:23** [z] [Mal. 3:10] **78:24** [a] Ex. 16:4 [b] John 6:31 **78:26** [c] Num. 11:31 **78:29** [d] Num. 11:19, 20 **78:30** [e] Num. 11:33 **78:32** [f] Num. 14:16, 17 [g] Num. 14:11 **78:33** [h] Num. 14:29, 35 **78:34** [i] [Hos. 5:15] **78:35** [j] [Deut. 32:4, 15] [k] Is. 41:14; 44:6; 63:9 **78:36** [l] Ezek. 33:31

And they lied to Him with their
tongue;
37 For their heart was not steadfast with
Him,
Nor were they faithful in His
covenant.
38 [m]But He, *being* full of [n]compassion,
forgave *their* iniquity,
And did not destroy *them.*
Yes, many a time [o]He turned His
anger away,
And [p]did not stir up all His wrath;
39 For [q]He remembered [r]that they *were*
but flesh,
[s]A breath that passes away and does
not come again.
40 How often they [t]provoked Him in the
wilderness,
And grieved Him in the desert!
41 Yes, [u]again and again they tempted
God,
And limited the Holy One of Israel.
42 They did not remember His power:
The day when He redeemed them from
the enemy,
43 When He worked His signs in Egypt,
And His wonders in the field of Zoan;
44 [v]Turned their rivers into blood,
And their streams, that they could not
drink.
45 [w]He sent swarms of flies among them,
which devoured them,
And [x]frogs, which destroyed them.
46 He also gave their crops to the
caterpillar,
And their labor to the [y]locust.
47 [z]He destroyed their vines with hail,
And their sycamore trees with frost.
48 He also gave up their [a]cattle to the
hail,
And their flocks to fiery lightning.
49 He cast on them the fierceness of His
anger,
Wrath, indignation, and trouble,
By sending angels of destruction
among them.
50 He made a path for His anger;
He did not spare their soul from death,
But gave their life over to the plague,
51 And destroyed all the [b]firstborn in
Egypt,
The first of *their* strength in the tents
of Ham.
52 But He [c]made His own people go forth
like sheep,
And guided them in the wilderness
like a flock;
53 And He [d]led them on safely, so that
they did not fear;
But the sea [e]overwhelmed their
enemies.
54 And He brought them to His [f]holy
border,
This mountain [g]*which* His right hand
had acquired.
55 [h]He also drove out the nations before
them,
[i]Allotted them an inheritance by survey,
And made the tribes of Israel dwell in
their tents.
56 [j]Yet they tested and provoked the Most
High God,
And did not keep His testimonies,
57 But [k]turned back and acted
unfaithfully like their fathers;
They were turned aside [l]like a
deceitful bow.
58 [m]For they provoked Him to anger with
their [n]high places,
And moved Him to jealousy with their
carved images.
59 When God heard *this,* He was furious,
And greatly abhorred Israel,
60 [o]So that He forsook the tabernacle of
Shiloh,
The tent He had placed among men,
61 [p]And delivered His strength into
captivity,
And His glory into the enemy's hand.
62 [q]He also gave His people over to the
sword,
And was furious with His inheritance.
63 The fire consumed their young men,
And [r]their maidens were not given in
marriage.
64 [s]Their priests fell by the sword,
And [t]their widows made no
lamentation.
65 Then the Lord awoke as *from* sleep,
[u]Like a mighty man who shouts
because of wine.

78:38 ***full of compassion.*** The awesome transcendence of the Lord is complemented in this section (v. 35) by an emphasis on His compassionate mercy.

78:58 ***high places.*** These places of worship were associated with the Canaanite worship of Baal and other fertility gods.

78:60 ***the tabernacle of Shiloh.*** This reference to Shiloh, the place where the tabernacle was set up in the time of Eli, places the time of disobedience described here in the latter period of the judges (1 Sam. 1:3).

78:61 ***delivered His strength into captivity.*** This term is an unusual way of speaking of the ark of the covenant which was lost to the Philistines during the battle of Aphek (1 Sam. 4:1–11). At this time the suffering of the people was acute, including even the deaths of priests (1 Sam. 4:17–18).

78:38 *m* [Num. 14:18–20] *n* Ex. 34:6 *o* [Is. 48:9] *p* 1 Kin. 21:29 **78:39** *q* Job 10:9 *r* John 3:6 *s* [Job 7:7, 16] **78:40** *t* Heb. 3:16 **78:41** *u* Num. 14:22 **78:44** *v* Ex. 7:20 **78:45** *w* Ex. 8:24 *x* Ex. 8:6 **78:46** *y* Ex. 10:14 **78:47** *z* Ex. 9:23–25 **78:48** *a* Ex. 9:19 **78:51** *b* Ex. 12:29, 30 **78:52** *c* Ps. 77:20 **78:53** *d* Ex. 14:19, 20 *e* Ex. 14:27, 28 **78:54** *f* Ex. 15:17 *g* Ps. 44:3 **78:55** *h* Ps. 44:2 *i* Josh. 13:7; 19:51; 23:4 **78:56** *j* Judg. 2:11–13 **78:57** *k* Ezek. 20:27, 28 *l* Hos. 7:16 **78:58** *m* Judg. 2:12 *n* Deut. 12:2 **78:60** *o* 1 Sam. 4:11 **78:61** *p* Judg. 18:30 **78:62** *q* 1 Sam. 4:10 **78:63** *r* Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10 **78:64** *s* 1 Sam. 4:17; 22:18 *t* Job 27:15; Ezek. 24:23 **78:65** *u* Is. 42:13

66 And [v]He beat back His enemies;
He put them to a perpetual reproach.
67 Moreover He rejected the tent of
Joseph,
And did not choose the tribe of
Ephraim,
68 But chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion [w]which He loved.
69 And He built His [x]sanctuary like the
heights,
Like the earth which He has
established forever.
70 [y]He also chose David His servant,
And took him from the sheepfolds;
71 From following [z]the ewes that had
young He brought him,
[a]To shepherd Jacob His people,
And Israel His inheritance.
72 So he shepherded them according to
the [b]integrity of his heart,
And guided them by the skillfulness of
his hands.

Psalm 79

A Dirge and a Prayer for Israel, Destroyed by Enemies

A Psalm of Asaph.

1 O God, the nations have come into
[a]Your inheritance;
Your holy temple they have defiled;
[b]They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.
2 [c]The dead bodies of Your servants
They have given *as* food for the birds
of the heavens,
The flesh of Your saints to the beasts
of the earth.
3 Their blood they have shed like water
all around Jerusalem,
And *there was* no one to bury *them.*
4 We have become a reproach to our
[d]neighbors,
A scorn and derision to those who are
around us.
5 [e]How long, LORD?
Will You be angry forever?
Will Your [f]jealousy burn like fire?
6 [g]Pour out Your wrath on the nations
that [h]do not know You,
And on the kingdoms that [i]do not call
on Your name.
7 For they have devoured Jacob,
And laid waste his dwelling place.
8 [j]Oh, do not remember former iniquities
against us!
Let Your tender mercies come speedily
to meet us,
For we have been brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
For the glory of Your name;
And deliver us, and provide atonement
for our sins,
[k]For Your name's sake!
10 [l]Why should the nations say,
"Where *is* their God?"
Let there be known among the nations
in our sight
The avenging of the blood of Your
servants *which has been* shed.
11 Let [m]the groaning of the prisoner
come before You;
According to the greatness of Your
power
Preserve those who are appointed to die;
12 And return to our neighbors
[n]sevenfold into their bosom
[o]Their reproach with which they have
reproached You, O Lord.
13 So [p]we, Your people and sheep of Your
pasture,
Will give You thanks forever;
[q]We will show forth Your praise to all
generations.

Psalm 80

Prayer for Israel's Restoration

To the Chief Musician. [a]Set to "The Lilies."* A Testimony* of Asaph.
A Psalm.

1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
[b]You who lead Joseph [c]like a flock;

* **80:title** Hebrew *Shoshannim* • Hebrew *Eduth*

78:68 ***Mount Zion which He loved.*** The description of the sanctuary in verses 68–69 suggests that this psalm was written after Solomon's temple was built.
78:71 ***To shepherd Jacob His people.*** The shepherding attributed to David is an ideal; it will be fully realized in the Savior King, Jesus, the true Good Shepherd (Matt. 2:6; John 10:1–18).
79:1 ***Your holy temple.*** The destruction described in this verse may be what the Babylonians did in 586 B.C.
79:6 ***Pour out Your wrath.*** An imprecation or curse on one's enemies is often found in the psalms of lament (137:7–9). Vengeance is left to the Lord, but such a call for vengeance is based in part on the covenant provisions that God had established with Abraham. God had promised to curse those who cursed Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12:2–3).
79:12 ***return to our neighbors sevenfold . . . Their reproach.*** While the Israelites' cries for vengeance seem to be missing the concept of "love your neighbor," it is clear that they understand both the seriousness of the offense against God and also the fact that it is God, not they, who must avenge.
80:1 ***Shepherd of Israel.*** The concept of God as the Good Shepherd who cares for His people is clearly

78:66 [v] 1 Sam. 5:6 **78:68** [w] [Ps. 87:2] **78:69** [x] 1 Kin. 6:1–38 **78:70** [y] 1 Sam. 16:11, 12 **78:71** [z] [Is. 40:11] [a] 2 Sam. 5:2 **78:72** [b] 1 Kin. 9:4 **79:1** [a] Ps. 74:2 [b] Mic. 3:12 **79:2** [c] Jer. 7:33; 19:7; 34:20 **79:4** [d] Ps. 44:13 **79:5** [e] Ps. 74:1, 9 [f] [Zeph. 3:8] **79:6** [g] Jer. 10:25 [h] Is. 45:4, 5 [i] Ps. 53:4 **79:8** [j] Is. 64:9 **79:9** [k] Jer. 14:7, 21 **79:10** [l] Ps. 42:10 **79:11** [m] Ps. 102:20 **79:12** [n] Gen. 4:15 [o] Ps. 74:10, 18, 22 **79:13** [p] Ps. 74:1; 95:7 [q] Is. 43:21 **80:title** [a] Ps. 45:title **80:1** [b] [Ex. 25:20–22] [c] Ps. 77:20

You who dwell *between* the cherubim,
[d]shine forth!
2 Before [e]Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
Stir up Your strength,
And come *and* save us!
3 [f]Restore us, O God;
[g]Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!
4 O LORD God of hosts,
[h]How long will You be angry
Against the prayer of Your people?
5 [i]You have fed them with the bread of tears,
And given them tears to drink in great measure.
6 You have made us a strife to our neighbors,
And our enemies laugh among themselves.
7 Restore us, O God of hosts;
Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!
8 You have brought [j]a vine out of Egypt;
[k]You have cast out the nations, and planted it.
9 You prepared *room* for it,
And caused it to take deep root,
And it filled the land.
10 The hills were covered with its shadow,
And the mighty cedars with its [l]boughs.
11 She sent out her boughs to the Sea,*
And her branches to the River.*
12 Why have You [m]broken down her hedges,
So that all who pass by the way pluck her *fruit?*
13 The boar out of the woods uproots it,
And the wild beast of the field devours it.
14 Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts;
[n]Look down from heaven and see,
And visit this vine
15 And the vineyard which Your right hand has planted,
And the branch *that* You made strong
[o]for Yourself.
16 *It is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down;
[p]They perish at the rebuke of Your countenance.
17 [q]Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand,
Upon the son of man *whom* You made strong for Yourself.
18 Then we will not turn back from You;
Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.
19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!

Psalm 81

An Appeal for Israel's Repentance

To the Chief Musician. [a]On an instrument of Gath.* *A Psalm* of Asaph.

1 Sing aloud to God our strength;
Make a joyful shout to the God of Jacob.
2 Raise a song and strike the timbrel,
The pleasant harp with the lute.
3 Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon,
At the full moon, on our solemn feast day.
4 For [b]this *is* a statute for Israel,
A law of the God of Jacob.
5 This He established in Joseph *as* a testimony,
When He went throughout the land of Egypt,
[c]*Where* I heard a language I did not understand.
6 "I removed his shoulder from the burden;
His hands were freed from the baskets.
7 [d]You called in trouble, and I delivered you;

* **80:11** That is, the Mediterranean • That is, the Euphrates * **81:title** Hebrew *Al Gittith*

shown by Jesus in John 10:1–18. ***dwell between the cherubim.*** In the Most Holy Place, the ark of the covenant was topped by the mercy seat on which were two cherubim, heavenly symbols of the throne of God (Ex. 25:22).

80:8 ***You have brought a vine out of Egypt.*** The picture of Israel as God's vine recurs other places in Scripture (see, for example, Is. 5:1–25). In the New Testament, Jesus used the same metaphor to describe the relationship of God with all who trust in Him (John 15:1–8).

81:3 ***the New Moon.*** The New Moon festival is mentioned in association with the Feast of Trumpets (Num. 29:6). Regulations for this festival can be found in the instructions to the Levites during the time of David (1 Chr. 23:31) and Solomon (2 Chr. 2:4). This psalm seems to be a basic instruction on the festival. The language and regulations are as solemn as any in the Torah.

81:7 ***I answered you.*** The Lord's appearance to Moses on Mount Sinai was God's great revelation of Himself (Ex. 19:20).

80:1 [d] Deut. 33:2 **80:2** [e] Ps. 78:9, 67 **80:3** [f] Lam. 5:21 [g] Num. 6:25 **80:4** [h] Ps. 79:5 **80:5** [i] Is. 30:20 **80:8** [j] [Is. 5:1, 7] [k] Ps. 44:2 **80:10** [l] Lev. 23:40 **80:12** [m] Is. 5:5 **80:14** [n] Is. 63:15 **80:15** [o] [Is. 49:5] **80:16** [p] [Ps. 39:11] **80:17** [q] Ps. 89:21 **81:title** [a] Ps. 8:title **81:4** [b] Num. 10:10 **81:5** [c] Ps. 114:1 **81:7** [d] Ex. 2:23; 14:10

[e]I answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I [f]tested you at the waters of Meribah.
Selah

8 "Hear,[g] O My people, and I will admonish you!
O Israel, if you will listen to Me!
9 There shall be no [h]foreign god among you;
Nor shall you worship any foreign god.
10 [i]I *am* the LORD your God,
Who brought you out of the land of Egypt;
[j]Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 "But My people would not heed My voice,
And Israel would *have* [k]none of Me.
12 [l]So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart,
To walk in their own counsels.

13 "Oh,[m] that My people would listen to Me,
That Israel would walk in My ways!
14 I would soon subdue their enemies,
And turn My hand against their adversaries.
15 [n]The haters of the LORD would pretend submission to Him,
But their fate would endure forever.
16 He would [o]have fed them also with the finest of wheat;
And with honey [p]from the rock I would have satisfied you."

Psalm 82

A Plea for Justice

A Psalm of Asaph.

1 God [a]stands in the congregation of the mighty;
He judges among [b]the gods.*
2 How long will you judge unjustly,
And [c]show partiality to the wicked?
Selah
3 Defend the poor and fatherless;
Do justice to the afflicted and [d]needy.
4 Deliver the poor and needy;
Free *them* from the hand of the wicked.
5 They do not know, nor do they understand;
They walk about in darkness;
All the [e]foundations of the earth are unstable.

6 I said, [f]"You *are* gods,*
And all of you *are* children of the Most High.
7 But you shall die like men,
And fall like one of the princes."

8 Arise, O God, judge the earth;
[g]For You shall inherit all nations.

Psalm 83

Prayer to Frustrate Conspiracy Against Israel

A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.

1 Do[a] not keep silent, O God!
Do not hold Your peace,
And do not be still, O God!
2 For behold, [b]Your enemies make a tumult;
And those who hate You have lifted up their head.
3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people,
And consulted together [c]against Your sheltered ones.
4 They have said, "Come, and [d]let us cut them off from *being* a nation,
That the name of Israel may be remembered no more."

5 For they have consulted together with one consent;
They form a confederacy against You:
6 [e]The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites;
Moab and the Hagrites;
7 Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek;
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;

* **82:1** Hebrew *elohim, mighty ones;* that is, the judges * **82:6** Hebrew *elohim, mighty ones;* that is, the judges

81:9 ***no foreign god.*** Asaph, the chief musician during David's reign, reviews the goodness of God and His marvelous deliverance of Israel from the land of bondage (Ex. 7–12). The plagues sent upon Egypt were meant to accomplish a purpose: first, to show to God's people the power of the true God; and second, to demonstrate to the Egyptians the total inability of their false gods. In spite of these dramatic object lessons against idolatry, Israel began worshiping pagan images almost as soon as they left Egypt.

82:6 ***You are gods.*** Jesus quoted this verse in His exchange with the religious authorities who wanted to stone Him for declaring Himself to be the Son of God (John 10:31–35). The word translated "gods" here is the same word translated such in verse 1. This word (*elohim*) is used to refer to the one God, to false gods, to angels, or to "mighty ones" (that is, the judges).

83:6 ***tents of Edom.*** The place names in this passage refer to nations on the borders of Israel and Judah. The Hagrites may have come from Arabia (1 Chr. 5:10,19–20).

81:7 [e] Ex. 19:19; 20:18 [f] Ex. 17:6, 7 **81:8** [g] [Ps. 50:7] **81:9** [h] [Is. 43:12] **81:10** [i] Ex. 20:2 [j] Ps. 103:5 **81:11** [k] Deut. 32:15 **81:12** [l] [Acts 7:42] **81:13** [m] [Is. 48:18] **81:15** [n] Rom. 1:30 **81:16** [o] Deut. 32:14 [p] Job w29:6 **82:1** [a] [2 Chr. 19:6] [b] Ps. 82:6 **82:2** [c] [Deut. 1:17] **82:3** [d] [Deut. 24:17] **82:5** [e] Ps. 11:3 **82:6** [f] John 10:34 **82:8** [g] [Rev. 11:15] **83:1** [a] Ps. 28:1 **83:2** [b] Ps. 81:15 **83:3** [c] [Ps. 27:5] **83:4** [d] Jer. 11:19; 31:36 **83:6** [e] 2 Chr. 20:1, 10, 11

8 Assyria also has joined with them;
They have helped the children of Lot.
Selah

9 Deal with them as *with* [f]Midian,
As *with* [g]Sisera,
As *with* Jabin at the Brook Kishon,
10 Who perished at En Dor,
[h]*Who* became *as* refuse on the earth.
11 Make their nobles like [i]Oreb and like Zeeb,
Yes, all their princes like [j]Zebah and Zalmunna,
12 Who said, "Let us take for ourselves
The pastures of God for a possession."

13 [k]O my God, make them like the whirling dust,
[l]Like the chaff before the wind!
14 As the fire burns the woods,
And as the flame [m]sets the mountains on fire,
15 So pursue them with Your tempest,
And frighten them with Your storm.
16 Fill their faces with shame,
That they may seek Your name, O LORD.
17 Let them be confounded and dismayed forever;
Yes, let them be put to shame and perish,
18 [n]That they may know that You, whose [o]name alone *is* the LORD,
Are [p]the Most High over all the earth.

Psalm 84

The Blessedness of Dwelling in the House of God

To the Chief Musician. [a]On an instrument of Gath.* A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

1 How [b]lovely *is* Your tabernacle,
O LORD of hosts!
2 [c]My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

3 Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King and my God.
4 Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your [d]house;
They will still be praising You. *Selah*

5 Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in You,
Whose heart *is* set on pilgrimage.
6 *As they* pass through the Valley [e]of Baca,
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with pools.
7 They go [f]from strength to strength;
Each one [g]appears before God in Zion.*

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*
9 [h]O God, behold our shield,
And look upon the face of Your anointed.

10 For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.
11 For the LORD God *is* [i]a sun and [j]shield;
The LORD will give grace and glory;
[k]No good *thing* will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.

12 O LORD of hosts,
[l]Blessed *is* the man who trusts in You!

* **84:title** Hebrew *Al Gittith* * **84:7** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *The God of gods shall be seen.*

83:9 ***Sisera.*** God's victory over Sisera was accomplished through Deborah and Barak (Judg. 4–5). The same God who had battled Israel's enemies in the past would fight all those who might oppose His people in the future.
83:16 ***That they may seek Your name.*** Asaph's first call for God to shame Israel's enemies is redemptive—that the nations might hear, feel shame, repent, and seek the Lord. Yet, if they continued in their wicked path, they would be further confounded and would one day face God in judgment.
84:1 ***How lovely is Your tabernacle.*** This psalm celebrates God's presence in Jerusalem, the city where His temple was built. Today it is not necessary to go to Jerusalem to draw near to God, for God is near to those who trust in His Son (Matt. 28:18–20).
84:6 ***the Valley of Baca.*** The Valley of Baca, or "Valley of Weeping," refers to the various difficulties that one might face on a pilgrimage. With God, even times of hardship and sorrow can become times of great joy and blessing.
84:9 ***Your anointed.*** The two phrases "our shield" and "Your anointed" both point to the same person, the king of Israel (89:3–4). These anointed kings foreshadowed the coming Messiah—the Anointed One.
84:11 ***No good thing will He withhold.*** When we go through times of darkness and difficulty, it sometimes seems that God is not giving us what we need. However, God is far wiser than we can ever be, and He never withholds what is good from us. When it seems that He does, we must assume that what we want would not actually be a good thing for us to have.

83:9 [f] Judg. 7:22 [g] Judg. 4:15–24; 5:20, 21 **83:10** [h] Zeph. 1:17 **83:11** [i] Judg. 7:25 [j] Judg. 8:12–21 **83:13** [k] Is. 17:13 [l] Ps. 35:5 **83:14** [m] Deut. 32:22 **83:18** [n] Ps. 59:13 [o] Ex. 6:3 [p] [Ps. 92:8] **84:title** [a] Ps. 8:title **84:1** [b] Ps. 27:4; 46:4, 5 **84:2** [c] Ps. 42:1, 2 **84:4** [d] [Ps. 65:4] **84:6** [e] 2 Sam. 5:22–25 **84:7** [f] Prov. 4:18 [g] Deut. 16:16 **84:9** [h] Gen. 15:1 **84:11** [i] Is. 60:19, 20 [j] Gen. 15:1 [k] Ps. 34:9, 10 **84:12** [l] [Ps. 2:12; 40:4]

Psalm 85

Prayer that the LORD Will Restore Favor to the Land

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm [a]of the sons of Korah.

1 LORD, You have been favorable to Your land;
You have [b]brought back the captivity of Jacob.
2 You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people;
You have covered all their sin. *Selah*
3 You have taken away all Your wrath;
You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger.

4 [c]Restore us, O God of our salvation,
And cause Your anger toward us to cease.
5 [d]Will You be angry with us forever?
Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?
6 Will You not [e]revive us again,
That Your people may rejoice in You?
7 Show us Your mercy, LORD,
And grant us Your salvation.

8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak,
For He will speak peace
To His people and to His saints;
But let them not turn back to folly.
9 Surely [f]His salvation *is* near to those who fear Him,
[g]That glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth have met together;
[h]Righteousness and peace have kissed.
11 Truth shall spring out of the earth,
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.
12 [i]Yes, the LORD will give *what is* good;
And our land will yield its increase.
13 Righteousness will go before Him,
And shall make His footsteps *our* pathway.

Psalm 86

Prayer for Mercy, with Meditation on the Excellencies of the LORD

A Prayer of David.

1 Bow down Your ear, O LORD, hear me;
For I *am* poor and needy.
2 Preserve my life, for I *am* holy;
You are my God;
Save Your servant who trusts in You!
3 Be merciful to me, O Lord,
For I cry to You all day long.
4 Rejoice the soul of Your servant,
[a]For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
5 For [b]You, Lord, *are* good, and ready to forgive,
And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.

6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
And attend to the voice of my supplications.
7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon You,
For You will answer me.

8 [c]Among the gods *there is* none like You, O Lord;
Nor *are there any works* like Your works.
9 All nations whom You have made
Shall come and worship before You, O Lord,
And shall glorify Your name.
10 For You *are* great, and [d]do wondrous things;
[e]You alone *are* God.

11 [f]Teach me Your way, O LORD;
I will walk in Your truth;
Unite my heart to fear Your name.
12 I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
And I will glorify Your name forevermore.
13 For great *is* Your mercy toward me,
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

85:1 ***You have brought back the captivity.*** The setting for this psalm appears to be the restoration of the people of God following a great catastrophe—perhaps the Babylonian captivity.

85:2–3 ***You have forgiven.*** In all its forms, from hideous to petty, sin alienates people from God and is deserving of His punishment. The wonderful message of the Bible is that God will forgive even the most despicable sinner if that sinner repents and turns from wickedness. God's forgiveness is not just an arbitrary overlooking of our sin, but a judicial act whereby He applies the penalty paid by His son to our account. Our sins are thus covered by Jesus' blood, and God considers us righteous.

85:10 ***Mercy and truth have met together.*** Kindness without truth is hypocrisy, while truth without love and mercy is cruel. Only when the two meet can we experience wholeness and healing.

86:1 ***Bow down Your ear.*** David's dramatic phrase captures the grandeur of God on high and his own humble position on the earth below.

86:8 ***Among the gods.*** The ancient nations took their sense of identity in part from their ties to their supposed gods. When the nations found out that their "gods" did not exist, they would have to acknowledge that the Lord alone is God. Here David envisions other nations worshiping the true God and thus anticipates the missionary thrust of the New Testament (Ps. 117:1; Matt. 28:18–20).

86:13 ***You have delivered my soul.*** The cold hand of death knocks at everyone's door, whether we dwell in a luxury condominium with security guards or a

85:title [a] Ps. 42:title **85:1** [b] Joel 3:1 **85:4** [c] Ps. 80:3, 7 **85:5** [d] Ps. 79:5 **85:6** [e] Hab. 3:2 **85:9** [f] Is. 46:13 [g] Zech. 2:5 **85:10** [h] Ps. 72:3 **85:12** [i] [Ps. 84:11] **86:4** [a] Ps. 25:1; 143:8 **86:5** [b] [Joel 2:13] **86:8** [c] [Ex. 15:11] **86:10** [d] [Ex. 15:11] [e] Deut. 6:4 **86:11** [f] Ps. 27:11; 143:8

14 O God, the proud have risen against me,
And a mob of violent *men* have sought my life,
And have not set You before them.
15 But [g]You, O Lord, *are* a God full of compassion, and gracious,
Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.
16 Oh, turn to me, and have mercy on me!
Give Your strength to Your servant,
And save the son of Your maidservant.
17 Show me a sign for good,
That those who hate me may see *it* and be ashamed,
Because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Psalm 87

The Glories of the City of God

A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song.

1 His foundation *is* in the holy mountains.
2 [a]The LORD loves the gates of Zion
More than all the dwellings of Jacob.
3 [b]Glorious things are spoken of you,
O city of God! *Selah*
4 "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me;
Behold, O Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia:
'This *one* was born there.'"
5 And of Zion it will be said,
"This *one* and that *one* were born in her;
And the Most High Himself shall establish her."
6 The LORD will record,
When He [c]registers the peoples:
"This *one* was born there." *Selah*
7 Both the singers and the players on instruments *say*,
"All my springs *are* in you."

Psalm 88

A Prayer for Help in Despondency

A Song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. To the Chief Musician.
Set to "Mahalath Leannoth."
A Contemplation* of [a]Heman the Ezrahite.

1 O LORD, [b]God of my salvation,
I have cried out day and night before You.
2 Let my prayer come before You;
Incline Your ear to my cry.
3 For my soul is full of troubles,
And my life [c]draws near to the grave.
4 I am counted with those who [d]go down to the pit;
[e]I am like a man *who has* no strength,
5 Adrift among the dead,
Like the slain who lie in the grave,
Whom You remember no more,
And who are cut off from Your hand.
6 You have laid me in the lowest pit,
In darkness, in the depths.
7 Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
And You have afflicted *me* with all [f]Your waves. *Selah*
8 [g]You have put away my acquaintances far from me;
You have made me an abomination to them;
[h]*I am* shut up, and I cannot get out;
9 My eye wastes away because of affliction.

* **88:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

tenement surrounded by urban blight. The good news, however, is that the Lord has not left us at the mercy of death, but has provided for the deliverance of our souls from the depths of the grave. We can face the future confidently, knowing that, when our bodies die, our spirits will be with Christ, and that one day we shall also experience the resurrection of the body by His mighty power (Phil. 3:20–21).

87:1 ***His foundation.*** God Himself established Zion (or Jerusalem) as the center of true worship. He ordained Solomon to build a temple there so that He could live among the Israelites (1 Kin. 6:13). Zion is holy because of God's declaration (1 Kin. 11:13), His promise, the worship given Him there (1 Kin. 8:14–66), the future work of the Savior there (Matt. 21:4–11), and the future rule of the King there (Rev. 21).

87:4 ***Rahab.*** Rahab is a symbolic name for Egypt (Is. 30:7) that has negative connotations, alluding to the arrogance of the Egyptians. ***Babylon.*** Babylon was the proverbial seat of apostasy and idolatry (Gen. 10:10).

87:5 ***born in her.*** Despite their foreign heritage, the people who worshiped God were considered to have been born in Zion. It appears that this is referring to a spiritual birth, foreshadowing Jesus' teaching about being born again (John 3:1–8).

88:title ***Heman.*** Heman is identified in 1 Kings 4:31 as a gifted wise man, and in 1 Chronicles 15:16–19 as one of the musically gifted Levites who ministered in worship during the time of David.

88:1 ***God of my salvation.*** Even in the midst of despair, Heman confesses his faith in God's saving goodness.

88:3 ***grave.*** This is also translated "Sheol," which is the Hebrew word for "hell." It is often linked with the term "pit" as a symbol of the end of earthly existence. The Old Testament has very little to say about what happens to a soul after death, but it is clear that to go to Sheol is the end of all we know.

86:15 [g] Ex. 34:6 **87:2** [a] Ps. 78:67, 68 **87:3** [b] Is. 60:1 **87:6** [c] Is. 4:3 **88:title** [a] 1 Kin. 4:31 **88:1** [b] Ps. 27:9 **88:3** [c] Ps. 107:18 **88:4** [d] [Ps. 28:1] [e] Ps. 31:12 **88:7** [f] Ps. 42:7 **88:8** [g] Job 19:13, 19 [h] Lam. 3:7

[i]LORD, I have called daily upon You;
I have stretched out my hands to You.
10 Will You work wonders for the dead?
Shall the dead arise *and* praise You?
Selah
11 Shall Your lovingkindness be declared in the grave?
Or Your faithfulness in the place of destruction?
12 Shall Your wonders be known in the dark?
And Your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?
13 But to You I have cried out, O LORD,
And in the morning my prayer comes before You.
14 LORD, why do You cast off my soul?
Why do You hide Your face from me?
15 I *have been* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth;
I suffer Your terrors;
I am distraught.
16 Your fierce wrath has gone over me;
Your terrors have cut me off.
17 They came around me all day long like water;
They engulfed me altogether.
18 [j]Loved one and friend You have put far from me,
And my acquaintances into darkness.

Psalm 89

Remembering the Covenant with David, and Sorrow for Lost Blessings

A Contemplation* of [a]Ethan the Ezrahite.

1 I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever;
With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.
2 For I have said, "Mercy shall be built up forever;
[b]Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens."
3 "I[c] have made a covenant with My chosen,
I have [d]sworn to My servant David:
4 'Your seed I will establish forever,
And build up your throne [e]to all generations.'"
Selah
5 And [f]the heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD;
Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints.
6 [g]For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD?
Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD?
7 [h]God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints,
And to be held in reverence by all *those* around Him.
8 O LORD God of hosts,
Who *is* mighty like You, O LORD?
Your faithfulness also surrounds You.
9 [i]You rule the raging of the sea;
When its waves rise, You still them.
10 [j]You have broken Rahab in pieces, as one who is slain;
You have scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm.
11 [k]The heavens *are* Yours, the earth also *is* Yours;
The world and all its fullness, You have founded them.
12 The north and the south, You have created them;
[l]Tabor and [m]Hermon rejoice in Your name.
13 You have a mighty arm;
Strong is Your hand, *and* high is Your right hand.
14 Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of Your throne;
Mercy and truth go before Your face.
15 Blessed *are* the people who know the [n]joyful sound!
They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance.
16 In Your name they rejoice all day long,
And in Your righteousness they are exalted.
17 For You *are* the glory of their strength,
And in Your favor our horn is [o]exalted.
18 For our shield *belongs* to the LORD,
And our king to the Holy One of Israel.

* **89:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

88:11 ***destruction.*** This word is also translated "Abaddon."
89:1 ***the mercies of the LORD.*** The lovingkindness of the Lord in this psalm centers on the covenant that He made with David, promising him an eternal dynasty (2 Sam. 7).
89:6 ***sons of the mighty.*** This phrase may mean "sons of gods" or "heavenly beings." The reference could be to other supposed gods or to angels, members of the heavenly court (Job 1:6).
89:10 ***Rahab.*** Rahab is a title for Egypt (87:4).
89:13 ***a mighty arm.*** God is the great Deliverer; He brandished His arm and hand in delivering His people from Egypt (Ex. 6:6; 15:6).
89:18 ***the Holy One of Israel.*** This is the title that Isaiah used to describe God, following his experience of God's holiness in his memorable vision of God's throne (Is. 6:1–5).

88:9 [i] Ps. 86:3 **88:18** [j] Ps. 31:11; 38:11 **89:title** [a] 1 Kin. 4:31 **89:2** [b] [Ps. 119:89, 90] **89:3** [c] 1 Kin. 8:16 [d] 2 Sam. 7:11 **89:4** [e] [Luke 1:33] **89:5** [f] [Ps. 19:1] **89:6** [g] Ps. 86:8; 113:5 **89:7** [h] Ps. 76:7, 11 **89:9** [i] Ps. 65:7; 93:3, 4; 107:29 **89:10** [j] Ps. 87:4 **89:11** [k] [Gen. 1:1] **89:12** [l] Josh. 19:22 [m] Josh. 11:17; 12:1 **89:15** [n] Ps. 98:6 **89:17** [o] Ps. 75:10; 92:10; 132:17

19 Then You spoke in a vision to Your
holy one,*
And said: "I have given help to *one*
who is mighty;
I have exalted one [p]chosen from the
people.
20 [q]I have found My servant David;
With My holy oil I have anointed him,
21 [r]With whom My hand shall be
established;
Also My arm shall strengthen him.
22 The enemy shall not outwit him,
Nor the son of wickedness afflict him.
23 I will beat down his foes before his face,
And plague those who hate him.
24 "But My faithfulness and My mercy
shall be with him,
And in My name his horn shall be
exalted.
25 Also I will [s]set his hand over the sea,
And his right hand over the rivers.
26 He shall cry to Me, 'You *are* [t]my Father,
My God, and [u]the rock of my
salvation.'
27 Also I will make him [v]My firstborn,
[w]The highest of the kings of the earth.
28 [x]My mercy I will keep for him forever,
And My covenant shall stand firm
with him.
29 His seed also I will make *to endure*
forever,
[y]And his throne [z]as the days of heaven.
30 "If[a] his sons [b]forsake My law
And do not walk in My judgments,
31 If they break My statutes
And do not keep My commandments,
32 Then I will punish their transgression
with the rod,
And their iniquity with stripes.
33 [c]Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will
not utterly take from him,
Nor allow My faithfulness to fail.
34 My covenant I will not break,
Nor [d]alter the word that has gone out
of My lips.
35 Once I have sworn [e]by My holiness;
I will not lie to David:
36 [f]His seed shall endure forever,
And his throne [g]as the sun before Me;
37 It shall be established forever like the
moon,
Even *like* the faithful witness in the
sky." *Selah*

38 But You have [h]cast off and [i]abhorred,
You have been furious with Your
anointed.
39 You have renounced the covenant of
Your servant;
[j]You have profaned his crown *by*
casting it to the ground.
40 You have broken down all his hedges;
You have brought his strongholds to
ruin.
41 All who pass by the way [k]plunder him;
He is a reproach to his neighbors.
42 You have exalted the right hand of his
adversaries;
You have made all his enemies rejoice.
43 You have also turned back the edge of
his sword,
And have not sustained him in the
battle.
44 You have made his glory cease,
And cast his throne down to the
ground.
45 The days of his youth You have
shortened;
You have covered him with shame.
Selah

46 How long, LORD?
Will You hide Yourself forever?
Will Your wrath burn like fire?
47 Remember how short my time [l]is;
For what [m]futility have You created all
the children of men?
48 What man can live and not see [n]death?
Can he deliver his life from the power
of the grave? *Selah*

49 Lord, where *are* Your former
lovingkindnesses,
Which You [o]swore to David [p]in Your
truth?
50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of Your
servants—
[q]*How* I bear in my bosom *the reproach*
of all the many peoples,
51 [r]With which Your enemies have
reproached, O LORD,
With which they have reproached the
footsteps of Your anointed.
52 [s]Blessed *be* the LORD forevermore!
Amen and Amen.

* **89:19** Following many Hebrew manuscripts; Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *holy ones.*

89:29 ***seed . . . throne.*** These words echo the covenant God made with David (2 Sam. 7:8–17).

89:34 ***My covenant I will not break.*** God is determined to complete, fulfill, and accomplish His grand plan for David's dynasty (2 Sam. 7:1–24).

89:49–51 ***Which You swore to David.*** The writer complains that God has not been keeping His promises to David (2 Sam. 7:1–24). As a result, His people are experiencing harsh treatment from their enemies. There is no resolution to this psalm; it ends with the people, the king, and the psalmist in distress. Yet the inclusion of this psalm among the praises of Israel suggests that God did answer this prayer of His people, just as He did in the case of Psalm 60.

89:19 [p] 1 Kin. 11:34 **89:20** [q] 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:1–12 **89:21** [r] Ps. 80:17 **89:25** [s] Ps. 72:8 **89:26** [t] [1 Chr. 22:10] [u] 2 Sam. 22:47 **89:27** [v] [Col. 1:15, 18] [w] Rev. 19:16 **89:28** [x] Is. 55:3 **89:29** [y] Jer. 33:17 [z] Deut. 11:21 **89:30** [a] [2 Sam. 7:14] [b] Ps. 119:53 **89:33** [c] 2 Sam. 7:14, 15 **89:34** [d] Jer. 33:20–22 **89:35** [e] Amos 4:2 **89:36** [f] [Luke 1:33] [g] Ps. 72:17 **89:38** [h] [1 Chr. 28:9] [i] Deut. 32:19 **89:39** [j] Lam. 5:16 **89:41** [k] Ps. 80:12 **89:47** [l] Ps. 90:9 [m] Ps. 62:9 **89:48** [n] [Eccl. 3:19] **89:49** [o] [2 Sam. 7:15] [p] Ps. 54:5 **89:50** [q] Ps. 69:9, 19 **89:51** [r] Ps. 74:10, 18, 22 **89:52** [s] Ps. 41:13

BOOK FOUR

Psalms 90–106

Psalm 90

The Eternity of God, and Man's Frailty

A Prayer [a]of Moses the man of God.

1 Lord, [b]You have been our dwelling
place* in all generations.
2 [c]Before the mountains were brought
forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and
the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting,
You *are* God.

3 You turn man to destruction,
And say, [d]"Return, O children of men."
4 [e]For a thousand years in Your sight
Are like yesterday when it is past,
And *like* a watch in the night.
5 You carry them away *like* a flood;
[f]*They are* like a sleep.
In the morning [g]they are like grass
which grows up:
6 In the morning it flourishes and grows
up;
In the evening it is cut down and
withers.

7 For we have been consumed by Your
anger,
And by Your wrath we are terrified.
8 [h]You have set our iniquities before
You,
Our [i]secret *sins* in the light of Your
countenance.
9 For all our days have passed away in
Your wrath;
We finish our years like a sigh.
10 The days of our lives *are* seventy years;
And if by reason of strength *they are*
eighty years,
Yet their boast *is* only labor and
sorrow;
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
11 Who knows the power of Your anger?
For as the fear of You, *so is* Your
wrath.
12 [j]So teach *us* to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

13 Return, O LORD!
How long?
And [k]have compassion on Your
servants.
14 Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy,
[l]That we may rejoice and be glad all
our days!
15 Make us glad according to the days *in
which* You have afflicted us,
The years *in which* we have seen evil.
16 Let [m]Your work appear to Your
servants,
And Your glory to their children.
17 [n]And let the beauty of the LORD our
God be upon us,
And [o]establish the work of our hands
for us;
Yes, establish the work of our hands.

Psalm 91

Safety of Abiding in the Presence of God

1 He [a]who dwells in the secret place of
the Most High
Shall abide [b]under the shadow of the
Almighty.

* **90:1** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *refuge*.

90:1 ***Lord.*** This is not God's personal name (Ex. 3:14–15), but a Hebrew word celebrating His majestic authority.
90:4 ***a thousand years . . . like yesterday.*** A thousand years may seem long at the time, but in comparison with God's eternal existence, they are nothing.
90:7 ***Your anger.*** The unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness experienced God's anger (Num. 13–14). An entire generation spent their lives wandering because of their unbelief and rebellion.
90:10 ***seventy years . . . eighty years.*** The point here is not to set a maximum, but to present a context for the brevity of human life. No matter how long people live, death is inevitable.
90:12 Counting Our Days—This prayer of Moses, probably written near the end of his life, gives us some excellent insight into living. We need to seek wisdom, be sober-minded and diligent, and seek to use our time wisely, living in light of the Lord's commands.
- Life is often painful, sometimes very painful, but survivable.
- We perpetually fall short of God's plan for us.
- We are loved by an all-powerful yet merciful God who knows all about us.
- The only true satisfaction is in knowing and obeying God.
- Serve God to your fullest because your time here on earth is short.

90:17 ***establish the work of our hands.*** We need to have a sense of lasting meaning in our lives, something that will continue to the next generation.
91:1 ***in the secret place.*** The person who trusts in God is the one who lives close to Him. ***Most High.*** This title emphasizes God's majesty and is parallel to the term "Almighty." Together, the terms "Most High" and "Almighty" speak of God as a mountain-like majesty.

90:title [a] Deut. 33:1 **90:1** [b] [Ezek. 11:16] **90:2** [c] [Prov. 8:25, 26] **90:3** [d] Gen. 3:19 **90:4** [e] 2 Pet. 3:8 **90:5** [f] Ps. 73:20 [g] Is. 40:6 **90:8** [h] Ps. 50:21 [i] Ps. 19:12 **90:12** [j] Ps. 39:4 **90:13** [k] Deut. 32:36 **90:14** [l] Ps. 85:6 **90:16** [m] Hab. 3:2 **90:17** [n] Ps. 27:4 [o] Is. 26:12 **91:1** [a] Ps. 27:5; 31:20; 32:7 [b] Ps. 17:8

2 [c]I will say of the LORD, "*He is* my refuge
and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust."

3 Surely [d]He shall deliver you from the
snare of the fowler*
And from the perilous pestilence.
4 [e]He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take
refuge;
His truth *shall be your* shield and
buckler.
5 [f]You shall not be afraid of the terror by
night,
Nor of the arrow *that* flies by day,
6 *Nor* of the pestilence *that* walks in
darkness,
Nor of the destruction *that* lays waste
at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.
8 Only [g]with your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because you have made the LORD, *who
is* [h]my refuge,
Even the Most High, [i]your dwelling
place,
10 [j]No evil shall befall you,
Nor shall any plague come near your
dwelling;
11 [k]For He shall give His angels charge
over you,
To keep you in all your ways.
12 In *their* hands they shall bear you up,
[l]Lest you dash your foot against a
stone.
13 You shall tread upon the lion and the
cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you
shall trample underfoot.

14 "Because he has set his love upon Me,
therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him on high, because he has
[m]known My name.
15 He shall [n]call upon Me, and I will
answer him;
I *will be* [o]with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.
16 With long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation."

Psalm 92

Praise to the LORD for His Love and Faithfulness

A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath day.

1 *It is* [a]good to give thanks to the LORD,
And to sing praises to Your name,
O Most High;
2 To [b]declare Your lovingkindness in the
morning,
And Your faithfulness every night,
3 [c]On an instrument of ten strings,
On the lute,
And on the harp,
With harmonious sound.
4 For You, LORD, have made me glad
through Your work;
I will triumph in the works of Your
hands.

5 [d]O LORD, how great are Your works!
[e]Your thoughts are very deep.
6 [f]A senseless man does not know,
Nor does a fool understand this.
7 When [g]the wicked spring up like grass,
And when all the workers of iniquity
flourish,
It is that they may be destroyed
forever.

8 [h]But You, LORD, *are* on high forevermore.
9 For behold, Your enemies, O LORD,
For behold, Your enemies shall perish;
All the workers of iniquity shall [i]be
scattered.

10 But [j]my horn You have exalted like a
wild ox;
I have been [k]anointed with fresh oil.
11 [l]My eye also has seen *my desire* on my
enemies;
My ears hear *my desire* on the wicked
Who rise up against me.

* **91:3** That is, one who catches birds in a trap or snare

91:4 ***feathers . . . wings.*** Just as chicks take refuge under the wings of the mother hen, so we can take refuge in God's enveloping care.
91:7 ***A thousand may fall at your side.*** The Israelites in Egypt were spared the danger that touched their neighbors (Ex. 9:26; 10:23; 11:7); similarly, believers in the Lord are protected from Satan's attacks.
91:11 ***give His angels charge over you.*** These words were used by Satan to tempt the Savior (Matt. 4:5–6).
91:13 ***lion and the cobra.*** The animal and snake imagery in this verse pictures all kinds of evil that might threaten believers.
91:14 ***he has set his love upon Me.*** The word used here is not the usual Hebrew word for love. It has the idea of "holding close to," or even "hugging tightly in love" (Deut. 7:8; 10:15).
92:6 ***A senseless man . . . a fool.*** A foolish or senseless person is not someone with limited intelligence, but rather a person who is spiritually obtuse—someone who ignores God and refuses to accept responsibility.
92:10 ***my horn You have exalted.*** This is a figure of speech for the psalmist's eventual triumph, the celebration of the psalmist's strength.

91:2 [c] Ps. 142:5 **91:3** [d] Ps. 124:7 **91:4** [e] Ps. 17:8 **91:5** [f] [Job 5:19] **91:8** [g] Mal. 1:5 **91:9** [h] Ps. 91:2 [i] Ps. 90:1 **91:10** [j] [Prov. 12:21] **91:11** [k] [Heb. 1:14] **91:12** [l] Matt. 4:6 **91:14** [m] [Ps. 9:10] **91:15** [n] Ps. 50:15 [o] Is. 43:2 **92:1** [a] Ps. 147:1 **92:2** [b] Ps. 89:1 **92:3** [c] 1 Chr. 23:5 **92:5** [d] Ps. 40:5 [e] [Is. 28:29] **92:6** [f] Ps. 73:22 **92:7** [g] Job 12:6 **92:8** [h] [Ps. 83:18] **92:9** [i] Ps. 68:1 **92:10** [j] Ps. 89:17 [k] Ps. 23:5 **92:11** [l] Ps. 54:7

12 [m]The righteous shall flourish like a
palm tree,
He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
13 Those who are planted in the house of
the LORD
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
14 They shall still bear fruit in old age;
They shall be fresh and flourishing,
15 To declare that the LORD is upright;
[n]*He is* my rock, and [o]*there is* no
unrighteousness in Him.

Psalm 93

The Eternal Reign of the LORD

1 The [a]LORD reigns, He is clothed with
majesty;
The LORD is clothed,
[b]He has girded Himself with strength.
Surely the world is established, so that
it cannot be moved.
2 [c]Your throne *is* established from of old;
You *are* from everlasting.

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD,
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.
4 [d]The LORD on high *is* mightier
Than the noise of many waters,
Than the mighty waves of the sea.

5 Your testimonies are very sure;
Holiness adorns Your house,
O LORD, forever.

Psalm 94

God the Refuge of the Righteous

1 O LORD God, [a]to whom vengeance
belongs—
O God, to whom vengeance belongs,
shine forth!
2 Rise up, O [b]Judge of the earth;
Render punishment to the proud.
3 LORD, [c]how long will the wicked,
How long will the wicked triumph?

4 They [d]utter speech, *and* speak insolent
things;
All the workers of iniquity boast in
themselves.
5 They break in pieces Your people,
O LORD,
And afflict Your heritage.
6 They slay the widow and the stranger,
And murder the fatherless.
7 [e]Yet they say, "The LORD does not see,
Nor does the God of Jacob
understand."

8 Understand, you senseless among the
people;
And *you* fools, when will you be wise?
9 [f]He who planted the ear, shall He not
hear?
He who formed the eye, shall He not
see?
10 He who instructs the nations, shall He
not correct,
He who teaches man knowledge?
11 The LORD [g]knows the thoughts of
man,
That they *are* futile.

12 Blessed *is* the man whom You
[h]instruct, O LORD,
And teach out of Your law,
13 That You may give him rest from the
days of adversity,
Until the pit is dug for the wicked.
14 For the LORD will not cast off His
people,
Nor will He forsake His inheritance.
15 But judgment will return to
righteousness,
And all the upright in heart will
follow it.

16 Who will rise up for me against the
evildoers?
Who will stand up for me against the
workers of iniquity?

92:12 ***flourish like a palm tree.*** This promise does not refer to success as the world counts it—the righteous are not often wealthy or powerful—but rather to spiritual success. Those who are committed to following God's ways will be so alive spiritually that even in old age they will appear young and vibrant.

93:1 ***is clothed with majesty.*** This language describes the victor of one-on-one combat. God is dressed in the garments of victory.

93:4 ***The LORD on high is mightier.*** The Creator King is infinite in power; no force in the universe competes with Him.

94:2 ***Judge of the earth.*** Even when the poets call out for divine vengeance, they recognize that God decides when to exercise His wrath and judgment. God's law clearly states that vengeance belongs to Him (Deut. 32:35).

94:6 ***slay the widow and the stranger.*** The Israelites had been commanded to comfort widows and orphans and to welcome strangers, as long as those strangers obeyed the law of God (Ex. 22:21–22).

94:12 ***Blessed is the man whom You instruct.*** The word "blessed" means "happy." Instruction, even if accompanied by chastening, is always for our ultimate good, and thus shows the depth of God's love for us (Heb. 12:7–11).

94:13 ***the pit is dug for the wicked.*** "Pit" is one of the words used as a synonym for Sheol (16:10). Digging the "pit" is a way of describing the preparations for the final judgment of the wicked (Rev. 20:11–15).

94:14 ***the LORD will not cast off His people.*** God will not forget His people any more than He will forget or deny Himself (2 Tim. 2:13).

92:12 [m] Ps. 52:8 **92:15** [n] [Deut. 32:4] [o] [Rom. 9:14] **93:1** [a] Ps. 96:10 [b] Ps. 65:6 **93:2** [c] Ps. 45:6 **93:4** [d] Ps. 65:7 **94:1** [a] [Nah. 1:2] **94:2** [b] [Gen. 18:25] **94:3** [c] [Job 20:5] **94:4** [d] Ps. 31:18 **94:7** [e] Ps. 10:11 **94:9** [f] [Ex. 4:11] **94:11** [g] 1 Cor. 3:20 **94:12** [h] [Heb. 12:5, 6]

17 Unless the LORD *had been* my help,
My soul would soon have settled in silence.
18 If I say, "My foot slips,"
Your mercy, O LORD, will hold me up.
19 In the multitude of my anxieties within me,
Your comforts delight my soul.
20 Shall [i]the throne of iniquity, which devises evil by law,
Have fellowship with You?
21 They gather together against the life of the righteous,
And condemn [j]innocent blood.
22 But the LORD has been my defense,
And my God the rock of my refuge.
23 He has brought on them their own iniquity,
And shall cut them off in their own wickedness;
The LORD our God shall cut them off.

Psalm 95

A Call to Worship and Obedience

1 Oh come, let us sing to the LORD!
Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.
2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;
Let us shout joyfully to Him with [a]psalms.
3 For [b]the LORD *is* the great God,
And the great King above all gods.
4 In His hand *are* the deep places of the earth;
The heights of the hills *are* His also.
5 [c]The sea *is* His, for He made it;
And His hands formed the dry *land*.
6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
Let [d]us kneel before the LORD our Maker.
7 For He *is* our God,
And [e]we *are* the people of His pasture,
And the sheep of His hand.

[f]Today, if you will hear His voice:
8 "Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion,*
[g]As *in* the day of trial* in the wilderness,
9 When [h]your fathers tested Me;
They tried Me, though they [i]saw My work.
10 [j]For forty years I was grieved with *that* generation,
And said, 'It *is* a people who go astray in their hearts,
And they do not know My ways.'
11 So [k]I swore in My wrath,
'They shall not enter My rest.'"

Psalm 96

A Song of Praise to God Coming in Judgment

1 Oh, [a]sing to the LORD a new song!
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.
2 Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
3 Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.
4 For [b]the LORD *is* great and [c]greatly to be praised;
[d]He *is* to be feared above all gods.
5 For [e]all the gods of the peoples *are* idols,
[f]But the LORD made the heavens.
6 Honor and majesty *are* before Him;
Strength and [g]beauty *are* in His sanctuary.
7 [h]Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.

* **95:8** Or *Meribah* • Or *Massah*

94:18 ***Your mercy.*** God's "mercy" or "lovingkindness" refers to His loyal, covenant love.
95:1–7 ***Let us shout joyfully.*** Along with others (Ps. 96–100), this song was probably sung at the dedication of the temple after it was restored by Ezra and Nehemiah. It was a time of great celebration. The hearts of the people were filled with joy as they sang and shouted to God, whom they declared to be the great King above all gods.
95:6 ***worship . . . bow down . . . kneel.*** These words amplify each other and call for a reflective, humble approach to God. Worship is joyful and can be done with abandon (vv. 1–5); but at other times worship may be quiet reverence of the Almighty (Ps. 134).
95:7–11 ***For He is our God.*** This whole section is quoted in Hebrews 3:7–11, with a notable introduction: "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says . . ." This phrase reminds us that the words of the Psalms, which are the response of the worshiping Israelite community, are also the oracles of God.
95:8 ***rebellion.*** Also translated "Meribah," this word would remind the Israelites of a time when they had doubted the Lord's provision (Ex. 17:7; Num. 20:13).
96:3 ***all peoples.*** This is a bold declaration that one day the message of God's mercy will be known the world over, the fulfillment of God's covenant promise to Abraham that through his descendants all nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:1–3).
96:7 ***O families of the peoples.*** The allusion to the Abrahamic covenant continues (vv. 2–3; Gen. 12:1–3).

94:20 [i] Amos 6:3 **94:21** [j] [Ex. 23:7] **95:2** [a] James 5:13 **95:3** [b] [Ps. 96:4] **95:5** [c] Gen. 1:9, 10 **95:6** [d] [Phil. 2:10] **95:7** [e] Ps. 79:13 [f] Heb. 3:7–11, 15; 4:7 **95:8** [g] Ex. 17:2–7 **95:9** [h] Ps. 78:18 [i] Num. 14:22 **95:10** [j] Heb. 3:10, 17 **95:11** [k] Heb. 4:3, 5 **96:1** [a] 1 Chr. 16:23–33 **96:4** [b] Ps. 145:3 [c] Ps. 18:3 [d] Ps. 95:3 **96:5** [e] [Jer. 10:11] [f] Is. 42:5 **96:6** [g] Ps. 29:2 **96:7** [h] Ps. 29:1, 2

8 Give to the LORD the glory *due* His name;
Bring an offering, and come into His courts.
9 Oh, worship the LORD [i]in the beauty of holiness!
Tremble before Him, all the earth.
10 Say among the nations, [j]"The LORD reigns;
The world also is firmly established,
It shall not be moved;
[k]He shall judge the peoples righteously."
11 [l]Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
[m]Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;
12 Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* in it.
Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice
13 before the LORD.
For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.
[n]He shall judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with His truth.

Psalm 97

A Song of Praise to the Sovereign LORD

1 The LORD [a]reigns;
Let the earth rejoice;
Let the multitude of isles be glad!
2 [b]Clouds and darkness surround Him;
[c]Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of His throne.
3 [d]A fire goes before Him,
And burns up His enemies round about.
4 [e]His lightnings light the world;
The earth sees and trembles.
5 [f]The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD,
At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
6 [g]The heavens declare His righteousness,
And all the peoples see His glory.
7 [h]Let all be put to shame who serve carved images,
Who boast of idols.
[i]Worship Him, all *you* gods.
8 Zion hears and is glad,
And the daughters of Judah rejoice
Because of Your judgments, O LORD.
9 For You, LORD, *are* [j]most high above all the earth;
[k]You are exalted far above all gods.
10 You who love the LORD, [l]hate evil!
[m]He preserves the souls of His saints;
[n]He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.
11 [o]Light is sown for the righteous,
And gladness for the upright in heart.
12 [p]Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous,
[q]And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.*

Psalm 98

A Song of Praise to the LORD for His Salvation and Judgment

A Psalm.

1 Oh, [a]sing to the LORD a new song!
For He has [b]done marvelous things;
His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory.
2 [c]The LORD has made known His salvation;
[d]His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations.

* **97:12** Or *His holiness*

96:10 ***The LORD reigns.*** This key phrase was the countercultural cry of ancient Israelites in a world that believed that gods could rise and fall. In contrast, the living God remains Ruler for all eternity.
96:11–13 ***Let the heavens rejoice . . . for He is coming.*** All creation groans under the curse, but when Christ returns, "the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).
97:2 ***Clouds and darkness.*** These words may be rephrased as "impenetrable clouds," an indicator of the final judgment and God's awesome power (Joel 2:2; Zeph. 1:15).
97:7 ***Worship Him, all you gods.*** One day, people will be forced to acknowledge that God is the only one worthy of worship, as they see that the very things they devoted themselves to in rejection of God must bow down to the Creator as Lord.
97:10 ***hate.*** The righteousness of God evokes a response either of delight or of shame because of sin (Is. 6:5). The subjects of the kingdom, the lovers of God, follow Him by loving what He loves and hating what He hates. "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13). Sin is portrayed in Scripture as an active and powerful force in unrelenting pursuit of its victims (Gen. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8), and the believer is called to total war against it.
98:1 ***His right hand.*** The "right hand" of the Lord is a way of referring to His great salvation of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 15:6; Deut. 4:34). The phrase is like a slogan for the Lord's redemption.
98:2 ***revealed in the sight of the nations.*** God's salvation was designed to be a witness to the nations (Deut. 4:6).

96:9 [i] Ps. 29:2 **96:10** [j] Ps. 93:1; 97:1 [k] Ps. 67:4 **96:11** [l] Ps. 69:34 [m] Ps. 98:7 **96:13** [n] [Rev. 19:11] **97:1** [a] [Ps. 96:10] **97:2** [b] Ps. 18:11 [c] [Ps. 89:14] **97:3** [d] Ps. 18:8 **97:4** [e] Ex. 19:18 **97:5** [f] Mic. 1:4 **97:6** [g] Ps. 19:1 **97:7** [h] [Ex. 20:4] [i] [Heb. 1:6] **97:9** [j] Ps. 83:18 [k] Ex. 18:11 **97:10** [l] [Ps. 34:14] [m] Prov. 2:8 [n] Ps. 37:40 **97:11** [o] Job 22:28 **97:12** [p] Ps. 33:1 [q] Ps. 30:4 **98:1** [a] Is. 42:10 [b] Ex. 15:11 **98:2** [c] Is. 52:10 [d] Is. 62:2

3 He has remembered His mercy and
His faithfulness to the house of
Israel;
[e]All the ends of the earth have seen the
salvation of our God.
4 Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the
earth;
Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing
praises.
5 Sing to the LORD with the harp,
With the harp and the sound of a
psalm,
6 With trumpets and the sound of a
horn;
Shout joyfully before the LORD, the
King.
7 Let the sea roar, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell in it;
8 Let the rivers clap *their* hands;
Let the hills be joyful together
9 before the LORD.
[f]For He is coming to judge the earth.
With righteousness He shall judge the
world,
And the peoples with equity.

Psalm 99

Praise to the LORD for His Holiness

1 The LORD reigns;
Let the peoples tremble!
[a]He dwells *between* the cherubim;
Let the earth be moved!
2 The LORD *is* great in Zion,
And He *is* high above all the peoples.
3 Let them praise Your great and
awesome name—
He *is* holy.
4 The King's strength also loves justice;
You have established equity;
You have executed justice and
righteousness in Jacob.
5 Exalt the LORD our God,
And worship at His footstool—
He *is* holy.
6 Moses and Aaron were among His
priests,
And Samuel was among those who
[b]called upon His name;
They called upon the LORD, and He
answered them.
7 He spoke to them in the cloudy pillar;
They kept His testimonies and the
ordinance He gave them.
8 You answered them, O LORD our God;
You were to them God-Who-Forgives,
Though You took vengeance on their
deeds.
9 Exalt the LORD our God,
And worship at His holy hill;
For the LORD our God *is* holy.

Psalm 100

A Song of Praise for the LORD's Faithfulness to His People

[a]A Psalm of Thanksgiving.

1 Make [b]a joyful shout to the LORD, all
you lands!
2 Serve the LORD with gladness;
Come before His presence with
singing.
3 Know that the LORD, He *is* God;
[c]*It is* He *who* has made us, and not we
ourselves;*
[d]*We are* His people and the sheep of
His pasture.
4 [e]Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His
name.
5 For the LORD *is* good;
[f]His mercy *is* everlasting,
And His truth *endures* to all
generations.

* **100:3** Following Kethib, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Qere, many Hebrew manuscripts, and Targum read *we are His*.

98:9 ***For He is coming.*** Creation rejoices at the coming of the Lord because when He establishes His kingdom, the curse will be lifted, and all creation will be freed from its slavery to corruption (Rom. 8:21–22).
99:1 ***cherubim.*** Cherubim are the angels most closely related to the glory of God. Two gold cherubim graced the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:18–22).
99:3 ***name . . . He is holy.*** To be holy is to be "distinct from," "separated," "set apart." This is the principal Hebrew word used to describe the transcendence of God (113:4–6).
99:5 ***His footstool.*** The footstool of the Lord is sometimes said to be the earth (Is. 66:1); but more specifically, Zion is the Lord's footstool (132:7; Is. 60:13). When the Israelites came to the temple in Jerusalem to worship, they pictured themselves as being at the feet of the Creator.
100:1 ***Make a joyful shout.*** This command is addressed not just to Israel but to all the earth. The Israelites were to be a people who would attract the nations to worship God.
100:3 ***the LORD, He is God.*** These words reflect the great confession of faith in Deuteronomy 6:4–9.
100:5 ***the LORD is good.*** The shout of the goodness of God in this verse is buttressed by an appeal to His lovingkindness and faithfulness. The Hebrew root for the word for "truth" comes from the word meaning "to be established" or "to be confirmed." From this word also comes the word "amen," meaning "surely" or "truly." God's goodness is based on His loyal love and His truth.

98:3 [e] Luke 3:6 **98:9** [f] [Ps. 96:10, 13] **99:1** [a] Ex. 25:22 **99:6** [b] 1 Sam. 7:9; 12:18 **100:title** [a] Ps. 145:title **100:1** [b] Ps. 95:1 **100:3** [c] [Eph. 2:10] [d] Ezek. 34:30, 31 **100:4** [e] Ps. 66:13; 116:17–19 **100:5** [f] Ps. 136:1

Psalm 101

Promised Faithfulness to the LORD

A Psalm of David.

1 I will sing of mercy and justice;
To You, O LORD, I will sing praises.
2 I will behave wisely in a perfect way.
Oh, when will You come to me?
I will [a]walk within my house with a perfect heart.
3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes;
[b]I hate the work of those [c]who fall away;
It shall not cling to me.
4 A perverse heart shall depart from me;
I will not [d]know wickedness.
5 Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor,
Him I will destroy;
[e]The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart,
Him I will not endure.
6 My eyes *shall be* on the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me;
He who walks in a perfect way,
He shall serve me.
7 He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house;
He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence.
8 [f]Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land,
That I may cut off all the evildoers [g]from the city of the LORD.

Psalm 102

The LORD's Eternal Love

A Prayer of the afflicted, [a]when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before the LORD.

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD,
And let my cry come to You.
2 [b]Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble;
Incline Your ear to me;
In the day that I call, answer me speedily.
3 For my days are [c]consumed like smoke,
And my bones are burned like a hearth.
4 My heart is stricken and withered like grass,
So that I forget to eat my bread.
5 Because of the sound of my groaning
My bones cling to my skin.
6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness;
I am like an owl of the desert.
7 I lie awake,
And am like a sparrow alone on the housetop.
8 My enemies reproach me all day long;
Those who deride me swear an oath against me.
9 For I have eaten ashes like bread,
And mingled my drink with weeping,
10 Because of Your indignation and Your wrath;
For You have lifted me up and cast me away.
11 My days *are* like a shadow that lengthens,
And I wither away like grass.
12 But You, O LORD, shall endure forever,
And the remembrance of Your name to all generations.
13 You will arise *and* have mercy on Zion;
For the time to favor her,
Yes, the set time, has come.
14 For Your servants take pleasure in her stones,
And show favor to her dust.
15 So the nations shall [d]fear the name of the LORD,
And all the kings of the earth Your glory.
16 For the LORD shall build up Zion;
[e]He shall appear in His glory.
17 [f]He shall regard the prayer of the destitute,
And shall not despise their prayer.
18 This will be [g]written for the generation to come,
That [h]a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.
19 For He [i]looked down from the height of His sanctuary;
From heaven the LORD viewed the earth,
20 [j]To hear the groaning of the prisoner,
To release those appointed to death,

101:1 ***mercy and justice.*** God's loyal love is coupled with justice. He does not allow sin to go unnoticed or unpunished, either in His children or in those who oppress them.
101:4 ***not know wickedness.*** The verb "to know" here has the idea of experience or intimate relationship with something or someone.
101:6 ***My eyes shall be on the faithful.*** David made a covenant with his eyes (Job 31:1) to observe the righteous and sustain them in their walk.
102:12 ***endure forever.*** Our days may be just a passing shadow, but God is King forever. He is gracious, loves His people, and promises to favor them.
102:15 ***the nations shall fear.*** A time will come when the Lord will rule over all the earth.

101:2 [a] 1 Kin. 11:4 **101:3** [b] Ps. 97:10 [c] Josh. 23:6 **101:4** [d] [Ps. 119:115] **101:5** [e] Prov. 6:17 **101:8** [f] Jer. 21:12 [g] Ps. 48:2, 8 **102:title** [a] Ps. 61:2 **102:2** [b] Ps. 27:9; 69:17 **102:3** [c] James 4:14 **102:15** [d] 1 Kin. 8:43 **102:16** [e] [Is. 60:1, 2] **102:17** [f] Neh. 1:6 **102:18** [g] [Rom. 15:4] [h] Ps. 22:31 **102:19** [i] Deut. 26:15 **102:20** [j] Ps. 79:11

21 To [k]declare the name of the LORD in Zion,
And His praise in Jerusalem,
22 [l]When the peoples are gathered together,
And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 He weakened my strength in the way;
He [m]shortened my days.
24 [n]I said, "O my God,
Do not take me away in the midst of my days;
[o]Your years *are* throughout all generations.
25 [p]Of old You laid the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands.
26 [q]They will perish, but You will endure;
Yes, they will all grow old like a garment;
Like a cloak You will change them,
And they will be changed.
27 But [r]You *are* the same,
And Your years will have no end.
28 [s]The children of Your servants will continue,
And their descendants will be established before You."

Psalm 103

Praise for the LORD's Mercies

A Psalm of David.

1 Bless [a]the LORD, O my soul;
And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name!
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:
3 [b]Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who [c]heals all your diseases,
4 Who redeems your life from destruction,
[d]Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
5 Who satisfies your mouth with good *things*,
So that [e]your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The LORD executes righteousness
And justice for all who are oppressed.
7 [f]He made known His ways to Moses,
His acts to the children of Israel.
8 [g]The LORD *is* merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
9 [h]He will not always strive *with us*,
Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.
10 [i]He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He [j]removed our transgressions from us.
13 [k]As a father pities *his* children,
So the LORD pities those who fear Him.
14 For He knows our frame;
He remembers that we *are* dust.

15 *As for* man, [l]his days *are* like grass;
As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.
16 [m]For the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
And [n]its place remembers it no more.*
17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting
On those who fear Him,
And His righteousness to children's children,
18 [o]To such as keep His covenant,
And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

19 The LORD has established His throne in heaven,
And [p]His kingdom rules over all.

* **103:16** Compare Job 7:10

102:25 ***Of old.*** God is eternal and His works are from ancient times. The writer of the Book of Hebrews applies these words of creation and eternality to the Son (vv. 25–27; Heb. 1:10–12).
103:1 ***Bless the LORD.*** To bless the Lord is to remember that He is the source of all our blessings. The psalmist blesses the Lord with his entire being (146:2).
103:3 ***heals all your diseases.*** This cannot be seen as a promise that the godly will never suffer from disease. Many believers have suffered and died of illnesses, despite repeated prayers for healing. Even though He does not always choose to heal, God is the source of all healing. This verse could also be seen as a parallel construction, coupling pardon from iniquity with healing from the disease of sin.
103:8 ***merciful and gracious.*** This is a basic description of God in the Old Testament (86:15; Ex. 34:6–7). If God dealt with us according to our sins, no one could stand before Him (130:3).
103:11 ***as the heavens are high above the earth.*** There is no way to compare the divine with the mortal; the mercy of God is greater than the heavens.
103:17 ***the mercy of the LORD.*** God's loyal love is forever.

102:21 [k] Ps. 22:22 **102:22** [l] Is. 2:2, 3; 49:22, 23; 60:3] **102:23** [m] Job 21:21 **102:24** [n] Is. 38:10 [o] [Ps. 90:2] **102:25** [p] [Heb. 1:10–12] **102:26** [q] Is. 34:4; 51:6 **102:27** [r] [Mal. 3:6] **102:28** [s] Ps. 69:36 **103:1** [a] Ps. 104:1, 35 **103:3** [b] Ps. 130:8 [c] [Ex. 15:26] **103:4** [d] [Ps. 5:12] **103:5** [e] [Is. 40:31] **103:7** [f] Ps. 147:19 **103:8** [g] [Ex. 34:6, 7] **103:9** [h] [Ps. 30:5] **103:10** [i] [Ezra 9:13] **103:12** [j] [Is. 38:17; 43:25] **103:13** [k] Mal. 3:17 **103:15** [l] 1 Pet. 1:24 **103:16** [m] [Is. 40:7] [n] Job 7:10 **103:18** [o] [Deut. 7:9] **103:19** [p] [Dan. 4:17, 25]

20 [q]Bless the LORD, you His angels,
Who excel in strength, who [r]do His word,
Heeding the voice of His word.
21 Bless the LORD, all *you* His hosts,
[s]*You* ministers of His, who do His pleasure.
22 Bless the LORD, all His works,
In all places of His dominion.

Bless the LORD, O my soul!

Psalm 104

Praise to the Sovereign LORD for His Creation and Providence

1 Bless [a]the LORD, O my soul!

O LORD my God, You are very great:
You are clothed with honor and majesty,
2 Who cover *Yourself* with light as *with* a garment,
Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.

3 [b]He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters,
Who makes the clouds His chariot,
Who walks on the wings of the wind,
4 Who makes His angels spirits,
His ministers a flame of fire.

5 *You who* laid the foundations of the earth,
So *that* it should not be moved forever,
6 You [c]covered it with the deep as *with* a garment;
The waters stood above the mountains.
7 At Your rebuke they fled;
At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away.
8 They went up over the mountains;
They went down into the valleys,
To the place which You founded for them.
9 You have [d]set a boundary that they may not pass over,
[e]That they may not return to cover the earth.

10 He sends the springs into the valleys;
They flow among the hills.
11 They give drink to every beast of the field;
The wild donkeys quench their thirst.
12 By them the birds of the heavens have their home;
They sing among the branches.
13 [f]He waters the hills from His upper chambers;
The earth is satisfied with [g]the fruit of Your works.

14 [h]He causes the grass to grow for the cattle,
And vegetation for the service of man,
That he may bring forth [i]food from the earth,
15 And [j]wine *that* makes glad the heart of man,
Oil to make *his* face shine,
And bread *which* strengthens man's heart.
16 The trees of the LORD are full *of sap*,
The cedars of Lebanon which He planted,
17 Where the birds make their nests;
The stork has her home in the fir trees.
18 The high hills *are* for the wild goats;
The cliffs are a refuge for the [k]rock badgers.*

19 [l]He appointed the moon for seasons;
The [m]sun knows its going down.
20 [n]You make darkness, and it is night,
In which all the beasts of the forest creep about.
21 [o]The young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their food from God.
22 *When* the sun rises, they gather together
And lie down in their dens.
23 Man goes out to [p]his work
And to his labor until the evening.

* **104:18** Or *rock hyrax* (compare Leviticus 11:5)

103:20–22 *Bless the LORD.* The poet began the psalm with a call to his own inner being to respond with praise to God (v. 1); he concludes the psalm with a call to heaven and earth to join him.
104:2 *cover Yourself with light.* God is Spirit (John 4:24), and descriptions of Him vary throughout the Bible. One strong description of Him is "light" (1 John 1:5). Here, light is described as the garment that enfolds His wonder. The first act of God in Genesis was the command for light (Gen. 1:3).
104:5 *laid the foundations of the earth.* The poet retells the story of creation from Genesis 1.
104:6 *covered it with the deep.* The term "deep" is the same word used in Genesis 1:2.
104:9 *set a boundary.* God promised that never again would the entire earth be covered as in the flood (Gen. 8:21–22).
104:15 *wine . . . Oil . . . bread.* It is clear that the earth was created for human beings and filled with good things for our sake.
104:19 *He appointed the moon for seasons.* In the ancient world, the heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars) were often worshiped as gods. God makes it clear that, far from being objects of worship, these things were created and set in place specifically for humans. The moon is not our god but our servant, set in place to keep track of times and seasons.

103:20 [q] Ps. 148:2 [r] [Matt. 6:10] **103:21** [s] [Heb. 1:14] **104:1** [a] Ps. 103:1 **104:3** [b] [Amos 9:6] **104:6** [c] Gen. 1:6 **104:9** [d] [Jer. 5:22] [e] Gen. 9:11–15 **104:13** [f] Ps. 147:8 [g] Jer. 10:13 **104:14** [h] Gen. 1:29 [i] Job 28:5 **104:15** [j] Judg. 9:13 **104:18** [k] Lev. 11:5 **104:19** [l] Gen. 1:14 [m] Ps. 19:6 **104:20** [n] [Is. 45:7] **104:21** [o] Job 38:39 **104:23** [p] Gen. 3:19

24 [q]O LORD, how manifold are Your works!
In wisdom You have made them all.
The earth is full of Your [r]possessions—
25 This great and wide sea,
In which *are* innumerable teeming things,
Living things both small and great.
26 There the ships sail about;
There is that [s]Leviathan
Which You have made to play there.

27 [t]These all wait for You,
That You may give *them* their food in due season.
28 *What* You give them they gather in;
You open Your hand, they are filled with good.
29 You hide Your face, they are troubled;
[u]You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.
30 [v]You send forth Your Spirit, they are created;
And You renew the face of the earth.

31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
May the LORD [w]rejoice in His works.
32 He looks on the earth, and it [x]trembles;
[y]He touches the hills, and they smoke.

33 [z]I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
34 May my [a]meditation be sweet to Him;
I will be glad in the LORD.
35 May [b]sinners be consumed from the earth,
And the wicked be no more.

Bless the LORD, O my soul!
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 105

The Eternal Faithfulness of the LORD

1 Oh, [a]give thanks to the LORD!
Call upon His name;
[b]Make known His deeds among the peoples!
2 Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
[c]Talk of all His wondrous works!
3 Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD!
4 Seek the LORD and His strength;
[d]Seek His face evermore!
5 [e]Remember His marvelous works which He has done,
His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,
6 O seed of Abraham His servant,
You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!

7 He *is* the LORD our God;
[f]His judgments *are* in all the earth.
8 He [g]remembers His covenant forever,
The word *which* He commanded, for a thousand generations,
9 [h]*The covenant* which He made with Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac,
10 And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute,
To Israel *as* an everlasting covenant,
11 Saying, [i]"To you I will give the land of Canaan
As the allotment of your inheritance,"
12 [j]When they were few in number,
Indeed very few, [k]and strangers in it.

13 When they went from one nation to another,
From *one* kingdom to another people,
14 [l]He permitted no one to do them wrong;
Yes, [m]He rebuked kings for their sakes,
15 *Saying,* "Do not touch My anointed ones,
And do My prophets no harm."

16 Moreover [n]He called for a famine in the land;
He destroyed all the [o]provision of bread.
17 [p]He sent a man before them—
Joseph—*who* [q]was sold as a slave.

104:27 ***These all wait for You.*** All creation depends on the Creator for birth, life, and sustenance. Even death is controlled by the Sovereign One.
104:31 ***May the LORD rejoice in His works.*** The Lord considered His creation "good" from the beginning (Gen. 1:31), and His pleasure in it remains (Prov. 8:30–31).
105:5 ***Remember His marvelous works.*** The psalmist calls to memory what God did for His people in fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3; 22:16–18).
105:8 ***He remembers.*** The words of the original promise to Abraham set out the Lord's obligation in strong terms (Gen. 12:1–3).
105:13–15 ***went . . . rebuked kings for their sakes.*** The descendants of Abraham have more than once been strangers in a foreign land, but each time the Lord has preserved their identity as a people and has rescued them from destruction. He saved them from the hand of Pharaoh (Exodus), and from the Persians (Esther). Today, the Jews are again scattered, but even though many have forgotten their God, they still do not forget that they are Jews. God's miraculous preservation of the identity of His people indicates that He is not yet finished with them.
105:17 ***Joseph.*** The story of Joseph's life is told in Genesis 37–50.

104:24 [q] Prov. 3:19 [r] Ps. 65:9 **104:26** [s] Job 41:1 **104:27** [t] Ps. 136:25 **104:29** [u] Job 34:15 **104:30** [v] Is. 32:15 **104:31** [w] Gen. 1:31 **104:32** [x] Hab. 3:10 [y] Ps. 144:5 **104:33** [z] Ps. 63:4 **104:34** [a] Ps. 19:14 **104:35** [b] Ps. 37:38 **105:1** [a] Is. 12:4 [b] Ps. 145:12 **105:2** [c] Ps. 119:27 **105:4** [d] Ps. 27:8 **105:5** [e] Ps. 77:11 **105:7** [f] [Is. 26:9] **105:8** [g] Luke 1:72 **105:9** [h] Gen. 17:2 **105:11** [i] Gen. 13:15; 15:18 **105:12** [j] [Deut. 7:7] [k] Heb. 11:9 **105:14** [l] Gen. 35:5 [m] Gen. 12:17 **105:16** [n] Gen. 41:54 [o] Lev. 26:26 **105:17** [p] [Gen. 45:5] [q] Gen. 37:28, 36

18 [r]They hurt his feet with fetters,
He was laid in irons.
19 Until the time that his word came to pass,
[s]The word of the LORD tested him.
20 [t]The king sent and released him,
The ruler of the people let him go free.
21 [u]He made him lord of his house,
And ruler of all his possessions,
22 To bind his princes at his pleasure,
And teach his elders wisdom.

23 [v]Israel also came into Egypt,
And Jacob dwelt [w]in the land of Ham.
24 [x]He increased His people greatly,
And made them stronger than their enemies.
25 [y]He turned their heart to hate His people,
To deal craftily with His servants.

26 [z]He sent Moses His servant,
And Aaron whom He had chosen.
27 They [a]performed His signs among them,
And wonders in the land of Ham.
28 He sent darkness, and made *it* dark;
And they did not rebel against His word.
29 [b]He turned their waters into blood,
And killed their fish.
30 [c]Their land abounded with frogs,
Even in the chambers of their kings.
31 [d]He spoke, and there came swarms of flies,
And lice in all their territory.
32 [e]He gave them hail for rain,
And flaming fire in their land.
33 [f]He struck their vines also, and their fig trees,
And splintered the trees of their territory.
34 [g]He spoke, and locusts came,
Young locusts without number,
35 And ate up all the vegetation in their land,
And devoured the fruit of their ground.
36 [h]He also destroyed all the firstborn in their land,
[i]The first of all their strength.

37 [j]He also brought them out with silver and gold,
And *there was* none feeble among His tribes.

38 [k]Egypt was glad when they departed,
For the fear of them had fallen upon them.
39 [l]He spread a cloud for a covering,
And fire to give light in the night.
40 [m]*The people* asked, and He brought quail,
And [n]satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
41 [o]He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
It ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For He remembered [p]His holy promise,
And Abraham His servant.
43 He brought out His people with joy,
His chosen ones with gladness.
44 [q]He gave them the lands of the Gentiles,
And they inherited the labor of the nations,
45 [r]That they might observe His statutes
And keep His laws.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 106

Joy in Forgiveness of Israel's Sins

1 Praise the LORD!

[a]Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD?
Who can declare all His praise?
3 Blessed *are* those who keep justice,
And he who [b]does* righteousness at [c]all times!

4 [d]Remember me, O LORD, with the favor *You have toward* Your people.
Oh, visit me with Your salvation,
5 That I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones,
That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation,
That I may glory with Your inheritance.

6 [e]We have sinned with our fathers,
We have committed iniquity,
We have done wickedly.

* **106:3** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *those who do.*

105:26–36 ***He sent Moses.*** The full story of the Israelites' slavery in Egypt and the plagues God sent upon the Egyptians is told in Exodus 1–11.
105:44 ***gave them the lands of the Gentiles.*** It is believed that this psalm may have been composed after the return from exile in Babylon. A celebration of God's gift of land would have been a tremendous source of encouragement to the people who had just returned to Israel.
106:6 ***sinned with our fathers.*** It is easy to point out the places where people have gone wrong in the past and to marvel at their stupidity and rebellion, but we have to point the finger at ourselves as well.

105:18 [r] Gen. 40:15 **105:19** [s] Gen. 39:11–21; 41:25, 42, 43 **105:20** [t] Gen. 41:14 **105:21** [u] Gen. 41:40–44 **105:23** [v] Gen. 46:6 [w] Ps. 78:51 **105:24** [x] Ex. 1:7, 9 **105:25** [y] Ex. 1:8–10; 4:21 **105:26** [z] Ex. 3:10; 4:12–15 **105:27** [a] Ps. 78:43 **105:29** [b] Ex. 7:20, 21 **105:30** [c] Ex. 8:6 **105:31** [d] Ex. 8:16, 17 **105:32** [e] Ex. 9:23–25 **105:33** [f] Ps. 78:47 **105:34** [g] Ex. 10:4 **105:36** [h] Ex. 12:29; 13:15 [i] Gen. 49:3 **105:37** [j] Ex. 12:35, 36 **105:38** [k] Ex. 12:33 **105:39** [l] Ex. 13:21 **105:40** [m] Ex. 16:12 [n] Ps. 78:24 **105:41** [o] Ex. 17:6 **105:42** [p] Gen. 15:13, 14 **105:44** [q] Josh. 11:16–23; 13:7 **105:45** [r] [Deut. 4:1, 40] **106:1** [a] 1 Chr. 16:34, 41 **106:3** [b] Ps. 15:2 [c] [Gal. 6:9] **106:4** [d] Ps. 119:132 **106:6** [e] [Dan. 9:5]

7 Our fathers in Egypt did not
understand Your wonders;
They did not remember the multitude
of Your mercies,
[f]But rebelled by the sea—the Red Sea.
8 Nevertheless He saved them for His
name's sake,
[g]That He might make His mighty
power known.
9 [h]He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it
dried up;
So [i]He led them through the depths,
As through the wilderness.
10 He [j]saved them from the hand of him
who hated *them*,
And redeemed them from the hand of
the enemy.
11 [k]The waters covered their enemies;
There was not one of them left.
12 [l]Then they believed His words;
They sang His praise.
13 [m]They soon forgot His works;
They did not wait for His counsel,
14 [n]But lusted exceedingly in the
wilderness,
And tested God in the desert.
15 [o]And He gave them their request,
But [p]sent leanness into their soul.
16 When [q]they envied Moses in the camp,
And Aaron the saint of the LORD,
17 [r]The earth opened up and swallowed
Dathan,
And covered the faction of Abiram.
18 [s]A fire was kindled in their company;
The flame burned up the wicked.
19 [t]They made a calf in Horeb,
And worshiped the molded image.
20 Thus [u]they changed their glory
Into the image of an ox that eats
grass.
21 They forgot God their Savior,
Who had done great things in Egypt,
22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham,
Awesome things by the Red Sea.
23 [v]Therefore He said that He would
destroy them,
Had not Moses His chosen one [w]stood
before Him in the breach,
To turn away His wrath, lest He
destroy *them*.
24 Then they despised [x]the pleasant
land;
They [y]did not believe His word,
25 [z]But complained in their tents,
And did not heed the voice of the
LORD.
26 [a]Therefore He raised His hand *in an
oath* against them,
[b]To overthrow them in the wilderness,
27 [c]To overthrow their descendants
among the nations,
And to scatter them in the lands.
28 [d]They joined themselves also to Baal of
Peor,
And ate sacrifices made to the dead.
29 Thus they provoked *Him* to anger with
their deeds,
And the plague broke out among
them.
30 [e]Then Phinehas stood up and
intervened,
And the plague was stopped.
31 And that was accounted to him [f]for
righteousness
To all generations forevermore.
32 [g]They angered *Him* also at the waters
of strife,*
[h]So that it went ill with Moses on
account of them;
33 [i]Because they rebelled against His
Spirit,
So that he spoke rashly with his lips.

* **106:32** Or *Meribah*

106:12 ***Then they believed.*** The people had faithlessly rebelled, but God graciously rescued them anyway, proving that His word is true and worth believing.

106:13 ***They soon forgot.*** Faith which is only active in the face of abundant proof is weak and short-lived.

106:15 ***He gave them their request.*** When the people rebelliously kept asking for their own desires, God finally let them have their own way—and also let them take the consequences. We don't have to fear that we might accidentally pray for something wrong and then receive a bad gift from the Lord. Even when we pray wrongly, if our hearts are turned towards God, He will redirect our desires and teach us the better way (37:4). However, it is sin if we keep praying for something when we already know that He said no, and we may have to bear consequences that we never dreamed of.

106:20 ***changed their glory.*** These words are echoed by Paul in Romans 1:22–23.

106:24–25 ***They did not believe.*** The Old Testament books of Exodus and Joshua illustrate God's plan of salvation. The first relates how Israel was brought out of the land of bondage, and the second describes how they were brought into the land of blessing. The wilderness route they traveled was of His choosing, but not the aimless wandering which followed. That sad 40-year episode was a direct result of their sin of unbelief.

106:28 ***Baal of Peor.*** After Balaam was prevented from cursing the Israelites, he suggested that the Moabites could destroy the Israelites in another way, by leading them into sin against their God (Num. 25).

106:7 [f] Ex. 14:11, 12 **106:8** [g] Ex. 9:16 **106:9** [h] Ex. 14:21 [i] Is. 63:11–13 **106:10** [j] Ex. 14:30 **106:11** [k] Ex. 14:27, 28; 15:5 **106:12** [l] Ex. 15:1–21 **106:13** [m] Ex. 15:24; 16:2; 17:2 **106:14** [n] 1 Cor. 10:6 **106:15** [o] Num. 11:31 [p] Is. 10:16 **106:16** [q] Num. 16:1–3 **106:17** [r] Deut. 11:6 **106:18** [s] Num. 16:35, 46 **106:19** [t] Ex. 32:1–4 **106:20** [u] Rom. 1:23 **106:23** [v] Ex. 32:10 [w] Ezek. 22:30 **106:24** [x] Deut. 8:7 [y] [Heb. 3:18, 19] **106:25** [z] Num. 14:2, 27 **106:26** [a] Ezek. 20:15, 16 [b] Num. 14:28–30 **106:27** [c] Lev. 26:33 **106:28** [d] Hos. 9:10 **106:30** [e] Num. 25:7, 8 **106:31** [f] Num. 25:11–13 **106:32** [g] Num. 20:3–13 [h] Deut. 1:37; 3:26 **106:33** [i] Num. 20:3, 10

34 [j]They did not destroy the peoples,
[k]Concerning whom the LORD had commanded them,
35 [l]But they mingled with the Gentiles
And learned their works;
36 [m]They served their idols,
[n]Which became a snare to them.
37 [o]They even sacrificed their sons
And their daughters to [p]demons,
38 And shed innocent blood,
The blood of their sons and daughters,
Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan;
And [q]the land was polluted with blood.
39 Thus they were [r]defiled by their own works,
And [s]played the harlot by their own deeds.

40 Therefore [t]the wrath of the LORD was kindled against His people,
So that He abhorred [u]His own inheritance.
41 And [v]He gave them into the hand of the Gentiles,
And those who hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies also oppressed them,
And they were brought into subjection under their hand.
43 [w]Many times He delivered them;
But they rebelled in their counsel,
And were brought low for their iniquity.

44 Nevertheless He regarded their affliction,
When [x]He heard their cry;
45 [y]And for their sake He remembered His covenant,
And [z]relented [a]according to the multitude of His mercies.
46 [b]He also made them to be pitied
By all those who carried them away captive.

47 [c]Save us, O LORD our God,
And gather us from among the Gentiles,
To give thanks to Your holy name,
To triumph in Your praise.

48 [d]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting!
And let all the people say, "Amen!"

Praise the LORD!

BOOK FIVE

Psalms 107–150

Psalm 107

Thanksgiving to the LORD for His Great Works of Deliverance

1 Oh, [a]give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.
2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say *so*,
Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy,
3 And [b]gathered out of the lands,
From the east and from the west,
From the north and from the south.

4 They wandered in [c]the wilderness in a desolate way;
They found no city to dwell in.
5 Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.
6 [d]Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,
And He delivered them out of their distresses.
7 And He led them forth by the [e]right way,
That they might go to a city for a dwelling place.
8 [f]Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!
9 For [g]He satisfies the longing soul,
And fills the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Those who [h]sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
[i]Bound in affliction and irons—
11 Because they [j]rebelled against the words of God,
And despised [k]the counsel of the Most High,
12 Therefore He brought down their heart with labor;
They fell down, and *there was* [l]none to help.

106:34 ***destroy the peoples.*** If Israel had obeyed and the Canaanites had been driven out, the people might never have succumbed to the idolatry that marked their existence for hundreds of years.
106:45 ***He remembered His covenant.*** God's wrath must always be seen in the context of His loyal love and His long forbearance. Even when the people brought down His wrath by their sins, He remained faithful to the covenant.
107:1 ***His mercy endures forever.*** God's "loyal love" or "mercies" will never end. He is always willing to restore those who call on Him.
107:9 ***He satisfies the longing soul.*** Only God can fulfill the spiritual longings of the human soul.

106:34 [j] Judg. 1:21 [k] [Deut. 7:2, 16] **106:35** [l] Judg. 3:5, 6 **106:36** [m] Judg. 2:12 [n] Deut. 7:16 **106:37** [o] 2 Kin. 16:3; 17:17 [p] [Lev. 17:7] **106:38** [q] [Num. 35:33] **106:39** [r] Ezek. 20:18 [s] [Lev. 17:7] **106:40** [t] Judg. 2:14 [u] [Deut. 9:29; 32:9] **106:41** [v] Judg. 2:14 **106:43** [w] Judg. 2:16 **106:44** [x] Judg. 3:9; 6:7; 10:10 **106:45** [y] [Lev. 26:41, 42] [z] Judg. 2:18 [a] Ps. 69:16 **106:46** [b] Ezra 9:9 **106:47** [c] 1 Chr. 16:35, 36 **106:48** [d] Ps. 41:13 **107:1** [a] Ps. 106:1 **107:3** [b] Is. 43:5, 6 **107:4** [c] [Deut. 2:7; 32:10] **107:6** [d] Ps. 50:15 **107:7** [e] Ezra 8:21 **107:8** [f] Ps. 107:15, 21 **107:9** [g] [Ps. 34:10] **107:10** [h] [Luke 1:79] [i] Job 36:8 **107:11** [j] Lam. 3:42 [k] [Ps. 73:24] **107:12** [l] Ps. 22:11

13 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,
And He saved them out of their distresses.
14 [m]He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,
And broke their chains in pieces.
15 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!
16 For He has [n]broken the gates of bronze,
And cut the bars of iron in two.

17 Fools, [o]because of their transgression,
And because of their iniquities, were afflicted.
18 [p]Their soul abhorred all manner of food,
And they [q]drew near to the gates of death.
19 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,
And He saved them out of their distresses.
20 [r]He sent His word and [s]healed them,
And [t]delivered *them* from their destructions.
21 Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!
22 [u]Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And [v]declare His works with rejoicing.

23 Those who go down to the sea in ships,
Who do business on great waters,
24 They see the works of the LORD,
And His wonders in the deep.
25 For He commands and [w]raises the stormy wind,
Which lifts up the waves of the sea.
26 They mount up to the heavens,
They go down again to the depths;
[x]Their soul melts because of trouble.
27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,
And are at their wits' end.
28 Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble,
And He brings them out of their distresses.
29 [y]He calms the storm,
So that its waves are still.
30 Then they are glad because they are quiet;
So He guides them to their desired haven.
31 [z]Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!
32 Let them exalt Him also [a]in the assembly of the people,
And praise Him in the company of the elders.

33 He [b]turns rivers into a wilderness,
And the watersprings into dry ground;
34 A [c]fruitful land into barrenness,
For the wickedness of those who dwell in it.
35 [d]He turns a wilderness into pools of water,
And dry land into watersprings.
36 There He makes the hungry dwell,
That they may establish a city for a dwelling place,
37 And sow fields and plant vineyards,
That they may yield a fruitful harvest.
38 [e]He also blesses them, and they multiply greatly;
And He does not let their cattle [f]decrease.

39 When they are [g]diminished and brought low
Through oppression, affliction, and sorrow,
40 [h]He pours contempt on princes,
And causes them to wander in the wilderness *where there is* no way;
41 [i]Yet He sets the poor on high, far from affliction,
And [j]makes *their* families like a flock.
42 [k]The righteous see *it* and rejoice,
And all [l]iniquity stops its mouth.

43 [m]Whoever *is* wise will observe these *things*,
And they will understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

Psalm 108

Assurance of God's Victory over Enemies

A Song. A Psalm of David.

1 O [a]God, my heart is steadfast;
I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

107:17 ***Fools.*** This harsh word emphasizes moral failure (Prov. 1:7; 15:5). These people deserved the trouble they suffered, yet they too may call upon the Lord, and He will deliver and restore them.

107:33 ***He turns rivers into a wilderness.*** During the reign of King Ahab of the northern kingdom of Israel, God sentenced the land to three years of drought because of their Baal worship (1 Kin. 17:1–7).

107:43 ***Whoever is wise.*** There is no wisdom apart from centering in on and responding to the love of God. The psalmist exhorts the readers to review God's history of delivering those in trouble and to praise His great love.

108:title ***A Song.*** This psalm is actually a medley of two other psalms of David. Verses 1–5 are from

107:14 [m] Ps. 68:6 **107:16** [n] Is. 45:1, 2 **107:17** [o] Lam. 3:39 **107:18** [p] Job 33:20 [q] Job 33:22 **107:20** [r] Matt. 8:8 [s] Ps. 30:2 [t] Job 33:28, 30 **107:22** [u] Lev. 7:12 [v] Ps. 9:11 **107:25** [w] Jon. 1:4 **107:26** [x] Ps. 22:14 **107:29** [y] Ps. 89:9 **107:31** [z] Ps. 107:8, 15, 21 **107:32** [a] Ps. 22:22, 25 **107:33** [b] 1 Kin. 17:1, 7 **107:34** [c] Gen. 13:10 **107:35** [d] Ps. 114:8 **107:38** [e] Gen. 12:2; 17:16, 20 [f] [Deut. 7:14] **107:39** [g] 2 Kin. 10:32 **107:40** [h] Job 12:21, 24 **107:41** [i] 1 Sam. 2:8 [j] Ps. 78:52 **107:42** [k] Job 5:15, 16 [l] [Rom. 3:19] **107:43** [m] Jer. 9:12 **108:1** [a] Ps. 57:7–11

2 [b]Awake, lute and harp!
I will awaken the dawn.
3 I will praise You, O LORD, among the peoples,
And I will sing praises to You among the nations.
4 For Your mercy *is* great above the heavens,
And Your truth *reaches* to the clouds.
5 [c]Be exalted, O God, above the heavens,
And Your glory above all the earth;
6 [d]That Your beloved may be delivered,
Save *with* Your right hand, and hear me.
7 God has spoken in His holiness:
"I will rejoice;
I will divide Shechem
And measure out the Valley of Succoth.
8 Gilead *is* Mine; Manasseh *is* Mine;
Ephraim also *is* the helmet for My head;
[e]Judah *is* My lawgiver.
9 Moab *is* My washpot;
Over Edom I will cast My shoe;
Over Philistia I will triumph."
10 [f]Who will bring me *into* the strong city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
11 *Is it* not *You,* O God, *who* cast us off?
And *You,* O God, *who* did not go out with our armies?
12 Give us help from trouble,
For the help of man is useless.
13 [g]Through God we will do valiantly,
For *it is* He *who* shall tread down our enemies.*

Psalm 109

Plea for Judgment of False Accusers

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1 Do[a] not keep silent,
O God of my praise!
2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful
Have opened against me;
They have spoken against me with a [b]lying tongue.
3 They have also surrounded me with words of hatred,
And fought against me [c]without a cause.
4 In return for my love they are my accusers,
But I *give myself to* prayer.
5 Thus [d]they have rewarded me evil for good,
And hatred for my love.
6 Set a wicked man over him,
And let [e]an accuser* stand at his right hand.
7 When he is judged, let him be found guilty,
And [f]let his prayer become sin.
8 Let his days be [g]few,
And [h]let another take his office.
9 [i]Let his children be fatherless,
And his wife a widow.
10 Let his children continually be vagabonds, and beg;
Let them seek *their bread** also from their desolate places.
11 [j]Let the creditor seize all that he has,
And let strangers plunder his labor.
12 Let there be none to extend mercy to him,
Nor let there be any to favor his fatherless children.
13 [k]Let his posterity be cut off,
And in the generation following let their [l]name be blotted out.
14 [m]Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD,
And let not the sin of his mother [n]be blotted out.
15 Let them be continually before the LORD,

* **108:13** Compare verses 6–13 with 60:5–12
* **109:6** Hebrew *satan* * **109:10** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *be cast out.*

57:7–11, and verses 6–13 are from 60:5–12. David is the author of both of these psalms, and 108 is attributed to him as well, even though the arrangement may have been someone else's.

108:7 ***I will rejoice.*** The remarkable fact about these words is that they are spoken by God. The Lord has pleasure in delivering His people and giving them victory. He celebrates His deliverance of them.

109:8 ***let another take his office.*** These words (along with 69:25) are quoted in Acts 1:20 as having been fulfilled in the replacement of Judas Iscariot.

109:9 ***fatherless . . . a widow.*** The curses that the psalmist wants to call down on his enemies seem very harsh and unforgiving. It is hard to understand how we should take this kind of language, in the face of Christ's teaching about loving our enemies and doing good to those who hurt us. However, two important points are clear: the psalmist left vengeance in the hands of the Lord, and he also clearly understood the reality of wickedness. We must remember that forgiveness is not saying, "It wasn't really bad." True forgiveness does not pretend that sin did not happen; it recognizes evil, and then releases the desire for vengeance into God's hands. God has promised that He will judge the wicked in the end.

108:2 [b] Ps. 57:8–11 **108:5** [c] Ps. 57:5, 11 **108:6** [d] Ps. 60:5–12 **108:8** [e] [Gen. 49:10] **108:10** [f] Ps. 60:9 **108:13** [g] Ps. 60:12 **109:1** [a] Ps. 83:1 **109:2** [b] Ps. 27:12 **109:3** [c] John 15:25 **109:5** [d] Ps. 35:7, 12; 38:20 **109:6** [e] Zech. 3:1 **109:7** [f] [Prov. 28:9] **109:8** [g] [Ps. 55:23] [h] Acts 1:20 **109:9** [i] Ex. 22:24 **109:11** [j] Job 5:5; 18:9 **109:13** [k] Job 18:19 [l] Prov. 10:7 **109:14** [m] [Ex. 20:5] [n] Neh. 4:5

That He may [o]cut off the memory of them from the earth;
16 Because he did not remember to show mercy,
But persecuted the poor and needy man,
That he might even slay the [p]broken in heart.
17 [q]As he loved cursing, so let it come to him;
As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him.
18 As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment,
So let it [r]enter his body like water,
And like oil into his bones.
19 Let it be to him like the garment which covers him,
And for a belt with which he girds himself continually.
20 *Let* this *be* the LORD's reward to my accusers,
And to those who speak evil against my person.

21 But You, O GOD the Lord,
Deal with me for Your name's sake;
Because Your mercy *is* good, deliver me.
22 For I *am* poor and needy,
And my heart is wounded within me.
23 I am gone [s]like a shadow when it lengthens;
I am shaken off like a locust.
24 My [t]knees are weak through fasting,
And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness.
25 I also have become [u]a reproach to them;
When they look at me, [v]they shake their heads.

26 Help me, O LORD my God!
Oh, save me according to Your mercy,
27 [w]That they may know that this *is* Your hand—
That You, LORD, have done it!
28 [x]Let them curse, but You bless;
When they arise, let them be ashamed,
But let [y]Your servant rejoice.
29 [z]Let my accusers be clothed with shame,
And let them cover themselves with their own disgrace as with a mantle.

30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth;
Yes, [a]I will praise Him among the multitude.
31 For [b]He shall stand at the right hand of the poor,
To save *him* from those who condemn him.

Psalm 110

Announcement of the Messiah's Reign

A Psalm of David.

1 The [a]LORD said to my Lord,
"Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your [b]footstool."
2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength [c]out of Zion.
[d]Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

3 [e]Your people *shall be* volunteers
In the day of Your power;
[f]In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning,
You have the dew of Your youth.
4 The LORD has sworn
And [g]will not relent,
"You *are* a [h]priest forever
According to the order of [i]Melchizedek."

109:27 ***That they may know.*** Even in the psalmist's intense emotional state, he wants to see the name of God defended, proclaimed, and honored.

110:1 ***The LORD.*** "LORD" is the translation of the Hebrew name Yahweh (I AM) and refers to God the Father. According to Jesus' interpretation of the passage (Matt. 22:41–45; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44), the second "Lord" is a reference to the Son of God in heaven in the presence of the Father. David himself confesses the Son to be his Lord—that is, his master or sovereign. ***at My right hand.*** This position of high honor beside the Father was given to the Savior upon His resurrection and ascension (Acts 2:33–36; 1 Cor. 15:20–28; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:13). The Savior placing His feet on His foes depicts the utter defeat of the enemies of Christ (1 Cor. 15:25–26; Eph. 1:22–23).

110:3 ***In the beauties of holiness.*** This description of the people who join the King in His great battle fits with Revelation 19:14.

110:4 ***a priest.*** God is seen appointing the coming Messiah to be a priest (Heb. 7). This was a source of confusion for Jews, as demonstrated by the questions that the New Testament Jews had about the Messiah. Some Dead Sea Scrolls give evidence that more than one Messiah was anticipated. According to Scripture, the Messiah would be a descendant of David (Is. 9:7), but this prophecy presents Him as a priest. This might seem to be a contradiction because true priests had to be descendants of Aaron, but the Messiah is presented as a priest by divine declaration rather than human descent. ***Melchizedek.*** Melchizedek is first mentioned in Genesis 14:18–20. He was a true priest of the Most High God, unrelated to Abraham and living hundreds of years before Aaron. He became a

109:15 [o] Job 18:17 **109:16** [p] [Ps. 34:18] **109:17** [q] Prov. 14:14 **109:18** [r] Num. 5:22 **109:23** [s] Ps. 102:11 **109:24** [t] Heb. 12:12 **109:25** [u] Ps. 22:7 [v] Matt. 27:39 **109:27** [w] Job 37:7 **109:28** [x] 2 Sam. 6:11, 12 [y] Is. 65:14 **109:29** [z] Ps. 35:26 **109:30** [a] Ps. 35:18; 111:1 **109:31** [b] [Ps. 16:8] **110:1** [a] Matt. 22:44 [b] [1 Cor. 15:25] **110:2** [c] [Rom. 11:26, 27] [d] [Dan. 7:13, 14] **110:3** [e] Judg. 5:2 [f] Ps. 96:9 **110:4** [g] [Num. 23:19] [h] [Zech. 6:13] [i] [Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20]

5 The Lord *is* [j]at Your right hand;
He shall execute kings [k]in the day of His wrath.
6 He shall judge among the nations,
He shall fill *the places* with dead bodies,
[l]He shall execute the heads of many countries.
7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside;
[m]Therefore He shall lift up the head.

Psalm 111

Praise to God for His Faithfulness and Justice

1 Praise the LORD!

[a]I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart,
In the assembly of the upright and *in* the congregation.
2 [b]The works of the LORD *are* great,
[c]Studied by all who have pleasure in them.
3 His work *is* [d]honorable and glorious,
And His righteousness endures forever.
4 He has made His wonderful works to be remembered;
[e]The LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion.
5 He has given food to those who fear Him;
He will ever be mindful of His covenant.
6 He has declared to His people the power of His works,
In giving them the heritage of the nations.
7 The works of His hands *are* [f]verity and justice;
All His precepts *are* sure.
8 [g]They stand fast forever and ever,
And are [h]done in truth and uprightness.
9 [i]He has sent redemption to His people;
He has commanded His covenant forever:
[j]Holy and awesome *is* His name.
10 [k]The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom;
A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments.*
His praise endures forever.

Psalm 112

The Blessed State of the Righteous

1 Praise the LORD!

Blessed *is* the man *who* fears the LORD,
Who [a]delights greatly in His commandments.
2 [b]His descendants will be mighty on earth;
The generation of the upright will be blessed.
3 [c]Wealth and riches *will be* in his house,
And his righteousness endures forever.
4 [d]Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness;
He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.
5 [e]A good man deals graciously and lends;
He will guide his affairs [f]with discretion.
6 Surely he will never be shaken;
[g]The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance.
7 [h]He will not be afraid of evil tidings;
His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.
8 His [i]heart *is* established;
[j]He will not be afraid,
Until he [k]sees *his desire* upon his enemies.
9 He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever;
His horn will be exalted with honor.

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prototype of the Messiah, whose priesthood was not based on connection with the line of Aaron but was by divine decree (Heb. 5:5–11; 6:20; 7:1–28).

111:1 ***Praise the LORD.*** This translates the Hebrew word *hallelujah.*

111:9 ***redemption.*** The psalmists constantly look back to the Exodus, but they also speak of that which was still to come—the redemption of mankind through the Messiah.

111:10 ***fear of the LORD.*** The fear of the Lord describes an obedient response of wonder and awe before the Most High God.

112:1 ***Praise the LORD.*** Like Psalm 111, this psalm begins with the Hebrew word "hallelujah." It then picks up where Psalm 111 left off. ***Blessed.*** This word, meaning "manifestly happy," is the same word which begins the Book of Psalms.

112:2 ***His descendants will be mighty.*** Compare the blessings of this psalm with the curses placed on the wicked in 109:6–13.

112:9 ***given to the poor.*** The gracious and compassionate nature of God is also seen in His people, especially in their acts of benevolence toward the poor. The poor are the materially destitute and

110:5 [j] [Ps. 16:8] [k] Ps. 2:5, 12 **110:6** [l] Ps. 68:21 **110:7** [m] [Is. 53:12] **111:1** [a] Ps. 35:18 **111:2** [b] Ps. 92:5 [c] Ps. 143:5 **111:3** [d] Ps. 145:4, 5 **111:4** [e] [Ps. 86:5] **111:7** [f] [Rev. 15:3] **111:8** [g] Is. 40:8 [h] [Rev. 15:3] **111:9** [i] Luke 1:68 [j] Luke 1:49 **111:10** [k] Eccl. 12:13 **112:1** [a] Ps. 128:1 **112:2** [b] [Ps. 102:28] **112:3** [c] [Matt. 6:33] **112:4** [d] Job 11:17 **112:5** [e] [Luke 6:35] [f] [Eph. 5:15] **112:6** [g] Prov. 10:7 **112:7** [h] [Prov. 1:33] **112:8** [i] Heb. 13:9 [j] Prov. 1:33; 3:24 [k] Ps. 59:10

10 The wicked will see *it* and be grieved;
He will gnash his teeth and melt away;
The desire of the wicked shall perish.

Psalm 113

The Majesty and Condescension of God

1 Praise the LORD!

[a]Praise, O servants of the LORD,
Praise the name of the LORD!
2 [b]Blessed be the name of the LORD
From this time forth and forevermore!
3 [c]From the rising of the sun to its going down
The LORD's name *is* to be praised.

4 The LORD *is* [d]high above all nations,
[e]His glory above the heavens.
5 [f]Who *is* like the LORD our God,
Who dwells on high,
6 [g]Who humbles Himself to behold
The things that are in the heavens and in the earth?

7 [h]He raises the poor out of the dust,
And lifts the [i]needy out of the ash heap,
8 That He may [j]seat *him* with princes—
With the princes of His people.
9 [k]He grants the barren woman a home,
Like a joyful mother of children.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 114

The Power of God in His Deliverance of Israel

1 When [a]Israel went out of Egypt,
The house of Jacob [b]from a people of strange language,
2 [c]Judah became His sanctuary,
And Israel His dominion.

3 [d]The sea saw *it* and fled;
[e]Jordan turned back.
4 [f]The mountains skipped like rams,
The little hills like lambs.
5 [g]What ails you, O sea, that you fled?
O Jordan, *that* you turned back?
6 O mountains, *that* you skipped like rams?
O little hills, like lambs?

7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,
At the presence of the God of Jacob,
8 [h]Who turned the rock *into* a pool of water,
The flint into a fountain of waters.

Psalm 115

The Futility of Idols and the Trustworthiness of God

1 Not [a]unto us, O LORD, not unto us,
But to Your name give glory,
Because of Your mercy,
Because of Your truth.

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helpless segments of society—widows, orphans, and aliens—whose rights are more easily violated. Scripture tells us that giving to the poor is lending to the Lord and will be repaid by the Lord (Prov. 19:17). To give freely to the poor literally means "to scatter" God's gifts, which suggests that the poor will be provided for and that abundance will come to the giver as well (2 Cor. 9:8–9). ***His horn.*** The horn is a symbol of power. When used for a righteous person, it speaks of prominence and a lasting sense of worth in his or her life.

113:1 ***Praise the LORD.*** This psalm of descriptive praise begins and ends with the Hebrew word "hallelujah." This psalm, along with Psalm 114, is traditionally read before the Passover meal.

113:2 ***the name of the LORD.*** In biblical times there was a close association between a person's name and identity. Praising the name of God centers one's thoughts on His character.

113:4 ***high above all nations.*** Unlike the manmade gods of the ancient Middle East, the Lord is not limited to a certain tribe or territory. Not only is He supreme over all nations, but His glory cannot be contained in the universe.

113:6 ***humbles Himself.*** God is not some far distant deity who set the world in motion and then went about His business. Instead, He is deeply involved in the lives of the people He created and loves us so much that He came down from His high position to save us (Phil. 2:5–9).

113:9 ***barren woman.*** In that time and culture, a barren woman was without significance and without joy. The joy of a barren woman who has been given children is a picture of the joy we receive when God stoops down to touch us.

114:1 ***out of Egypt.*** This psalm recalling the salvation of Israel from Egypt is traditionally read along with Psalm 113 before the Passover meal.

114:2 ***Judah became His sanctuary.*** This verse anticipates the New Testament sense of God living among His people (Ezek. 37:26–27; 2 Cor. 6:16–18).

115:1 ***to Your name give glory.*** This community psalm of praise focuses on the glory of the Lord in the salvation of His people. It is one of the Passover psalms (115–118; 136), traditionally read or sung after the Passover meal.

113:1 [a] Ps. 135:1 **113:2** [b] [Dan. 2:20] **113:3** [c] Is. 59:19 **113:4** [d] Ps. 97:9; 99:2 [e] [Ps. 8:1] **113:5** [f] [Is. 57:15] **113:6** [g] [Ps. 11:4] **113:7** [h] 1 Sam. 2:8 [i] Ps. 72:12 **113:8** [j] [Job 36:7] **113:9** [k] 1 Sam. 2:5 **114:1** [a] Ex. 12:51; 13:3 [b] Ps. 81:5 **114:2** [c] Ex. 6:7; 19:6; 25:8; 29:45, 46 **114:3** [d] Ex. 14:21 [e] Josh. 3:13–16 **114:4** [f] Ps. 29:6 **114:5** [g] Hab. 3:8 **114:8** [h] Ex. 17:6 **115:1** [a] [Is. 48:11]

2 Why should the Gentiles say,
[b]"So where *is* their God?"

3 [c]But our God *is* in heaven;
He does whatever He pleases.
4 [d]Their idols *are* silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
5 They have mouths, but they do not
speak;
Eyes they have, but they do not see;
6 They have ears, but they do not hear;
Noses they have, but they do not
smell;
7 They have hands, but they do not
handle;
Feet they have, but they do not walk;
Nor do they mutter through their
throat.
8 [e]Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.

9 [f]O Israel, trust in the LORD;
[g]He *is* their help and their shield.
10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD;
He *is* their help and their shield.
11 You who fear the LORD, trust in the
LORD;
He *is* their help and their shield.

12 The LORD has been mindful of *us;*
He will bless us;
He will bless the house of Israel;
He will bless the house of Aaron.
13 [h]He will bless those who fear the LORD,
Both small and great.

14 May the LORD give you increase more
and more,
You and your children.
15 *May* you *be* [i]blessed by the LORD,
[j]Who made heaven and earth.

16 The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the
LORD's;
But the earth He has given to the
children of men.
17 [k]The dead do not praise the LORD,
Nor any who go down into silence.
18 [l]But we will bless the LORD
From this time forth and
forevermore.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 116

Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death

1 I [a]love the LORD, because He has
heard
My voice *and* my supplications.
2 Because He has inclined His ear
to me,
Therefore I will call *upon Him* as long
as I live.

3 [b]The pains of death surrounded me,
And the pangs of Sheol laid hold of
me;
I found trouble and sorrow.
4 Then I called upon the name of the
LORD:
"O LORD, I implore You, deliver my
soul!"

5 [c]Gracious *is* the LORD, and [d]righteous;
Yes, our God *is* merciful.
6 The LORD preserves the simple;
I was brought low, and He saved me.
7 Return to your [e]rest, O my soul,
For [f]the LORD has dealt bountifully
with you.

8 [g]For You have delivered my soul from
death,
My eyes from tears,
And my feet from falling.
9 I will walk before the LORD
[h]In the land of the living.
10 [i]I believed, therefore I spoke,
"I am greatly afflicted."
11 [j]I said in my haste,
[k]"All men *are* liars."

12 What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
13 I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the
LORD.
14 [l]I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His
people.

15 [m]Precious in the sight of the LORD
Is the death of His saints.

115:4–8 *idols.* Like the prophets (Is. 40:18–20; Jer. 10:1–10), the psalms are derisive toward the idols of the nations.

115:18 *Praise the LORD.* Many of the Passover psalms (115–117) conclude with the Hebrew word "hallelujah."

116:1 *I love the LORD.* This messianic psalm is one of the Passover psalms (113–118). It was probably recited by Jesus on the night of His arrest, the night He celebrated the Passover with His disciples (Luke 22:15).

116:3 *pains of death.* These words point prophetically to the Savior's anguish on the cross (Matt. 27:27–35).

116:10 *I believed, therefore I spoke.* This belief is the hope of eternal life articulated in verse 9. Paul quotes this verse (translated "I believed, and therefore I spoke") as proof of the scriptural hope of the resurrection (2 Cor. 4:13).

116:13 *the cup of salvation.* This psalm is traditionally read after the Passover meal, following the third cup of wine, called the cup of salvation. How appropriate that this Passover psalm would call to mind God's cup of salvation the very night that the Savior was betrayed (Matt. 26:27; Luke 22:14–22).

115:2 [b] Ps. 42:3, 10 **115:3** [c] [1 Chr. 16:26] **115:4** [d] Jer. 10:3 **115:8** [e] Is. 44:9–11 **115:9** [f] Ps. 118:2, 3 [g] Ps. 33:20 **115:13** [h] Ps. 128:1, 4 **115:15** [i] [Gen. 14:19] [j] Gen. 1:1 **115:17** [k] [Is. 38:18] **115:18** [l] Dan. 2:20 **116:1** [a] Ps. 18:1 **116:3** [b] Ps. 18:4–6 **116:5** [c] [Ps. 103:8] [d] [Ezra 9:15] **116:7** [e] [Jer. 6:16] [f] Ps. 13:6 **116:8** [g] Ps. 56:13 **116:9** [h] Ps. 27:13 **116:10** [i] 2 Cor. 4:13 **116:11** [j] Ps. 31:22 [k] Rom. 3:4 **116:14** [l] Ps. 116:18 **116:15** [m] Ps. 72:14

16 O LORD, truly [n]I *am* Your servant;
I *am* Your servant, [o]the son of Your maidservant;
You have loosed my bonds.
17 I will offer to You [p]the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon the name of the LORD.

18 I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people,
19 In the [q]courts of the LORD's house,
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 117

Let All Peoples Praise the LORD

1 Praise [a]the LORD, all you Gentiles!
Laud Him, all you peoples!
2 For His merciful kindness is great toward us,
And [b]the truth of the LORD *endures* forever.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 118

Praise to God for His Everlasting Mercy

1 Oh, [a]give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
[b]For His mercy *endures* forever.

2 [c]Let Israel now say,
"His mercy *endures* forever."
3 Let the house of Aaron now say,
"His mercy *endures* forever."
4 Let those who fear the LORD now say,
"His mercy *endures* forever."

5 [d]I called on the LORD in distress;
The LORD answered me *and* [e]*set me* in a broad place.
6 [f]The LORD *is* on my side;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?
7 [g]The LORD is for me among those who help me;
Therefore [h]I shall see *my desire* on those who hate me.
8 [i]*It is* better to trust in the LORD
Than to put confidence in man.
9 [j]*It is* better to trust in the LORD
Than to put confidence in princes.

10 All nations surrounded me,
But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
11 They [k]surrounded me,
Yes, they surrounded me;
But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
12 They surrounded me [l]like bees;
They were quenched [m]like a fire of thorns;
For in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.
13 You pushed me violently, that I might fall,
But the LORD helped me.
14 [n]The LORD *is* my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation.*

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation
Is in the tents of the righteous;
The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.
16 [o]The right hand of the LORD is exalted;
The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.
17 [p]I shall not die, but live,
And [q]declare the works of the LORD.
18 The LORD has [r]chastened me severely,
But He has not given me over to death.

19 [s]Open to me the gates of righteousness;

* **118:14** Compare Exodus 15:2

118:1 ***give thanks.*** This is the climax of the group of psalms called the Passover psalms. These psalms were probably sung by Jesus on the night before His death.
118:2 ***His mercy endures forever.*** This refrain praises God's loyal, merciful, covenant love throughout the psalm.
118:9 ***put confidence in princes.*** Although relying on other people is part of living, our ultimate trust can only be placed in the Lord God. Even powerful rulers are limited by their own mortality (146:3).
118:13 ***the LORD helped me.*** Compare this to Paul's words in 2 Timothy 4:17–18. Deliverance always comes from God.
118:14 ***my strength and song.*** These words are a quotation from "the Song of Moses" (Ex. 15:2); they are also quoted in Isaiah 12:2. The God who delivered the Israelites by dividing the waters of the Red Sea was ready to deliver the psalmist from trouble.
118:19 ***Open to me the gates of righteousness.*** The poet draws on the wording and imagery of Psalm 24. There is only One who can enter the gates of the Lord of His own accord—Jesus, the perfect King of glory.

116:16 [n] Ps. 119:125; 143:12 [o] Ps. 86:16 **116:17** [p] Lev. 7:12 **116:19** [q] Ps. 96:8 **117:1** [a] Rom. 15:11 **117:2** [b] [Ps. 100:5] **118:1** [a] 1 Chr. 16:8, 34 [b] [Ps. 136:1–26] **118:2** [c] [Ps. 115:9] **118:5** [d] Ps. 120:1 [e] Ps. 18:19 **118:6** [f] Ps. 27:1; 56:9 **118:7** [g] Ps. 54:4 [h] Ps. 59:10 **118:8** [i] Ps. 40:4 **118:9** [j] Ps. 146:3 **118:11** [k] Ps. 88:17 **118:12** [l] Deut. 1:44 [m] Nah. 1:10 **118:14** [n] Is. 12:2 **118:16** [o] Ex. 15:6 **118:17** [p] Hab. 1:12 [q] Ps. 73:28 **118:18** [r] 2 Cor. 6:9 **118:19** [s] Is. 26:2

I will go through them,
And I will praise the LORD.
20 [t]This is the gate of the LORD,
[u]Through which the righteous shall enter.

21 I will praise You,
For You have [v]answered me,
And have become my salvation.

22 [w]The stone *which* the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
23 This was the LORD's doing;
It *is* marvelous in our eyes.
24 This *is* the day the LORD has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save now, I pray, O LORD;
O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.
26 [x]Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the LORD!
We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.
27 God *is* the LORD,
And He has given us [y]light;
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.
28 You *are* my God, and I will praise You;
[z]*You are* my God, I will exalt You.

29 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 119

Meditations on the Excellencies of the Word of God

א ALEPH

1 Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way,
[a]Who walk in the law of the LORD!
2 Blessed *are* those who keep His testimonies,
Who seek Him with the [b]whole heart!
3 [c]They also do no iniquity;
They walk in His ways.
4 You have commanded *us*
To keep Your precepts diligently.
5 Oh, that my ways were directed
To keep Your statutes!
6 [d]Then I would not be ashamed,
When I look into all Your commandments.
7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.
8 I will keep Your statutes;
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

ב BETH

9 How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.

118:20 ***gate of the LORD.*** The literal reference may be to the gate of Jerusalem, the city of God—or even to a gate of the temple. Jesus declared that He was the gate or door leading to salvation (John 10:9).

118:22 ***the chief cornerstone.*** The potent imagery of this verse depicts Jesus' rejection by many (Is. 53:3; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22; 17:25). Jesus elaborated on this prophetic verse with the parable of the vineyard owner. In this parable, the rejection included the murder of the owner's son—a reference to God's only Son (Mark 12:1–12). But, even though the Savior was rejected, He was elevated to the right hand of God (Acts 7:56). The cross, the symbol of Jesus' rejection, has become the symbol of our salvation (1 Cor. 1:18; Heb. 12:2).

118:25 ***Save now.*** These words are familiar to us in the transliteration of the Hebrew word "hosanna." The words are so significant that, if the people had not shouted them aloud (Matt. 21:16) when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the stones would have had to shout them (Luke 19:40).

118:26 ***Blessed is he who comes.*** These are the very words that the people used to bless Jesus as He rode into Jerusalem the week before the Passover (Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:9; Luke 19:38).

119:1 ***Blessed are the undefiled.*** This very lengthy poem is an acrostic. For each of the 22 consonants in the Hebrew alphabet, there are eight verses beginning with that letter. Within the psalm, eight words for God's law occur again and again: law, testimonies, promise, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, word. These words elaborate the application of the law of God to daily life and to Israel's destiny.

the law of the LORD. The Hebrew word *torah*, translated "law," basically means "instruction" or "direction." Broadly, it refers to all God's instructions from Moses to the prophets. More strictly, it refers to the first five books of the Old Testament. The law was never designed as a means of salvation; no one could be saved by keeping it. Instead, the law was the means for the Israelites to learn how to live as God's holy people. The psalmists consistently describe the law of God as a great blessing, for it was God's gracious revelation to His people for their own good (Deut. 6:1–3). In the law, God mercifully pointed out the right path to follow. Only mistaken legalistic interpretations of the law prompted the negative statements in the New Testament.

119:9–11 ***Your word.*** The Lord designs that His Word should bring purity (v. 9), security (v. 23), freedom (v. 45), hope (v. 49), life (v. 50), light (v. 105), and peace (v. 165).

119:9 God's Word Cleanses—One of the pieces of furniture in the Old Testament tabernacle was called the bronze laver (Ex. 38:8). It was a huge upright bronze bowl filled with water, resting upon a pedestal. The priests would often stop at this laver to perform their ritualistic cleansings. The Word of God is like this laver. Only the Word can remove the

118:20 [t] Ps. 24:7 [u] Is. 35:8 **118:21** [v] Ps. 116:1 **118:22** [w] Matt. 21:42 **118:26** [x] Mark 11:9 **118:27** [y] [1 Pet. 2:9] **118:28** [z] Is. 25:1 **119:1** [a] Ps. 128:1 **119:2** [b] Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 13:3 **119:3** [c] [1 John 3:9; 5:18] **119:6** [d] Job 22:26

10 With my whole heart I have [e]sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
11 [f]Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.
12 Blessed *are* You, O LORD!
Teach me Your statutes.
13 With my lips I have [g]declared
All the judgments of Your mouth.
14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As *much as* in all riches.
15 I will meditate on Your precepts,
And contemplate Your ways.
16 I will [h]delight myself in Your statutes;
I will not forget Your word.

ג GIMEL

17 [i]Deal bountifully with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.
18 Open my eyes, that I may see
Wondrous things from Your law.
19 [j]I *am* a stranger in the earth;
Do not hide Your commandments from me.
20 [k]My soul breaks with longing
For Your judgments at all times.
21 You rebuke the proud—the cursed,
Who stray from Your commandments.
22 [l]Remove from me reproach and contempt,
For I have kept Your testimonies.
23 Princes also sit *and* speak against me,
But Your servant meditates on Your statutes.
24 Your testimonies also *are* my delight
And my counselors.

ד DALETH

25 [m]My soul clings to the dust;
[n]Revive me according to Your word.
26 I have declared my ways, and You answered me;
[o]Teach me Your statutes.
27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts;
So [p]shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.
28 [q]My soul melts from heaviness;
Strengthen me according to Your word.
29 Remove from me the way of lying,
And grant me Your law graciously.
30 I have chosen the way of truth;
Your judgments I have laid *before me.*
31 I cling to Your testimonies;
O LORD, do not put me to shame!
32 I will run the course of Your commandments,
For You shall [r]enlarge my heart.

ה HE

33 [s]Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes,
And I shall keep it *to* the end.
34 [t]Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law;
Indeed, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart.
35 Make me walk in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.
36 Incline my heart to Your testimonies,
And not to [u]covetousness.
37 [v]Turn away my eyes from [w]looking at worthless things,
And revive me in Your way.*

* **119:37** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Targum reads *Your words.*

filth and dirt from our hearts (1 Pet. 1:22) just as the bronze laver removed the physical impurities from the priests.

How can the Bible cleanse us? It can cleanse us from wrong thoughts (Ps. 19:12; 51:10; Phil. 4:8–9). It can help eliminate fear (Judg. 1:9). It can cleanse us from wrong actions (1 John 1:9). Jesus directly promises all this: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you" (John 15:3).

119:11 Memorizing Scripture—The Bible recognizes the importance of Scripture memorization. By memorizing the Word, we have access to it no matter where we are or what our circumstances. The following benefits can be cited:

- It keeps us from sinning (Ps. 119:11).
- It provides comfort in times of trouble (Ps. 119:52,92).
- It provides daily sustenance for the spiritual life (Deut. 8:3).
- It provides continual and ready guidance in all the situations of life (Prov. 6:20–23).
- It provides the basis for formal and informal instruction of children (Deut. 6:6–7).

119:16 *statutes.* The Hebrew word translated "statutes" refers to something marked out as a boundary, something inscribed or engraved. Hence the word speaks of the permanence of the law, which God Himself had engraved in stone (Ex. 24:12). The same word is often translated "decree" (2:7).

119:22 *testimonies.* The Hebrew word translated "testimonies" is derived from the verb meaning "to witness" or "to testify." It refers to the Ten Commandments, called the "two tablets of the Testimony" (Ex. 31:18). The commandments were a testimony because they were a witness to the Israelites of their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the covenant (Deut. 31:26).

119:37 *Your way.* The will of God is like a path leading to life; His ways are a reflection of His good character.

119:10 [e] 2 Chr. 15:15 **119:11** [f] Luke 2:19 **119:13** [g] Ps. 34:11 **119:16** [h] Ps. 1:2 **119:17** [i] Ps. 116:7 **119:19** [j] Heb. 11:13 **119:20** [k] Ps. 42:1, 2; 63:1; 84:2 **119:22** [l] Ps. 39:8 **119:25** [m] Ps. 44:25 [n] Ps. 143:11 **119:26** [o] Ps. 25:4; 27:11; 86:11 **119:27** [p] Ps. 145:5, 6 **119:28** [q] Ps. 107:26 **119:32** [r] Is. 60:5 **119:33** [s] [Rev. 2:26] **119:34** [t] [Prov. 2:6] **119:36** [u] Ezek. 33:31 **119:37** [v] Is. 33:15 [w] Prov. 23:5

38 [x]Establish Your word to Your servant,
Who *is devoted* to fearing You.
39 Turn away my reproach which I dread,
For Your judgments *are* good.
40 Behold, I long for Your precepts;
Revive me in Your righteousness.

ו WAW

41 Let Your mercies come also to me,
O LORD—
Your salvation according to Your word.
42 So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.
43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
For I have hoped in Your ordinances.
44 So shall I keep Your law continually,
Forever and ever.
45 And I will walk at [y]liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.
46 [z]I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings,
And will not be ashamed.
47 And I will delight myself in Your commandments,
Which I love.
48 My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments,
Which I love,
And I will meditate on Your statutes.

ז ZAYIN

49 Remember the word to Your servant,
Upon which You have caused me to hope.
50 This *is* my [a]comfort in my affliction,
For Your word has given me life.
51 The proud have me in great derision,
Yet I do not turn aside from Your law.
52 I remembered Your judgments of old,
O LORD,
And have comforted myself.
53 [b]Indignation has taken hold of me
Because of the wicked, who forsake Your law.
54 Your statutes have been my songs
In the house of my pilgrimage.
55 [c]I remember Your name in the night,
O LORD,
And I keep Your law.
56 This has become mine,
Because I kept Your precepts.

ח HETH

57 [d]*You are* my portion, O LORD;
I have said that I would keep Your words.
58 I entreated Your favor with *my* whole heart;
Be merciful to me according to Your word.
59 I [e]thought about my ways,
And turned my feet to Your testimonies.
60 I made haste, and did not delay
To keep Your commandments.
61 The cords of the wicked have bound me,
But I have not forgotten Your law.
62 [f]At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.
63 I *am* a companion of all who fear You,
And of those who keep Your precepts.
64 [g]The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy;
Teach me Your statutes.

ט TETH

65 You have dealt well with Your servant,
O LORD, according to Your word.
66 Teach me good judgment and [h]knowledge,
For I believe Your commandments.
67 Before I was [i]afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.
68 You *are* [j]good, and do good;
Teach me Your statutes.
69 The proud have [k]forged a lie against me,
But I will keep Your precepts with *my* whole heart.
70 [l]Their heart is as fat as grease,
But I delight in Your law.
71 *It is* good for me that I have been afflicted,
That I may learn Your statutes.
72 [m]The law of Your mouth *is* better to me
Than thousands of *coins of* gold and silver.

י YOD

73 [n]Your hands have made me and fashioned me;

119:45 ***at liberty.*** Many think of laws, instructions, and commandments as limiting and restricting, but the law of God paradoxically frees us. It frees us from sin (v. 133) and gives us the peace that comes from following the Lord's instructions (v. 165).

119:56 ***precepts.*** This Hebrew word means "an appointed thing," "something for which one is given charge." The word has the same idea as "commandment" for both words assume that the One who commands has the authority to take charge or appoint (v. 4).

119:70 ***delight.*** This is not the delight of a passive observer, but the delight of a disciple who has staked his life and security on a cause or principle.

119:38 [x] 2 Sam. 7:25 **119:45** [y] Prov. 4:12
119:46 [z] Matt. 10:18 **119:50** [a] [Rom. 15:4]
119:53 [b] Ezra 9:3 **119:55** [c] Ps. 63:6 **119:57** [d] Jer. 10:16
119:59 [e] Luke 15:17 **119:62** [f] Acts 16:25 **119:64** [g] Ps. 33:5 **119:66** [h] Phil. 1:9 **119:67** [i] [Heb. 12:5–11]
119:68 [j] [Matt. 19:17] **119:69** [k] Job 13:4 **119:70** [l] Acts 28:27 **119:72** [m] Ps. 19:10 **119:73** [n] Job 10:8; 31:15

Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.
74 [o]Those who fear You will be glad when they see me,
Because I have hoped in Your word.
75 I know, O LORD, [p]that Your judgments *are* right,
And *that* in faithfulness You have afflicted me.
76 Let, I pray, Your merciful kindness be for my comfort,
According to Your word to Your servant.
77 Let Your tender mercies come to me, that I may live;
For Your law *is* my delight.
78 Let the proud [q]be ashamed,
For they treated me wrongfully with falsehood;
But I will meditate on Your precepts.
79 Let those who fear You turn to me,
Those who know Your testimonies.
80 Let my heart be blameless regarding Your statutes,
That I may not be ashamed.

כ KAPH

81 [r]My soul faints for Your salvation,
But I hope in Your word.
82 My eyes fail *from searching* Your word,
Saying, "When will You comfort me?"
83 For [s]I have become like a wineskin in smoke,
Yet I do not forget Your statutes.
84 [t]How many *are* the days of Your servant?
[u]When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me?
85 [v]The proud have dug pits for me,
Which *is* not according to Your law.
86 All Your commandments *are* faithful;
They persecute me [w]wrongfully;
Help me!
87 They almost made an end of me on earth,
But I did not forsake Your precepts.
88 Revive me according to Your lovingkindness,
So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.

ל LAMED

89 [x]Forever, O LORD,
Your word is settled in heaven.
90 Your faithfulness *endures* to all generations;
You established the earth, and it abides.
91 They continue this day according to [y]Your ordinances,
For all *are* Your servants.
92 Unless Your law *had been* my delight,
I would then have perished in my affliction.
93 I will never forget Your precepts,
For by them You have given me life.
94 I *am* Yours, save me;
For I have sought Your precepts.
95 The wicked wait for me to destroy me,
But I will consider Your testimonies.
96 [z]I have seen the consummation of all perfection,
But Your commandment *is* exceedingly broad.

מ MEM

97 Oh, how I love Your law!
[a]It *is* my meditation all the day.
98 You, through Your commandments, make me [b]wiser than my enemies;
For they *are* ever with me.
99 I have more understanding than all my teachers,
[c]For Your testimonies *are* my meditation.
100 [d]I understand more than the ancients,
Because I keep Your precepts.
101 I have restrained my feet from every evil way,
That I may keep Your word.
102 I have not departed from Your judgments,
For You Yourself have taught me.
103 [e]How sweet are Your words to my taste,
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!
104 Through Your precepts I get understanding;
Therefore I hate every false way.

נ NUN

105 [f]Your word *is* a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.
106 [g]I have sworn and confirmed
That I will keep Your righteous judgments.
107 I am afflicted very much;
Revive me, O LORD, according to Your word.

119:82 ***Your word.*** The Hebrew term for "word" is derived from the verb "to say." The term is a general word for God's law, encompassing everything that the Lord has promised and spoken.
119:97 ***how I love Your law.*** Fundamentally, the psalmist's attraction to the law is the result of his love for God Himself, his Teacher (vv. 102,132).
119:105 ***a light to my path.*** God's word is a guide for everyday living.

119:74 [o] Ps. 34:2 **119:75** [p] [Heb. 12:10] **119:78** [q] Ps. 25:3 **119:81** [r] Ps. 73:26; 84:2 **119:83** [s] Job 30:30 **119:84** [t] Ps. 39:4 [u] Rev. 6:10 **119:85** [v] Ps. 35:7 **119:86** [w] Ps. 35:19 **119:89** [x] Matt. 24:35 **119:91** [y] Jer. 33:25 **119:96** [z] Matt. 5:18 **119:97** [a] Ps. 1:2 **119:98** [b] Deut. 4:6 **119:99** [c] [2 Tim. 3:15] **119:100** [d] [Job 32:7–9] **119:103** [e] Prov. 8:11 **119:105** [f] Prov. 6:23 **119:106** [g] Neh. 10:29

108 Accept, I pray, [h]the freewill offerings
of my mouth, O LORD,
And teach me Your judgments.
109 [i]My life *is* continually in my hand,
Yet I do not forget Your law.
110 [j]The wicked have laid a snare for me,
Yet I have not strayed from Your
precepts.
111 [k]Your testimonies I have taken as a
heritage forever,
For they *are* the rejoicing of my
heart.
112 I have inclined my heart to perform
Your statutes
Forever, to the very end.

ס SAMEK

113 I hate the double-minded,
But I love Your law.
114 [l]You *are* my hiding place and my
shield;
I hope in Your word.
115 [m]Depart from me, you evildoers,
For I will keep the commandments of
my God!
116 Uphold me according to Your word,
that I may live;
And do not let me [n]be ashamed of my
hope.
117 Hold me up, and I shall be safe,
And I shall observe Your statutes
continually.
118 You reject all those who stray from
Your statutes,
For their deceit *is* falsehood.
119 You put away all the wicked of the
earth [o]*like* dross;
Therefore I love Your testimonies.
120 [p]My flesh trembles for fear of You,
And I am afraid of Your judgments.

ע AYIN

121 I have done justice and
righteousness;
Do not leave me to my oppressors.
122 Be [q]surety for Your servant for good;
Do not let the proud oppress me.
123 My eyes fail *from seeking* Your
salvation
And Your righteous word.
124 Deal with Your servant according to
Your mercy,
And teach me Your statutes.
125 [r]I *am* Your servant;
Give me understanding,
That I may know Your testimonies.
126 *It is* time for *You* to act, O LORD,
For they have regarded Your law as
void.
127 [s]Therefore I love Your
commandments
More than gold, yes, than fine gold!
128 Therefore all *Your* precepts
concerning all *things*
I consider *to be* right;
I hate every false way.

פ PE

129 Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore my soul keeps them.
130 The entrance of Your words gives
light;
[t]It gives understanding to the [u]simple.
131 I opened my mouth and [v]panted,
For I longed for Your
commandments.
132 [w]Look upon me and be [x]merciful to me,
As Your custom *is* toward those who
love Your name.
133 [y]Direct my steps by Your word,
And [z]let no iniquity have dominion
over me.
134 [a]Redeem me from the oppression of
man,
That I may keep Your precepts.
135 [b]Make Your face shine upon Your
servant,
And teach me Your statutes.
136 [c]Rivers of water run down from my
eyes,
Because *men* do not keep Your law.

צ TSADDE

137 [d]Righteous *are* You, O LORD,
And upright *are* Your judgments.
138 [e]Your testimonies, *which* You have
commanded,
Are righteous and very faithful.
139 [f]My zeal has consumed me,
Because my enemies have forgotten
Your words.
140 [g]Your word *is* very pure;
Therefore Your servant loves it.
141 I *am* small and despised,
Yet I do not forget Your precepts.
142 Your righteousness *is* an everlasting
righteousness,
And Your law *is* [h]truth.
143 Trouble and anguish have overtaken
me,
Yet Your commandments *are* my
delights.

119:127 *commandments.* This word alludes to God's authority to govern His people. The commandments of God help believers to find their way in a world that is filled with confusion, sin, and error.

119:136 *Rivers of water.* One of the earmarks of a true believer is the remorse and sorrow that is felt when the person sins and fails to keep God's law.

119:108 [h] Hos. 14:2 **119:109** [i] Job 13:14 **119:110** [j] Ps. 140:5 **119:111** [k] Deut. 33:4 **119:114** [l] [Ps. 32:7] **119:115** [m] Matt. 7:23 **119:116** [n] [Rom. 5:5; 9:33; 10:11] **119:119** [o] Ezek. 22:18, 19 **119:120** [p] Hab. 3:16 **119:122** [q] Heb. 7:22 **119:125** [r] Ps. 116:16 **119:127** [s] Ps. 19:10 **119:130** [t] Prov. 6:23 [u] [Ps. 19:7] **119:131** [v] Ps. 42:1 **119:132** [w] Ps. 106:4 [x] [2 Thess. 1:6] **119:133** [y] Ps. 17:5 [z] [Rom. 6:12] **119:134** [a] Luke 1:74 **119:135** [b] Ps. 4:6 **119:136** [c] Jer. 9:1, 18; 14:17 **119:137** [d] Neh. 9:33 **119:138** [e] [Ps. 19:7–9] **119:139** [f] John 2:17 **119:140** [g] Ps. 12:6 **119:142** [h] [John 17:17]

144 The righteousness of Your
testimonies *is* everlasting;
Give me understanding, and I shall
live.

ק QOPH

145 I cry out with *my* whole heart;
Hear me, O LORD!
I will keep Your statutes.
146 I cry out to You;
Save me, and I will keep Your
testimonies.
147 [i]I rise before the dawning of the
morning,
And cry for help;
I hope in Your word.
148 [j]My eyes are awake through the *night*
watches,
That I may meditate on Your word.
149 Hear my voice according to Your
lovingkindness;
O LORD, revive me according to Your
justice.
150 They draw near who follow after
wickedness;
They are far from Your law.
151 You *are* [k]near, O LORD,
And all Your commandments *are*
truth.
152 Concerning Your testimonies,
I have known of old that You have
founded them [l]forever.

ר RESH

153 [m]Consider my affliction and deliver
me,
For I do not forget Your law.
154 [n]Plead my cause and redeem me;
Revive me according to Your word.
155 Salvation *is* far from the wicked,
For they do not seek Your statutes.
156 Great *are* Your tender mercies,
O LORD;
Revive me according to Your
judgments.
157 Many *are* my persecutors and my
enemies,
Yet I do not [o]turn from Your
testimonies.
158 I see the treacherous, and [p]am
disgusted,
Because they do not keep Your word.
159 Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, O LORD, according to
Your lovingkindness.
160 The entirety of Your word *is* truth,
And every one of Your righteous
judgments *endures* forever.

ש SHIN

161 [q]Princes persecute me without a
cause,
But my heart stands in awe of Your
word.
162 I rejoice at Your word
As one who finds great treasure.
163 I hate and abhor lying,
But I love Your law.
164 Seven times a day I praise You,
Because of Your righteous
judgments.
165 [r]Great peace have those who love
Your law,
And nothing causes them to stumble.
166 [s]LORD, I hope for Your salvation,
And I do Your commandments.
167 My soul keeps Your testimonies,
And I love them exceedingly.
168 I keep Your precepts and Your
testimonies,
[t]For all my ways *are* before You.

ת TAU

169 Let my cry come before You, O LORD;
[u]Give me understanding according to
Your word.
170 Let my supplication come before You;
Deliver me according to Your word.
171 [v]My lips shall utter praise,
For You teach me Your statutes.
172 My tongue shall speak of Your word,
For all Your commandments *are*
righteousness.
173 Let Your hand become my help,
For [w]I have chosen Your precepts.
174 [x]I long for Your salvation, O LORD,
And [y]Your law *is* my delight.
175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise
You;
And let Your judgments help me.
176 [z]I have gone astray like a lost sheep;
Seek Your servant,
For I do not forget Your
commandments.

119:149 ***revive.*** With this word, the psalmist begs God to transform him, to breathe new life back into his soul. The psalmist does not want his obedience to be mechanical; he asks for a renewed spirit. The basis for his plea is God's covenantal love and His just nature.

119:159 ***lovingkindness.*** The lovingkindness of God is a recurring theme in the Book of Psalms, describing His loyal, covenant love and merciful care of His people.

119:162 ***rejoice.*** Jesus also described the "kingdom of God" as a great treasure, one so valuable that it would be worth selling everything one had in order to possess it (Matt. 13:44–46).

119:176 ***like a lost sheep.*** Jesus, the Messiah, described Himself as the Good Shepherd who would lay down His own life in order to protect and rescue His sheep (John 10:11). He affirmed that God does indeed seek lost sinners in order to bring them to Himself (Luke 15:3–7).

119:147 [i] Ps. 5:3 **119:148** [j] Ps. 63:1, 6 **119:151** [k] [Ps. 145:18] **119:152** [l] Luke 21:33 **119:153** [m] Lam. 5:1 **119:154** [n] 1 Sam. 24:15 **119:157** [o] Ps. 44:18 **119:158** [p] Ezek. 9:4 **119:161** [q] 1 Sam. 24:11; 26:18 **119:165** [r] Prov. 3:2 **119:166** [s] Gen. 49:18 **119:168** [t] Prov. 5:21 **119:169** [u] Ps. 119:27, 144 **119:171** [v] Ps. 119:7 **119:173** [w] Josh. 24:22 **119:174** [x] Ps. 119:166 [y] Ps. 119:16, 24 **119:176** [z] [Is. 53:6]

Psalm 120

Plea for Relief from Bitter Foes

A Song of Ascents.

1 In [a]my distress I cried to the LORD,
And He heard me.
2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips
And from a deceitful tongue.

3 What shall be given to you,
Or what shall be done to you,
You false tongue?
4 Sharp arrows of the warrior,
With coals of the broom tree!

5 Woe is me, that I dwell in [b]Meshech,
[c]*That* I dwell among the tents of Kedar!
6 My soul has dwelt too long
With one who hates peace.
7 I *am for* peace;
But when I speak, they *are* for war.

Psalm 121

God the Help of Those Who Seek Him

A Song of Ascents.

1 I [a]will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my help?
2 [b]My help *comes* from the LORD,
Who made heaven and earth.

3 [c]He will not allow your foot to be moved;
[d]He who keeps you will not slumber.
4 Behold, He who keeps Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD *is* your keeper;
The LORD *is* [e]your shade [f]at your right
hand.

6 [g]The sun shall not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD shall preserve you from all
evil;
He shall [h]preserve your soul.
8 The LORD shall [i]preserve your going
out and your coming in
From this time forth, and even
forevermore.

Psalm 122

The Joy of Going to the House of the LORD

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

1 I was glad when they said to me,
[a]"Let us go into the house of the LORD."
2 Our feet have been standing
Within your gates, O Jerusalem!

3 Jerusalem is built
As a city that is [b]compact together,
4 [c]Where the tribes go up,
The tribes of the LORD,
To [d]the Testimony of Israel,
To give thanks to the name of the
LORD.
5 [e]For thrones are set there for judgment,
The thrones of the house of David.

6 [f]Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
"May they prosper who love you.
7 Peace be within your walls,
Prosperity within your palaces."
8 For the sake of my brethren and
companions,
I will now say, "Peace *be* within you."
9 Because of the house of the LORD our
God
I will [g]seek your good.

120:1 ***In my distress I cried.*** This psalm is the first of a group of psalms called the Songs of Ascent (120–134). This group of hymns was probably used by pilgrims making their way to Jerusalem to worship the Lord during the three annual feasts—Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Lev. 23). Since Jerusalem is on a high hill, a traveler always goes "up" to Jerusalem; hence the term "songs of ascent."

120:5 ***Meshech . . . Kedar.*** These seem to be examples of the pagan peoples among whom the psalmist had to live.

121:1 ***my eyes to the hills.*** This Song of Ascent (see Ps. 120) dramatically pictures a traveler approaching the city of Jerusalem.

121:2 ***from the LORD.*** As comforting as the sight of the holy city would be to a pilgrim, the psalmist emphasizes the real reason for rejoicing: God's tender care for His people. ***Who made.*** We might have expected the psalmist to emphasize God as a loving heavenly Father or a tender and compassionate Savior, but instead he ascribes our everlasting safety to the God of creation. God owns the world because He made it; nothing that happens is beyond Him.

121:6 ***Nor the moon by night.*** There is never a time when the Lord is "off duty" and does not see what is happening to His people.

122:1 ***I was glad.*** This third Song of Ascent (see Ps. 120) describes the joy of the pilgrim on arriving at Jerusalem to worship God.

122:4 ***the tribes go up.*** This refers to the three annual feasts of ancient Israel (Lev. 23), as well as to any time that an individual or family needed to worship the Lord in the holy city.

122:5 ***thrones . . . for judgment.*** Jerusalem was not only the central place for worship, it was also the site where civil judgments and decisions were made. Religious and civil issues were closely intertwined in the law of God.

122:6 ***the peace of Jerusalem.*** True peace will only come when the Prince of Peace returns to establish His rule (Ps. 98:5–6; Rev. 21:9–27).

120:1 [a] Jon. 2:2 **120:5** [b] Gen. 10:2 [c] Gen. 25:13
121:1 [a] [Jer. 3:23] **121:2** [b] [Ps. 124:8] **121:3** [c] 1 Sam. 2:9 [d] Is. 27:3 **121:5** [e] Is. 25:4 [f] Ps. 16:8 **121:6** [g] Is. 49:10 **121:7** [h] Ps. 41:2 **121:8** [i] Deut. 28:6 **122:1** [a] [Is. 2:3] **122:3** [b] 2 Sam. 5:9 **122:4** [c] Deut. 16:16 [d] Ex. 16:34 **122:5** [e] Deut. 17:8 **122:6** [f] Ps. 51:18 **122:9** [g] Neh. 2:10

Psalm 123

Prayer for Relief from Contempt

A Song of Ascents.

1 Unto You [a]I lift up my eyes,
O You [b]who dwell in the heavens.
2 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* to
the hand of their masters,
As the eyes of a maid to the hand of
her mistress,
[c]So our eyes *look* to the LORD our God,
Until He has mercy on us.
3 Have mercy on us, O LORD, have
mercy on us!
For we are exceedingly filled with
contempt.
4 Our soul is exceedingly filled
With the scorn of those who are at ease,
With the contempt of the proud.

Psalm 124

The LORD the Defense of His People

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

1 "If it had not been the LORD who was on
our [a]side,"
[b]Let Israel now say—
2 "If it had not been the LORD who was on
our side,
When men rose up against us,
3 Then they would have [c]swallowed us
alive,
When their wrath was kindled against
us;
4 Then the waters would have
overwhelmed us,
The stream would have gone over our
soul;
5 Then the swollen waters
Would have gone over our soul."
6 Blessed *be* the LORD,
Who has not given us *as* prey to their
teeth.
7 [d]Our soul has escaped [e]as a bird from
the snare of the fowlers;*
The snare is broken, and we have
escaped.
8 [f]Our help *is* in the name of the LORD,
[g]Who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 125

The LORD the Strength of His People

A Song of Ascents.

1 Those who trust in the LORD
Are like Mount Zion,
Which cannot be moved, *but* abides
forever.
2 As the mountains surround
Jerusalem,
So the LORD surrounds His people
From this time forth and forever.
3 For [a]the scepter of wickedness shall
not rest
On the land allotted to the righteous,
Lest the righteous reach out their
hands to iniquity.
4 Do good, O LORD, to *those who are*
good,
And to *those who are* upright in their
hearts.
5 As for such as turn aside to their
[b]crooked ways,
The LORD shall lead them away
With the workers of iniquity.

[c]Peace *be* upon Israel!

Psalm 126

A Joyful Return to Zion

A Song of Ascents.

1 When [a]the LORD brought back the
captivity of Zion,
[b]We were like those who dream.
2 Then [c]our mouth was filled with
laughter,
And our tongue with singing.
Then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for
them."
3 The LORD has done great things
for us,
And we are glad.

* **124:7** That is, persons who catch birds in a trap or snare

123:2 ***as the eyes of servants.*** Good servants keep watch over their masters, anticipating their wants and keeping themselves in constant readiness to obey orders. In the same way, we should keep ourselves focused on pleasing God. The more we look at Him, the more we become like Him (2 Cor. 3:18).
124:1 ***the LORD who was on our side.*** It is because God is "on our side" that He sent His Son to save the world (John 3:16).
124:6 ***Blessed be the LORD.*** To bless God is to identify Him as the source of our blessings (103:2).
125:2 ***the mountains surround Jerusalem.*** Jerusalem is built on one of seven mountain peaks in the region. The mountains provided some protection for the city, since any invading army would have to march through difficult terrain to reach the city.
126:1 ***brought back the captivity.*** This seventh Song of Ascent (see Ps. 120) comes from the time of the restoration of Jerusalem, following the Babylonian captivity.

123:1 [a] Ps. 121:1; 141:8 [b] Ps. 2:4; 11:4; 115:3 **123:2** [c] Ps. 25:15 **124:1** [a] [Rom. 8:31] [b] Ps. 129:1 **124:3** [c] Prov. 1:12 **124:7** [d] Ps. 91:3 [e] Prov. 6:5 **124:8** [f] [Ps. 121:2] [g] Gen. 1:1 **125:3** [a] Prov. 22:8 **125:5** [b] Prov. 2:15 [c] [Gal. 6:16] **126:1** [a] Hos. 6:11 [b] Acts 12:9 **126:2** [c] Job 8:21

4 Bring back our captivity, O LORD,
As the streams in the South.
5 [d]Those who sow in tears
Shall reap in joy.
6 He who continually goes forth weeping,
Bearing seed for sowing,
Shall doubtless come again with
[e]rejoicing,
Bringing his sheaves *with him.*

Psalm 127

Laboring and Prospering with the LORD

A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.

1 Unless the LORD builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless [a]the LORD guards the city,
The watchman stays awake in vain.
2 *It is* vain for you to rise up early,
To sit up late,
To [b]eat the bread of sorrows;
For so He gives His beloved sleep.
3 Behold, [c]children *are* a heritage from
the LORD,
[d]The fruit of the womb *is* a [e]reward.
4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So *are* the children of one's youth.
5 [f]Happy *is* the man who has his quiver
full of them;
[g]They shall not be ashamed,
But shall speak with their enemies in
the gate.

Psalm 128

Blessings of Those Who Fear the LORD

A Song of Ascents.

1 Blessed [a]*is* every one who fears the LORD,
Who walks in His ways.
2 [b]When you eat the labor of your
hands,
You *shall be* happy, and *it shall be*
[c]well with you.
3 Your wife *shall be* [d]like a fruitful
vine
In the very heart of your house,
Your [e]children [f]like olive plants
All around your table.
4 Behold, thus shall the man be
blessed
Who fears the LORD.
5 [g]The LORD bless you out of Zion,
And may you see the good of
Jerusalem
All the days of your life.
6 Yes, may you [h]see your children's
children.

[i]Peace *be* upon Israel!

Psalm 129

Song of Victory over Zion's Enemies

A Song of Ascents.

1 "Many a time they have [a]afflicted me
from [b]my youth,"
[c]Let Israel now say—
2 "Many a time they have afflicted me
from my youth;
Yet they have not prevailed
against me.
3 The plowers plowed on my back;
They made their furrows long."
4 The LORD *is* righteous;
He has cut in pieces the cords of the
wicked.
5 Let all those who hate Zion
Be put to shame and turned back.
6 Let them be as the [d]grass *on* the
housetops,
Which withers before it grows up,
7 With which the reaper does not fill his
hand,

126:4 ***Bring back.*** The people who returned were a small percentage of those who had been exiled; the people still prayed that God would complete the restoration of His people to their land.
127:1 ***Unless the LORD.*** This psalm, the eighth Song of Ascent (see Ps. 120), is one of only two psalms attributed to Solomon (see Ps. 72).
127:2 ***bread of sorrows.*** This phrase captures the essence of those removed from a sense of the Lord in their lives. The food that should give them strength for life and a zest for living only maintains their miserable state.
127:5 ***in the gate.*** The gate was the place where the elders of the city met and where citizens would convene (Ruth 4:1–12).
128:1 ***Blessed.*** This word describes the happiness of those who trust in the Lord and do His will (127:5).
fears. The fear of God is an attitude of respect, a response of reverence and wonder. It is the only appropriate response to our Creator and Redeemer.
128:2 ***the labor of your hands.*** There is a reward in work and a satisfaction in labor that is a blessing of God (Eccl. 3:9–13).
129:1–4 ***Many a time.*** The psalm begins with a litany of suffering, as the people of God acknowledge that throughout their history in the land they have been under constant assault by various peoples.
129:6 ***grass on the housetops.*** Sod was sometimes used on the roofs of the houses. After a spring rain, there might be grass growing on the housetop, but

126:5 [d] Jer. 31:9 **126:6** [e] Is. 61:3 **127:1** [a] [Ps. 121:3–5] **127:2** [b] [Gen. 3:17, 19] **127:3** [c] [Josh. 24:3, 4] [d] Deut. 7:13; 28:4 [e] [Ps. 113:9] **127:5** [f] Ps. 128:2, 3 [g] Prov. 27:11 **128:1** [a] Ps. 119:1 **128:2** [b] Is. 3:10 [c] Deut. 4:40 **128:3** [d] Ezek. 19:10 [e] Ps. 127:3–5 [f] Ps. 52:8; 144:12 **128:5** [g] Ps. 134:3 **128:6** [h] Job 42:16 [i] Ps. 125:5 **129:1** [a] [Jer. 1:19; 15:20] [b] Ezek. 23:3 [c] Ps. 124:1 **129:6** [d] Ps. 37:2

Nor he who binds sheaves, his
arms.
8 Neither let those who pass by them
say,
e"The blessing of the LORD *be* upon
you;
We bless you in the name of the
LORD!"

Psalm 130

Waiting for the Redemption of the LORD

A Song of Ascents.

1 Out a of the depths I have cried to You,
O LORD;
2 Lord, hear my voice!
Let Your ears be attentive
To the voice of my supplications.
3 b If You, LORD, should mark
iniquities,
O Lord, who could c stand?
4 But *there is* d forgiveness with You,
That e You may be feared.
5 f I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
And g in His word I do hope.
6 h My soul *waits* for the Lord
More than those who watch for the
morning—
Yes, more than those who watch for
the morning.
7 i O Israel, hope in the LORD;
For j with the LORD *there is* mercy,
And with Him *is* abundant
redemption.
8 And k He shall redeem Israel
From all his iniquities.

Psalm 131

Simple Trust in the LORD

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

1 LORD, my heart is not haughty,
Nor my eyes lofty.
a Neither do I concern myself with great
matters,
Nor with things too profound for me.
2 Surely I have calmed and quieted my
soul,
b Like a weaned child with his mother;
Like a weaned child *is* my soul
within me.
3 c O Israel, hope in the LORD
From this time forth and forever.

Psalm 132

The Eternal Dwelling of God in Zion

A Song of Ascents.

1 LORD, remember David
And all his afflictions;
2 How he swore to the LORD,
a *And* vowed to b the Mighty One of Jacob:
3 "Surely I will not go into the chamber of
my house,
Or go up to the comfort of my bed;
4 I will c not give sleep to my eyes
Or slumber to my eyelids,

---

this was not grass that flourished; it lacked roots and soon withered under the summer heat.

130:1 ***Out of the depths.*** The placement of this penitential psalm is fitting. We must not be so interested in the destruction of the wicked (Ps. 129) that we fail to understand our own heart before the Lord.

130:3 ***iniquities.*** Does the Lord keep a record of our sins? The answer is both yes and no. At the end of all things, Christ will sit on the judgment seat, the books will be opened, and everyone will be judged according to the actual record (Rev. 20:11–15). However, if we cry to Him for mercy now in this life, we shall find forgiveness. Then the record of our sins will be cast away into the depth of God's forgetfulness. They are covered by the blood of Jesus.

130:4 ***forgiveness . . . that You may be feared.*** God's provision for forgiveness is not to be taken lightly (Rom. 6:1–2). The truly forgiven sinner realizes the magnitude of God's grace, remains grateful for Jesus' sacrifice for sins, and lives in the fear or awe of God (Ps. 128).

130:8 ***He shall redeem.*** God had redeemed the people from slavery in Egypt; the psalmist also looked forward to the time when He would redeem the people from slavery to their own sinful natures, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:13).

131:1 ***my heart is not haughty.*** David presents himself with genuine humility, a delicate balance between self-abasement and arrogant pride. From the life of David, we know that he was not always able to keep this balance. But it was his desire, and at times—by God's grace—a reality in his life.

131:2 ***Like a weaned child.*** A weaned child is comforted just by the presence of his mother, without crying for the more tangible comfort of milk as a younger baby does.

132:1 ***remember.*** This psalm was one of the 15 Songs of Ascent sung by pilgrims as they approached the holy city to worship. Each year, as they marched and sang, they anticipated that perhaps this was the year that this prophecy would be fulfilled. ***David . . . his afflictions.*** If this psalm was written during the period after the exile, these words have a significant meaning. During the years between the return of the people to Jerusalem and the birth of Jesus, there would have been a growing desire on the part of

129:8 e Ruth 2:4 **130:1** a Lam. 3:55 **130:3** b [Ps. 143:2] c [Nah. 1:6] **130:4** d [Ex. 34:7] e [1 Kin. 8:39, 40] **130:5** f [Ps. 27:14] g Ps. 119:81 **130:6** h Ps. 119:147 **130:7** i Ps. 131:3 j [Is. 55:7] **130:8** k [Ps. 103:3, 4] **131:1** a [Rom. 12:16] **131:2** b [Matt. 18:3] **131:3** c [Ps. 130:7] **132:2** a Ps. 65:1 b Gen. 49:24 **132:4** c Prov. 6:4

5 Until I [d]find a place for the LORD,
A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 Behold, we heard of it [e]in Ephrathah;
[f]We found it [g]in the fields of the woods.*

7 Let us go into His tabernacle;
[h]Let us worship at His footstool.

8 [i]Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place,
You and [j]the ark of Your strength.

9 Let Your priests [k]be clothed with righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy.

10 For Your servant David's sake,
Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed.

11 [l]The LORD has sworn *in* truth to David;
He will not turn from it:
"I will set upon your throne [m]the fruit of your body.

12 If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore."

13 [n]For the LORD has chosen Zion;
He has desired *it* for His dwelling place:

14 "This[o] *is* My resting place forever;
Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

15 [p]I will abundantly bless her provision;
I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16 [q]I will also clothe her priests with salvation,
[r]And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17 [s]There I will make the horn of David grow;
[t]I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.

18 His enemies I will [u]clothe with shame,
But upon Himself His crown shall flourish."

Psalm 133

Blessed Unity of the People of God

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*
For [a]brethren to dwell together in unity!

2 *It is* like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.

3 *It is* like the dew of [b]Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For [c]there the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.

Psalm 134

Praising the LORD in His House at Night

A Song of Ascents.

1 Behold, bless the LORD,
All *you* servants of the LORD,
Who by night stand in the house of the LORD!

2 [a]Lift up your hands *in* the sanctuary,
And bless the LORD.

3 The LORD who made heaven and earth
Bless you from Zion!

Psalm 135

Praise to God in Creation and Redemption

1 Praise the LORD!

Praise the name of the LORD;
[a]Praise *Him*, O you servants of the LORD!

* **132:6** Hebrew *Jaar*

godly people for the Lord to restore David's kingdom in fulfillment of His promise.

132:6 ***Ephrathah.*** This name refers to the region of Bethlehem (Ruth 1:2).

132:12 ***sit upon your throne forevermore.*** The ultimate fulfillment of God's covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:8–16) is in Jesus Christ, the Son of David (Luke 1:32–33; Acts 2:30).

132:16 ***joy.*** God's presence is a source of joy to the upright. God had chosen Zion as His resting place, and His godly ones shouted "aloud for joy." When God rules on the throne of the human spirit, joy reigns within.

132:17 ***horn . . . lamp.*** The words "horn" and "lamp" speak of the Messiah's authority and righteousness (Is. 11:1–5).

133:3 ***the dew of Hermon.*** This high mountain to the north of Israel received such large amounts of water that it seemed to be a source of moisture for the lands below.

134:1 ***All you servants of the LORD.*** This psalm concludes the Songs of Ascent. The people who had come to worship at the temple were getting ready to go home, but the priests would remain at the holy temple, continuing to lift up worship to the Lord.

132:5 [d] Acts 7:46 **132:6** [e] 1 Sam. 17:12 [f] 1 Sam. 7:1 [g] 1 Chr. 13:5 **132:7** [h] Ps. 5:7; 99:5 **132:8** [i] Num. 10:35 [j] Ps. 78:61 **132:9** [k] Job 29:14 **132:11** [l] [Ps. 89:3, 4, 33; 110:4] [m] 2 Sam. 7:12 **132:13** [n] [Ps. 48:1, 2] **132:14** [o] Ps. 68:16 **132:15** [p] Ps. 147:14 **132:16** [q] 2 Chr. 6:41 [r] 1 Sam. 4:5 **132:17** [s] Ezek. 29:21 [t] 1 Kin. 11:36; 15:4 **132:18** [u] Ps. 35:26 **133:1** [a] Gen. 13:8 **133:3** [b] Deut. 4:48 [c] Lev. 25:21 **134:2** [a] [1 Tim. 2:8] **135:1** [a] Ps. 113:1

2 [b]You who stand in the house of the LORD,
In [c]the courts of the house of our God,
3 Praise the LORD, for [d]the LORD *is* good;
Sing praises to His name, [e]for *it is* pleasant.
4 For [f]the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself,
Israel for His special treasure.

5 For I know that [g]the LORD *is* great,
And our Lord *is* above all gods.
6 [h]Whatever the LORD pleases He does,
In heaven and in earth,
In the seas and in all deep places.
7 [i]He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth;
[j]He makes lightning for the rain;
He brings the wind out of His [k]treasuries.

8 [l]He destroyed the firstborn of Egypt,
Both of man and beast.
9 [m]He sent signs and wonders into the midst of you, O Egypt,
[n]Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.
10 [o]He defeated many nations
And slew mighty kings—
11 Sihon king of the Amorites,
Og king of Bashan,
And [p]all the kingdoms of Canaan—
12 [q]And gave their land *as* a heritage,
A heritage to Israel His people.

13 [r]Your name, O LORD, *endures* forever,
Your fame, O LORD, throughout all generations.
14 [s]For the LORD will judge His people,
And He will have compassion on His servants.

15 [t]The idols of the nations *are* silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
16 They have mouths, but they do not speak;
Eyes they have, but they do not see;
17 They have ears, but they do not hear;
Nor is there *any* breath in their mouths.
18 Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.

19 [u]Bless the LORD, O house of Israel!
Bless the LORD, O house of Aaron!
20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi!
You who fear the LORD, bless the LORD!
21 Blessed be the LORD [v]out of Zion,
Who dwells in Jerusalem!

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 136

Thanksgiving to God for His Enduring Mercy

1 Oh, [a]give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
[b]For His mercy *endures* forever.
2 Oh, give thanks to [c]the God of gods!
For His mercy *endures* forever.
3 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords!
For His mercy *endures* forever:

4 To Him [d]who alone does great wonders,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
5 [e]To Him who by wisdom made the heavens,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
6 [f]To Him who laid out the earth above the waters,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
7 [g]To Him who made great lights,
For His mercy *endures* forever—
8 [h]The sun to rule by day,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
9 The moon and stars to rule by night,
For His mercy *endures* forever.

10 [i]To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
11 [j]And brought out Israel from among them,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
12 [k]With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
13 [l]To Him who divided the Red Sea in two,
For His mercy *endures* forever;

135:8 *the firstborn of Egypt.* The defeat of Egypt was solely the work of the Lord. Israel was merely His instrument; the battle belonged to Him (Ex. 12:12; 15:3).

135:15 *idols of the nations.* The people who returned from Babylon had had their fill of the worship of idols; at long last, the people of Israel were ready to worship the only true God.

135:19 *Bless the LORD.* To bless the Lord is to identify Him as the source of all blessings and to be grateful for all that He has given.

136:1 *mercy.* This word, also translated "lovingkindness" or "loyal love," is the most significant term used in the Psalms to describe the character of God. His love is forever; it is part of His eternal character.

136:4–9 *great wonders.* God's creation of the universe is the grand display of His wisdom. The heavens give a clear presentation of the glory of God (19:1–6). Romans 1:20 teaches that God's "invisible attributes" are clearly seen through the things He has made.

135:2 [b] Luke 2:37 [c] Ps. 116:19 **135:3** [d] [Ps. 119:68] [e] Ps. 147:1 **135:4** [f] [Ex. 19:5] **135:5** [g] Ps. 95:3; 97:9 **135:6** [h] Ps. 115:3 **135:7** [i] Jer. 10:13 [j] Job 28:25, 26; 38:24–28 [k] Jer. 51:16 **135:8** [l] Ex. 12:12 **135:9** [m] Ex. 7:10 [n] Ps. 136:15 **135:10** [o] Num. 21:24 **135:11** [p] Josh. 12:7–24 **135:12** [q] Ps. 78:55; 136:21, 22 **135:13** [r] [Ex. 3:15] **135:14** [s] Deut. 32:36 **135:15** [t] [Ps. 115:4–8] **135:19** [u] [Ps. 115:9] **135:21** [v] Ps. 134:3 **136:1** [a] Ps. 106:1 [b] 1 Chr. 16:34 **136:2** [c] [Deut. 10:17] **136:4** [d] Ps. 72:18 **136:5** [e] Jer. 51:15 **136:6** [f] Jer. 10:12 **136:7** [g] Gen. 1:14–18 **136:8** [h] Gen. 1:16 **136:10** [i] Ex. 12:29 **136:11** [j] Ex. 12:51; 13:3, 16 **136:12** [k] Ex. 6:6 **136:13** [l] Ex. 14:21

14 And made Israel pass through the
midst of it,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
15 [m]But overthrew Pharaoh and his army
in the Red Sea,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
16 [n]To Him who led His people through
the wilderness,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
17 [o]To Him who struck down great kings,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
18 [p]And slew famous kings,
For His mercy *endures* forever—
19 [q]Sihon king of the Amorites,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
20 [r]And Og king of Bashan,
For His mercy *endures* forever—
21 [s]And gave their land as a heritage,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
22 A heritage to Israel His servant,
For His mercy *endures* forever.

23 Who [t]remembered us in our lowly state,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
24 And [u]rescued us from our enemies,
For His mercy *endures* forever;
25 [v]Who gives food to all flesh,
For His mercy *endures* forever.

26 Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 137

Longing for Zion in a Foreign Land

1 By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept
When we remembered Zion.
2 We hung our harps
Upon the willows in the midst of it.
3 For there those who carried us away
captive asked of us a song,
And those who [a]plundered us
requested mirth,
Saying, "Sing us *one* of the songs of
Zion!"

4 How shall we sing the LORD's song
In a foreign land?
5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget *its skill!*
6 If I do not remember you,
Let my [b]tongue cling to the roof of my
mouth—
If I do not exalt Jerusalem
Above my chief joy.

7 Remember, O LORD, against [c]the sons
of Edom
The day of Jerusalem,
Who said, "Raze *it*, raze *it*,
To its very foundation!"

8 O daughter of Babylon, [d]who are to be
destroyed,
Happy the one [e]who repays you as you
have served us!
9 Happy the one who takes and [f]dashes
Your little ones against the rock!

Psalm 138

The LORD's Goodness to the Faithful

A Psalm of David.

1 I will praise You with my whole heart;
[a]Before the gods I will sing praises to
You.
2 [b]I will worship [c]toward Your holy
temple,
And praise Your name
For Your lovingkindness and Your
truth;
For You have [d]magnified Your word
above all Your name.
3 In the day when I cried out, You
answered me,
And made me bold *with* strength in
my soul.

136:23 ***remembered us.*** It is possible that these words suggest the return of the people of Judah and Jerusalem to their land following the Babylonian captivity.
137:1 ***Babylon.*** Babylon was one of the great empires in world history. When this psalm was written, the Jews were living there in exile.
137:5 ***If I forget you.*** The love of the people for Jerusalem was not just for the place, but for its function in their lives. The place was holy because it was the dwelling place of God and the place of worship and sacrifice for sins.
137:9 ***Happy the one.*** The idea of rejoicing and happiness at the violence depicted here is hard to swallow. Like some of the other difficult stories recorded in Scripture (see the Book of Judges), this imprecatory psalm is included with no comments about how God viewed the psalmist's emotion. Elsewhere in Scripture, we receive strict commands condemning taking vengeance into our own hands (Rom. 12:19–21), rejoicing when others suffer (Obad. 12), and refusing to forgive (Matt. 5:43–45; 6:14–15). However, none of these passages are saying that we should pretend that evil doesn't exist. This psalmist's violent reaction to evil should remind us of how seriously God takes sin. He will not allow wickedness to go unpunished.
138:1 ***Before the gods.*** David is so confident in his faith in the Lord that he is determined to take the name of God into foreign territory.
138:2 ***Your holy temple.*** The use of the word "temple" does not rule out David as the author of this or similar poems (15:1). The Hebrew term is a general one that would fit whatever building was in use in David's day.

136:15 [m] Ex. 14:27 **136:16** [n] Ex. 13:18; 15:22 **136:17** [o] Ps. 135:10–12 **136:18** [p] Deut. 29:7 **136:19** [q] Num. 21:21 **136:20** [r] Num. 21:33 **136:21** [s] Josh. 12:1 **136:23** [t] Gen. 8:1 **136:24** [u] Ps. 44:7 **136:25** [v] Ps. 104:27; 145:15 **137:3** [a] Ps. 79:1 **137:6** [b] Ezek. 3:26 **137:7** [c] Jer. 49:7–22 **137:8** [d] Is. 13:1–6; 47:1 [e] Jer. 50:15 **137:9** [f] Is. 13:16 **138:1** [a] Ps. 119:46 **138:2** [b] Ps. 28:2 [c] 1 Kin. 8:29 [d] Is. 42:21

4 [e]All the kings of the earth shall praise
You, O LORD,
When they hear the words of Your
mouth.
5 Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the
LORD,
For great *is* the glory of the LORD.
6 [f]Though the LORD *is* on high,
Yet [g]He regards the lowly;
But the proud He knows from afar.
7 [h]Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
You will revive me;
You will stretch out Your hand
Against the wrath of my enemies,
And Your right hand will save me.
8 [i]The LORD will perfect *that which*
concerns me;
Your mercy, O LORD, *endures* forever;
[j]Do not forsake the works of Your hands.

Psalm 139

God's Perfect Knowledge of Man

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of
David.

1 O LORD, [a]You have searched me and
known *me*.
2 [b]You know my sitting down and my
rising up;
You [c]understand my thought afar off.
3 [d]You comprehend my path and my
lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
4 For *there is* not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O LORD, [e]You know it
altogether.
5 You have hedged me behind and
before,
And laid Your hand upon me.
6 [f]*Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful
for me;
It is high, I cannot *attain* it.
7 [g]Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?
8 [h]If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there;
[i]If I make my bed in hell, behold, You
are there.
9 *If* I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of
the sea,
10 Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me.
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall*
on me,"
Even the night shall be light about me;
12 Indeed, [j]the darkness shall not hide
from You,
But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light *are* both
alike *to You*.
13 For You formed my inward parts;
You covered me in my mother's womb.
14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and*
wonderfully made;*
Marvelous are Your works,
And *that* my soul knows very well.
15 [k]My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest
parts of the earth.
16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet
unformed.
And in Your book they all were written,
The days fashioned for me,
When *as yet there were* none of them.

* **139:11** Vulgate and Symmachus read *cover*.
* **139:14** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *You are fearfully wonderful*.

138:6 *the lowly.* When man is boastful and conceited before God, he separates himself from God. Yet God bends with a special concern toward those who are humble before Him.

138:8 *mercy . . . endures forever.* God's loyal covenant love will never be rescinded or forgotten.

139:5 *You have hedged me behind and before.* The purpose of God's intimate knowledge of His servants is protective and helpful, not judgmental and condemning.

139:7–12 *You are there.* The believer can rejoice and rest in the knowledge that God is present in every place and every situation in life.

139:12 *the darkness and the light are both alike to You.* God can see what is happening to us even under cover of darkness. Nothing can conceal His people from Him.

139:14 God's Omniscience—He is the God who knows. He knows everything that has happened and will happen. He understands all of nature perfectly. In fact He knows everything there is to know. God knows so much that it would be impossible to overstate what He knows. The proper theological term for this attribute of God is: *omniscience*.

God knows all of our thoughts, motives, and deeds. God knows us better than we know ourselves. We are all uneasy with the fact that God knows us so well. Like Adam and Eve, we fear the exposure of our sin.

There is, however, great reason to rejoice in the fact that God knows us so well. He loves us in spite of what He knows about us; in the midst of our sin He still loves us. He knows the worst things there are to know about us and still wants to save us. He also knows the best things about us. When everyone else misunderstands us, He understands us fully. Finally, God knows what we will be. He has a marvelous end in mind that should give us great comfort no matter what our present state.

139:16 *in Your book.* The idea is that all human beings, and the structure and meaning of each person's life, are all established from the beginning by God.

138:4 [e] Ps. 102:15 **138:6** [f] [Ps. 113:4–7] [g] [James 4:6] **138:7** [h] [Ps. 23:3, 4] **138:8** [i] Ps. 57:2 [j] Job 10:3, 8 **139:1** [a] Ps. 17:3 **139:2** [b] 2 Kin. 19:27 [c] Matt. 9:4 **139:3** [d] Job 14:16; 31:4 **139:4** [e] [Heb. 4:13] **139:6** [f] Job 42:3 **139:7** [g] [Jer. 23:24] **139:8** [h] [Amos 9:2–4] [i] [Job 26:6] **139:12** [j] Job 26:6; 34:22 **139:15** [k] Job 10:8, 9

17 [l]How precious also are Your thoughts
to me, O God!
How great is the sum of them!
18 *If* I should count them, they would be
more in number than the sand;
When I awake, I am still with You.

19 Oh, that You would [m]slay the wicked,
O God!
[n]Depart from me, therefore, you
bloodthirsty men.
20 For they [o]speak against You wickedly;
Your enemies take *Your name* in
vain.*
21 [p]Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate
You?
And do I not loathe those who rise up
against You?
22 I hate them with perfect hatred;
I count them my enemies.

23 [q]Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
24 And see if *there is any* wicked way in
me,
And [r]lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 140

Prayer for Deliverance from Evil Men

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm
of David.

1 Deliver me, O LORD, from evil men;
Preserve me from violent men,
2 Who plan evil things in *their* hearts;
[a]They continually gather together *for*
war.
3 They sharpen their tongues like a
serpent;
The [b]poison of asps *is* under their lips.
Selah

4 [c]Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of
the wicked;
Preserve me from violent men,
Who have purposed to make my steps
stumble.
5 The proud have hidden a [d]snare for
me, and cords;
They have spread a net by the wayside;
They have set traps for me. *Selah*

6 I said to the LORD: "You *are* my God;
Hear the voice of my supplications,
O LORD.
7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my
salvation,
You have covered my head in the day
of battle.
8 Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of
the wicked;
Do not further his *wicked* scheme,
[e]*Lest* they be exalted. *Selah*

9 "*As for* the head of those who surround
me,
Let the evil of their lips cover them;
10 [f]Let burning coals fall upon them;
Let them be cast into the fire,
Into deep pits, that they rise not up
again.
11 Let not a slanderer be established in
the earth;
Let evil hunt the violent man to
overthrow *him*."

12 I know that the LORD will [g]maintain
The cause of the afflicted,
And justice for the poor.
13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks
to Your name;
The upright shall dwell in Your
presence.

Psalm 141

Prayer for Safekeeping from Wickedness

A Psalm of David.

1 LORD, I cry out to You;
Make haste to me!
Give ear to my voice when I cry out
to You.
2 Let my prayer be set before You [a]*as*
incense,
[b]The lifting up of my hands *as* [c]the
evening sacrifice.

3 Set a guard, O LORD, over my
[d]mouth;
Keep watch over the door of my lips.

* **139:20** Septuagint and Vulgate read *They take Your cities in vain.*

139:23 ***Search me, O God.*** It is only when we are aware of our sins that we can repent of them and be healed.
140:6 ***You are my God.*** David confessed his complete trust in the Lord even though he was surrounded by people plotting his destruction. On the basis of his trust, he pled with the Lord to deliver him.
140:10 ***Let burning coals fall.*** David recalls the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:12–29) and asks God to once again judge the enemies of the righteous.
140:12 ***justice for the poor.*** The cause of the poor and afflicted is of special interest to the Lord. He promises to uphold and comfort them (41:1; 72:4; 109:31; Luke 4:18; 6:20).
141:2 ***as incense.*** The prayers of God's people are also compared to incense in Revelation 8:3–4.
141:3 ***Set a guard . . . over my mouth.*** David recognized how terribly easy it is to sin in what we say (Prov. 30:32–33; James 3:1–12).

139:17 [l] [Ps. 40:5] **139:19** [m] [Is. 11:4] [n] Ps. 119:115 **139:20** [o] Jude 15 **139:21** [p] 2 Chr. 19:2 **139:23** [q] Job 31:6 **139:24** [r] Ps. 5:8; 143:10 **140:2** [a] Ps. 56:6 **140:3** [b] Ps. 58:4 **140:4** [c] Ps. 71:4 **140:5** [d] Jer. 18:22 **140:8** [e] Deut. 32:27 **140:10** [f] Ps. 11:6 **140:12** [g] 1 Kin. 8:45 **141:2** [a] [Rev. 5:8; 8:3, 4] [b] [1 Tim. 2:8] [c] Ex. 29:39, 41 **141:3** [d] [Prov. 13:3; 21:23]

4 Do not incline my heart to any evil thing,
To practice wicked works
With men who work iniquity;
[e]And do not let me eat of their delicacies.

5 [f]Let the righteous strike me;
It shall be a kindness.
And let him rebuke me;
It shall be as excellent oil;
Let my head not refuse it.

For still my prayer *is* against the deeds of the wicked.
6 Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the cliff,
And they hear my words, for they are sweet.
7 Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave,
As when one plows and breaks up the earth.

8 But [g]my eyes *are* upon You, O GOD the Lord;
In You I take refuge;
Do not leave my soul destitute.
9 Keep me from [h]the snares they have laid for me,
And from the traps of the workers of iniquity.
10 [i]Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
While I escape safely.

Psalm 142

A Plea for Relief from Persecutors

A [a]Contemplation* of David. A Prayer [b]when he was in the cave.

1 I cry out to the LORD with my voice;
With my voice to the LORD I make my supplication.
2 I pour out my complaint before Him;
I declare before Him my trouble.

3 When my spirit was [c]overwhelmed within me,
Then You knew my path.
In the way in which I walk
They have secretly [d]set a snare for me.
4 Look on *my* right hand and see,
For *there is* no one who acknowledges me;
Refuge has failed me;
No one cares for my soul.

5 I cried out to You, O LORD:
I said, "You *are* my refuge,
My portion in the land of the living.
6 Attend to my cry,
For I am brought very low;
Deliver me from my persecutors,
For they are stronger than I.
7 Bring my soul out of prison,
That I may [e]praise Your name;
The righteous shall surround me,
For You shall deal bountifully with me."

Psalm 143

An Earnest Appeal for Guidance and Deliverance

A Psalm of David.

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD,
Give ear to my supplications!
In Your faithfulness answer me,
And in Your righteousness.
2 Do not enter into judgment with Your servant,
[a]For in Your sight no one living is righteous.

3 For the enemy has persecuted my soul;
He has crushed my life to the ground;
He has made me dwell in darkness,
Like those who have long been dead.
4 [b]Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me;
My heart within me is distressed.

5 [c]I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all Your works;
I muse on the work of Your hands.
6 I spread out my hands to You;
[d]My soul *long*s for You like a thirsty land. *Selah*

* **142:title** Hebrew *Maschil*

141:5 ***Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness.*** The rebuke of a righteous person, even if it is painful at the time, is designed to bring about good. Sometimes being "nice" isn't really the kindest thing we can do for someone.
141:8 ***my eyes are upon You.*** If we focus on the strength of wickedness, we will be overcome with fear. If we focus on ourselves, we will become absorbed in our difficulties or exalt ourselves in our victories. Only when we focus on God can we achieve balance and health.
142:title ***when he was in the cave.*** This may refer to one of two occasions when David hid from King Saul in a cave: at En Gedi (Ps. 57; 1 Sam. 24), and at Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1).
142:5 ***You are my refuge.*** Sometimes God allows us to go through times when we have no one at our right hand, "no one cares," just so that we will be very aware of our need for God.
143:2 ***no one living is righteous.*** This is not so much a confession as an observation that everyone is sinful.
143:3 ***in darkness.*** To live in darkness is similar to being in the pit (v. 7); this is the reason for the parallel to those who are already dead (Job 10:21–22).

141:4 [e] Prov. 23:6 **141:5** [f] [Prov. 9:8] **141:8** [g] Ps. 25:15 **141:9** [h] Ps. 119:110 **141:10** [i] Ps. 35:8 **142:title** [a] Ps. 32:title [b] 1 Sam. 22:1 **142:3** [c] Ps. 77:3 [d] Ps. 141:9 **142:7** [e] Ps. 34:1, 2 **143:2** [a] [Gal. 2:16] **143:4** [b] Ps. 77:3 **143:5** [c] Ps. 77:5, 10, 11 **143:6** [d] Ps. 63:1

7 Answer me speedily, O LORD;
My spirit fails!
Do not hide Your face from me,
[e]Lest I be like those who go down into the pit.
8 Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness [f]in the morning,
For in You do I trust;
[g]Cause me to know the way in which I should walk,
For [h]I lift up my soul to You.
9 Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies;
In You I take shelter.*
10 [i]Teach me to do Your will,
For You *are* my God;
[j]Your Spirit *is* good.
Lead me in [k]the land of uprightness.
11 [l]Revive me, O LORD, for Your name's sake!
For Your righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.
12 In Your mercy [m]cut off my enemies,
And destroy all those who afflict my soul;
For I *am* Your servant.

Psalm 144

A Song to the LORD Who Preserves and Prospers His People

A Psalm of David.

1 Blessed *be* the LORD my Rock,
[a]Who trains my hands for war,
And my fingers for battle—
2 My lovingkindness and my fortress,
My high tower and my deliverer,
My shield and *the One* in whom I take refuge,
Who subdues my people* under me.
3 [b]LORD, what *is* man, that You take knowledge of him?
Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him?
4 [c]Man is like a breath;
[d]His days *are* like a passing shadow.
5 [e]Bow down Your heavens, O LORD, and come down;
[f]Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.
6 [g]Flash forth lightning and scatter them;
Shoot out Your arrows and destroy them.
7 Stretch out Your hand from above;
Rescue me and deliver me out of great waters,
From the hand of foreigners,
8 Whose mouth [h]speaks lying words,
And whose right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.
9 I will [i]sing a new song to You, O God;
On a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You,
10 *The One* who gives salvation to kings,
[j]Who delivers David His servant
From the deadly sword.
11 Rescue me and deliver me from the hand of foreigners,
Whose mouth speaks lying words,
And whose right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood—
12 That our sons *may be* [k]as plants grown up in their youth;
That our daughters *may be* as pillars,
Sculptured in palace style;
13 *That* our barns *may be* full,
Supplying all kinds of produce;
That our sheep may bring forth thousands
And ten thousands in our fields;
14 *That* our oxen *may be* well laden;
That there be no breaking in or going out;
That there be no outcry in our streets.
15 [l]Happy *are* the people who are in such a state;
Happy *are* the people whose God *is* the LORD!

* **143:9** Septuagint and Vulgate read *To You I flee.*
* **144:2** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Syriac and Targum read *the peoples* (compare 18:47).

143:11 ***for Your name's sake.*** The requests of the psalmists are often tied to various character traits of God. When we pray "in Jesus' name," we pray both in the authority of His name and in the character it represents.
144:4 ***like a passing shadow.*** Human life apart from God is presented in the darkest terms by the Word of God. Briefly stated, it is short and full of trouble (Job 14:1), uncertain (Luke 12:16–20), and empty (Eccl. 1:2). In contrast, Paul the apostle describes the life of the redeemed as being like a victorious soldier, a winning athlete, a successful farmer, a diligent student, and a useable vessel (2 Tim. 2). The redeemed life is marked by peace and purpose now, and eternity with Christ later.
144:11 ***hand of falsehood.*** The principal lie of the enemy was that the Lord could not save His people (Is. 36:18–20).
144:15 ***Happy.*** This word could also be translated "Blessed." The happiness that David describes refers both to external well-being and to internal peace.

143:7 [e] Ps. 28:1 **143:8** [f] Ps. 46:5 [g] Ps. 5:8 [h] Ps. 25:1 **143:10** [i] Ps. 25:4, 5 [j] Neh. 9:20 [k] Is. 26:10 **143:11** [l] Ps. 119:25 **143:12** [m] Ps. 54:5 **144:1** [a] 2 Sam. 22:35 **144:3** [b] Heb. 2:6 **144:4** [c] Ps. 39:11 [d] Job 8:9; 14:2 **144:5** [e] Ps. 18:9 [f] Ps. 104:32 **144:6** [g] Ps. 18:13, 14 **144:8** [h] Ps. 12:2 **144:9** [i] Ps. 33:2, 3; 40:3 **144:10** [j] Ps. 18:50 **144:12** [k] Ps. 128:3 **144:15** [l] [Ps. 33:12]

Psalm 145

A Song of God's Majesty and Love

[a]A Praise of David.

1 I will extol You, my God, O King;
And I will bless Your name forever and ever.
2 Every day I will bless You,
And I will praise Your name forever and ever.
3 [b]Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
And [c]His greatness *is* unsearchable.
4 [d]One generation shall praise Your works to another,
And shall declare Your mighty acts.
5 I* will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty,
And on Your wondrous works.*
6 *Men* shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts,
And I will declare Your greatness.
7 They shall utter the memory of Your great goodness,
And shall sing of Your righteousness.
8 [e]The LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion,
Slow to anger and great in mercy.
9 [f]The LORD *is* good to all,
And His tender mercies *are* over all His works.
10 [g]All Your works shall praise You, O LORD,
And Your saints shall bless You.
11 They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom,
And talk of Your power,
12 To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts,
And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.
13 [h]Your kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,
And Your dominion *endures* throughout all generations.*
14 The LORD upholds all who fall,
And [i]raises up all *who are* bowed down.
15 [j]The eyes of all look expectantly to You,
And [k]You give them their food in due season.
16 You open Your hand
[l]And satisfy the desire of every living thing.
17 The LORD *is* righteous in all His ways,
Gracious in all His works.
18 [m]The LORD *is* near to all who call upon Him,
To all who call upon Him [n]in truth.
19 He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;
He also will hear their cry and save them.
20 [o]The LORD preserves all who love Him,
But all the wicked He will destroy.
21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD,
And all flesh shall bless His holy name Forever and ever.

Psalm 146

The Happiness of Those Whose Help Is the LORD

1 Praise the LORD!

[a]Praise the LORD, O my soul!
2 [b]While I live I will praise the LORD;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
3 [c]Do not put your trust in princes,
Nor in a son of man, in whom *there is* no help.
4 [d]His spirit departs, he returns to his earth;
In that very day [e]his plans perish.
5 [f]Happy *is he* who *has* the God of Jacob for his help,
Whose hope *is* in the LORD his God,
6 [g]Who made heaven and earth,
The sea, and all that *is* in them;
Who keeps truth forever,

* **145:5** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *They.* • Literally *on the words of Your wondrous works* * **145:13** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate add *The LORD is faithful in all His words, And holy in all His works.*

145:8 ***gracious and full of compassion.*** In contrast to the popular image of God as stern and critical, God is full of compassion for erring humans—so much so that He sent His own Son to redeem them (John 3:16).
145:13 ***an everlasting kingdom.*** The rule of God is eternal, and the message of His wonders needs to be delivered to all people in the present time.
145:17 ***righteous . . . Gracious.*** The pairing of these two terms is a powerful description of the character of God. Righteousness alone would lead to our destruction because of our sin, but God is also kind and gracious and has arranged a way for us to be saved.

146:3 ***in princes.*** Even the best of people are not adequate help in times of terrible stress.
146:5 ***hope.*** Most people are aware that there is

145:title [a] Ps. 100:title **145:3** [b] [Ps. 147:5] [c] [Rom. 11:33] **145:4** [d] Is. 38:19 **145:8** [e] [Num. 14:18] **145:9** [f] Nah. 1:7 **145:10** [g] Ps. 19:1 **145:13** [h] [1 Tim. 1:17] **145:14** [i] Ps. 146:8 **145:15** [j] Ps. 104:27 [k] Ps. 136:25 **145:16** [l] Ps. 104:21, 28 **145:18** [m] [Deut. 4:7] [n] [John 4:24] **145:20** [o] [Ps. 31:23] **146:1** [a] Ps. 103:1 **146:2** [b] Ps. 104:33 **146:3** [c] [Is. 2:22] **146:4** [d] [Eccl. 12:7] [e] [1 Cor. 2:6] **146:5** [f] Jer. 17:7 **146:6** [g] Rev. 14:7

7 [h]Who executes justice for the
oppressed,
[i]Who gives food to the hungry.
[j]The LORD gives freedom to the
prisoners.
8 [k]The LORD opens *the eyes of* the
blind;
[l]The LORD raises those who are bowed
down;
The LORD loves the righteous.
9 [m]The LORD watches over the
strangers;
He relieves the fatherless and
widow;
[n]But the way of the wicked He turns
upside down.
10 [o]The LORD shall reign forever—
Your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 147

Praise to God for His Word and Providence

1 Praise the LORD!
For [a]*it is* good to sing praises to our
God;
[b]For *it is* pleasant, *and* [c]praise is
beautiful.
2 The LORD [d]builds up Jerusalem;
[e]He gathers together the outcasts of
Israel.
3 [f]He heals the brokenhearted
And binds up their wounds.
4 [g]He counts the number of the stars;
He calls them all by name.
5 [h]Great *is* our Lord, and [i]mighty in
power;
[j]His understanding *is* infinite.
6 [k]The LORD lifts up the humble;
He casts the wicked down to the
ground.
7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
Sing praises on the harp to our
God,
8 [l]Who covers the heavens with
clouds,
Who prepares rain for the earth,
Who makes grass to grow on the
mountains.
9 [m]He gives to the beast its food,
And [n]to the young ravens that cry.
10 [o]He does not delight in the strength of
the horse;
He takes no pleasure in the legs of a
man.
11 The LORD takes pleasure in those who
fear Him,
In those who hope in His mercy.
12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
13 For He has strengthened the bars of
your gates;
He has blessed your children within
you.
14 [p]He makes peace *in* your borders,
And [q]fills you with the finest wheat.
15 [r]He sends out His command *to the*
earth;
His word runs very swiftly.
16 [s]He gives snow like wool;
He scatters the frost like ashes;
17 He casts out His hail like morsels;
Who can stand before His cold?
18 [t]He sends out His word and melts
them;
He causes His wind to blow, *and* the
waters flow.
19 [u]He declares His word to Jacob,
[v]His statutes and His judgments to
Israel.
20 [w]He has not dealt thus with any
nation;
And *as for His* judgments, they have
not known them.

Praise the LORD!

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more in life than they are getting out of it. They try many things to satisfy their desire for a fuller life. But like Solomon, who gives his testimony in the Book of Ecclesiastes, they find that "things" do not satisfy. Blessedness, or fullness of life, comes to those who have a relationship with God and hope of eternal life with Him.

146:10 ***reign forever.*** God's reign is both present and eternal.

147:2 ***builds up Jerusalem.*** The few people who had returned from captivity faced an immense task. They needed to remember that the work was God's and He would see that it was accomplished.

147:3 ***heals the brokenhearted.*** God's principal work is always within the human heart (51:10–12).

147:6 ***lifts up the humble.*** God's greatness may be approached only by the humble (James 4:6).

147:9 ***beast its food.*** Jesus describes God's care as extending even to sparrows (Matt. 10:29).

147:10 ***He does not delight.*** The joy that God finds in His "very good" creation (Gen. 1) does not compare with the delight that He takes in humans whose hearts are turned to Him.

147:19 ***His word.*** God's word goes throughout His creation, causing snow, frost, hail, wind, and every other aspect of weather to obey His command. He has also given His Word to His people. Will we obey as the wind does, or will we be the only element of creation that is unresponsive to Him?

146:7 [h] Ps. 103:6 [i] Ps. 107:9 [j] Ps. 107:10 **146:8** [k] Matt. 9:30 [l] Luke 13:13 **146:9** [m] Deut. 10:18 [n] Ps. 147:6 **146:10** [o] Ex. 15:18 **147:1** [a] Ps. 92:1 [b] Ps. 135:3 [c] Ps. 33:1 **147:2** [d] Ps. 102:16 [e] Deut. 30:3 **147:3** [f] [Ps. 51:17] **147:4** [g] Is. 40:26 **147:5** [h] Ps. 48:1 [i] Nah. 1:3 [j] Is. 40:28 **147:6** [k] Ps. 146:8, 9 **147:8** [l] Job 38:26 **147:9** [m] Job 38:41 [n] [Matt. 6:26] **147:10** [o] Ps. 33:16, 17 **147:14** [p] Is. 54:13; 60:17, 18 [q] Ps. 132:15 **147:15** [r] [Ps. 107:20] **147:16** [s] Job 37:6 **147:18** [t] Job 37:10 **147:19** [u] Deut. 33:4 [v] Mal. 4:4 **147:20** [w] [Rom. 3:1, 2]

Psalm 148

Praise to the LORD from Creation

1 Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights!
2 Praise Him, all His angels;
Praise Him, all His hosts!
3 Praise Him, sun and moon;
Praise Him, all you stars of light!
4 Praise Him, [a]you heavens of heavens,
And [b]you waters above the heavens!

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
For [c]He commanded and they were created.
6 [d]He also established them forever and ever;
He made a decree which shall not pass away.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth,
[e]You great sea creatures and all the depths;
8 Fire and hail, snow and clouds;
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;
9 [f]Mountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars;
10 Beasts and all cattle;
Creeping things and flying fowl;
11 Kings of the earth and all peoples;
Princes and all judges of the earth;
12 Both young men and maidens;
Old men and children.

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
For His [g]name alone is exalted;
His glory *is* above the earth and heaven.
14 And He [h]has exalted the horn of His people,
The praise of [i]all His saints—
Of the children of Israel,
[j]A people near to Him.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 149

Praise to God for His Salvation and Judgment

1 Praise the LORD!

[a]Sing to the LORD a new song,
And His praise in the assembly of saints.

2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker;
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their [b]King.
3 [c]Let them praise His name with the dance;
Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.
4 For [d]the LORD takes pleasure in His people;
[e]He will beautify the humble with salvation.

5 Let the saints be joyful in glory;
Let them [f]sing aloud on their beds.
6 *Let* the high praises of God *be* in their mouth,
And [g]a two-edged sword in their hand,
7 To execute vengeance on the nations,
And punishments on the peoples;
8 To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron;
9 [h]To execute on them the written judgment—
[i]This honor have all His saints.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 150

Let All Things Praise the LORD

1 Praise[a] the LORD!

Praise God in His sanctuary;
Praise Him in His mighty firmament!

148:5 ***He commanded and they were created.*** The reality of God as Creator of the universe is the basis of His claim on our lives.

148:14 ***A people near to Him.*** When we consider the meaning of God's holiness (99:1; Is. 6:3) and the reality of His power, the marvel that He approaches us to mercifully provide for us becomes overwhelming.

149:1 ***in the assembly.*** One of the primary emphases in the Book of Psalms is that the praise of God is to take place in the center of the worshiping community. Praise unites the people of God (33:1–3).

149:5 ***the saints.*** This term (also translated "godly ones") refers to those who demonstrate in their lives the characteristics of the God whom they serve.

149:6 ***two-edged sword.*** The focus of the psalm switches from the congregation at worship to the army in training. Israel's army was to be the vanguard for the battle of the Lord. Their training was to have a strong component of praise and worship to God.

150:1 ***Praise the LORD.*** This psalm is a development of the Hebrew word "hallelujah," meaning "praise the Lord."

150:1 Praise—To praise God is to acknowledge who He is in all His glory. While thanksgiving is given to acknowledge what God has done, praise is given to declare who God is. Here are some facts about praise:

- God alone is worthy of our praise (Ps. 18:3; 113:3).
- It is His will for us to praise Him (Ps. 50:23).

148:4 [a] 1 Kin. 8:27 [b] Gen. 1:7 **148:5** [c] Gen. 1:1, 6 **148:6** [d] Ps. 89:37 **148:7** [e] Is. 43:20 **148:9** [f] Is. 44:23; 49:13 **148:13** [g] Ps. 8:1 **148:14** [h] Ps. 75:10 [i] Ps. 149:9 [j] Eph. 2:17 **149:1** [a] Ps. 33:3 **149:2** [b] Zech. 9:9 **149:3** [c] Ps. 81:2 **149:4** [d] Ps. 35:27 [e] Ps. 132:16 **149:5** [f] Job 35:10 **149:6** [g] Heb. 4:12 **149:9** [h] Deut. 7:1, 2 [i] 1 Cor. 6:2 **150:1** [a] Ps. 145:5, 6

2 Praise Him for His mighty acts;
Praise Him according to His excellent
[b]greatness!
3 Praise Him with the sound of the
trumpet;
Praise Him with the lute and harp!
4 Praise Him with the timbrel and
dance;
Praise Him with stringed instruments
and flutes!
5 Praise Him with loud cymbals;
Praise Him with clashing cymbals!
6 Let everything that has breath praise
the LORD.

Praise the LORD!

- Praise should be continuous (Ps. 34:1; 71:6) and also public (Ps. 22:25).
- We are to praise God for His holiness (2 Chr. 20:21), grace (Eph. 1:6), goodness (Ps. 135:3), and kindness (Ps. 138:2).
- All nature praises God (Ps. 148).
- The sun, moon, and stars praise Him (Ps. 19:1).
- The angels praise Him (Ps. 148:2).

150:6 ***everything that has breath.*** The very breath that God gives us should be used to praise Him. As long as we live we should praise our Creator (146:1–2). By His breath God created all things (33:6), and by our breath we should adore Him. The Book of Psalms begins with God's blessing on the righteous (1:1) and concludes with all of creation blessing its loving Creator.

150:2 [b] Deut. 3:24

THE BOOK OF
PROVERBS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Solomon's name appears at the beginning of the three sections that he wrote: 1–9; 10:1—22:16; and 25–29. Only about 800 of the more than 3,000 proverbs attributed to Solomon are recorded here. It is likely that Solomon collected and edited proverbs other than his own. The collection of Solomonic proverbs in chapters 25–29 was assembled by the scribes of King Hezekiah. Some of the sayings in Proverbs are quite similar to those found in *The Wisdom of Amenemope*, a document of teachings on civil service by an Egyptian who probably lived between 1000 B.C. and 600 B.C.

▶ **TIME:** c. 950–700 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Prov. 3:5–6

▶ **THEME:** The Proverbs are part of what is commonly called the wisdom literature of the Bible. Each society needs a way to pass on what it understands to be the best way to live to succeeding generations. Biblical wisdom literature provided that means for the Jewish community. The Proverbs contain nuggets of truth that endure not only in the Jewish culture, but also make sense today. It contains basic wisdom on how to deal with the most common everyday issues that we face. Transcending personality and culture, the simple truth is that if people followed the advice of Proverbs, many of their problems would be reduced dramatically.

The Beginning of Knowledge

1 The [a]proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

2 To know wisdom and instruction,
To perceive the words of understanding,
3 To receive the instruction of wisdom,
Justice, judgment, and equity;
4 To give prudence to the [b]simple,
To the young man knowledge and discretion—
5 [c]A wise *man* will hear and increase learning,
And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,
6 To understand a proverb and an enigma,
The words of the wise and their [d]riddles.
7 [e]The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge,
But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Shun Evil Counsel

8 [f]My son, hear the instruction of your father,
And do not forsake the law of your mother;

1:2–3 ***To know . . . To perceive . . . To receive.*** These verbs refer to the ways we acquire wisdom. *Wisdom* refers to skill. *Instruction* could also be translated discipline; it refers to the process of receiving knowledge and applying it to daily life.

1:3 ***Justice, judgment, and equity.*** Biblical wisdom also has a moral context. It involves all of life and may often involve a change of behavior and a commitment to justice.

1:4 ***To the young man knowledge and discretion.*** The young have little experience and are more likely to make mistakes. A wise person has learned by experience how to distinguish what is true, praiseworthy, and good from what is false, shameful, and bad (Rom. 12:1–2).

1:7 ***The fear of the LORD.*** This concept is the most basic ingredient in wisdom. Fools have rejected the fear of the Lord. The term "despise" is strongly negative. Not fearing God is the same as rejecting wisdom outright (Dan. 11:32; John 17:3).

1:8 ***My son, hear.*** The opening words of wisdom's instruction come as an appeal from parent to son (a generic term for child)—a theme that continues throughout the book. Both the Old and New Testaments have one central teaching for children to understand—obey your parents. The Fifth Commandment makes honoring parents the foundational teaching in human relationships. It is also the only Commandment that comes with a promise, "that your days may be long" (Deut. 5:16). Paul's teaching in Ephesians 6:1 echoes what we see here in Proverbs. Obeying parents is the right thing to do.

1:1 [a] 1 Kin. 4:32 **1:4** [b] Prov. 9:4 **1:5** [c] Prov. 9:9
1:6 [d] Ps. 78:2 **1:7** [e] Job 28:28 **1:8** [f] Prov. 4:1

9 For they *will be* a [g]graceful ornament
on your head,
And chains about your neck.

10 My son, if sinners entice you,
[h]Do not consent.
11 If they say, "Come with us,
Let us [i]lie in wait to *shed* blood;
Let us lurk secretly for the innocent
without cause;
12 Let us swallow them alive like Sheol,*
And whole, [j]like those who go down to
the Pit;
13 We shall find all *kinds* of precious
possessions,
We shall fill our houses with spoil;
14 Cast in your lot among us,
Let us all have one purse"—
15 My son, [k]do not walk in the way with
them,
[l]Keep your foot from their path;
16 [m]For their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed blood.
17 Surely, in vain the net is spread
In the sight of any bird;
18 But they lie in wait for their *own* blood,
They lurk secretly for their *own* lives.
19 [n]So *are* the ways of everyone who is
greedy for gain;
It takes away the life of its owners.

The Call of Wisdom

20 [o]Wisdom calls aloud outside;
She raises her voice in the open
squares.
21 She cries out in the chief concourses,*
At the openings of the gates in the city
She speaks her words:
22 "How long, you simple ones, will you
love simplicity?
For scorners delight in their scorning,
And fools hate knowledge.
23 Turn at my rebuke;
Surely [p]I will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.
24 [q]Because I have called and you refused,
I have stretched out my hand and no
one regarded,
25 Because you [r]disdained all my counsel,
And would have none of my rebuke,
26 [s]I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your terror comes,
27 When [t]your terror comes like a storm,
And your destruction comes like a
whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon
you.

28 "Then[u] they will call on me, but I will
not answer;
They will seek me diligently, but they
will not find me.
29 Because they [v]hated knowledge
And did not [w]choose the fear of the
LORD,
30 [x]They would have none of my counsel
And despised my every rebuke.
31 Therefore [y]they shall eat the fruit of
their own way,
And be filled to the full with their own
fancies.
32 For the turning away of the simple will
slay them,
And the complacency of fools will
destroy them;
33 But whoever listens to me will dwell
[z]safely,
And [a]will be secure, without fear of
evil."

The Value of Wisdom

2 My son, if you receive my words,
And [a]treasure my commands within
you,
2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;

* **1:12** Or *the grave* * **1:21** Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum read *top of the walls;* Vulgate reads *the head of multitudes.*

From obedience springs the ability to deal with all the other important issues of life. The child who has not learned to obey his parents, who are God's representatives in the family, will probably not learn to obey God.

Christ's obedience is the perfect illustration. He was obedient to God the Father even though that obedience resulted in His death (Phil. 2:6–8). Being obedient for Christ meant no qualifications or limitations on that obedience.

1:15–18 ***My son, do not walk in the way with them.*** The parents speak words of caution. One step on the precipitous path is a step toward destruction. Spreading a net in the sight of the bird one wishes to trap would be a fruitless task. Yet the fool is less sensible than the bird; he will watch the trap being set and get caught in it anyway.

1:19 ***takes away the life.*** The study of wisdom is a matter of life and death.

1:20–21 ***Wisdom calls aloud outside.*** The word *wisdom* is plural and intensive. This fact calls attention to the word and heightens its meaning.

1:22–27 ***How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?*** Wisdom addresses the *simple ones*. These are young people who have not yet made up their minds about life or the direction they will take. Wisdom ridicules those who reject her when they come to face the inevitable judgment of their foolishness (Ps. 2:4). Yet wisdom also laughs with joy at God's work and has delight in the people of God (8:30–31).

1:28–33 ***I will not answer.*** When fools despise wisdom, they must face the results of their choice. Their hatred for wisdom arises out of refusal to fear God (v. 29). Fools bring about their own destruction. In contrast, those who listen to her will find security.

2:1–5 ***My son.*** These verses begin the second of the

1:9 [g] Prov. 3:22 **1:10** [h] Gen. 39:7–10 **1:11** [i] Jer. 5:26 **1:12** [j] Ps. 28:1 **1:15** [k] Ps. 1:1 [l] Ps. 119:101 **1:16** [m] [Is. 59:7] **1:19** [n] [1 Tim. 6:10] **1:20** [o] [John 7:37] **1:23** [p] Joel 2:28 **1:24** [q] Jer. 7:13 **1:25** [r] Luke 7:30 **1:26** [s] Ps. 2:4 **1:27** [t] [Prov. 10:24, 25] **1:28** [u] Is. 1:15 **1:29** [v] Job 21:14 [w] Ps. 119:173 **1:30** [x] Ps. 81:11 **1:31** [y] Job 4:8 **1:33** [z] Prov. 3:24–26 [a] Ps. 112:7 **2:1** [a] [Prov. 4:21]

3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
4 [b]If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as *for* hidden treasures;
5 [c]Then you will understand the fear of the LORD,
And find the knowledge of God.
6 [d]For the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding;
7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
[e]*He is* a shield to those who walk uprightly;
8 He guards the paths of justice,
And [f]preserves the way of His saints.
9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice,
Equity *and* every good path.

10 When wisdom enters your heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,
11 Discretion will preserve you;
[g]Understanding will keep you,
12 To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things,
13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To [h]walk in the ways of darkness;
14 [i]Who rejoice in doing evil,
And delight in the perversity of the wicked;
15 [j]Whose ways *are* crooked,
And *who are* devious in their paths;
16 To deliver you from [k]the immoral woman,
[l]From the seductress *who* flatters with her words,
17 Who forsakes the companion of her youth,
And forgets the covenant of her God.
18 For [m]her house leads down to death,
And her paths to the dead;
19 None who go to her return,
Nor do they regain the paths of life—
20 So you may walk in the way of goodness,
And keep *to* the paths of righteousness.
21 For the upright will dwell in the [n]land,
And the blameless will remain in it;
22 But the wicked will be cut off from the earth,
And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it.

Guidance for the Young

3 My son, do not forget my law,
[a]But let your heart keep my commands;
2 For length of days and long life
And [b]peace they will add to you.

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you;
[c]Bind them around your neck,
[d]Write them on the tablet of your heart,
4 [e]*And* so find favor and high esteem
In the sight of God and man.

5 [f]Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
[g]And lean not on your own understanding;
6 [h]In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct* your paths.

7 Do not be wise in your own [i]eyes;
Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
8 It will be health to your flesh,*
And [j]strength* to your bones.

9 [k]Honor the LORD with your possessions,
And with the firstfruits of all your increase;

* **3:6** Or *make smooth* or *straight* * **3:8** Literally *navel*, figurative of the body • Literally *drink* or *refreshment*

"my son" passages and tie the concepts of wisdom and the knowledge of God more closely together. Wisdom is near but not always easy to embrace.

2:5–8 *the fear of the LORD . . . the knowledge of God.* When a person seeks wisdom, he or she finds it. Those who know God fear or revere Him. ***sound wisdom.*** This is another word for wisdom that can also mean "abiding success" or "victory."

2:10–11 *wisdom enters your heart.* This phrase stresses the internalization of wisdom. The proverbs do not merely provide knowledge; they provide insight into practical living.

2:12–15 *the way of evil.* Evil is directly contrasted with wisdom. It is characterized by perverse things such as lies, deceptions, and deviousness.

2:16–19 *the immoral woman.* The adulteress is described as a flatterer, and flattery is the method used by the adulteress, not only in trapping her victims, but in excusing her sin (30:20). She is unfaithful to her husband and prefers to forget the covenant of her God (2:17).

3:3–4 *mercy and truth.* These words describe God's character (Ps. 100:5). The apostle John used the Greek equivalent of these words, "grace and truth," to describe Jesus' character in John 1:14.

3:5–6 *Trust in the LORD.* The verb "trust" is complemented by the verb "lean." Trusting in God is a conscious dependence on God, much like leaning on a tree for support. The command to acknowledge Him means to observe Him and get to know Him in the process of living. These are the vital elements of faith that should fill every area of life.

3:9 *the firstfruits of all your increase.* God expects that out of the blessings we receive we should readily give. One aspect of worship is giving. These verses

2:4 [b] [Prov. 3:14] **2:5** [c] [James 1:5, 6] **2:6** [d] 1 Kin. 3:9, 12 **2:7** [e] [Ps. 84:11] **2:8** [f] [1 Sam. 2:9] **2:11** [g] Prov. 4:6; 6:22 **2:13** [h] [John 3:19, 20] **2:14** [i] [Rom. 1:32] **2:15** [j] Ps. 125:5 **2:16** [k] Prov. 5:20; 6:24; 7:5 [l] Prov. 5:3 **2:18** [m] Prov. 7:27 **2:21** [n] Ps. 37:3 **3:1** [a] Deut. 8:1 **3:2** [b] Ps. 119:165 **3:3** [c] Prov. 6:21 [d] [2 Cor. 3:3] **3:4** [e] Rom. 14:18 **3:5** [f] [Ps. 37:3, 5] [g] [Jer. 9:23, 24] **3:6** [h] [1 Chr. 28:9] **3:7** [i] Rom. 12:16 **3:8** [j] Job 21:24 **3:9** [k] Ex. 22:29

10 [l]So your barns will be filled with plenty,
And your vats will overflow with new wine.

11 [m]My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,
Nor detest His correction;
12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects,
[n]Just as a father the son *in whom* he delights.

13 [o]Happy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom,
And the man *who* gains understanding;
14 [p]For her proceeds *are* better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
15 She *is* more precious than rubies,
And [q]all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
16 [r]Length of days *is* in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
17 [s]Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths *are* peace.
18 She *is* [t]a tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy *are all* who retain her.

19 [u]The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
By understanding He established the heavens;
20 By His knowledge the depths were [v]broken up,
And clouds drop down the dew.

21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
22 So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.
23 [w]Then you will walk safely in your way,
And your foot will not stumble.
24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
25 [x]Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
26 For the LORD will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.

27 [y]Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
When it is in the power of your hand to do *so*.
28 [z]Do not say to your neighbor,
"Go, and come back,
And tomorrow I will give *it*,"
When you have it with you.
29 Do not devise evil against your neighbor,
For he dwells by you for safety's sake.
30 [a]Do not strive with a man without cause,
If he has done you no harm.

31 [b]Do not envy the oppressor,
And choose none of his ways;
32 For the perverse *person is* an abomination to the LORD,
[c]But His secret counsel *is* with the upright.
33 [d]The curse of the LORD *is* on the house of the wicked,
But [e]He blesses the home of the just.
34 [f]Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives grace to the humble.
35 The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Security in Wisdom

4 Hear, [a]*my* children, the instruction of a father,
And give attention to know understanding;
2 For I give you good doctrine:
Do not forsake my law.
3 When I was my father's son,
[b]Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother,
4 [c]He also taught me, and said to me:
"Let your heart retain my words;
[d]Keep my commands, and live.
5 [e]Get wisdom! Get understanding!
Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

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should not be taken as a formula for getting rich. They point to what is the proper response to God's gifts to us, not a return we get for investing.

3:11–12 *the chastening of the LORD.* Discipline is the other side of God's grace. We should cherish God's correction in our lives, because God disciplines those He loves (Heb. 2:7–10).

3:13–18 *Happy.* The Beatitudes of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3–12) work much the way these verses do. God is pleased with people who discover that wisdom is a priceless treasure.

3:19 *by wisdom founded the earth.* One of the central themes in Proverbs is the association of wisdom with creation (8:1–36).

3:21 *let them not depart.* This verse encourages the son to keep faith with wisdom. The intent is much like that of the Shema (Deut. 6:4–9).

4:1–4 *I was my father's son.* In Israel training in wisdom happened in the home. As his father had taught him, so the son now teaches his own sons, one generation instructing another. The call for parents to teach the things of God to their children is based on Deuteronomy 6:7.

4:5–7 *Get wisdom.* Verses 5–9 present an impassioned plea from the father to his sons to acquire wisdom whatever the cost. The presentation follows

3:10 [l] Deut. 28:8 **3:11** [m] Job 5:17 **3:12** [n] Deut. 8:5 **3:13** [o] Prov. 8:32, 34, 35 **3:14** [p] Job 28:13 **3:15** [q] Matt. 13:44 **3:16** [r] [1 Tim. 4:8] **3:17** [s] [Matt. 11:29] **3:18** [t] Gen. 2:9 **3:19** [u] Ps. 104:24 **3:20** [v] Gen. 7:11 **3:23** [w] Prov. 10:9 **3:25** [x] Ps. 91:5 **3:27** [y] Rom. 13:7 **3:28** [z] Lev. 19:13 **3:30** [a] [Rom. 12:18] **3:31** [b] Ps. 37:1 **3:32** [c] Ps. 25:14 **3:33** [d] Zech. 5:3, 4 [e] Ps. 1:3 **3:34** [f] James 4:6 **4:1** [a] Ps. 34:11 **4:3** [b] 1 Chr. 29:1 **4:4** [c] 1 Chr. 28:9 [d] Prov. 7:2 **4:5** [e] Prov. 2:2, 3

6 Do not forsake her, and she will
preserve you;
[f]Love her, and she will keep you.
7 [g]Wisdom *is* the principal thing;
Therefore get wisdom.
And in all your getting, get
understanding.
8 [h]Exalt her, and she will promote you;
She will bring you honor, when you
embrace her.
9 She will place on your head [i]an
ornament of grace;
A crown of glory she will deliver to
you."

10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings,
[j]And the years of your life will be many.
11 I have [k]taught you in the way of
wisdom;
I have led you in right paths.
12 When you walk, [l]your steps will not be
hindered,
[m]And when you run, you will not
stumble.
13 Take firm hold of instruction, do not
let go;
Keep her, for she *is* your life.

14 [n]Do not enter the path of the wicked,
And do not walk in the way of evil.
15 Avoid it, do not travel on it;
Turn away from it and pass on.
16 [o]For they do not sleep unless they have
done evil;
And their sleep is taken away unless
they make *someone* fall.
17 For they eat the bread of wickedness,
And drink the wine of violence.

18 [p]But the path of the just [q]*is* like the
shining sun,*
That shines ever brighter unto the
perfect day.
19 [r]The way of the wicked *is* like
darkness;
They do not know what makes them
stumble.

20 My son, give attention to my words;
Incline your ear to my sayings.
21 Do not let them depart from your eyes;
Keep them in the midst of your heart;
22 For they *are* life to those who find
them,
And health to all their flesh.
23 Keep your heart with all diligence,
For out of it *spring* the issues of [s]life.
24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth,
And put perverse lips far from you.
25 Let your eyes look straight ahead,
And your eyelids look right before you.
26 Ponder the path of your [t]feet,
And let all your ways be established.
27 Do not turn to the right or the left;
Remove your foot from evil.

The Peril of Adultery

5 My son, pay attention to my wisdom;
Lend your ear to my understanding,
2 That you may preserve discretion,
And your lips [a]may keep knowledge.
3 [b]For the lips of an immoral woman drip
honey,
And her mouth *is* [c]smoother than oil;
4 But in the end she is bitter as
wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.
5 Her feet go down to death,
[d]Her steps lay hold of hell.*
6 Lest you ponder *her* path of life—
Her ways are unstable;
You do not know *them.*

7 Therefore hear me now, *my* children,
And do not depart from the words of
my mouth.
8 Remove your way far from her,
And do not go near the door of her
house,
9 Lest you give your honor to others,
And your years to the cruel *one;*
10 Lest aliens be filled with your wealth,
And your labors *go* to the house of a
foreigner;
11 And you mourn at last,
When your flesh and your body are
consumed,
12 And say:
"How I have hated instruction,
And my heart despised correction!

*4:18 Literally *light* *5:5 Or *Sheol*

a pattern: statement, restatement, embellishment. By making generous use of creative restatement, the ideas come through strongly.

4:9 ***ornament of grace . . . crown of glory.*** These phrases emphasize the supreme value of wisdom. The person who holds wisdom in highest esteem and embraces it will be exalted and honored.

4:20–27 ***Keep your heart with all diligence.*** This section demands constancy of heart and purpose, honesty in speech, steadiness of gaze, and a right goal in walk and life. Setting off on the path of wisdom is no casual thing.

5:1–6 ***the lips of an immoral woman drip honey.*** Chapter 5 returns to the theme of the immoral woman (2:16–19). This passage speaks strongly for marital fidelity against all pressure to the contrary.

5:5 ***Her feet go down to death.*** This verse warns us of the deadly effects of immorality. Fornication, adultery, and prostitution lead to personality decay, venereal disease, abortion, separation, and divorce.

5:8–10 ***Remove your way far from her.*** Some temptations should be avoided at all cost. A wise son knows this and will not go near an immoral woman. The apostle Paul's instruction to Timothy to flee youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22) teaches the same theme.

4:6 [f] 2 Thess. 2:10 **4:7** [g] Matt. 13:44 **4:8** [h] 1 Sam. 2:30 **4:9** [i] Prov. 3:22 **4:10** [j] Prov. 3:2 **4:11** [k] 1 Sam. 12:23 **4:12** [l] Ps. 18:36 [m] [Ps. 91:11] **4:14** [n] Ps. 1:1 **4:16** [o] Ps. 36:4 **4:18** [p] Matt. 5:14, 45 [q] 2 Sam. 23:4 **4:19** [r] [Is. 59:9, 10] **4:23** [s] [Matt. 12:34; 15:18, 19] **4:26** [t] Heb. 12:13 **5:2** [a] Mal. 2:7 **5:3** [b] Prov. 2:16 [c] Ps. 55:21 **5:5** [d] Prov. 7:27

13 I have not obeyed the voice of my
teachers,
Nor inclined my ear to those who
instructed me!
14 I was on the verge of total ruin,
In the midst of the assembly and
congregation."

15 Drink water from your own cistern,
And running water from your own
well.
16 Should your fountains be dispersed
abroad,
Streams of water in the streets?
17 Let them be only your own,
And not for strangers with you.
18 Let your fountain be blessed,
And rejoice with [e]the wife of your
youth.
19 [f]*As a* loving deer and a graceful doe,
Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
And always be enraptured with her
love.
20 For why should you, my son, be
enraptured by [g]an immoral
woman,
And be embraced in the arms of a
seductress?

21 [h]For the ways of man *are* before the
eyes of the LORD,
And He ponders all his paths.
22 [i]His own iniquities entrap the wicked
man,
And he is caught in the cords of his
sin.
23 [j]He shall die for lack of instruction,
And in the greatness of his folly he
shall go astray.

Dangerous Promises

6 My son, [a]if you become surety for your
friend,
If you have shaken hands in pledge for
a stranger,
2 You are snared by the words of your
mouth;
You are taken by the words of your
mouth.
3 So do this, my son, and deliver
yourself;
For you have come into the hand of
your friend:
Go and humble yourself;
Plead with your friend.
4 [b]Give no sleep to your eyes,
Nor slumber to your eyelids.
5 Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the
hand *of the hunter,*
And like a bird from the hand of the
fowler.*

The Folly of Indolence

6 [c]Go to the ant, you sluggard!
Consider her ways and be wise,
7 Which, having no captain,
Overseer or ruler,
8 Provides her supplies in the summer,
And gathers her food in the harvest.
9 [d]How long will you slumber,
O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?
10 A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep—
11 [e]So shall your poverty come on you like
a prowler,
And your need like an armed man.

The Wicked Man

12 A worthless person, a wicked man,
Walks with a perverse mouth;
13 [f]He winks with his eyes,
He shuffles his feet,
He points with his fingers;
14 Perversity *is* in his heart,
[g]He devises evil continually,
[h]He sows discord.
15 Therefore his calamity shall come
[i]suddenly;
Suddenly he shall [j]be broken [k]without
remedy.

16 These six *things* the LORD hates,
Yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him:
17 [l]A proud look,
[m]A lying tongue,
[n]Hands that shed innocent blood,
18 [o]A heart that devises wicked plans,
[p]Feet that are swift in running to evil,

* **6:5** That is, one who catches birds in a trap or snare

5:15 ***Drink water from your own cistern.*** This image is a clear call to marital fidelity.
5:18 ***and rejoice with the wife of your youth.*** We are encouraged to find mutual joy and pleasure in the marriage bed. It is in fact blessed by God.
6:1 ***if you become surety for your friend.*** This phrase refers to responsibility for someone else's debt as in cosigning a loan. This does not mean we should never be generous, only that we should not promise what we cannot deliver.
6:6 ***Go to the ant, you sluggard.*** This passage is a warning about laziness. The sluggard is a lazy person who is captive to leisure. He can learn all he needs to know by studying the work habits of the ant.
6:12 ***a wicked man.*** He is a troublemaker. Unlike the sluggard, whose only desire is to take a nap, the troublemaker cannot wait to cause more problems. He delights in creating dissension.
6:16 ***Yes, seven are an abomination to Him.*** The use of numerical progression—six, even seven—in these proverbs is a rhetorical device that embellishes the poetry and serves as a memory aid. It gives the impression that there is more to be said about the

5:18 [e] Mal. 2:14 **5:19** [f] Song 2:9 **5:20** [g] Prov. 2:16 **5:21** [h] Hos. 7:2 **5:22** [i] Num. 32:23 **5:23** [j] Job 4:21 **6:1** [a] Prov. 11:15 **6:4** [b] Ps. 132:4 **6:6** [c] Job 12:7 **6:9** [d] Prov. 24:33, 34 **6:11** [e] Prov. 10:4 **6:13** [f] Job 15:12 **6:14** [g] Mic. 2:1 [h] Prov. 6:19 **6:15** [i] Is. 30:13 [j] Jer. 19:11 [k] 2 Chr. 36:16 **6:17** [l] Ps. 101:5 [m] Ps. 120:2 [n] Is. 1:15 **6:18** [o] Gen. 6:5 [p] Is. 59:7

19 [q]A false witness *who* speaks lies,
And one who [r]sows discord among brethren.

Beware of Adultery

20 [s]My son, keep your father's command,
And do not forsake the law of your mother.
21 [t]Bind them continually upon your heart;
Tie them around your neck.
22 [u]When you roam, they* will lead you;
When you sleep, [v]they will keep you;
And *when* you awake, they will speak with you.
23 [w]For the commandment *is* a lamp,
And the law a light;
Reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life,
24 [x]To keep you from the evil woman,
From the flattering tongue of a seductress.
25 [y]Do not lust after her beauty in your heart,
Nor let her allure you with her eyelids.
26 For [z]by means of a harlot
A man is reduced to a crust of bread;
[a]And an adulteress* will [b]prey upon his precious life.
27 Can a man take fire to his bosom,
And his clothes not be burned?
28 Can one walk on hot coals,
And his feet not be seared?
29 So *is* he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;
Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.

30 *People* do not despise a thief
If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.
31 Yet *when* he is found, [c]he must restore sevenfold;
He may have to give up all the substance of his house.
32 Whoever commits adultery with a woman [d]lacks understanding;
He *who* does so destroys his own soul.
33 Wounds and dishonor he will get,
And his reproach will not be wiped away.
34 For [e]jealousy *is* a husband's fury;
Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.
35 He will accept no recompense,
Nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.

7 My son, keep my words,
And [q]treasure my commands within you.
2 [b]Keep my commands and live,
[c]And my law as the apple of your eye.
3 [d]Bind them on your fingers;
Write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Say to wisdom, "You *are* my sister,"
And call understanding *your* nearest kin,
5 [e]That they may keep you from the immoral woman,
From the seductress *who* flatters with her words.

The Crafty Harlot

6 For at the window of my house
I looked through my lattice,
7 And saw among the simple,
I perceived among the youths,
A young man [f]devoid of understanding,
8 Passing along the street near her corner;
And he took the path to her house
9 [g]In the twilight, in the evening,
In the black and dark night.

10 And there a woman met him,
With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.

* **6:22** Literally *it* * **6:26** Literally *a man's wife,* that is, of another

topic. The word "abomination" is the Bible's strongest expression of hatred for wickedness.

6:23 Illumination of God's Word—Illumination is the last of three important steps that God takes to communicate with us. The first step is revelation which occurred when God spoke to the authors of the Bible. The second step was inspiration, which is the process God used to guide them in correctly writing down His message. The third step provides understanding as men and women hear and see God's message. It is a divine process whereby God causes the written revelation to be understood by the human heart.

Christians need this illumination because we are blinded by our fallen fleshly natures (1 Cor. 2:14) and by Satan himself (2 Cor. 4:3–4). The Holy Spirit is the one who illumines us (John 14:26). We see this illumination process at work in Acts 2 when over 3,000 people respond to Peter's message and become followers of Christ.

Christians also need this illumination on a day-to-day basis to help them fully grasp the marvelous message in God's Word. Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit will show these tremendous truths to us as we read the Scriptures (1 Cor. 2:10; 2 Cor. 4:6).

6:30 *if he steals to satisfy himself . . . starving.* This passage is not condoning theft. It merely contrasts theft with adultery, which never makes sense. For ancient Israelites, marital fidelity was a mark of one's fidelity to God.

7:1–5 *as the apple of your eye.* People should guard wise words as instinctively as they protect the pupil of the eye.

6:19 [q] Ps. 27:12 [r] Prov. 6:14 **6:20** [s] Eph. 6:1 **6:21** [t] Prov. 3:3 **6:22** [u] [Prov. 3:23] [v] Prov. 2:11 **6:23** [w] Ps. 19:8 **6:24** [x] Prov. 2:16` **6:25** [y] Matt. 5:28 **6:26** [z] Prov. 29:3 [a] Gen. 39:14 [b] Ezek. 13:18 **6:31** [c] Ex. 22:1–4 **6:32** [d] Prov. 7:7 **6:34** [e] Song 8:6 **7:1** [q] Prov. 2:1 **7:2** [b] Lev. 18:5 [c] Deut. 32:10 **7:3** [d] Deut. 6:8 **7:5** [e] Prov. 2:16; 5:3 **7:7** [f] [Prov. 6:32; 9:4, 16] **7:9** [g] Job 24:15

11 [h]She *was* loud and rebellious,
[i]Her feet would not stay at home.
12 At times *she was* outside, at times in the open square,
Lurking at every corner.
13 So she caught him and kissed him;
With an impudent face she said to him:
14 "*I have* peace offerings with me;
Today I have paid my vows.
15 So I came out to meet you,
Diligently to seek your face,
And I have found you.
16 I have spread my bed with tapestry,
Colored coverings of [j]Egyptian linen.
17 I have perfumed my bed
With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come, let us take our fill of love until morning;
Let us delight ourselves with love.
19 For my husband *is* not at home;
He has gone on a long journey;
20 He has taken a bag of money with him,
And will come home on the appointed day."

21 With [k]her enticing speech she caused him to yield,
[l]With her flattering lips she seduced him.
22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter,
Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,*
23 Till an arrow struck his liver.
[m]As a bird hastens to the snare,
He did not know it *would cost* his life.

24 Now therefore, listen to me, *my* children;
Pay attention to the words of my mouth:
25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths;
26 For she has cast down many wounded,
And [n]all who were slain by her were strong *men*.
27 [o]Her house *is* the way to hell,*
Descending to the chambers of death.

The Excellence of Wisdom

8 Does not [a]wisdom cry out,
And understanding lift up her voice?
2 She takes her stand on the top of the high hill,
Beside the way, where the paths meet.
3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city,
At the entrance of the doors:
4 "To you, O men, I call,
And my voice *is* to the sons of men.
5 O you simple ones, understand prudence,
And you fools, be of an understanding heart.
6 Listen, for I will speak of [b]excellent things,
And from the opening of my lips *will come* right things;
7 For my mouth will speak truth;
Wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.
8 All the words of my mouth *are* with righteousness;
Nothing crooked or perverse *is* in them.
9 They *are* all plain to him who understands,
And right to those who find knowledge.
10 Receive my instruction, and not silver,
And knowledge rather than choice gold;
11 [c]For wisdom *is* better than rubies,
And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.

12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
And find out knowledge *and* discretion.
13 [d]The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil;
[e]Pride and arrogance and the evil way
And [f]the perverse mouth I hate.
14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom;
I *am* understanding, [g]I have strength.
15 [h]By me kings reign,
And rulers decree justice.

* **7:22** Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum read *as a dog to bonds;* Vulgate reads *as a lamb … to bonds.*
* **7:27** Or *Sheol*

7:15 ***I came out to meet you.*** All the adulteress does is perverse. Here she presents an offering as a feast for the young man she plans to entrap. She overcomes her target's fear by assuring him that her husband will not come home and discover them together.
7:22 ***as a fool to the correction of the stocks.*** This passage uses several unflattering metaphors to describe how a young fool falls into immorality.
8:1 ***Does not wisdom cry out?*** Wisdom, in contrast to foolishness, wants to reach everyone and therefore broadcasts her message publicly, unlike the immoral woman, who uses privacy and deception to achieve her goals. Wisdom is open to all. Her location is at the place of decision, the place of authority, the place of beginnings. She speaks loudly, but only those who adjust their lives to God's truth actually enjoy the spoils of wisdom.
8:13 ***The fear of the LORD is to hate evil.*** The offer of wisdom is held out only to those who fear God. Coming to wisdom requires coming to God, and coming to God means turning away from all that God hates—evil, pride, and arrogance.
8:15 ***By me kings reign, and rulers.*** Power and authority require the use of wisdom.

7:11 [h] Prov. 9:13 [i] Titus 2:5 **7:16** [j] Is. 19:9 **7:21** [k] Prov. 5:3 [l] Ps. 12:2 **7:23** [m] Eccl. 9:12 **7:26** [n] Neh. 13:26 **7:27** [o] Prov. 2:18; 5:5; 9:18 **8:1** [a] Prov. 1:20, 21; 9:3 **8:6** [b] Prov. 22:20 **8:11** [c] Job 28:15 **8:13** [d] Prov. 3:7; 16:6 [e] [Prov. 16:17, 18] [f] Prov. 4:24 **8:14** [g] Eccl. 7:19; 9:16 **8:15** [h] Rom. 13:1

16 By me princes rule, and nobles,
All the judges of the earth.*
17 [i]I love those who love me,
And [j]those who seek me diligently will find me.
18 [k]Riches and honor *are* with me,
Enduring riches and righteousness.
19 My fruit *is* better than gold, yes, than fine gold,
And my revenue than choice silver.
20 I traverse the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of justice,
21 That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth,
That I may fill their treasuries.

22 "The[l] LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way,
Before His works of old.
23 [m]I have been established from everlasting,
From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.
24 When *there were* no depths I was brought forth,
When *there were* no fountains abounding with water.
25 [n]Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills, I was brought forth;
26 While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields,
Or the primal dust of the world.
27 When He prepared the heavens, I *was* there,
When He drew a circle on the face of the deep,
28 When He established the clouds above,
When He strengthened the fountains of the deep,
29 [o]When He assigned to the sea its limit,
So that the waters would not transgress His command,
When [p]He marked out the foundations of the earth,
30 [q]Then I was beside Him *as* a master craftsman;*
[r]And I was daily *His* delight,
Rejoicing always before Him,
31 Rejoicing in His inhabited world,
And [s]my delight *was* with the sons of men.

32 "Now therefore, listen to me, *my* children,
For [t]blessed *are those who* keep my ways.
33 Hear instruction and be wise,
And do not disdain *it*.
34 [u]Blessed is the man who listens to me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at the posts of my doors.
35 For whoever finds me finds life,
And [v]obtains favor from the LORD;
36 But he who sins against me [w]wrongs his own soul;
All those who hate me love death."

The Way of Wisdom

9 Wisdom has [a]built her house,
She has hewn out her seven pillars;
2 [b]She has slaughtered her meat,
[c]She has mixed her wine,
She has also furnished her table.
3 She has sent out her maidens,
She cries out from the highest places of the city,
4 "Whoever[d] *is* simple, let him turn in here!"
As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
5 "Come,[e] eat of my bread
And drink of the wine I have mixed.
6 Forsake foolishness and live,
And go in the way of understanding.

7 "He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself,
And he who rebukes a wicked *man only* harms himself.
8 [f]Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
[g]Rebuke a wise *man*, and he will love you.

* **8:16** Masoretic Text, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *righteousness;* Septuagint, Bomberg, and some manuscripts and editions read *earth*.
* **8:30** A Jewish tradition reads *one brought up*.

8:30–31 ***as a master craftsman.*** With wisdom's skill, God created the universe. A proper study of the universe is a progressive study of God's wisdom. Her greatest joy comes in the finest of the work of God—the sons of men—that is, humankind.

9:1 ***seven pillars.*** The number seven represents completeness, as it often does in Semitic poetry. That is, it is not that there were precisely seven pillars so much as that the house of wisdom was solidly built and substantial in character.

9:2 ***mixed her wine.*** Wine was a staple in ancient Israel; but when a feast was special, a homemaker would add aromatic spices to the wine, enlivening the bouquet and improving the taste (Song 8:2). This idea sets up a contrast with the foolish woman. While wisdom is busy, attending to every detail like a gracious hostess, the foolish woman sits at the entrance of her house with very little to do (9:14).

9:4 ***Whoever is simple.*** Wisdom makes a point of inviting the naive, meaning those who have not yet made up their minds about their course in life. The person who comes to wisdom has nothing to lose but naiveté. Hebrews 5:14 speaks of a mature person as one who is able to eat and enjoy solid food, in contrast to the naive, who is able only to drink milk.

9:7 ***He who corrects a scoffer.*** This personality is thoroughly set against wisdom (1:22) and scoffs at the things of God (Ps. 1:1). By contrast a wise man accepts correction and responds with gratitude to the one who points out his error.

8:17 [i] [John 14:21] [j] James 1:5 **8:18** [k] Prov. 3:16 **8:22** [l] Prov. 3:19 **8:23** [m] [Ps. 2:6] **8:25** [n] Job 15:7, 8 **8:29** [o] Gen. 1:9, 10 [p] Job 28:4, 6 **8:30** [q] [John 1:1–3, 18] [r] [Matt. 3:17] **8:31** [s] Ps. 16:3 **8:32** [t] Luke 11:28 **8:34** [u] Prov. 3:13, 18 **8:35** [v] [John 17:3] **8:36** [w] Prov. 20:2 **9:1** [a] [Matt. 16:18] **9:2** [b] Matt. 22:4 [c] Prov. 23:30 **9:4** [d] Ps. 19:7 **9:5** [e] Is. 55:1 **9:8** [f] Matt. 7:6 [g] Ps. 141:5

9 Give *instruction* to a wise *man*, and he will be still wiser;
Teach a just *man*, [h]and he will increase in learning.

10 "The[i] fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.
11 [j]For by me your days will be multiplied,
And years of life will be added to you.
12 [k]If you are wise, you are wise for yourself,
And *if* you scoff, you will bear *it* alone."

The Way of Folly

13 [l]A foolish woman is clamorous;
She is simple, and knows nothing.
14 For she sits at the door of her house,
On a seat [m]*by* the highest places of the city,
15 To call to those who pass by,
Who go straight on their way:
16 "Whoever[n] *is* simple, let him turn in here";
And *as for* him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
17 "Stolen[o] water is sweet,
And bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant."
18 But he does not know that [p]the dead *are* there,
That her guests *are* in the depths of hell.*

Wise Sayings of Solomon

10 The proverbs of [a]Solomon:

[b]A wise son makes a glad father,
But a foolish son *is* the grief of his mother.

2 [c]Treasures of wickedness profit nothing,
[d]But righteousness delivers from death.

3 [e]The LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish,
But He casts away the desire of the wicked.

4 [f]He who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But [g]the hand of the diligent makes rich.
5 He who gathers in [h]summer *is* a wise son;
He who sleeps in harvest *is* [i]a son who causes shame.

6 Blessings *are* on the head of the righteous,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
7 [j]The memory of the righteous *is* blessed,
But the name of the wicked will rot.

8 The wise in heart will receive commands,
[k]But a prating fool will fall.
9 [l]He who walks with integrity walks securely,
But he who perverts his ways will become known.

10 He who winks with the eye causes trouble,
But a prating fool will fall.

11 The mouth of the righteous *is* a well of life,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

12 Hatred stirs up strife,
But [m]love covers all sins.

13 Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding,
But [n]a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.

* **9:18** Or *Sheol*

9:13–18 ***A foolish woman is clamorous.*** This section is a parody of 9:1–6. Like personified wisdom, the woman of folly calls out an invitation. But she is brash, loud, undisciplined, and knows nothing (7:10–12). She cries out in the same words that wisdom has used, but she has no marvelous banquet for her guests, only shabby food, stolen and meager.

9:18 ***the dead are there.*** Fools cast away all restraint and express their freedom in direct defiance of heaven's moral law for the ordering of our conduct on earth. But they do not know that the end of such perverse behavior is death. The way of wisdom is to turn from such a disastrous course while there is time.

10:1 ***The proverbs of Solomon.*** This section focuses on the wise son in contrast with the foolish son. *Son* is used generically for son and daughter.

10:4 ***slack hand.*** Proverbs often links laziness with poverty, and hard work with riches.

10:7 ***But the name of the wicked.*** In biblical times a person's name was most significant. When a person's name was remembered by future generations for good, that person's life was believed to have been of great value. But when the memory of a name rotted away, it was as though that person had never lived.

10:9 ***walks with integrity.*** Many of the proverbs contrast two paths of life. This phrase means conforming to God's law as a course of life. Choosing crooked paths is willfully to disdain the guidance God so graciously provided.

10:12 ***Hatred . . . love.*** This verse describes interpersonal relationships, not salvation. When people respond in love to each other, they cover over the sins or offenses that would otherwise come between them.

10:13 ***But a rod is for the back of him.*** Rod refers to punishment, in this case deserved. The phrase "devoid of understanding" comes from the Hebrew idiom "lack heart." The one who "lacks heart" is contrasted with the one who is "wise in heart" (10:8).

9:9 [h] [Matt. 13:12] **9:10** [i] Job 28:28 **9:11** [j] Prov. 3:2, 16 **9:12** [k] Job 35:6, 7 **9:13** [l] Prov. 7:11 **9:14** [m] Prov. 9:3 **9:16** [n] Prov. 7:7, 8 **9:17** [o] Prov. 20:17 **9:18** [p] Prov. 2:18; 7:27 **10:1** [a] Prov. 1:1; 25:1 [b] Prov. 15:20; 17:21, 25; 19:13; 29:3, 15 **10:2** [c] [Luke 12:19, 20] [d] Dan. 4:27 **10:3** [e] Ps. 34:9, 10; 37:25 **10:4** [f] Prov. 19:15 [g] Prov. 12:24; 13:4; 21:5 **10:5** [h] Prov. 6:8 [i] Prov. 19:26 **10:7** [j] Eccl. 8:10 **10:8** [k] Prov. 10:10 **10:9** [l] [Ps. 23:4] **10:12** [m] [1 Cor. 13:4–7] **10:13** [n] Prov. 26:3

14 Wise *people* store up knowledge,
But [o]the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.

15 The [p]rich man's wealth *is* his strong city;
The destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

16 The labor of the righteous *leads* to [q]life,
The wages of the wicked to sin.

17 He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life,
But he who refuses correction goes astray.

18 Whoever [r]hides hatred *has* lying lips,
And [s]whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.

19 [t]In the multitude of words sin is not lacking,
But [u]he who restrains his lips *is* wise.

20 The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver;
The heart of the wicked *is worth* little.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
But fools die for lack of wisdom.*

22 [v]The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich,
And He adds no sorrow with it.

23 [w]To do evil *is* like sport to a fool,
But a man of understanding has wisdom.

24 [x]The fear of the wicked will come upon him,
And [y]the desire of the righteous will be granted.

25 When the whirlwind passes by, [z]the wicked *is* no *more*,
But [a]the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
So *is* the lazy *man* to those who send him.

27 [b]The fear of the LORD prolongs days,
But [c]the years of the wicked will be shortened.

28 The hope of the righteous *will be* gladness,
But the [d]expectation of the wicked will perish.

29 The way of the LORD *is* strength for the upright,
But [e]destruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity.

30 [f]The righteous will never be removed,
But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.

31 [g]The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,
But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,
But the mouth of the wicked *what is* perverse.

11 [a]Dishonest scales *are* an abomination to the LORD,
But a just weight *is* His delight.

2 When pride comes, then comes [b]shame;
But with the humble *is* wisdom.

* **10:21** Literally *heart*

10:14–15 ***store up knowledge.*** This set of verses contrasts the wise person's pursuit of knowledge with the empty talk of a fool. Wealth is like a fortress. In biblical times only walled cities had any defense against enemy armies.

10:16–17 ***The labor of the righteous leads to life.*** These verses present the doctrine of the two ways. The righteous are on the way of life but the wicked wander from it.

10:23 ***like sport to a fool.*** Sport here usually means "joyous laughter." Here the proverb uses the word in a completely negative sense. For the fool, wickedness is only a game. He makes up the rules as he goes along; for losing is only in getting caught. But a person who has understanding takes a longer-term perspective.

10:25 ***the righteous has an everlasting foundation.*** The short-lived nature of the wicked is contrasted with the stability of the righteous. The foundation of righteousness is faith in God, much like the waters that nourish the tree of Psalm 1:3.

10:28 ***hope . . . expectation.*** The righteous have something to look forward to; the wicked do not.

10:29 ***The way of the LORD is strength for the upright.*** Different people see the way of the Lord differently. Those who are innocent see it as a shelter from the storm. Those who practice iniquity see it only as a source of condemnation and wrath. The viewer's perspective makes all the difference.

10:31–32 ***The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom.*** These verses form another pair of sentences about true and false speech. This repetition with variation indicates the significance of truth and falsehood.

11:1 ***Dishonest scales are abomination to the LORD.*** Dealing fairly with one another is an outgrowth of the command to love one's neighbor as oneself (Lev. 19:18), which in turn is an outgrowth of the central command given to Israel, to love God above all else (Deut. 6:4–9). That is why dishonest scales are an abomination to God.

11:2 ***When pride comes.*** Many proverbs contrast the arrogant with the humble, as this one does. The Hebrew word for pride comes from a root that means "to boil up"; it refers to a raging arrogance or insolence.

10:14 [o] Prov. 18:7 **10:15** [p] Job 31:24 **10:16** [q] Prov. 6:23 **10:18** [r] Prov. 26:24 [s] Ps. 15:3; 101:5 **10:19** [t] Eccl. 5:3 [u] [James 1:19; 3:2] **10:22** [v] Gen. 24:35; 26:12 **10:23** [w] Prov. 2:14; 15:21 **10:24** [x] Job 15:21 [y] Ps. 145:19 **10:25** [z] Ps. 37:9, 10 [a] Ps. 15:5 **10:27** [b] Prov. 9:11 [c] Job 15:32 **10:28** [d] Job 8:13 **10:29** [e] Ps. 1:6 **10:30** [f] Ps. 37:22 **10:31** [g] Ps. 37:30 **11:1** [a] Lev. 19:35, 36 **11:2** [b] Prov. 16:18; 18:12; 29:23

3 The integrity of the upright will guide
[c]them,
But the perversity of the unfaithful
will destroy them.
4 [d]Riches do not profit in the day of
wrath,
But [e]righteousness delivers from
death.
5 The righteousness of the blameless
will direct* his way aright,
But the wicked will fall by his own
[f]wickedness.
6 The righteousness of the upright will
deliver them,
But the unfaithful will be caught by
their lust.

7 When a wicked man dies, *his*
expectation will [g]perish,
And the hope of the unjust perishes.
8 [h]The righteous is delivered from
trouble,
And it comes to the wicked instead.
9 The hypocrite with *his* mouth destroys
his neighbor,
But through knowledge the righteous
will be delivered.
10 [i]When it goes well with the righteous,
the city rejoices;
And when the wicked perish, *there is*
jubilation.
11 By the blessing of the upright the city
is [j]exalted,
But it is overthrown by the mouth of
the wicked.

12 He who is devoid of wisdom despises
his neighbor,
But a man of understanding holds his
peace.

13 [k]A talebearer reveals secrets,
But he who is of a faithful spirit
[l]conceals a matter.

14 [m]Where *there is* no counsel, the people
fall;
But in the multitude of counselors
there is safety.

15 He who is [n]surety for a stranger will
suffer,
But one who hates being surety is
secure.

16 A gracious woman retains honor,
But ruthless *men* retain riches.
17 [o]The merciful man does good for his
own soul,
But *he who is* cruel troubles his own
flesh.
18 The wicked *man* does deceptive work,
But [p]he who sows righteousness *will*
have a sure reward.
19 As righteousness *leads* to [q]life,
So he who pursues evil *pursues it* to
his own [r]death.
20 Those who are of a perverse heart *are*
an abomination to the LORD,
But *the* blameless in their ways *are*
His delight.
21 [s]*Though they join* forces,* the wicked
will not go unpunished;
But [t]the posterity of the righteous will
be delivered.

22 *As* a ring of gold in a swine's snout,
So is a lovely woman who lacks
discretion.

23 The desire of the righteous *is* only
good,
But the expectation of the wicked [u]*is*
wrath.

24 There is *one* who [v]scatters, yet
increases more;
And there is *one* who withholds more
than is right,
But it *leads* to poverty.
25 [w]The generous soul will be made rich,
[x]And he who waters will also be
watered himself.
26 The people will curse [y]him who
withholds grain,
But [z]blessing *will be* on the head of
him who sells *it*.

* **11:5** Or *make smooth* or *straight* * **11:21** Literally *hand to hand*

11:10 ***When it goes well with the righteous.*** Truly righteous people bring justice to all the inhabitants of a city, and the city experiences true peace. Many of the psalm writers cried for vindication of the righteous and for a cessation of evil (Ps. 69:22–28).
11:13 ***A talebearer reveals secrets.*** A faithful friend conceals delicate matters that an unfaithful person reveals.
11:14 ***in the multitude of counselors.*** In modern times, as in the past, leaders of nations need adequate counsel. We all need to seek advice from wise and trustworthy people.
11:17 ***The merciful man does good for his own soul.*** Throughout the Bible, God promises that good actions will return to you in benefits. Behavior that hurts others will hurt you as well.
11:19 ***leads to life.*** Proverbs such as this remind us that the pursuit of righteousness is a matter of life and death.
11:22 ***ring of gold.*** A golden ring would be ludicrous on a pig's snout. To the ancient Israelites, pigs were unclean and repellent. The immoral person is compared to such an animal, no matter what the outward appearance might be.
11:24–26 ***There is one who scatters.*** These proverbs should shape our attitudes toward wealth: We should share it. Stinginess may lead to poverty. Generosity has the opposite effect. Selfishness is foolish because it only creates enemies and dishonors God.

11:3 [c] Prov. 13:6 **11:4** [d] Ezek. 7:19 [e] Gen. 7:1 **11:5** [f] Prov. 5:22 **11:7** [g] Prov. 10:28 **11:8** [h] Prov. 21:18 **11:10** [i] Prov. 28:12 **11:11** [j] Prov. 14:34 **11:13** [k] Lev. 19:16 [l] Prov. 19:11 **11:14** [m] 1 Kin. 12:1 **11:15** [n] Prov. 6:1, 2 **11:17** [o] [Matt. 5:7; 25:34–36] **11:18** [p] Hos. 10:12 **11:19** [q] Prov. 10:16; 12:28 [r] [Rom. 6:23] **11:21** [s] Prov. 16:5 [t] Ps. 112:2 **11:23** [u] Rom. 2:8, 9 **11:24** [v] Ps. 112:9 **11:25** [w] [2 Cor. 9:6, 7] [x] [Matt. 5:7] **11:26** [y] Amos 8:5, 6 [z] Job 29:13

27 He who earnestly seeks good finds
favor,
[a]But trouble will come to him who
seeks *evil*.

28 [b]He who trusts in his riches will fall,
But [c]the righteous will flourish like
foliage.

29 He who troubles his own house [d]will
inherit the wind,
And the fool *will be* [e]servant to the
wise of heart.

30 The fruit of the righteous *is a* tree of
life,
And [f]he who wins souls *is* wise.

31 [g]If the righteous will be recompensed
on the earth,
How much more the ungodly and the
sinner.

12 Whoever loves instruction loves
knowledge,
But he who hates correction *is* stupid.

2 A good *man* obtains favor from the
LORD,
But a man of wicked intentions He will
condemn.

3 A man is not established by
wickedness,
But the [a]root of the righteous cannot
be moved.

4 [b]An excellent* wife *is* the crown of her
husband,
But she who causes shame *is* [c]like
rottenness in his bones.

5 The thoughts of the righteous *are*
right,
But the counsels of the wicked *are*
deceitful.

6 [d]The words of the wicked *are*, "Lie in
wait for blood,"
[e]But the mouth of the upright will
deliver them.

7 [f]The wicked are overthrown and *are* no
more,
But the house of the righteous will
stand.

8 A man will be commended according
to his wisdom,
[g]But he who is of a perverse heart will
be despised.

9 [h]Better *is the one* who is slighted but
has a servant,
Than he who honors himself but lacks
bread.

10 [i]A righteous *man* regards the life of his
animal,
But the tender mercies of the wicked
are cruel.

11 [j]He who tills his land will be satisfied
with [k]bread,
But he who follows frivolity [l]*is* devoid
of understanding.*

12 The wicked covet the catch of evil *men*,
But the root of the righteous yields
fruit.

13 [m]The wicked is ensnared by the
transgression of *his* lips,
[n]But the righteous will come through
trouble.

14 [o]A man will be satisfied with good by
the fruit of *his* mouth,
[p]And the recompense of a man's hands
will be rendered to him.

15 [q]The way of a fool *is* right in his own
eyes,
But he who heeds counsel *is* wise.

16 [r]A fool's wrath is known at once,
But a prudent *man* covers shame.

17 [s]He *who* speaks truth declares
righteousness,
But a false witness, deceit.

18 [t]There is one who speaks like the
piercings of a sword,
But the tongue of the wise *promotes*
health.

* **12:4** Literally *A wife of valor* * **12:11** Literally *heart*

11:31 ***much more.*** This proverb argues from a premise to a conclusion. Since the righteous will finally find their reward, it follows that the wicked, who are defiant toward God and in conflict with His works, will certainly receive judgment.

12:1 ***But he who hates correction is stupid.*** Literally "stupid as a cow."

12:4 ***An excellent wife.*** A husband should rejoice in such a woman because her noble character brings him honor.

12:5–6 ***The thoughts of the righteous.*** A person's thoughts are the foundation of his or her words and deeds. The words of wicked persons can be like a deadly ambush.

12:9 ***he who honors himself.*** This verse contrasts a person who is a "nobody" but has a servant with a person who makes a great display but does not even have food on the table. Pretension destroys those who indulge in it.

12:16 ***known at once.*** Careless words can make a fool out of us, so we are wise to think before we speak. Whereas the wise man restrains his anger and turns it away, the fool constantly loses his temper (29:11).

12:18–19 ***the tongue of the wise promotes health.*** Many proverbs praise people who speak carefully and truthfully. Speech reflects a person's character. The words of a righteous person soothe the listener.

11:27 [a] Esth. 7:10 **11:28** [b] Job 31:24 [c] Ps. 1:3 **11:29** [d] Eccl. 5:16 [e] Prov. 14:19 **11:30** [f] [Dan. 12:3] **11:31** [g] Jer. 25:29 **12:3** [a] [Prov. 10:25] **12:4** [b] 1 Cor. 11:7 [c] Prov. 14:30 **12:6** [d] Prov. 1:11, 18 [e] Prov. 14:3 **12:7** [f] Matt. 7:24–27 **12:8** [g] 1 Sam. 25:17 **12:9** [h] Prov. 13:7 **12:10** [i] Deut. 25:4 **12:11** [j] Gen. 3:19 [k] Prov. 28:19 [l] Prov. 6:32 **12:13** [m] Prov. 18:7 [n] [2 Pet. 2:9] **12:14** [o] Prov. 13:2; 15:23; 18:20 [p] [Is. 3:10, 11] **12:15** [q] Luke 18:11 **12:16** [r] Prov. 11:13; 29:11 **12:17** [s] Prov. 14:5 **12:18** [t] Ps. 57:4

19 The truthful lip shall be established forever,
[u]But a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.
20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil,
But counselors of peace have joy.
21 [v]No grave trouble will overtake the righteous,
But the wicked shall be filled with evil.
22 [w]Lying lips *are* an abomination to the LORD,
But those who deal truthfully *are* His delight.

23 [x]A prudent man conceals knowledge,
But the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.

24 [y]The hand of the diligent will rule,
But the lazy *man* will be put to forced labor.

25 [z]Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression,
But [a]a good word makes it glad.

26 The righteous should choose his friends carefully,
For the way of the wicked leads them astray.

27 The lazy *man* does not roast what he took in hunting,
But diligence *is* man's precious possession.

28 In the way of righteousness *is* life,
And in *its* pathway *there is* no death.

13 A wise son *heeds* his father's instruction,
[a]But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

2 [b]A man shall eat well by the fruit of *his* mouth,
But the soul of the unfaithful feeds on violence.

3 [c]He who guards his mouth preserves his life,
But he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 [d]The soul of a lazy *man* desires, and *has* nothing;
But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.

5 A righteous *man* hates lying,
But a wicked *man* is loathsome and comes to shame.

6 [e]Righteousness guards *him whose* way is blameless,
But wickedness overthrows the sinner.

7 [f]There is one who makes himself rich, yet *has* nothing;
And one who makes himself poor, yet *has* great riches.

8 The ransom of a man's life *is* his riches,
But the poor does not hear rebuke.

9 The light of the righteous rejoices,
[g]But the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

10 By pride comes nothing but [h]strife,
But with the well-advised *is* wisdom.

11 [i]Wealth *gained by* dishonesty will be diminished,
But he who gathers by labor will increase.

12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
But [j]*when* the desire comes, *it is* a tree of life.

13 He who [k]despises the word will be destroyed,
But he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

14 [l]The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life,
To turn *one* away from [m]the snares of death.

12:22 ***Lying lips are an abomination.*** Abomination is something that "nauseates" God (11:20). The term conveys extreme hatred.
12:25 ***Anxiety in the heart of man.*** Anxiety loses some of its force in the face of a positive, encouraging word. Barnabas is an example of an encourager in the early church (Acts 4:36).
12:26 ***The righteous should choose his friends carefully.*** Our friends help to determine who we will become, and an excellent example inspires us to copy.
12:27 ***The lazy man.*** Lazy people do work, they just don't always finish what they start. The cure for their laziness is diligence—to follow through to the end.
13:5 ***A righteous man hates lying.*** The person who hates lying does not merely feel bad about it; he avoids it like the plague.
13:7 ***rich, yet has nothing.*** The paradox of greed causing poverty, and of generosity causing wealth, is a recurring theme in Scripture (Matt. 6:19–21). The point is not how much money you have, but what you do with it.
13:9 ***The light of the righteous rejoices.*** For an ancient Israelite, an oil lamp would be the only source of light at night. Without it, a person had no way of seeing the path in front of him.
13:10 ***By pride.*** It is self-centeredness and having to push one's own ideas that bring quarrels. The wise know when to speak and when to keep still.
13:11 ***Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished.*** This proverb describes the natural long-term consequences of cheating. People who compromise their honesty to get rich merely postpone the inevitable need to earn their keep. The day comes when their cheating catches up with them, but by then their honest colleagues have become far better at obtaining wealth.
13:14 ***fountain of life.*** In an arid land such as ancient Judah, a fountain provided water for oneself and for

12:19 [u] Prov. 19:9 **12:21** [v] 1 Pet. 3:13 **12:22** [w] Rev. 22:15 **12:23** [x] Prov. 13:16 **12:24** [y] Prov. 10:4 **12:25** [z] Prov. 15:13 [a] Is. 50:4 **13:1** [a] Is. 28:14, 15 **13:2** [b] Prov. 12:14 **13:3** [c] Prov. 21:23 **13:4** [d] Prov. 10:4 **13:6** [e] Prov. 11:3, 5, 6 **13:7** [f] [Prov. 11:24; 12:9] **13:9** [g] Prov. 24:20 **13:10** [h] Prov. 10:12 **13:11** [i] Prov. 10:2; 20:21 **13:12** [j] Prov. 13:19 **13:13** [k] Num. 15:31 **13:14** [l] Prov. 6:22; 10:11; 14:27 [m] 2 Sam. 22:6

15 Good understanding gains [n]favor,
But the way of the unfaithful *is* hard.
16 [o]Every prudent *man* acts with knowledge,
But a fool lays open *his* folly.
17 A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
But [p]a faithful ambassador *brings* health.
18 Poverty and shame *will come* to him who disdains correction,
But [q]he who regards a rebuke will be honored.
19 A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul,
But *it is* an abomination to fools to depart from evil.
20 He who walks with wise *men* will be wise,
But the companion of fools will be destroyed.
21 [r]Evil pursues sinners,
But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.
22 A good *man* leaves an inheritance to his children's children,
But [s]the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.
23 [t]Much food *is in* the fallow *ground* of the poor,
And for lack of justice there is waste.*
24 [u]He who spares his rod hates his son,
But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.
25 [v]The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul,
But the stomach of the wicked shall be in want.

14 The wise woman builds her house,
But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.
2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD,
[a]But *he who is* perverse in his ways despises Him.
3 In the mouth of a fool *is* a rod of pride,
[b]But the lips of the wise will preserve them.
4 Where no oxen *are,* the trough *is* clean;
But much increase *comes* by the strength of an ox.
5 A [c]faithful witness does not lie,
But a false witness will utter [d]lies.
6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not *find it,*
But [e]knowledge *is* easy to him who understands.
7 Go from the presence of a foolish man,
When you do not perceive *in him* the lips of [f]knowledge.
8 The wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way,
But the folly of fools *is* deceit.
9 [g]Fools mock at sin,
But among the upright *there is* favor.
10 The heart knows its own bitterness,
And a stranger does not share its joy.
11 [h]The house of the wicked will be overthrown,
But the tent of the upright will flourish.
12 [i]There is a way *that seems* right to a man,
But [j]its end *is* the way of [k]death.

* **13:23** Literally *what is swept away*

one's flocks. It was a necessity—a source of life. A fountain is also a picture for salvation (Is. 12:1–3).

13:15 ***Good understanding gains favor.*** Favor with God and other people—a good reputation is highly desirable because it ensures that you won't be alone in life. A good reputation was the first qualification listed by the apostles for deacons in the early church (Acts 6:3).

13:20 ***He who walks with wise men.*** Our selection of friends (12:26) is extremely important. Pressure from peers is much stronger than many people realize.

13:24 ***hates . . . loves.*** This is the first of several proverbs on parental discipline. A parent's loving discipline is modeled after God's loving correction (3:11–12).

14:1 ***wise woman builds her house.*** She develops a peaceful setting for family nurture.

14:2 ***fears the LORD.*** This phrase contrasts starkly with "despises him." Love for uprightness will naturally coincide with love and respect for the most upright One of all, God Himself. Love for perversity will likewise result in hatred for Him. Fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom is the central theme of Proverbs (1:7).

14:4 ***the trough is clean.*** A farmer has to put up with some messes in the barn if he wants the help of an ox. This is not an excuse to be slovenly, but an encouragement to work hard.

14:12 ***There is a way that seems right to a man.*** Only when it is too late does the deluded person discover that he is on the crowded highway to death. The implication is not that he was tricked, but that he relied too heavily on his own "wisdom" rather than turning in humility to God.

13:15 [n] Prov. 3:4 **13:16** [o] Prov. 12:23 **13:17** [p] Prov. 25:13 **13:18** [q] Prov. 15:5, 31, 32 **13:21** [r] Ps. 32:10 **13:22** [s] [Eccl. 2:26] **13:23** [t] Prov. 12:11 **13:24** [u] Prov. 19:18 **13:25** [v] Ps. 34:10 **14:2** [a] [Rom. 2:4] **14:3** [b] Prov. 12:6 **14:5** [c] Rev. 1:5; 3:14 [d] Prov. 6:19; 12:17 **14:6** [e] Prov. 8:9; 17:24 **14:7** [f] Prov. 23:9 **14:9** [g] Prov. 10:23 **14:11** [h] Job 8:15 **14:12** [i] Prov. 16:25 [j] Rom. 6:21 [k] Prov. 12:15

13 Even in laughter the heart may sorrow,
And [l]the end of mirth *may be* grief.

14 The backslider in heart will be [m]filled with his own ways,
But a good man *will be satisfied* from [n]above.*

15 The simple believes every word,
But the prudent considers well his steps.

16 [o]A wise *man* fears and departs from evil,
But a fool rages and is self-confident.

17 A quick-tempered *man* acts foolishly,
And a man of wicked intentions is hated.

18 The simple inherit folly,
But the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

19 The evil will bow before the good,
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20 [p]The poor *man* is hated even by his own neighbor,
But the rich *has* many [q]friends.

21 He who despises his neighbor sins;
[r]But he who has mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.

22 Do they not go astray who devise evil?
But mercy and truth *belong* to those who devise good.

23 In all labor there is profit,
But idle chatter* *leads* only to poverty.

24 The crown of the wise is their riches,
But the foolishness of fools *is* folly.

25 A true witness delivers [s]souls,
But a deceitful *witness* speaks lies.

26 In the fear of the LORD *there is* strong confidence,
And His children will have a place of refuge.

27 [t]The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life,
To turn *one* away from the snares of death.

28 In a multitude of people *is* a king's honor,
But in the lack of people *is* the downfall of a prince.

29 [u]*He who is* slow to wrath has great understanding,
But *he who is* impulsive* exalts folly.

30 A sound heart *is* life to the body,
But [v]envy *is* [w]rottenness to the bones.

31 [x]He who oppresses the poor reproaches [y]his Maker,
But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.

32 The wicked is banished in his wickedness,
But [z]the righteous has a refuge in his death.

33 Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding,
But [a]*what is* in the heart of fools is made known.

34 Righteousness exalts a [b]nation,
But sin *is* a reproach to *any* people.

35 [c]The king's favor *is* toward a wise servant,
But his wrath *is against* him who causes shame.

15 A [a]soft answer turns away wrath,
But [b]a harsh word stirs up anger.

2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly,
[c]But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

3 [d]The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place,
Keeping watch on the evil and the good.

4 A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life,
But perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

* **14:14** Literally *from above himself* * **14:23** Literally *talk of the lips* * **14:29** Literally *short of spirit*

14:19 ***at the gates of the righteous.*** In an ancient walled city, the gate area would normally be the weakest section of the wall. The city engineers of ancient Canaan developed complex structures to fortify this point. Controlling the gate of a city meant controlling the city.

14:31 ***oppresses . . . honors.*** The theme of "as you treat people, so you treat God" is central to Scripture (Ex. 22:22–24; Matt. 25:31–46).

14:32 ***The wicked is banished in his wickedness.*** Some of the proverbs describe deliverance from death itself (11:4). The teaching of life after death is not a major teaching in the Old Testament, but neither is it altogether neglected.

14:34 ***Righteousness exalts a nation.*** Although each individual is responsible for his or her actions, the effects extend to the whole community.

15:1 ***A soft answer turns away wrath.*** Often it is not so much what we say but the way we say it that prompts such varied responses as acceptance and anger. For Abigail's gentle words to David when he was angry, see 1 Samuel 25:12–34. Words can have either life-giving or death-producing results.

15:3 ***The eyes of the LORD.*** That they are in every place watching everything chills those who do evil and comforts those who submit to Him (Eccl. 12:12).

14:13 [l] Eccl. 2:1, 2 **14:14** [m] Prov. 1:31; 12:15 [n] Prov. 13:2; 18:20 **14:16** [o] Prov. 22:3 **14:20** [p] Prov. 19:7 [q] Prov. 19:4 **14:21** [r] Ps. 112:9 **14:25** [s] [Ezek. 3:18–21] **14:27** [t] Prov. 13:14 **14:29** [u] James 1:19 **14:30** [v] Ps. 112:10 [w] Prov. 12:4 **14:31** [x] Matt. 25:40 [y] [Prov. 22:2] **14:32** [z] Job 13:15 **14:33** [a] Prov. 12:16 **14:34** [b] Prov. 11:11 **14:35** [c] Matt. 24:45–47 **15:1** [a] Prov. 25:15 [b] 1 Sam. 25:10 **15:2** [c] Prov. 12:23 **15:3** [d] Job 34:21

5 [e]A fool despises his father's instruction,
[f]But he who receives correction is prudent.

6 *In* the house of the righteous *there is* much treasure,
But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.

7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge,
But the heart of the fool *does* not *do* so.

8 [g]The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD,
But the prayer of the upright *is* His delight.

9 The way of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD,
But He loves him who [h]follows righteousness.

10 [i]Harsh discipline *is* for him who forsakes the way,
And [j]he who hates correction will die.

11 [k]Hell* and Destruction* *are* before the LORD;
So how much more [l]the hearts of the sons of men.

12 [m]A scoffer does not love one who corrects him,
Nor will he go to the wise.

13 [n]A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance,
But [o]by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge,
But the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.

15 All the days of the afflicted *are* evil,
[p]But he who is of a merry heart *has* a continual feast.

16 [q]Better *is* a little with the fear of the LORD,
Than great treasure with trouble.

17 [r]Better *is* a dinner of herbs* where love is,
Than a fatted calf with hatred.

18 [s]A wrathful man stirs up strife,
But *he who is* slow to anger allays contention.

19 [t]The way of the lazy *man is* like a hedge of thorns,
But the way of the upright *is* a highway.

20 [u]A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish man despises his mother.

21 [v]Folly *is* joy *to him who is* destitute of discernment,
[w]But a man of understanding walks uprightly.

22 [x]Without counsel, plans go awry,
But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

23 A man has joy by the answer of his mouth,
And [y]a word *spoken* in due season, how good *it is!*

24 [z]The way of life *winds* upward for the wise,
That he may [a]turn away from hell* below.

25 [b]The LORD will destroy the house of the proud,
But [c]He will establish the boundary of the widow.

* **15:11** Or *Sheol* • Hebrew *Abaddon* * **15:17** Or *vegetables* * **15:24** Or *Sheol*

15:6 ***the house of the righteous.*** One house is a blessing and the other is ruinous; the reason for this lies in how the house was acquired and how it is being used. The house of the righteous contains great wealth because it is founded on wisdom and a proper response to God. On the other hand, the wicked never gain enough to suit them, and lose what they have because of their deceptive ways.

15:10 ***Harsh discipline.*** There is a consequence for those who forsake God's way. This discipline comes as a means of correction. Only the person who hates this correction will die.

15:11 ***how much more the hearts.*** This is a "how much more" proverb, which impresses on the reader the clarity with which the Lord sees people's hearts. The Hebrew word *sheol,* or "hell," connotes the fear of the unknown. The word actually means "the mysterious realm of death." Yet death is no mystery to the Lord. And if the mysterious realm of the dead is known to Him, then surely a person's heart is transparent to Him. This technique of arguing from the greater to the lesser appears in both Testaments.

15:12 ***A scoffer does not love.*** The scorner (14:6) is used as a foil or comparison in Proverbs to expose more sharply the character of the wise. Whereas the sluggard is a comic figure in Proverbs, the scorner is a villain. His basic problem is displayed in his response to correction. He does not learn from it nor does he seek it. The scorner is adamant in his folly.

15:14 ***The heart of him who has understanding.*** The person with an understanding heart, another description of the wise, is never satisfied with what he or she knows. The pursuit of wisdom and knowledge are lifelong occupations—never fully realized in this lifetime. But fools, not knowing the extent of their ignorance, continue to pursue folly.

15:18 ***A wrathful man stirs up strife.*** A hot-tempered person can stir up strife where there is none; but a person who has a slow fuse—who is slow to anger—soothes contention (15:1).

15:25 ***The LORD will destroy the house of the proud.*** God will bring about justice in the end. To the

15:5 [e] Prov. 10:1 [f] Prov. 13:18 **15:8** [g] Is. 1:11 **15:9** [h] Prov. 21:21 **15:10** [i] 1 Kin. 22:8 [j] Prov. 5:12 **15:11** [k] Job 26:6 [l] 2 Chr. 6:30 **15:12** [m] Amos 5:10 **15:13** [n] Prov. 12:25 [o] Prov. 17:22 **15:15** [p] Prov. 17:22 **15:16** [q] Ps. 37:16 **15:17** [r] Prov. 17:1 **15:18** [s] Prov. 26:21 **15:19** [t] Prov. 22:5 **15:20** [u] Prov. 10:1 **15:21** [v] Prov. 10:23 [w] Eph. 5:15 **15:22** [x] Prov. 11:14 **15:23** [y] Prov. 25:11 **15:24** [z] Phil. 3:20 [a] Prov. 14:16 **15:25** [b] Prov. 12:7 [c] Ps. 68:5, 6

26 [d]The thoughts of the wicked *are* an
abomination to the LORD,
[e]But the words of the pure *are* pleasant.

27 [f]He who is greedy for gain troubles his
own house,
But he who hates bribes will live.

28 The heart of the righteous [g]studies
how to answer,
But the mouth of the wicked pours
forth evil.

29 [h]The LORD *is* far from the wicked,
But [i]He hears the prayer of the
righteous.

30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart,
And a good report makes the bones
healthy.*

31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life
Will abide among the wise.
32 He who disdains instruction despises
his own soul,
But he who heeds rebuke gets
understanding.
33 [j]The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction
of wisdom,
And [k]before honor *is* humility.

16 The [a]preparations of the heart
belong to man,
[b]But the answer of the tongue *is* from
the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man *are* pure in his
own [c]eyes,
But the LORD weighs the spirits.

3 [d]Commit your works to the LORD,
And your thoughts will be established.

4 The [e]LORD has made all for Himself,
[f]Yes, even the wicked for the day of
doom.

5 [g]Everyone proud in heart *is* an
abomination to the LORD;
Though they join forces,* none will go
unpunished.

6 [h]In mercy and truth
Atonement is provided for iniquity;
And [i]by the fear of the LORD *one*
departs from evil.

7 When a man's ways please the
LORD,
He makes even his enemies to be at
peace with him.

8 [j]Better *is* a little with righteousness,
Than vast revenues without justice.

9 [k]A man's heart plans his way,
[l]But the LORD directs his steps.

10 Divination *is* on the lips of the king;
His mouth must not transgress in
judgment.
11 [m]Honest weights and scales *are* the
LORD's;
All the weights in the bag *are* His
work.
12 *It is* an abomination for kings to
commit wickedness,
For [n]a throne is established by
righteousness.
13 [o]Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings,
And they love him who speaks *what
is* right.

* **15:30** Literally *fat* * **16:5** Literally *hand to hand*

haughty, God will give a dose of humility. But for the widow, a completely defenseless person in ancient times, God will provide protection.

15:32 ***despises his own soul.*** The natural instinct for self-preservation is dangerous when it is time to listen to a necessary rebuke.

15:33 ***The fear of the LORD . . . instruction.*** Knowledge alone does not make a person wiser; the fear of the Lord must accompany it. The same is true of honor.

16:1–2 ***The preparations of the heart.*** These verses contrast human limitations with the sovereignty of God. Man can plan, dream, and hope, but the final outcome is from the Lord. Rather than "resign ourselves to fate," we should trust in God.

16:3 ***Commit your works to the LORD.*** The verb "commit to" is from a word meaning "to roll." The idea is to "roll your cares onto the Lord." Trusting the Lord with our decisions frees us from preoccupation with our problems (3:5–6).

Dedication is the foundation of commitment. Without it the believer is unable to offer God anything else. Paul explains this dedication process in Romans 12:1–2. He emphasizes three things. First, it is our body which is to be dedicated as a living sacrifice to God. Second, we are to avoid being conformed to this world, but should strive to be transformed by the Word. Finally, by doing this we can discover God's perfect will for our lives.

After the dedication of our bodies, what are we to commit? We are to commit our salvation to God (2 Tim. 1:12). We are to commit our works (Prov. 16:3). Then our goals in life are to be given to Him (Job 5:8; Ps. 37:5). It is difficult but vital to commit our suffering experiences to God (1 Pet. 4:19). Our Lord Jesus did this very thing when He was on earth (1 Pet. 2:23). Finally, in the hour of death, we can with confidence commit our very souls to God (Ps. 31:5). Paul the apostle assures us that any and all such commitments to the Lord will be accepted and honored (1 Cor. 15:58).

16:6 ***In mercy and truth.*** These words can also be translated "by genuine piety." "Atonement" probably alludes to a sacrificial offering, but not apart from a contrite heart.

16:10 ***Divination.*** This refers to judicial decisions made by the king. Because the nation rested in the king's hands, his first responsibility was to obey God (King Josiah's reform of Israel, 2 Kin. 22). Even the king had to submit to the dictates of justice.

15:26 [d] Prov. 6:16, 18 [e] Ps. 37:30 **15:27** [f] Is. 5:8 **15:28** [g] 1 Pet. 3:15 **15:29** [h] Ps. 10:1; 34:16 [i] Ps. 145:18 **15:33** [j] Prov. 1:7 [k] Prov. 18:12 **16:1** [a] Jer. 10:23 [b] Matt. 10:19 **16:2** [c] Prov. 21:2 **16:3** [d] Ps. 37:5 **16:4** [e] Is. 43:7 [f] [Rom. 9:22] **16:5** [g] Prov. 6:17; 8:13 **16:6** [h] Dan. 4:27 [i] Prov. 8:13; 14:16 **16:8** [j] Ps. 37:16 **16:9** [k] Prov. 19:21 [l] Jer. 10:23 **16:11** [m] Lev. 19:36 **16:12** [n] Prov. 25:5 **16:13** [o] Prov. 14:35

14 As messengers of death *is* the king's wrath,
But a wise man will [p]appease it.
15 In the light of the king's face *is* life,
And his favor *is* like a [q]cloud of the latter rain.

16 [r]How much better to get wisdom than gold!
And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.

17 The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil;
He who keeps his way preserves his soul.

18 Pride *goes* before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before a fall.
19 Better *to be* of a humble spirit with the lowly,
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 He who heeds the word wisely will find good,
And whoever [s]trusts in the LORD, happy *is* he.

21 The wise in heart will be called prudent,
And sweetness of the lips increases learning.

22 Understanding *is* a wellspring of life to him who has it.
But the correction of fools *is* folly.

23 The heart of the wise teaches his mouth,
And adds learning to his lips.

24 Pleasant words *are like* a honeycomb,
Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.

25 There is a way *that seems* right to a man,
But its end *is* the way of [t]death.

26 The person who labors, labors for himself,
For his *hungry* mouth drives [u]him *on*.

27 An ungodly man digs up evil,
And *it is* on his lips like a burning [v]fire.
28 A perverse man sows strife,
And [w]a whisperer separates the best of friends.
29 A violent man entices his neighbor,
And leads him in a way *that is* not good.
30 He winks his eye to devise perverse things;
He purses his lips *and* brings about evil.

31 [x]The silver-haired head *is* a crown of glory,
If it is found in the way of righteousness.

32 [y]*He who is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty,
And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

33 The lot is cast into the lap,
But its every decision *is* from the LORD.

17 Better *is* [a]a dry morsel with quietness,
Than a house full of feasting* *with* strife.

2 A wise servant will rule over [b]a son who causes shame,
And will share an inheritance among the brothers.

* **17:1** Or *sacrificial meals*

16:15 ***life . . . his favor.*** Successfully courting a powerful person's favor is like seeing rain clouds in a dry land. The phrase about the light of the face in this proverb helps us understand Aaron's benediction in Numbers 6:24–26.
16:17 ***The highway of the upright.*** This phrase is a metaphor for the way a person lives habitually. An *upright* person's highway or habit is to *depart from evil*. He does not compromise; he consistently strives to do good.
16:24 ***Pleasant words are like a honeycomb.*** The Hebrew word for honeycomb is also used in Psalm 19:10–11 with regard to the Word of God. The Israelites saw honey as a healthy food as well as a sweetener. Any comparison to it would connote positive, healthful effects.
16:27–29 ***ungodly . . . perverse . . . violent man.*** These verses all begin in a similar way describing three different types of wicked people. The word "ungodly" means a man of Belial; this person is a muckraker who uses bad information for evil purposes; he destroys people on purpose. The "perverse" person starts fights between friends. The "violent man" uses his power of persuasion to recruit others to join in his attacks.
16:32 ***better than the mighty.*** Even though one of the most favored persons in the ancient Middle East was the military hero, this proverb suggests that one who is "slow to anger" or who "rules his spirit" is a greater hero than a returning warrior.
16:33 ***The lot is cast into the lap.*** The use of lots in ancient Israel (16:10) could easily be confused with luck. But when a *lot* was cast as a means of determining God's will, the people knew it did not fall indiscriminately. God exercises sovereignty over human affairs (16:4).
17:1 ***Better is a dry morsel.*** This expression means "very little" especially in comparison to feasting. But the feasting in this verse is tainted by contention. Feasting could also be part of a sacrifice to God, but even such a feast could be ruined by angry disputes between believers.
17:2 ***A wise servant.*** Reversals of fortune could happen if the wise servant was sufficiently skillful and the son and his brothers were undeserving. Much of

16:14 [p] Prov. 25:15 **16:15** [q] Zech. 10:1 **16:16** [r] Prov. 8:10, 11, 19 **16:20** [s] Ps. 34:8 **16:25** [t] Prov. 14:12 **16:26** [u] [Eccl. 6:7] **16:27** [v] [James 3:6] **16:28** [w] Prov. 17:9 **16:31** [x] Prov. 20:29 **16:32** [y] Prov. 14:29; 19:11 **17:1** [a] Prov. 15:17 **17:2** [b] Prov. 10:5

3 The refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold,
[c]But the LORD tests the hearts.

4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips;
A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.

5 [d]He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker;
[e]He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

6 [f]Children's children *are* the crown of old men,
And the glory of children *is* their father.

7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool,
Much less lying lips to a prince.

8 A present *is* a precious stone in the eyes of its possessor;
Wherever he turns, he prospers.

9 [g]He who covers a transgression seeks love,
But [h]he who repeats a matter separates friends.

10 [i]Rebuke is more effective for a wise *man*
Than a hundred blows on a fool.

11 An evil *man* seeks only rebellion;
Therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

12 Let a man meet [j]a bear robbed of her cubs,
Rather than a fool in his folly.

13 Whoever [k]rewards evil for good,
Evil will not depart from his house.

14 The beginning of strife *is like* releasing water;
Therefore [l]stop contention before a quarrel starts.

15 [m]He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just,
Both of them alike *are* an abomination to the LORD.

16 Why *is there* in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom,
Since *he has* no heart *for it?*

17 [n]A friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.

18 [o]A man devoid of understanding shakes hands in a pledge,
And becomes surety for his friend.

19 He who loves transgression loves strife,
And [p]he who exalts his gate seeks destruction.

20 He who has a deceitful heart finds no good,
And he who has [q]a perverse tongue falls into evil.

21 He who begets a scoffer *does so* to his sorrow,
And the father of a fool has no joy.

22 A [r]merry heart does good, *like* medicine,*
But a broken spirit dries the bones.

23 A wicked *man* accepts a bribe behind the back*
To pervert the ways of justice.

24 [s]Wisdom *is* in the sight of him who has understanding,
But the eyes of a fool *are* on the ends of the earth.

25 A [t]foolish son *is* a grief to his father,
And bitterness to her who bore him.

26 Also, to punish the righteous *is* not good,
Nor to strike princes for *their* uprightness.

27 [u]He who has knowledge spares his words,
And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.

28 [v]Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace;
When he shuts his lips, *he is considered* perceptive.

18 A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire;
He rages against all wise judgment.

* **17:22** Or *makes medicine even better*
* **17:23** Literally *from the bosom*

Genesis describes the unexpected rise of a younger son over his older brother (Gen. 25:23–34).

17:4 *A evildoer gives heed to false lips.* This proverb presents the "evildoer" and the "liar" as a parody of the wise. As the righteous person listens with care to the instruction of a teacher, so the wicked person listens with care to the ruinous speech of the unrighteous.

17:7 *Excellent speech.* It is a contradiction in terms for a fool to speak well or for a prince to be a liar.

17:12 *a bear robbed of her cubs.* Nothing matches the rage of a mother bear who has been separated from her cubs; yet there is nothing in life more dangerous than the fool in the midst of his folly.

17:15 *abomination to the LORD.* Since God is a God of justice, He detests those who pervert justice—both those who declare the innocent guilty and those who declare the guilty innocent.

18:1 *isolates himself.* When a person is seeking his own desires, he separates himself from wisdom. His

17:3 [c] Jer. 17:10 **17:5** [d] Prov. 14:31 [e] Job 31:29
17:6 [f] [Ps. 127:3; 128:3] **17:9** [g] [Prov. 10:12] [h] Prov. 16:28
17:10 [i] [Mic. 7:9] **17:12** [j] Hos. 13:8 **17:13** [k] Ps. 109:4, 5
17:14 [l] [Prov. 20:3] **17:15** [m] Ex. 23:7 **17:17** [n] Ruth 1:16
17:18 [o] Prov. 6:1 **17:19** [p] Prov. 16:18 **17:20** [q] James 3:8 **17:22** [r] Prov. 12:25; 15:13, 15 **17:24** [s] Eccl. 2:14
17:25 [t] Prov. 10:1; 15:20; 19:13 **17:27** [u] James 1:19
17:28 [v] Job 13:5

2 A fool has no delight in understanding,
But in expressing his [a]own heart.

3 When the wicked comes, contempt
comes also;
And with dishonor *comes* reproach.

4 [b]The words of a man's mouth *are* deep
waters;
[c]The wellspring of wisdom *is* a flowing
brook.

5 *It is* not good to show partiality to the
wicked,
Or to overthrow the righteous in
[d]judgment.

6 A fool's lips enter into contention,
And his mouth calls for blows.
7 [e]A fool's mouth *is* his destruction,
And his lips *are* the snare of his [f]soul.
8 [g]The words of a talebearer *are* like
tasty trifles,*
And they go down into the inmost
body.

9 He who is slothful in his work
Is a brother to him who is a great
destroyer.

10 The name of the LORD *is* a strong
[h]tower;
The righteous run to it and are safe.
11 The rich man's wealth *is* his strong
city,
And like a high wall in his own
esteem.

12 [i]Before destruction the heart of a man
is haughty,
And before honor *is* humility.

13 He who answers a matter before he
hears *it,*
It *is* folly and shame to him.

14 The spirit of a man will sustain him in
sickness,
But who can bear a broken spirit?

15 The heart of the prudent acquires
knowledge,
And the ear of the wise seeks
knowledge.

16 [j]A man's gift makes room for him,
And brings him before great men.

17 The first *one* to plead his cause *seems*
right,
Until his neighbor comes and
examines him.

18 Casting [k]lots causes contentions to
cease,
And keeps the mighty apart.

19 A brother offended *is harder to win*
than a strong city,
And contentions *are* like the bars of a
castle.

20 [l]A man's stomach shall be satisfied
from the fruit of his mouth;
From the produce of his lips he shall
be filled.

21 [m]Death and life *are* in the power of the
tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit.

22 [n]*He who* finds a wife finds a good
thing,
And obtains favor from the LORD.

23 The poor *man* uses entreaties,
But the rich answers [o]roughly.

24 A man *who has* friends must himself
be friendly,*
[p]But there is a friend *who* sticks closer
than a brother.

19 Better [a]*is* the poor who walks in his
integrity
Than *one who is* perverse in his lips,
and is a fool.

2 Also it is not good *for* a soul *to be*
without knowledge,
And he sins who hastens with *his* feet.

3 The foolishness of a man twists his way,
And his heart frets against the LORD.

* **18:8** A Jewish tradition reads *wounds.*
* **18:24** Following Greek manuscripts, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *may come to ruin.*

selfishness puts him at odds with sound understanding.

18:2 ***A fool has no delight in understanding.*** A compulsive talker never listens, only pausing to plan what he will say next. Every speech confirms what a fool he is.

18:8 ***The words of a talebearer.*** These words are like delicious sweets. Although they are fun to eat, they ruin the person's health. Gossip is fun to listen to, but it damages the listener's innermost parts.

18:10–11 ***The name of the LORD is a strong tower.*** The phrase *name of the LORD* is a way of speaking of God's person. The righteous turn to God for security. Rich people, by contrast, tend to trust in their wealth.

18:12 ***the heart of a man is haughty.*** The Hebrew word for haughty, ordinarily negative, can also be used positively to mean courage and daring (2 Chr. 17:6). The path to honor, which the proud so covet, is humility.

18:14 ***The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness.*** This proverb affirms the value of coping skills. Sickness can be overcome, but there is no medicine for a *broken spirit.*

18:20 ***stomach . . . mouth.*** Inner satisfaction comes from true and good speech.

18:22 ***favor from the LORD.*** Problems in marriage arise from breakdowns in communication or mutual respect, not from some flaw in marriage itself (12:4).

18:2 [a] Eccl. 10:3 **18:4** [b] Prov. 10:11 [c] [James 3:17] **18:5** [d] Prov. 17:15 **18:7** [e] Prov. 10:14 [f] Eccl. 10:12 **18:8** [g] Prov. 12:18 **18:10** [h] 2 Sam. 22:2, 3, 33 **18:12** [i] Prov. 15:33; 16:18 **18:16** [j] Gen. 32:20, 21 **18:18** [k] [Prov. 16:33] **18:20** [l] Prov. 12:14; 14:14 **18:21** [m] Matt. 12:37 **18:22** [n] [Prov. 12:4; 19:14] **18:23** [o] James 2:3, 6 **18:24** [p] Prov. 17:17 **19:1** [a] Prov. 28:6

4 [b]Wealth makes many friends,
But the poor is separated from his friend.

5 A [c]false witness will not go unpunished,
And *he who* speaks lies will not escape.

6 Many entreat the favor of the nobility,
And every man *is* a friend to one who gives gifts.

7 [d]All the brothers of the poor hate him;
How much more do his friends go [e]far from him!
He may pursue *them with* words, *yet* they abandon *him.*

8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul;
He who keeps understanding [f]will find good.

9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
And *he who* speaks lies shall perish.

10 Luxury is not fitting for a fool,
Much less [g]for a servant to rule over princes.

11 [h]The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger,
[i]And his glory *is* to overlook a transgression.

12 [j]The king's wrath *is* like the roaring of a lion,
But his favor *is* [k]like dew on the grass.

13 [l]A foolish son *is* the ruin of his father,
[m]And the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dripping.

14 [n]Houses and riches *are* an inheritance from fathers,
But [o]a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

15 [p]Laziness casts *one* into a deep sleep,
And an idle person will [q]suffer hunger.

16 [r]He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul,
But he who is careless* of his ways will die.

17 [s]He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD,
And He will pay back what he has given.

18 [t]Chasten your son while there is hope,
And do not set your heart on his destruction.*

19 *A man of* great wrath will suffer punishment;
For if you rescue *him,* you will have to do it again.

20 Listen to counsel and receive instruction,
That you may be wise [u]in your latter days.

21 There are many plans in a man's heart,
[v]Nevertheless the LORD's counsel—that will stand.

22 What is desired in a man is kindness,
And a poor man is better than a liar.

23 [w]The fear of the LORD *leads* to life,
And *he who has it* will abide in satisfaction;
He will not be visited with evil.

24 [x]A lazy *man* buries his hand in the bowl,*
And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

25 Strike a scoffer, and the simple [y]will become wary;
[z]Rebuke one who has understanding, *and* he will discern knowledge.

26 He who mistreats *his* father *and* chases away *his* mother
Is [a]a son who causes shame and brings reproach.

* **19:16** Literally *despises*, figurative of recklessness or carelessness * **19:18** Literally *to put him to death;* a Jewish tradition reads *on his crying.* * **19:24** Septuagint and Syriac read *bosom;* Targum and Vulgate read *armpit.*

19:4 ***Wealth makes many friends.*** This proverb speaks of the effects of wealth and poverty on friendship. It does not describe how friends ought to behave, but how many friends actually do. Like a faithful spouse, a faithful friend is priceless (14:20).
19:8 ***he who keeps understanding will find good.*** Ultimately to "find good" means to find the Lord in His Word (16:20).
19:10 ***is not fitting.*** This phrase might also be rendered "is not a pretty sight" (compare 17:7). For the wrong people to rule is an outrage.
19:12 ***roaring of a lion . . . dew on the grass.*** These metaphors are especially fitting when a monarch has all power. His rage may be violent and unpredictable, his pleasure gracious and restorative. A good king will display rage and spread favor for the right reasons.
19:13 ***A foolish son . . . the contentions of a wife.*** The family exists as the basic unit of a godly society. Two threats against the family are pictured in this proverb. One is the wayward son. The second is an emotionally unstable wife.
19:21 ***many plans in a man's heart.*** A wise person commits his or her plans to the Lord (16:3). A person whose plans oppose the Lord (as in Ps. 2:1–3) may actually become God's enemy. But the person whose ways are from God will certainly succeed (16:1,9).
19:22 ***kindness.*** Kindness may also mean "beauty." Faithfulness is beautiful, whereas deception is a disfigurement of character (3:14; 31:18).
19:26–27 ***son.*** The desire for a good son—or daughter—is the subject of a significant portion of Proverbs (chs. 1–9). A child who is abusive to his parents shames them and violates God's command (20:20; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16). As an abusive son is shameful, so an obedient son is faithful.

19:4 [b] Prov. 14:20 **19:5** [c] Ex. 23:1 **19:7** [d] Prov. 14:20 [e] Ps. 38:11 **19:8** [f] Prov. 16:20 **19:10** [g] Prov. 30:21, 22 **19:11** [h] James 1:19 [i] Eph. 4:32 **19:12** [j] Prov. 16:14 [k] Hos. 14:5 **19:13** [l] Prov. 10:1 [m] Prov. 21:9, 19 **19:14** [n] 2 Cor. 12:14 [o] Prov. 18:22 **19:15** [p] Prov. 6:9 [q] Prov. 10:4 **19:16** [r] Luke 10:28; 11:28 **19:17** [s] [2 Cor. 9:6–8] **19:18** [t] Prov. 13:24 **19:20** [u] Ps. 37:37 **19:21** [v] Heb. 6:17 **19:23** [w] [1 Tim. 4:8] **19:24** [x] Prov. 15:19 **19:25** [y] Deut. 13:11 [z] Prov. 9:8 **19:26** [a] Prov. 17:2

27 Cease listening to instruction, my son,
And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

28 A disreputable witness scorns justice,
And [b]the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers,
[c]And beatings for the backs of fools.

20 Wine [a]*is* a mocker,
Strong drink *is* a brawler,
And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

2 The wrath* of a king *is* like the roaring of a lion;
Whoever provokes him to anger sins *against* his own life.

3 [b]*It is* honorable for a man to stop striving,
Since any fool can start a quarrel.

4 [c]The lazy *man* will not plow because of winter;
[d]He will beg during harvest and *have* nothing.

5 Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water,
But a man of understanding will draw it out.

6 Most men will proclaim each his own goodness,
But who can find a faithful man?

7 [e]The righteous *man* walks in his integrity;
[f]His children *are* blessed after him.

8 A king who sits on the throne of judgment
Scatters all evil with his eyes.

9 [g]Who can say, "I have made my heart clean,
I am pure from my sin"?

10 [h]Diverse weights *and* diverse measures,
They *are* both alike, an abomination to the LORD.

11 Even a child is [i]known by his deeds,
Whether what he does *is* pure and right.

12 [j]The hearing ear and the seeing eye,
The LORD has made them both.

13 [k]Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty;
Open your eyes, *and* you will be satisfied with bread.

14 "*It is* good for nothing,"* cries the buyer;
But when he has gone his way, then he boasts.

15 There is gold and a multitude of rubies,
But [l]the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

16 [m]Take the garment of one who is surety *for* a stranger,
And hold it as a pledge *when it* is for a seductress.

17 [n]Bread gained by deceit *is* sweet to a man,
But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.

18 [o]Plans are established by counsel;
[p]By wise counsel wage war.

19 [q]He who goes about *as* a talebearer reveals secrets;
Therefore do not associate with one [r]who flatters with his lips.

20 [s]Whoever curses his father or his mother,
[t]His lamp will be put out in deep darkness.

* **20:2** Literally *fear* or *terror* which is produced by the king's wrath * **20:14** Literally *evil, evil*

20:1 ***Wine is a mocker.*** This chapter begins with a warning against the abuse of wine, or excessive drinking (see this theme more extensively in 23:29–35). A wise person takes the danger seriously.
20:5 ***draw it out.*** Motivation for behavior is complex. A gifted counselor is able to draw out from a person genuine feelings and motivations, just as someone draws water from a deep well.
20:9 ***Who can say.*** This proverb is a rhetorical question. Everyone sins, a theme that Paul addresses at length in Romans 3:10–23. Anyone who claims never to sin is a liar (1 John 1:8–9). But those who confess their sin obtain forgiveness (Rom. 4:7).
20:11 ***by his deeds.*** A pattern established early in life may continue to mark a person for his or her lifetime. Even at a very early age, a person's moral character may be revealed.
20:13 ***sleep.*** While sleep is a gift from God, it can also be a matter of excess and laziness. Hard work is necessary to make a living; laziness leads only to poverty (6:6–9).
20:16 ***Take the garment.*** Clothing could be taken as collateral for a debt (Deut. 24:10–13). If someone assumes responsibility for the debt of an unknown stranger, he or she should be held accountable even to the point of taking his or her clothing as a pledge.
20:17 ***But afterward.*** The Scriptures do not say that there is no pleasure in sinning, only that the reward does not last (9:17–18).
20:20 ***Whoever curses.*** This proverb is about breaking the Fifth Commandment, "Honor your father and your mother" (Ex. 20:12). The term for "curses" is based on a word that means "to treat lightly, to regard as insignificant." The statement "his lamp will be put out in deep darkness," is a symbol of eternal damnation.

19:28 [b] Job 15:16 **19:29** [c] Prov. 26:3 **20:1** [a] Gen. 9:21 **20:3** [b] Prov. 17:14 **20:4** [c] Prov. 10:4 [d] Prov. 19:15 **20:7** [e] 2 Cor. 1:12 [f] Ps. 37:26 **20:9** [g] [1 Kin. 8:46] **20:10** [h] Deut. 25:13 **20:11** [i] Matt. 7:16 **20:12** [j] Ex. 4:11 **20:13** [k] Rom. 12:11 **20:15** [l] [Prov. 3:13–15] **20:16** [m] Prov. 22:26 **20:17** [n] Prov. 9:17 **20:18** [o] Prov. 24:6 [p] Luke 14:31 **20:19** [q] Prov. 11:13 [r] Rom. 16:18 **20:20** [s] Matt. 15:4 [t] Job 18:5, 6

21 [u]An inheritance gained hastily at the beginning
[v]Will not be blessed at the end.

22 [w]Do not say, "I will recompense evil";
[x]Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.

23 Diverse weights *are* an abomination to the LORD,
And dishonest scales *are* not good.

24 A man's steps *are* of the LORD;
How then can a man understand his own way?

25 *It is* a snare for a man to devote rashly *something as* holy,
And afterward to reconsider *his* vows.

26 [y]A wise king sifts out the wicked,
And brings the threshing wheel over them.

27 [z]The spirit of a man *is* the lamp of the LORD,
Searching all the inner depths of his heart.*

28 [a]Mercy and truth preserve the king,
And by lovingkindness he upholds his throne.

29 The glory of young men *is* their strength,
And [b]the splendor of old men *is* their gray head.

30 Blows that hurt cleanse away evil,
As *do* stripes the inner depths of the heart.*

21 The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD,
Like the rivers of water;
He turns it wherever He wishes.

2 [a]Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes,
[b]But the LORD weighs the hearts.

3 [c]To do righteousness and justice
Is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 [d]A haughty look, a proud heart,
And the plowing* of the wicked *are* sin.

5 [e]The plans of the diligent *lead* surely to plenty,
But *those of* everyone *who is* hasty, surely to poverty.

6 [f]Getting treasures by a lying tongue
Is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.*

7 The violence of the wicked will destroy them,*
Because they refuse to do justice.

8 The way of a guilty man *is* perverse;*
But *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.

9 Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop,
Than in a house shared with [g]a contentious woman.

10 [h]The soul of the wicked desires evil;
His neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.

11 When the scoffer is punished, the simple is made wise;
But when the [i]wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

12 The righteous *God* wisely considers the house of the wicked,
Overthrowing the wicked for *their* wickedness.

* **20:27** Literally *the rooms of the belly*
* **20:30** Literally *the rooms of the belly* * **21:4** Or *lamp* * **21:6** Septuagint reads *Pursue vanity on the snares of death;* Vulgate reads *Is vain and foolish, and shall stumble on the snares of death;* Targum reads *They shall be destroyed, and they shall fall who seek death.* * **21:7** Literally *drag them away* * **21:8** Or *The way of a man is perverse and strange*

20:25 ***something as holy.*** Several proverbs warn against making rash promises about holy things, then withdrawing the promises later (Eccl. 5:1–7). It is better never to vow than to vow and then change one's mind.

20:26 ***A wise king sifts out the wicked.*** This royal proverb presents discipline as a merciful act. To punish wickedness is entirely appropriate. When the wicked are separated and punished with the severity that their crimes demand, all of society benefits. Ideally, the king in Israel mirrored God's character.

20:30 ***Blows that hurt cleanse away evil.*** Suffering cleanses. No one wants to be hurt, but God can bring good out of any evil and make us better through hardship.

21:1 ***The king's heart . . . rivers of water.*** A person can look at a river and think that it is following a random pattern, but the water is following the direction of God's hand. So is the king.

21:3 ***To do righteousness and justice.*** This proverb affirms, as do Psalm 40:6–8; Micah 6:8, and numerous other passages in the Bible, that righteous living is more important than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22).

21:6 ***Getting treasures by a lying tongue.*** If you have to lie to gain your "treasure," you are ultimately choosing death to your dreams. There is no stability in anything gained by a lie.

21:9 ***a corner of a housetop.*** Ancient Israelite roofs were flat and could be used as a deck or terrace. On occasion people would build a temporary shelter on a part of the roof. Here, the harried husband finds he prefers to live on the housetop rather than below with the nagging words of his wife.

21:10 ***The soul of the wicked desires evil.*** Wicked persons typically refuse to think of anyone but themselves.

20:21 [u] Prov. 28:20 [v] Hab. 2:6 **20:22** [w] [Rom. 12:17–19] [x] 2 Sam. 16:12 **20:26** [y] Ps. 101:8 **20:27** [z] 1 Cor. 2:11 **20:28** [a] Prov. 21:21 **20:29** [b] Prov. 16:31 **21:2** [a] Prov. 16:2 [b] Prov. 24:12 **21:3** [c] 1 Sam. 15:22 **21:4** [d] Prov. 6:17 **21:5** [e] Prov. 10:4 **21:6** [f] 2 Pet. 2:3 **21:9** [g] Prov. 19:13 **21:10** [h] James 4:5 **21:11** [i] Prov. 19:25

13 [j]Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor
Will also cry himself and not be heard.

14 A gift in secret pacifies anger,
And a bribe behind the back,* strong wrath.

15 *It is* a joy for the just to do justice,
But destruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity.

16 A man who wanders from the way of understanding
Will rest in the assembly of the [k]dead.

17 He who loves pleasure *will be* a poor man;
He who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

18 The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous,
And the unfaithful for the upright.

19 Better to dwell in the wilderness,
Than with a contentious and angry woman.

20 [l]*There is* desirable treasure,
And oil in the dwelling of the wise,
But a foolish man squanders it.

21 [m]He who follows righteousness and mercy
Finds life, righteousness, and honor.

22 A [n]wise *man* scales the city of the mighty,
And brings down the trusted stronghold.

23 [o]Whoever guards his mouth and tongue
Keeps his soul from troubles.

24 A proud *and* haughty *man*—"Scoffer" *is* his name;
He acts with arrogant pride.

25 The [p]desire of the lazy *man* kills him,
For his hands refuse to labor.

26 He covets greedily all day long,
But the righteous [q]gives and does not spare.

27 [r]The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination;
How much more *when* he brings it with wicked intent!

28 A false witness shall perish,
But the man who hears *him* will speak endlessly.

29 A wicked man hardens his face,
But *as for* the upright, he establishes* his way.

30 [s]*There is* no wisdom or understanding
Or counsel against the LORD.

31 The horse *is* prepared for the day of battle,
But [t]deliverance *is* of the LORD.

22 A [a]*good* name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
Loving favor rather than silver and gold.

2 The [b]rich and the poor have this in common,
The [c]LORD *is* the maker of them all.

3 A prudent *man* foresees evil and hides himself,
But the simple pass on and are [d]punished.

4 By humility *and* the fear of the LORD
Are riches and honor and life.

5 Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the perverse;
He who guards his soul will be far from them.

6 [e]Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.

*21:14 Literally *in the bosom* *21:29 Qere and Septuagint read *understands.*

21:15 *joy . . . to do justice.* Doing justice is not a heavy obligation that weighs a person down. For the righteous, promoting justice is a joy.

21:16 *the assembly of the dead.* The term *dead* is a frightful one, meaning "shades" (9:18). Death in these verses may speak of physical death rather than spiritual death (as is the case in James 1).

21:21 *life, righteousness, and honor.* It is possible that these three ideas go together to mean "a more abundant life." The pursuit of righteousness is its own reward. But added rewards are found in fullness of life, achieving righteousness, and receiving honor. All these things are gifts from the Lord (15:9).

21:28 *A false witness shall perish.* A large number of proverbs focus on bearing false witness (19:28). The problem with a false witness is that his lies pervert justice for others.

22:2 *The LORD is the maker of them all.* This sentence repeats the theme of riches (v. 1). God makes both the rich and the poor. This means that those who favor the rich over the poor (James 2) have not only missed the point of creation, they have insulted the Creator (14:31).

22:4 *By humility and the fear of the LORD.* The writer of this proverb makes humility synonymous with the fear of the Lord. True humility begins with a proper attitude toward God. In such a spirit of submission to God, true fear of God is exhibited.

22:6 *Train up a child.* This verse, like the other proverbs, contains a wise statement that is usually true. Who your child turns out to be is a reflection of your parenting. As God has taught elsewhere in His word, parents are to teach their children the way of the Lord. Not only are they to teach it purposefully, but they are to do it constantly—when they talk and sit and walk

21:13 [j] [Matt. 7:2; 18:30–34] **21:16** [k] Ps. 49:14
21:20 [l] Ps. 112:3 **21:21** [m] Matt. 5:6 **21:22** [n] Prov. 24:5
21:23 [o] [James 3:2] **21:25** [p] Prov. 13:4 **21:26** [q] [Prov. 22:9] **21:27** [r] Jer. 6:20 **21:30** [s] [Jer. 9:23, 24]
21:31 [t] Ps. 3:8 **22:1** [a] Eccl. 7:1 **22:2** [b] Prov. 29:13 [c] Job 31:15 **22:3** [d] Prov. 27:12 **22:6** [e] Eph. 6:4

7 The [f]rich rules over the poor,
And the borrower *is* servant to the lender.

8 He who sows iniquity will reap [g]sorrow,
And the rod of his anger will fail.

9 [h]He who has a generous eye will be [i]blessed,
For he gives of his bread to the poor.

10 [j]Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave;
Yes, strife and reproach will cease.

11 [k]He who loves purity of heart
And has grace on his lips,
The king *will be* his friend.

12 The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge,
But He overthrows the words of the faithless.

13 [l]The lazy *man* says, "*There is* a lion outside!
I shall be slain in the streets!"

14 [m]The mouth of an immoral woman *is* a deep pit;
[n]He who is abhorred by the LORD will fall there.

15 Foolishness *is* bound up in the heart of a child;
[o]The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

16 He who oppresses the poor to increase his *riches*,
And he who gives to the rich, *will* surely *come* to poverty.

Sayings of the Wise

17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise,
And apply your heart to my knowledge;

18 For *it is* a pleasant thing if you keep them within you;
Let them all be fixed upon your lips,

19 So that your trust may be in the LORD;
I have instructed you today, even you.

20 Have I not written to you excellent things
Of counsels and knowledge,

21 [p]That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth,
[q]That you may answer words of truth
To those who send to you?

22 Do not rob the [r]poor because he *is* poor,
Nor oppress the afflicted at the gate;

23 [s]For the LORD will plead their cause,
And plunder the soul of those who plunder them.

24 Make no friendship with an angry man,
And with a [t]furious man do not go,

25 Lest you learn his ways
And set a snare for your soul.

26 [u]Do not be one of those who shakes hands in a pledge,
One of those who is surety for debts;

27 If you have nothing *with which* to pay,
Why should he take away your bed from under you?

28 [v]Do not remove the ancient landmark
Which your fathers have set.

29 Do you see a man *who* excels in his work?
He will stand before kings;
He will not stand before unknown *men*.

23 When you sit down to eat with a ruler,
Consider carefully what *is* before you;

2 And put a knife to your throat
If you *are* a man given to appetite.

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and lie down and get up (Deut. 6:7–8). If children see their parents speaking kindly, being forgiving and gracious, gentle and understanding, children will want these character attributes too. But even more important, if the parents teach that they depend upon God to build kindly habits in themselves, children will know that it is to the Lord that one turns for help in every part of life. Training children undoubtedly involves everything from wiping feet and closing doors to saying "please" and "thank you," and "I am sorry." But the most important training that a child receives is the continual teaching and daily example of their parents' dependence on the Lord.

22:10 *the scoffer.* This kind of person should be expelled from the community because his influence is harmful to everyone. The wise know that the scorner is not a laughing matter, because he is laughing at holy things, at God Himself.

22:12 *The eyes of the LORD.* God is the final arbiter of knowledge and justice. The eyes of human beings are simply not trustworthy.

22:13 *There is a lion outside.* This proverb about lazy people pokes fun at how the lazy invent all sorts of excuses for avoiding work and risk.

22:17—24:22 Proverbs Concerning Various Situations—Verse 17 marks a new section of Proverbs. Three elements distinguish this section: (1) the change from one-verse units to multiple-verse units; (2) section headings that are embedded in the text; and (3) the affinity of this section for ancient Egyptian wisdom texts.

22:17–21 *Incline your ear.* These introductory words call the reader to pay attention and to prepare to learn about and worship God. The advice emphasizes strongly that a person's trust must be in the Lord.

22:28 *Do not remove the ancient landmark.* The ancient Israelites regarded respect for the posted landmark as more than a question of private property. They saw it as a basic part of civil life. People

22:7 [f] James 2:6 **22:8** [g] Job 4:8 **22:9** [h] 2 Cor. 9:6 [i] [Prov. 19:17] **22:10** [j] Ps. 101:5 **22:11** [k] Ps. 101:6 **22:13** [l] Prov. 26:13 **22:14** [m] Prov. 2:16; 5:3; 7:5 [n] Eccl. 7:26 **22:15** [o] Prov. 13:24; 23:13, 14 **22:21** [p] Luke 1:3, 4 [q] 1 Pet. 3:15 **22:22** [r] Ex. 23:6 **22:23** [s] 1 Sam. 24:12 **22:24** [t] Prov. 29:22 **22:26** [u] Prov. 11:15 **22:28** [v] Deut. 19:14; 27:17

3 Do not desire his delicacies,
For they *are* deceptive food.

4 [a]Do not overwork to be rich;
[b]Because of your own understanding,
cease!
5 Will you set your eyes on that which is
not?
For *riches* certainly make themselves
wings;
They fly away like an eagle *toward*
heaven.

6 Do not eat the bread of [c]a miser,*
Nor desire his delicacies;
7 For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he.
"Eat and drink!" [d]he says to you,
But his heart is not with you.
8 The morsel you have eaten, you will
vomit up,
And waste your pleasant words.

9 [e]Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
For he will despise the wisdom of your
words.

10 Do not remove the ancient landmark,
Nor enter the fields of the fatherless;
11 [f]For their Redeemer *is* mighty;
He will plead their cause against you.

12 Apply your heart to instruction,
And your ears to words of knowledge.

13 [g]Do not withhold correction from a
child,
For *if* you beat him with a rod, he will
not die.
14 You shall beat him with a rod,
And deliver his soul from hell.*

15 My son, if your heart is wise,
My heart will rejoice—indeed, I myself;
16 Yes, my inmost being will rejoice
When your lips speak right things.

17 [h]Do not let your heart envy sinners,
But [i]*be zealous* for the fear of the
LORD all the day;
18 [j]For surely there is a hereafter,
And your hope will not be cut off.

19 Hear, my son, and be wise;
And guide your heart in the way.

20 [k]Do not mix with winebibbers,
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;
21 For the drunkard and the glutton will
come to poverty,
And drowsiness will clothe *a man*
with rags.

22 [l]Listen to your father who begot you,
And do not despise your mother when
she is old.

23 [m]Buy the truth, and do not sell *it*,
Also wisdom and instruction and
understanding.

24 [n]The father of the righteous will greatly
rejoice,
And he who begets a wise *child* will
delight in him.
25 Let your father and your mother be
glad,
And let her who bore you rejoice.

26 My son, give me your heart,
And let your eyes observe my ways.
27 [o]For a harlot *is* a deep pit,
And a seductress *is* a narrow well.
28 [p]She also lies in wait as *for* a victim,
And increases the unfaithful among
men.

29 [q]Who has woe?
Who has sorrow?
Who has contentions?
Who has complaints?
Who has wounds without cause?
Who [r]has redness of eyes?
30 [s]Those who linger long at the wine,
Those who go in search of [t]mixed wine.
31 Do not look on the wine when it is red,
When it sparkles in the cup,
When it swirls around smoothly;
32 At the last it bites like a serpent,
And stings like a viper.
33 Your eyes will see strange things,
And your heart will utter perverse
things.
34 Yes, you will be like one who lies
down in the midst of the sea,

* **23:6** Literally *one who has an evil eye*
* **23:14** Or *Sheol*

must feel a certain sense of public trust and fairness for society to function.

23:4–5 ***Do not overwork to be rich.*** These verses call for moderation in work. Although the proverbs discourage laziness (22:13), they also discourage any overworking whose purpose is greater wealth.

23:13–14 ***if you beat him with a rod.*** This language was designed to motivate overly permissive parents, who were afraid of damaging children with any kind of discipline, or of making rules and enforcing them. There is no call here for abuse. Loving discipline does not destroy rebellious children; it does them a big favor.

23:15 ***if your heart is wise.*** Wisdom is an outgrowth of a proper response to discipline. That wisdom in turn is immediately discernible to the father and brings joy that must be expressed.

23:21 ***For the drunkard and the glutton.*** These kinds of people have no self-control, and this fact plagues them. Hebrew culture gave a prominent place to eating and drinking, but it had little tolerance for drunkenness and gluttony.

23:29–35 ***Who has woe?*** Along with Isaiah's celebrated description of debauchery (Is. 19:11–15), this section is one of the sharpest attacks on drunkenness in the Bible (vv. 19–21). The satire is razor sharp and the imagery vivid.

23:4 [a] [1 Tim. 6:9, 10] [b] Rom. 12:16 **23:6** [c] Deut. 15:9 **23:7** [d] Prov. 12:2 **23:9** [e] Matt. 7:6 **23:11** [f] Prov. 22:23 **23:13** [g] Prov. 13:24 **23:17** [h] Ps. 37:1 [i] Prov. 28:14 **23:18** [j] [Ps. 37:37] **23:20** [k] Is. 5:22 **23:22** [l] Prov. 1:8 **23:23** [m] [Matt. 13:44] **23:24** [n] Prov. 10:1 **23:27** [o] Prov. 22:14 **23:28** [p] Prov. 7:12 **23:29** [q] Is. 5:11, 22 [r] Gen. 49:12 **23:30** [s] [Eph. 5:18] [t] Ps. 75:8

Or like one who lies at the top of the
mast, *saying:*
35 "They[u] have struck me, *but* I was not
hurt;
They have beaten me, but I did not
feel *it*.
When shall [v]I awake, that I may seek
another *drink*?"

24 Do not be [a]envious of evil men,
Nor desire to be with them;
2 For their heart devises violence,
And their lips talk of troublemaking.

3 Through wisdom a house is built,
And by understanding it is
established;
4 By knowledge the rooms are filled
With all precious and pleasant riches.

5 [b]A wise man *is* strong,
Yes, a man of knowledge increases
strength;
6 [c]For by wise counsel you will wage
your own war,
And in a multitude of counselors *there
is* safety.

7 [d]Wisdom *is* too lofty for a fool;
He does not open his mouth in the
gate.

8 He who [e]plots to do evil
Will be called a schemer.
9 The devising of foolishness *is* sin,
And the scoffer *is* an abomination to
men.

10 *If* you [f]faint in the day of adversity,
Your strength *is* small.

11 [g]Deliver *those who* are drawn toward
death,
And hold back *those* stumbling to the
slaughter.
12 If you say, "Surely we did not know
this,"
Does not [h]He who weighs the hearts
consider *it*?
He who keeps your soul, does He *not*
know *it*?
And will He *not* render to *each* man
[i]according to his deeds?

13 My son, [j]eat honey because *it is* good,
And the honeycomb *which is* sweet to
your taste;
14 [k]So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be*
to your soul;
If you have found *it*, there is a prospect,
And your hope will not be cut off.

15 Do not lie in wait, O wicked *man*,
against the dwelling of the
righteous;
Do not plunder his resting place;
16 [l]For a righteous *man* may fall seven
times
And rise again,
[m]But the wicked shall fall by calamity.

17 [n]Do not rejoice when your enemy
falls,
And do not let your heart be glad when
he stumbles;
18 Lest the LORD see *it*, and it displease
Him,
And He turn away His wrath from
him.

19 [o]Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the wicked;
20 For there will be no prospect for the
evil *man;*
The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

21 My son, [p]fear the LORD and the king;
Do not associate with those given to
change;
22 For their calamity will rise suddenly,
And who knows the ruin those two
can bring?

Further Sayings of the Wise

23 These *things* also *belong* to the wise:

[q]*It is* not good to show partiality in
judgment.
24 [r]He who says to the wicked, "You *are*
righteous,"
Him the people will curse;
Nations will abhor him.
25 But those who rebuke *the wicked* will
have [s]delight,
And a good blessing will come upon
them.

24:6 The Will of God—Common sense tells us that God often works through circumstances and through wise counsel to reveal His will for us. A number of biblical examples illustrate this principle:

- God directed Abraham to substitute a ram, whose horns had become entangled in a thicket, for the life of Isaac (Gen. 22:13).
- God arranged for Pharaoh's daughter to be bathing in the river Nile at the exact time the baby Moses floated by in an ark of bulrushes (Ex. 2:1–10).
- Paul's young nephew happened to overhear a plot to kill his uncle. He then reported it to the authorities who saved Paul's life (Acts 23:11–35).

In light of the above, the Christian should ask himself, "Is the Lord showing me something through these circumstances?" We can also take great comfort in Paul's reminder to the Romans that God causes all things to "work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

24:21–22 *fear the LORD and the king.* This proverb relates most fully to the Davidic kings, who were God's regents on earth; one way the ancient Israelites could show respect for God was to respect the king.

23:35 [u] Jer. 5:3 [v] Eph. 4:19 **24:1** [a] Ps. 1:1; 37:1 **24:5** [b] Prov. 21:22 **24:6** [c] Luke 14:31 **24:7** [d] Ps. 10:5 **24:8** [e] Rom. 1:30 **24:10** [f] Heb. 12:3 **24:11** [g] Ps. 82:4 **24:12** [h] Prov. 21:2 [i] Ps. 62:12 **24:13** [j] Song 5:1 **24:14** [k] Ps. 19:10; 58:11 **24:16** [l] [Mic. 7:8] [m] Esth. 7:10 **24:17** [n] Obad. 12 **24:19** [o] Ps. 37:1 **24:21** [p] [1 Pet. 2:17] **24:23** [q] Lev. 19:15 **24:24** [r] Is. 5:23 **24:25** [s] Prov. 28:23

26 He who gives a right answer kisses the
lips.

27 [t]Prepare your outside work,
Make it fit for yourself in the field;
And afterward build your house.

28 [u]Do not be a witness against your
neighbor without cause,
For would you deceive* with your
lips?
29 [v]Do not say, "I will do to him just as he
has done to me;
I will render to the man according to
his work."

30 I went by the field of the lazy *man*,
And by the vineyard of the man devoid
of understanding;
31 And there it was, [w]all overgrown with
thorns;
Its surface was covered with nettles;
Its stone wall was broken down.
32 When I saw *it*, I considered *it* well;
I looked on *it and* received
instruction:
33 [x]A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to rest;
34 [y]So shall your poverty come *like* a
prowler,
And your need like an armed man.

Further Wise Sayings of Solomon

25 These[a] also *are* proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied:

2 [b]*It is* the glory of God to conceal a
matter,
But the glory of kings *is* to search out
a matter.

3 *As* the heavens for height and the
earth for depth,
So the heart of kings *is*
unsearchable.

4 [c]Take away the dross from silver,
And it will go to the silversmith *for*
jewelry.
5 Take away the wicked from before the
king,
And his throne will be established in
[d]righteousness.

6 Do not exalt yourself in the presence
of the king,
And do not stand in the place of the
great;
7 [e]For *it is* better that he say to you,
"Come up here,"
Than that you should be put lower in
the presence of the prince,
Whom your eyes have seen.

8 [f]Do not go hastily to court;
For what will you do in the end,
When your neighbor has put you to
shame?
9 [g]Debate your case with your neighbor,
And do not disclose the secret to
another;
10 Lest he who hears *it* expose your shame,
And your reputation be ruined.

11 A word fitly [h]spoken *is like* apples of
gold
In settings of silver.
12 *Like* an earring of gold and an
ornament of fine gold
Is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear.

13 [i]Like the cold of snow in time of
harvest
Is a faithful messenger to those who
send him,
For he refreshes the soul of his masters.

14 [j]Whoever falsely boasts of giving
Is like [k]clouds and wind without rain.

15 [l]By long forbearance a ruler is
persuaded,
And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.

16 Have you found honey?
Eat only as much as you need,
Lest you be filled with it and vomit.

17 Seldom set foot in your neighbor's
house,
Lest he become weary of you and hate
you.

* **24:28** Septuagint and Vulgate read *Do not deceive.*

25:1 ***These also are proverbs of Solomon.*** After the first collection of proverbs from Solomon (10:1—22:16) and proverbs from foreign sources (22:17—24:22; 24:23–34) comes a collection of proverbs attributed to Solomon, but which were not compiled until the time of Hezekiah. The following observations can be made: (1) The wisdom tradition concerning Solomon was prodigious; (2) Israel's interest in wisdom was particularly centered in times of relative peace; (3) Hezekiah's involvement in this activity was a mark of the strength of his rule and the sense he had of restoring Solomon's glory.

25:6 ***Do not exalt yourself.*** Knowing your place is a recurring theme in the Bible. It is humiliating to be told to remove yourself from a seat of honor. Jesus spoke of the same need for deference (Luke 14:11).

25:7 ***Whom your eyes have seen.*** This phrase reflects the custom in the ancient world of never looking directly in the eyes of a superior until told to do so (Is. 6:5).

25:15 ***By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded.*** In this passage the general rule that a gentle answer turns away wrath is applied to a particular and most difficult situation.

24:27 [t] Prov. 27:23–27 **24:28** [u] Eph. 4:25 **24:29** [v] [Prov. 20:22] **24:31** [w] Gen. 3:18 **24:33** [x] Prov. 6:9, 10 **24:34** [y] Prov. 6:9–11 **25:1** [a] 1 Kin. 4:32 **25:2** [b] Deut. 29:29 **25:4** [c] 2 Tim. 2:21 **25:5** [d] Prov. 16:12; 20:8 **25:7** [e] Luke 14:7–11 **25:8** [f] Matt. 5:25 **25:9** [g] [Matt. 18:15] **25:11** [h] Prov. 15:23 **25:13** [i] Prov. 13:17 **25:14** [j] Prov. 20:6 [k] Jude 12 **25:15** [l] Prov. 15:1

18 [m]A man who bears false witness
against his neighbor
Is like a club, a sword, and a sharp
arrow.

19 Confidence in an unfaithful *man* in
time of trouble
Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.

20 *Like* one who takes away a garment in
cold weather,
And like vinegar on soda,
Is one who [n]sings songs to a heavy
heart.

21 [o]If your enemy is hungry, give him
bread to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water to
drink;
22 For *so* you will heap coals of fire on
his head,
[p]And the LORD will reward you.

23 The north wind brings forth rain,
And [q]a backbiting tongue an angry
countenance.

24 [r]*It is* better to dwell in a corner of a
housetop,
Than in a house shared with a
contentious woman.

25 *As* cold water to a weary soul,
So *is* [s]good news from a far country.

26 A righteous *man* who falters before
the wicked
Is like a murky spring and a polluted
well.

27 *It is* not good to eat much honey;
So [t]to seek one's own glory *is not* glory.

28 [u]Whoever *has* no rule over his own
spirit
Is like a city broken down, without
walls.

26 As snow in summer [a]and rain in
harvest,
So honor is not fitting for a fool.

2 Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying
swallow,
So [b]a curse without cause shall not
alight.

3 [c]A whip for the horse,
A bridle for the donkey,
And a rod for the fool's back.

4 Do not answer a fool according to his
folly,
Lest you also be like him.
5 [d]Answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest he be wise in his own eyes.
6 He who sends a message by the hand
of a fool
Cuts off *his own* feet *and* drinks
violence.
7 *Like* the legs of the lame that hang
limp
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling
Is he who gives honor to a fool.
9 *Like* a thorn *that* goes into the hand of
a drunkard
Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
10 The great *God* who formed everything
Gives the fool *his* hire and the
transgressor *his* wages.*
11 [e]As a dog returns to his own vomit,
[f]So a fool repeats his folly.
12 [g]Do you see a man wise in his own
eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for
him.

13 The lazy *man* says, "*There is* a lion in
the road!
A fierce lion *is* in the streets!"
14 *As* a door turns on its hinges,
So *does* the lazy *man* on his bed.
15 The [h]lazy *man* buries his hand in the
bowl;*
It wearies him to bring it back to his
mouth.
16 The lazy *man is* wiser in his own eyes
Than seven men who can answer
sensibly.

17 He who passes by *and* meddles in a
quarrel not his own
Is like one who takes a dog by the ears.

18 Like a madman who throws
firebrands, arrows, and death,
19 *Is* the man *who* deceives his neighbor,
And says, [i]"I was only joking!"

20 Where *there is* no wood, the fire goes
out;
And where *there is* no talebearer,
strife ceases.

* **26:10** The Hebrew is difficult; ancient and modern translators differ greatly. * **26:15** Compare 19:24

25:21–22 ***coals of fire.*** The words of Jesus in Matthew 5:43–48 have direct ties to these verses. They speak of God's judgment (Ps. 120:4; 140:10); the idea is that an act of kindness to your enemy may cause him or her to feel ashamed. This is just one way to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:20).

26:4–5 ***according to his folly.*** Some people have called the two proverbs here contradictory, but that is not necessarily true. The phrase appears twice as a play on words with two shades of meaning. On the one hand, it means "avoid the temptation to stoop to his level"; that is do not use his methods, "lest you also be like him." On the other hand, it means "avoid the temptation to ignore him altogether"; that is respond in some way, or else he will become wise in his own eyes and his folly will get worse.

25:18 [m] Ps. 57:4 **25:20** [n] Dan. 6:18 **25:21** [o] Rom. 12:20 **25:22** [p] 2 Sam. 16:12 **25:23** [q] Ps. 101:5 **25:24** [r] Prov. 19:13 **25:25** [s] Prov. 15:30 **25:27** [t] Prov. 27:2 **25:28** [u] Prov. 16:32 **26:1** [a] 1 Sam. 12:17 **26:2** [b] Deut. 23:5 **26:3** [c] Ps. 32:9 **26:5** [d] Matt. 16:1–4 **26:11** [e] 2 Pet. 2:22 [f] Ex. 8:15 **26:12** [g] [Rev. 3:17] **26:15** [h] Prov. 19:24 **26:19** [i] Eph. 5:4

21 [j]*As* charcoal *is* to burning coals, and
wood to fire,
So *is* a contentious man to kindle
strife.
22 The words of a talebearer *are* like
tasty trifles,
And they go down into the inmost
body.

23 Fervent lips with a wicked heart
Are like earthenware covered with
silver dross.

24 He who hates, disguises *it* with his
lips,
And lays up deceit within himself;
25 [k]When he speaks kindly, do not believe
him,
For *there are* seven abominations in
his heart;
26 *Though his* hatred is covered by
deceit,
His wickedness will be revealed before
the assembly.

27 [l]Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,
And he who rolls a stone will have it
roll back on him.

28 A lying tongue hates *those who are*
crushed by it,
And a flattering mouth works [m]ruin.

27 Do[a] not boast about tomorrow,
For you do not know what a day
may bring forth.

2 [b]Let another man praise you, and not
your own mouth;
A stranger, and not your own lips.

3 A stone *is* heavy and sand *is*
weighty,
But a fool's wrath *is* heavier than both
of them.

4 Wrath *is* cruel and anger a torrent,
But [c]who *is* able to stand before
jealousy?

5 [d]Open rebuke *is* better
Than love carefully concealed.

6 Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend,
But the kisses of an enemy *are*
[e]deceitful.

7 A satisfied soul loathes the
honeycomb,
But to a hungry soul every bitter thing
is sweet.

8 Like a bird that wanders from its nest
Is a man who wanders from his place.

9 Ointment and perfume delight the
heart,
And the sweetness of a man's friend
gives delight by hearty counsel.

10 Do not forsake your own friend or
your father's friend,
Nor go to your brother's house in the
day of your calamity;
[f]Better *is* a neighbor nearby than a
brother far away.

11 My son, be wise, and make my heart
glad,
[g]That I may answer him who
reproaches me.

12 A prudent *man* foresees evil *and* hides
himself;
The simple pass on *and* are [h]punished.

13 Take the garment of him who is surety
for a stranger,
And hold it in pledge *when* he is surety
for a seductress.

14 He who blesses his friend with a loud
voice, rising early in the morning,
It will be counted a curse to him.

15 A [i]continual dripping on a very rainy
day
And a contentious woman are alike;
16 Whoever restrains her restrains the
wind,
And grasps oil with his right hand.

17 *As* iron sharpens iron,
So a man sharpens the countenance of
his friend.

18 [j]Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its
fruit;
So he who waits on his master will be
honored.

19 As in water face *reflects* face,
So a man's heart *reveals* the man.

20 [k]Hell* and Destruction* are never full;
So [l]the eyes of man are never satisfied.

* **27:20** Or *Sheol* • Hebrew *Abaddon*

26:23 ***earthenware covered with silver dross.*** The meaning of this proverb is similar to Jesus' remarks to His enemies that they were like whitewashed tombs (Matt. 23:27). No amount of painting on the outside changes the value of the rotten interior.
26:24–26 ***revealed before the assembly.*** A person who hates says one thing but stores up anger within. He may find that his hatred hurts him, when in his life there is so much falsehood that no one believes him no matter how gracious and truthful he might be at times.
27:7 ***to a hungry soul.*** Those who are full do not appreciate what they have, while to those who are hungry anything tastes good.

27:17 ***iron sharpens iron.*** This may also be translated as applying to the will; "let iron sharpen iron, and so let a person sharpen his friend." The idea is that people grow from interaction with one another.

26:21 [j] Prov. 15:18 **26:25** [k] Ps. 28:3 **26:27** [l] Ps. 7:15 **26:28** [m] Prov. 29:5 **27:1** [a] James 4:13–16 **27:2** [b] Prov. 25:27 **27:4** [c] 1 John 3:12 **27:5** [d] [Prov. 28:23] **27:6** [e] Matt. 26:49 **27:10** [f] Prov. 17:17; 18:24 **27:11** [g] Prov. 10:1; 23:15–26 **27:12** [h] Prov. 22:3 **27:15** [i] Prov. 19:13 **27:18** [j] [1 Cor. 3:8; 9:7–13] **27:20** [k] Hab. 2:5 [l] Eccl. 1:8; 4:8

21 [m]The refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold,
And a man *is valued* by what others say of him.

22 [n]Though you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain,
Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.

23 Be diligent to know the state of your [o]flocks,
And attend to your herds;
24 For riches *are* not forever,
Nor does a crown *endure* to all generations.
25 [p]*When* the hay is removed, and the tender grass shows itself,
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in,
26 The lambs *will provide* your clothing,
And the goats the price of a field;
27 *You shall have* enough goats' milk for your food,
For the food of your household,
And the nourishment of your maidservants.

28 The [a]wicked flee when no one pursues,
But the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 Because of the transgression of a land, many *are* its princes;
But by a man of understanding *and* knowledge
Right will be prolonged.

3 [b]A poor man who oppresses the poor
Is like a driving rain which leaves no food.

4 [c]Those who forsake the law praise the wicked,
[d]But such as keep the law contend with them.

5 [e]Evil men do not understand justice,
But [f]those who seek the LORD understand all.

6 Better *is* the poor who walks in his integrity
Than one perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

7 Whoever keeps the law *is* a discerning son,
But a companion of gluttons shames his father.

8 One who increases his possessions by usury and extortion
Gathers it for him who will pity the poor.

9 One who turns away his ear from hearing the law,
[g]Even his prayer *is* an abomination.

10 [h]Whoever causes the upright to go astray in an evil way,
He himself will fall into his own pit;
[i]But the blameless will inherit good.

11 The rich man *is* wise in his own eyes,
But the poor who has understanding searches him out.

12 When the righteous rejoice, *there is* great [j]glory;
But when the wicked arise, men hide themselves.

13 [k]He who covers his sins will not prosper,
But whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy.

14 Happy *is* the man who is always reverent,
But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

15 [l]*Like* a roaring lion and a charging bear
[m]*Is* a wicked ruler over poor people.

16 A ruler who lacks understanding *is* a great [n]oppressor,
But he who hates covetousness will prolong *his* days.

17 [o]A man burdened with bloodshed will flee into a pit;
Let no one help him.

18 Whoever walks blamelessly will be saved,
But *he who is* perverse *in his* ways will suddenly fall.

19 [p]He who tills his land will have plenty of bread,

28:4–5 ***Those who forsake the law.*** When a person abandons God's law, he or she loses all sense of right and praise the wicked (Rom. 1:28–32). Since true justice is from God, the ungodly have trouble understanding it. This is why the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (1:7).
28:7 ***a companion of gluttons.*** One way of breaking God's law is to be a companion of gluttons (23:20–21). This is why Jesus' enemies charged Him with associating with gluttons and winebibbers. Such accusations were attacks on His faithfulness to God (Matt. 11:19).
28:8 ***usury and extortion.*** Profit gained by charging interest or high "profit margins" is unjust. God will help the poor eventually at their exploiters' expense.
28:14 ***Happy is the man.*** This is a repeat of Psalm 1:1 about a person who is in awe of God. The person who never thinks of God faces calamity.

27:21 [m] Prov. 17:3 **27:22** [n] Jer. 5:3 **27:23** [o] Prov. 24:27 **27:25** [p] Ps. 104:14 **28:1** [a] Ps. 53:5 **28:3** [b] Matt. 18:28 **28:4** [c] Ps. 49:18 [d] 1 Kin. 18:18 **28:5** [e] Ps. 92:6 [f] John 17:17 **28:9** [g] Prov. 15:8 **28:10** [h] Prov. 26:27 [i] [Matt. 6:33] **28:12** [j] Prov. 11:10; 29:2 **28:13** [k] Ps. 32:3–5 **28:15** [l] 1 Pet. 5:8 [m] Matt. 2:16 **28:16** [n] Eccl. 10:16 **28:17** [o] Gen. 9:6 **28:19** [p] Prov. 12:11; 20:13

But he who follows frivolity will have
poverty enough!

20 A faithful man will abound with
blessings,
[q]But he who hastens to be rich will not
go unpunished.

21 [r]To show partiality *is* not good,
[s]Because for a piece of bread a man
will transgress.

22 A man with an evil eye hastens after
riches,
And does not consider that [t]poverty
will come upon him.

23 [u]He who rebukes a man will find more
favor afterward
Than he who flatters with the tongue.

24 Whoever robs his father or his mother,
And says, "*It is* no transgression,"
The same [v]*is* companion to a destroyer.

25 [w]He who is of a proud heart stirs up
strife,
[x]But he who trusts in the LORD will be
prospered.

26 He who [y]trusts in his own heart is a
fool,
But whoever walks wisely will be
delivered.

27 [z]He who gives to the poor will not lack,
But he who hides his eyes will have
many curses.

28 When the wicked arise, [a]men hide
themselves;
But when they perish, the righteous
increase.

29 He[a] who is often rebuked, *and*
hardens *his* neck,
Will suddenly be destroyed, and that
without remedy.

2 When the righteous are in authority,
the [b]people rejoice;
But when a wicked *man* rules, [c]the
people groan.

3 Whoever loves wisdom makes his
father rejoice,
But a companion of harlots wastes *his*
wealth.

4 The king establishes the land by
justice,
But he who receives bribes
overthrows it.

5 A man who [d]flatters his neighbor
Spreads a net for his feet.

6 By transgression an evil man is
snared,
But the righteous sings and rejoices.

7 The righteous [e]considers the cause of
the poor,
But the wicked does not understand
such knowledge.

8 Scoffers [f]set a city aflame,
But wise *men* turn away wrath.

9 *If* a wise man contends with a foolish
man,
[g]Whether *the fool* rages or laughs,
there is no peace.

10 [h]The bloodthirsty hate the blameless,
But the upright seek his well-being.*

11 A fool vents all his [i]feelings,*
But a wise *man* holds them back.

12 If a ruler pays attention to lies,
All his servants *become* wicked.

13 The poor *man* and the oppressor have
this in common:
[j]The LORD gives light to the eyes of
both.

14 The king who judges the [k]poor with
truth,
His throne will be established
forever.

15 The rod and rebuke give [l]wisdom,
But a child left *to himself* brings
shame to his mother.

16 When the wicked are multiplied,
transgression increases;
But the righteous will see their [m]fall.

17 Correct your son, and he will give you
rest;
Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

18 [n]Where *there is* no revelation,* the
people cast off restraint;
But [o]happy *is* he who keeps the law.

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* **29:10** Literally *soul* * **29:11** Literally *spirit*
* **29:18** Or *prophetic vision*

28:23 ***He who rebukes a man.*** Constructive criticism has more value than flattery, which aims only to win people's affection.

28:25–26 ***He who is . . . proud.*** One of the main causes of strife is pride; trust in God leads to blessing.

29:5 ***Spreads a net.*** Flattery is a lie. If you flatter your neighbor you are making a trap of some kind for him. God never lies. He always tells the truth and so should we.

29:13 ***The poor man and the oppressor.*** God is responsible for giving life to both. Jesus attested that God causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust (Matt. 5:45).

29:18 ***Where there is no revelation.*** Without God's revelation of the law, the people flounder. True happiness is discovered within the constraints of revelation, in the counsel of the Savior.

28:20 [q] 1 Tim. 6:9 **28:21** [r] Prov. 18:5 [s] Ezek. 13:19 **28:22** [t] Prov. 21:5 **28:23** [u] Prov. 27:5, 6 **28:24** [v] Prov. 18:9 **28:25** [w] Prov. 13:10 [x] 1 Tim. 6:6 **28:26** [y] Prov. 3:5 **28:27** [z] Deut. 15:7 **28:28** [a] Job 24:4 **29:1** [a] 2 Chr. 36:16 **29:2** [b] Prov. 28:12 [c] Esth. 4:3 **29:5** [d] Prov. 26:28 **29:7** [e] Job 29:16 **29:8** [f] Prov. 11:11 **29:9** [g] Matt. 11:17 **29:10** [h] 1 John 3:12 **29:11** [i] Prov. 14:33 **29:13** [j] [Matt. 5:45] **29:14** [k] Is. 11:4 **29:15** [l] Prov. 22:15 **29:16** [m] Ps. 37:34 **29:18** [n] 1 Sam. 3:1 [o] John 13:17

19 A servant will not be corrected by
mere words;
For though he understands, he will not
respond.

20 Do you see a man hasty in his words?
[p]*There is* more hope for a fool than for
him.

21 He who pampers his servant from
childhood
Will have him as a son in the end.

22 [q]An angry man stirs up strife,
And a furious man abounds in
transgression.

23 [r]A man's pride will bring him low,
But the humble in spirit will retain
honor.

24 Whoever is a partner with a thief hates
his own life;
[s]He swears to tell the truth,* but reveals
nothing.

25 [t]The fear of man brings a snare,
But whoever trusts in the LORD shall
be safe.

26 [u]Many seek the ruler's favor,
But justice for man *comes* from the
LORD.

27 An unjust man *is* an abomination to
the righteous,
And *he who is* upright in the way *is* an
abomination to the wicked.

The Wisdom of Agur

30 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh,
his utterance. This man declared to
Ithiel—to Ithiel and Ucal:

2 [a]Surely I *am* more stupid than *any* man,
And do not have the understanding of
a man.
3 I neither learned wisdom
Nor have [b]knowledge of the Holy One.

4 [c]Who has ascended into heaven, or
descended?
[d]Who has gathered the wind in His fists?
Who has bound the waters in a
garment?
Who has established all the ends of
the earth?
What *is* His name, and what *is* His
Son's name,
If you know?

5 [e]Every word of God *is* pure;
[f]He *is* a shield to those who put their
trust in Him.
6 [g]Do not add to His words,
Lest He rebuke you, and you be found
a liar.

7 Two *things* I request of You
(Deprive me not before I die):
8 Remove falsehood and lies far from
me;
Give me neither poverty nor riches—
[h]Feed me with the food allotted to me;
9 [i]Lest I be full and deny *You,*
And say, "Who *is* the LORD?"
Or lest I be poor and steal,
And profane the name of my God.

10 Do not malign a servant to his master,
Lest he curse you, and you be found
guilty.

11 *There is* a generation *that* curses its
[j]father,
And does not bless its mother.
12 *There is* a generation [k]*that is* pure in
its own eyes,
Yet is not washed from its filthiness.
13 *There is* a generation—oh, how [l]lofty
are their eyes!
And their eyelids are lifted up.
14 [m]*There is* a generation whose teeth *are
like* swords,
And whose fangs *are like* knives,
[n]To devour the poor from off the earth,
And the needy from *among* men.

15 The leech has two daughters—
Give *and* Give!

There are three *things that* are never
satisfied,
Four never say, "Enough!":
16 [o]The grave,*
The barren womb,

* **29:24** Literally *hears the adjuration*
* **30:16** Or *Sheol*

29:23 ***A man's pride will bring him low.*** Pride, inordinate self-esteem, causes others to lose respect for the conceited egotist. In contrast to this, humility draws honor from others. However, pride takes many forms and is not always the adornment of just the conceited egotist.

29:26 ***but justice for man comes from the LORD.*** God controls human affairs. Therefore it makes more sense to seek the Lord first before stooping to seek the favor of human rulers.

30:1 ***The words of Agur.*** This verse starts an entirely new section of Proverbs. Like Lemuel (31:1–9), Agur was a non-Hebrew contributor to the Book of Proverbs. He came to faith in the God of Israel in a foreign land.

30:4 ***what is His name?*** This verse gives the riddle that perplexed Agur. The questions all culminate in the last two lines. The Old Testament would answer that "His name" is the Lord God, but did not have a name for His Son. This riddle was to remain unsolved until Jesus answered it for Nicodemus (John 3:13). These verses form one of the most straightforward messianic texts in the Bible.

29:20 [p] Prov. 26:12 **29:22** [q] Prov. 26:21 **29:23** [r] Is. 66:2 **29:24** [s] Lev. 5:1 **29:25** [t] Gen. 12:12; 20:2 **29:26** [u] Ps. 20:9 **30:2** [a] Ps. 73:22 **30:3** [b] [Prov. 9:10] **30:4** [c] [John 3:13] [d] Job 38:4 **30:5** [e] Ps. 12:6; 19:8; 119:140 [f] Ps. 18:30; 84:11; 115:9–11 **30:6** [g] Deut. 4:2; 12:32 **30:8** [h] Matt. 6:11 **30:9** [i] Deut. 8:12–14 **30:11** [j] Ex. 21:17 **30:12** [k] Luke 18:11 **30:13** [l] Prov. 6:17 **30:14** [m] Job 29:17 [n] Amos 8:4 **30:16** [o] Prov. 27:20

The earth *that* is not satisfied with water—
And the fire never says, "Enough!"

17 [p]The eye *that* mocks *his* father,
And scorns obedience to *his* mother,
The ravens of the valley will pick it out,
And the young eagles will eat it.

18 There are three *things which* are too wonderful for me,
Yes, four *which* I do not understand:
19 The way of an eagle in the air,
The way of a serpent on a rock,
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea,
And the way of a man with a virgin.

20 This *is* the way of an adulterous woman:
She eats and wipes her mouth,
And says, "I have done no wickedness."

21 For three *things* the earth is perturbed,
Yes, for four it cannot bear up:
22 [q]For a servant when he reigns,
A fool when he is filled with food,
23 A hateful *woman* when she is married,
And a maidservant who succeeds her mistress.

24 There are four *things which* are little on the earth,
But they *are* exceedingly wise:
25 [r]The ants *are* a people not strong,
Yet they prepare their food in the summer;
26 [s]The rock badgers* are a feeble folk,
Yet they make their homes in the crags;
27 The locusts have no king,
Yet they all advance in ranks;
28 The spider* skillfully grasps with its hands,
And it is in kings' palaces.

29 There are three *things which* are majestic in pace,
Yes, four *which* are stately in walk:
30 A lion, *which is* mighty among beasts
And does not turn away from any;
31 A greyhound,*
A male goat also,
And a king *whose* troops *are* with him.*

32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself,
Or if you have devised evil, [t]*put your* hand on *your* mouth.
33 For *as* the churning of milk produces butter,
And wringing the nose produces blood,
So the forcing of wrath produces strife.

The Words of King Lemuel's Mother

31 The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him:

2 What, my son?
And what, son of my womb?
And what, [a]son of my vows?
3 [b]Do not give your strength to women,
Nor your ways [c]to that which destroys kings.

4 [d]*It is* not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Nor for princes intoxicating drink;
5 [e]Lest they drink and forget the law,
And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.
6 [f]Give strong drink to him who is perishing,
And wine to those who are bitter of heart.
7 Let him drink and forget his poverty,
And remember his misery no more.

8 [g]Open your mouth for the speechless,
In the cause of all *who are* appointed to die.*
9 Open your mouth, [h]judge righteously,
And [i]plead the cause of the poor and needy.

The Virtuous Wife

10 [j]Who* can find a virtuous* wife?
For her worth *is* far above rubies.

* **30:26** Or *hyraxes* * **30:28** Or *lizard*
* **30:31** Exact identity unknown • A Jewish tradition reads *a king against whom there is no uprising.* * **31:8** Literally *sons of passing away*
* **31:10** Verses 10 through 31 are an alphabetic acrostic in Hebrew (compare Psalm 119). • Literally *a wife of valor,* in the sense of all forms of excellence

30:19 ***virgin.*** This term could also read maid or young woman in this context.
30:20 ***This is the way.*** This verse contrasts with the way of verse 19; this way is awful whereas the former is wonderful. The *adulterous woman* regards her illicit sexual relations without remorse.
30:24–28 ***four things which are little on the earth.*** This numerical proverb speaks of four creatures that are small in size but amazing in behavior. Each of these small creatures has a behavioral trait from which wise people can learn.
30:32–33 ***put your hand on your mouth.*** This phrase means "stop it." The idea is if you are in the middle of making trouble and suddenly realize your foolishness, stop right then before things get worse.
31:1 ***The words of King Lemuel.*** This verse begins a new section of material from a non-Israelite source.
31:4–5 ***Lest they drink and forget the law.*** In this passage the consumption of strong drink is linked to injustice.
31:10 ***a virtuous wife.*** Proverbs 31:10–31 is an acrostic poem; each verse begins with a successive letter to the Hebrew alphabet. As the Book of Proverbs begins with a Prologue (1:1–7), which gives the

30:17 [p] Gen. 9:22 **30:22** [q] Prov. 19:10 **30:25** [r] Prov. 6:6 **30:26** [s] Ps. 104:18 **30:32** [t] Mic. 7:16 **31:2** [a] Is. 49:15 **31:3** [b] Prov. 5:9 [c] Deut. 17:17 **31:4** [d] Eccl. 10:17 **31:5** [e] Hos. 4:11 **31:6** [f] Ps. 104:15 **31:8** [g] Job 29:15, 16 **31:9** [h] Lev. 19:15 [i] Jer. 22:16 **31:10** [j] Prov. 12:4; 19:14

11 The heart of her husband safely trusts
her;
So he will have no lack of gain.
12 She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
13 She seeks wool and flax,
And willingly works with her hands.
14 She is like the merchant ships,
She brings her food from afar.
15 [k]She also rises while it is yet night,
And [l]provides food for her household,
And a portion for her maidservants.
16 She considers a field and buys it;
From her profits she plants a vineyard.
17 She girds herself with strength,
And strengthens her arms.
18 She perceives that her merchandise *is*
good,
And her lamp does not go out by night.
19 She stretches out her hands to the
distaff,
And her hand holds the spindle.
20 [m]She extends her hand to the poor,
Yes, she reaches out her hands to the
needy.
21 She is not afraid of snow for her
household,
For all her household *is* clothed with
scarlet.
22 She makes tapestry for herself;
Her clothing *is* fine linen and purple.
23 [n]Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sits among the elders of the
land.
24 She makes linen garments and sells
them,
And supplies sashes for the
merchants.
25 Strength and honor *are* her clothing;
She shall rejoice in time to come.
26 She opens her mouth with wisdom,
And on her tongue *is* the law of
kindness.
27 She watches over the ways of her
household,
And does not eat the bread of idleness.
28 Her children rise up and call her
blessed;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her:
29 "Many daughters have done well,
But you excel them all."
30 Charm *is* deceitful and beauty *is*
passing,
But a woman *who* fears the LORD, she
shall be praised.
31 Give her of the fruit of her hands,
And let her own works praise her in
the gates.

goals of wisdom in general terms, so now it concludes with this Epilogue, which presents them in a case study.

31:20–22 ***to the poor.*** The excellent woman works not to get rich, but to give to the poor. She can be concerned for others because she has provided for her own family.

31:26 ***on her tongue is the law of kindness.*** This attribute of kindness in a woman is valued far above physical charm in God's sight. Peter describes real beauty as a product of the heart and not the combination of certain physical features (1 Pet. 3:1–5).

31:30–31 ***Charm.*** Charm, which could be translated "graciousness," like beauty, can deceive us about the true nature of someone's character. But if a woman fears the Lord, that is trustworthy and more worthy of praise than physical comeliness.

31:15 [k] Rom. 12:11 [l] Luke 12:42 **31:20** [m] Eph. 4:28
31:23 [n] Prov. 12:4

THE BOOK OF
ECCLESIASTES

▶ **AUTHOR:** The author calls himself "the son of David, king in Jerusalem" in 1:1. Solomonic authorship is the standard Christian position, although some scholars, along with the Talmud, believe the work was later edited during the time of Hezekiah or possibly Ezra. The proverbs in this book are similar to those in the Book of Proverbs (Eccl. 7; 10). According to 12:9, the Preacher collected and arranged many proverbs, perhaps referring to the two Solomonic collections in Proverbs.

▶ **TIME:** c. 935 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Eccl. 2:24

▶ **THEME:** Ecclesiastes is a Greek word that is usually translated "the preacher" or "the teacher." The book was likely written late in Solomon's life, when he could see that the glorious era of his kingdom was beginning to decline. He had it all—power, prestige, pleasure—but none of that provides ultimate satisfaction. That fulfillment comes only through a relationship with God and obedience to His word. It is important to note that the arguments of the book are more thematic than linear. The same topics are addressed in different ways at different points within the work.

The Vanity of Life

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, [a]king in Jerusalem.

2 "Vanity[b]* of vanities," says the Preacher;
"Vanity of vanities, [c]all *is* vanity."

3 [d]What profit has a man from all his labor
In which he toils under the sun?

4 *One* generation passes away, and *another* generation comes;
[e]But the earth abides forever.

5 [f]The sun also rises, and the sun goes down,
And hastens to the place where it arose.

6 [g]The wind goes toward the south,
And turns around to the north;
The wind whirls about continually,
And comes again on its circuit.

7 [h]All the rivers run into the sea,
Yet the sea *is* not full;
To the place from which the rivers come,
There they return again.

8 All things *are* full of labor;
Man cannot express *it*.
[i]The eye is not satisfied with seeing,
Nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 [j]That which has been *is* what will be,
That which *is* done is what will be done,
And *there is* nothing new under the sun.

10 Is there anything of which it may be said,
"See, this *is* new"?

* **1:2** Or *Absurdity, Frustration, Futility, Nonsense;* and so throughout this book

1:1 ***the Preacher.*** This word denotes a function or a profession. It literally means "one who assembles or gathers people together." Thus the word refers to Solomon as a person who convened an assembly of the wise in order to explore in a formal manner the meaning of life.

1:2 ***Vanity of vanities.*** This phrase translates the Hebrew superlative, familiar from such phrases as "Song of Songs" and "holy of holies." Here it might express "the ultimate absurdity" or "utter emptiness." The word vanity means "breath" or "vapor" and thus speaks of life as "quickly passing." Life is like a vapor; indeed, it is like the thinnest of vapors. Wherever we read the word *vanity* in Ecclesiastes, we should think not of what is "meaningless," but of what is "quickly passing" (v. 14; 6:12). This is one of the key terms in the Book of Ecclesiastes, for it is found 38 times here, but only 34 times throughout the rest of the Old Testament. The teaching of the Preacher is to realize that life is a fleeting thing that needs to be savored and enjoyed as a gift from God.

1:4 ***One generation.*** This term suggests both the human actors and the natural phenomena as well. With the verb "passes" we have the first of a series of antitheses in Ecclesiastes. ***the earth abides forever.*** Only God is eternal and everlasting in the fullest sense. But compared to the lives of humankind, the earth abides with little change.

1:1 [a] Prov. 1:1 **1:2** [b] Ps. 39:5, 6; 62:9; 144:4 [c] [Rom. 8:20, 21] **1:3** [d] Eccl. 2:22; 3:9 **1:4** [e] Ps. 104:5; 119:90 **1:5** [f] Ps. 19:4–6 **1:6** [g] John 3:8 **1:7** [h] [Jer. 5:22] **1:8** [i] Prov. 27:20 **1:9** [j] Eccl. 3:15

It has already been in ancient times
before us.
11 *There is* [k]no remembrance of former
things,
Nor will there be any remembrance of
things that are to come
By *those* who will come after.

The Grief of Wisdom

12 I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in
Jerusalem. 13 And I set my heart to seek and
[l]search out by wisdom concerning all that
is done under heaven; [m]this burdensome
task God has given to the sons of man, by
which they may be exercised. 14 I have seen
all the works that are done under the sun;
and indeed, all *is* vanity and grasping for
the wind.

15 [n]*What is* crooked cannot be made
straight,
And what is lacking cannot be
numbered.

16 I communed with my heart, saying,
"Look, I have attained greatness, and have
gained [o]more wisdom than all who were
before me in Jerusalem. My heart has
understood great wisdom and knowledge."
17 [p]And I set my heart to know wisdom and
to know madness and folly. I perceived that
this also is grasping for the wind.

18 For [q]in much wisdom *is* much grief,
And he who increases knowledge
increases sorrow.

The Vanity of Pleasure

2 I said [a]in my heart, "Come now, I will
test you with [b]mirth; therefore enjoy
pleasure"; but surely, [c]this also *was* vanity. 2 I said of laughter—"Madness!"; and
of mirth, "What does it accomplish?" 3 [d]I
searched in my heart *how* to gratify my
flesh with wine, while guiding my heart
with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly,
till I might see what *was* [e]good for the sons
of men to do under heaven all the days of
their lives.

4 I made my works great, I built myself
[f]houses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I
made myself gardens and orchards, and
I planted all *kinds* of fruit trees in them.
6 I made myself water pools from which
to water the growing trees of the grove. 7 I
acquired male and female servants, and
had servants born in my house. Yes, I had
greater possessions of herds and flocks
than all who were in Jerusalem before me.
8 [g]I also gathered for myself silver and gold
and the special treasures of kings and of
the provinces. I acquired male and female
singers, the delights of the sons of men,
and musical instruments* of all kinds.

9 [h]So I became great and excelled [i]more
than all who were before me in Jerusalem.
Also my wisdom remained with me.

10 Whatever my eyes desired I did not
keep from them.
I did not withhold my heart from any
pleasure,
For my heart rejoiced in all my labor;
And [j]this was my reward from all my
labor.
11 Then I looked on all the works that my
hands had done
And on the labor in which I had toiled;
And indeed all *was* [k]vanity and
grasping for the wind.
There was no profit under the sun.

The End of the Wise and the Fool

12 Then I turned myself to consider
wisdom [l]and madness and folly;
For what *can* the man *do* who
succeeds the king?—
Only what he has already [m]done.
13 Then I saw that wisdom [n]excels folly
As light excels darkness.
14 [o]The wise man's eyes *are* in his head,
But the fool walks in darkness.
Yet I myself perceived
That [p]the same event happens to them
all.

15 So I said in my heart,
"As it happens to the fool,
It also happens to me,

* **2:8** Exact meaning unknown

1:13 ***under heaven.*** This is a synonymous expression for "under the sun" (vv. 3,9); it refers to life as it is lived by people on earth.

1:14 ***grasping for the wind.*** This phrase does not occur in the Hebrew Bible outside of Ecclesiastes. Seven of its nine occurrences (v. 14; 2:11,17,26; 4:4,6; 6:9) follow "vanity" statements. The phrase explains the nature of life according to the Preacher. Life is real, but quickly passing; any attempt to slow it is futile.

2:1 ***Come now, I will test you with mirth.*** The Preacher uses a literary device of conversing with himself as a way of describing his thought processes.

pleasure. A new test is proposed, following the test of wisdom. It is the test of "joy."

2:2 ***Madness.*** Solomon labels the lighter side of pleasure and joy as sheer madness, but even the weightier aspects of laughter cause Solomon to ask if anything substantial is really achieved. As Solomon writes in Proverbs 14:13, "Even in laughter the heart may sorrow, and the end of mirth may be grief."

2:10 ***my eyes desired.*** Solomon had limitless ability to fulfill any and all of his desires.

2:11 ***indeed all was vanity.*** At the end of his grand quest for possessions and experiences, Solomon

1:11 [k] Eccl. 2:16 **1:13** [l] [Eccl. 7:25; 8:16, 17] [m] Eccl. 3:10 **1:15** [n] Eccl. 7:13 **1:16** [o] 1 Kin. 3:12, 13 **1:17** [p] Eccl. 2:3, 12; 7:23, 25 **1:18** [q] Eccl. 12:12 **2:1** [a] Luke 12:19 [b] [Eccl. 7:4; 8:15] [c] Eccl. 1:2 **2:3** [d] Eccl. 1:17 [e] [Eccl. 3:12, 13; 5:18; 6:12] **2:4** [f] 1 Kin. 7:1–12 **2:8** [g] 1 Kin. 9:28; 10:10, 14, 21 **2:9** [h] Eccl. 1:16 [i] 2 Chr. 9:22 **2:10** [j] Eccl. 3:22; 5:18; 9:9 **2:11** [k] Eccl. 1:3, 14 **2:12** [l] Eccl. 1:17; 7:25 [m] Eccl. 1:9 **2:13** [n] Eccl. 7:11, 14, 19; 9:18; 10:10 **2:14** [o] Prov. 17:24 [p] Ps. 49:10

And why was I then more wise?"
Then I said in my heart,
"This also *is* vanity."
16 For *there is* [q]no more remembrance
of the wise than of the fool
forever,
Since all that now *is* will be forgotten
in the days to come.
And how does a wise *man* die?
As the fool!

17 Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun *was* distressing to me, for all *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

18 Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because [r]I must leave it to the man who will come after me. 19 And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also *is* vanity. 20 Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under the sun. 21 For there is a man whose labor *is* with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also *is* vanity and a great evil. 22 [s]For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun? 23 For all his days *are* [t]sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity.

24 [u]Nothing *is* better for a man *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God. 25 For who can eat, or who can have enjoyment, more than I?* 26 For *God* gives [v]wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who *is* good in His sight; but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that [w]he may give to *him who is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

Everything Has Its Time

3 To everything *there is* a season,
A [a]time for every purpose under
heaven:

2 A time to be born,
And [b]a time to die;
A time to plant,
And a time to pluck *what is* planted;
3 A time to kill,
And a time to heal;
A time to break down,
And a time to build up;
4 A time to [c]weep,
And a time to laugh;
A time to mourn,
And a time to dance;
5 A time to cast away stones,
And a time to gather stones;
[d]A time to embrace,
And a time to refrain from embracing;
6 A time to gain,
And a time to lose;
A time to keep,
And a time to throw away;
7 A time to tear,
And a time to sew;
[e]A time to keep silence,
And a time to [f]speak;

* **2:25** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Syriac read *without Him*.

concluded that it was "vanity" or a "vapor," a striving after the wind. That is, even with all he had done and experienced, there was still a sense that nothing lasting or enduring had been achieved.

2:17 *Therefore I hated life.* Such hatred of life is astonishing since the one who finds wisdom also finds life, according to Proverbs 3:16. But the Preacher's dissatisfaction was related to the quickly passing nature of everything (1:2), including the good things.

2:21 *This also is vanity and a great evil.* The term *evil* often has a sense of moral evil; here, however, it may mean "calamity" or "ruin." There is a sense of sadness that runs through this section. Nothing that we gain in this life can be carried on into the life to come.

2:24 *eat and drink.* The Preacher concludes that all good is located only in God. This phrase marks one of the central affirmations of the book (3:12,22; 8:15; 9:7); in the midst of a world of trouble, a believer is able to seize the moment in joy from God. Only God supplies the key to the meaning of life. Without Him, genuine meaning, satisfaction, and enjoyment in life are ultimately elusive.

2:26 *God gives wisdom, and knowledge, and joy.* One of the words used most frequently in Ecclesiastes to describe God's relationship to individuals is a verb "to give." It appears 11 times with God as the subject. Joy is God's gift to the man who is good in His sight. God has designed us so that true joy is possible only through Him.

3:1–15 *To everything there is a season.* Some regard the Book of Ecclesiastes as describing life apart from God. But clearly this text describes life that is lived in relationship with God. Through these words, the Preacher is not saying that everything has an opportune time according to which one should choose one action or the other. Rather, he teaches that all events are in the hand of God, who makes everything happen in the time He judges appropriate.

3:5 *A time to cast away stones.* In times of peace, stones were cleared from the fields allowing for cultivation. In wartime, the rocks were thrown on the fields to make them unusable (2 Kin. 3:19,25).

3:7 *A time to tear, And a time to sew.* When bad news came, it was customary to rip one's garments to show grief (2 Sam. 13:31). When the problem passed, it was just as well to sew the garment back together.

2:16 [q] Eccl. 1:11; 4:16 **2:18** [r] Ps. 49:10 **2:22** [s] Eccl. 1:3; 3:9 **2:23** [t] Job 5:7; 14:1 **2:24** [u] Eccl. 3:12, 13, 22 **2:26** [v] Prov. 2:6 [w] Prov. 28:8 **3:1** [a] Eccl. 3:17; 8:6 **3:2** [b] Heb. 9:27 **3:4** [c] Rom. 12:15 **3:5** [d] Joel 2:16 **3:7** [e] Amos 5:13 [f] Prov. 25:11

8 A time to love,
And a time to [g]hate;
A time of war,
And a time of peace.

The God-Given Task

9 [h]What profit has the worker from that
in which he labors? 10 [i]I have seen the God-
given task with which the sons of men are
to be occupied. 11 He has made everything
beautiful in its time. Also He has put eter-
nity in their hearts, except that [j]no one can
find out the work that God does from be-
ginning to end.

12 I know that nothing *is* [k]better for them
than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives,
13 and also that [l]every man should eat and
drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—
it *is* the gift of God.

14 I know that whatever God does,
It shall be forever.
[m]Nothing can be added to it,
And nothing taken from it.
God does *it*, that men should fear
before Him.
15 [n]That which is has already been,
And what is to be has already been;
And God requires an account of what
is past.

Injustice Seems to Prevail

16 Moreover [o]I saw under the sun:

In the place of judgment,
Wickedness *was* there;
And *in* the place of righteousness,
Iniquity *was* there.

17 I said in my heart,

[p]"God shall judge the righteous and the
wicked,
For *there is* a time there for every
purpose and for every work."

18 I said in my heart, "Concerning the con-
dition of the sons of men, God tests them,
that they may see that they themselves
are *like* animals." 19 [q]For what happens to
the sons of men also happens to animals;
one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies
the other. Surely, they all have one breath;
man has no advantage over animals, for
all *is* vanity. 20 All go to one place: [r]all
are from the dust, and all return to dust.
21 [s]Who knows the spirit of the sons of men,
which goes upward, and the spirit of the
animal, which goes down to the earth?*
22 [t]So I perceived that nothing *is* better
than that a man should rejoice in his own
works, for [u]that *is* his heritage. [v]For who
can bring him to see what will happen af-
ter him?

4 Then I returned and considered all the
[a]oppression that is done under the sun:

And look! The tears of the oppressed,
But they have no comforter—
On the side of their oppressors *there*
is power,
But they have no comforter.
2 [b]Therefore I praised the dead who were
already dead,
More than the living who are still
alive.
3 [c]Yet, better than both *is he* who has
never existed,
Who has not seen the evil work that is
done under the sun.

The Vanity of Selfish Toil

4 Again, I saw that for all toil and every
skillful work a man is envied by his neigh-
bor. This also *is* vanity and grasping for
the wind.

5 [d]The fool folds his hands
And consumes his own flesh.

* **3:21** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *Who knows whether the spirit … goes upward, and whether … goes downward to the earth?*

3:9 ***What profit has the worker.*** This is the same question posed in 1:3. The answer here is that all of life unfolds at the appointment of God. All the toiling of man cannot change the time, circumstances, and control of events that God has reserved for Himself.

3:11 ***put eternity in their hearts.*** This phrase refers to a deep-seated, compulsive drive to transcend our mortality by knowing the meaning and destiny of the world. Because we are made in the image of God, we have an inborn inquisitiveness about eternal realities. We can find peace only when we come to know our eternal Creator. Even then, we know God only in part (1 Cor. 13:12).

3:12–13 ***nothing is better . . . to rejoice.*** As in 2:24, the advice of the Preacher is to seize the day in the joy of God. Biblical faith is a call for joy, even when we live in a wicked world and under terrible stress; this is because we find true joy in the living God.

3:16–17 ***Wickedness was there.*** It was outrageous that in the very establishments where people should expect justice, they could find only wickedness. The Preacher warns the wicked judges that God, the final Judge, will come to rectify all wrongdoing and bring true justice.

3:20 ***All go to one place.*** Both humans and beasts die and go to the grave. But this is not the end for human beings—they will face eternal life or death.

4:1 ***they have no comforter.*** So much pain can come to the downtrodden that they may even despair of life (1 Kin. 19:4). Only when the oppressed go into the house of God will they gain perspective (5:1–6; Ps. 73:17).

4:3 ***who has never existed.*** So powerfully wrong and so lonely is the suffering of the oppressed, that Solomon, with a good deal of poetic license similar to Job 3:3–10, argues that nonexistence could be preferred over existence.

3:8 [g] Luke 14:26 **3:9** [h] Eccl. 1:3 **3:10** [i] Eccl. 1:13 **3:11** [j] Rom. 11:33 **3:12** [k] Eccl. 2:3, 24 **3:13** [l] Eccl. 2:24 **3:14** [m] James 1:17 **3:15** [n] Eccl. 1:9 **3:16** [o] Eccl. 5:8 **3:17** [p] [Rom. 2:6–10] **3:19** [q] [Eccl. 2:16] **3:20** [r] Gen. 3:19 **3:21** [s] Eccl. 12:7 **3:22** [t] Eccl. 2:24; 5:18 [u] Eccl. 2:10 [v] Eccl. 6:12; 8:7 **4:1** [a] Eccl. 3:16; 5:8 **4:2** [b] Job 3:17, 18 **4:3** [c] Job 3:11–22 **4:5** [d] Prov. 6:10; 24:33

6 [e]Better a handful *with* quietness
Than both hands full, *together with*
toil and grasping for the wind.

7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun:

8 There is one alone, without
companion:
He has neither son nor brother.
Yet *there is* no end to all his labors,
Nor is his [f]eye satisfied with riches.
But [g]*he never asks,*
"For whom do I toil and deprive myself
of [h]good?"
This also *is* vanity and a grave
misfortune.

The Value of a Friend

9 Two *are* better than one,
Because they have a good reward for
their labor.
10 For if they fall, one will lift up his
companion.
But woe to him *who is* alone when he
falls,
For *he has* no one to help him up.
11 Again, if two lie down together, they
will keep warm;
But how can one be warm *alone?*
12 Though one may be overpowered by
another, two can withstand him.
And a threefold cord is not quickly
broken.

Popularity Passes Away

13 Better a poor and wise youth
Than an old and foolish king who will
be admonished no more.
14 For he comes out of prison to be
king,
Although he was born poor in his
kingdom.
15 I saw all the living who walk under the
sun;
They were with the second youth who
stands in his place.
16 *There was* no end of all the people
over whom he was made king;
Yet those who come afterward will not
rejoice in him.
Surely this also *is* vanity and grasping
for the wind.

Fear God, Keep Your Vows

5 Walk [a]prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather [b]than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil.

2 Do not be [c]rash with your mouth,
And let not your heart utter anything
hastily before God.
For God *is* in heaven, and you on
earth;
Therefore let your words [d]be few.
3 For a dream comes through much
activity,
And [e]a fool's voice *is known* by *his*
many words.

4 [f]When you make a vow to God, do not
delay to [g]pay it;
For *He has* no pleasure in fools.
Pay what you have vowed—
5 [h]Better not to vow than to vow and not
pay.

6 Do not let your [i]mouth cause your flesh to sin, [j]nor say before the messenger *of God* that it *was* an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse* and destroy the work of your hands? 7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there is* also vanity. But [k]fear God.

The Vanity of Gain and Honor

8 If you [l]see the oppression of the poor, and the violent perversion of justice and righteousness in a province, do not marvel at the matter; for [m]high official watches over high official, and higher officials are over them.

9 Moreover the profit of the land is for all; *even* the king is served from the field.

10 He who loves silver will not be
satisfied with silver;
Nor he who loves abundance, with
increase.
This also *is* vanity.

* **5:6** Literally *voice*

4:8 ***Nor is his eye satisfied.*** Man is in love with what is vanishing. The antidote for covetousness is to replace sinful desire for increase in wealth, with a strong passion for doing the will of God (1 John 2:17).
4:9–12 ***Two are better than one.*** Throughout this section there is an emphasis on the obvious benefits of companions. The intimacy and sharing of life brings relief for the problem of isolation and loneliness. A companion can offer assistance, comfort, and defense—a threefold cord.
5:1 ***Walk prudently.*** This means behave yourself. The idea of righteous behavior is rephrased at the end of the section in the words: "fear God" (5:7).
5:4–5 ***When you make a vow to God.*** One should not attempt to bribe God with a hasty vow. The first part of this verse is almost identical to Deuteronomy 23:21. See the later example of the lie of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–11).
5:7 ***fear God.*** This is a central theme of the Book of Ecclesiastes. It does not mean to be afraid of God (Ex. 20:2). It means to have reverence, awe, and wonder in response to His glory.
5:10 ***will not be satisfied.*** Desire always outruns possessions, no matter how vast acquisitions may grow.

4:6 [e] Prov. 15:16, 17; 16:8 **4:8** [f] [1 John 2:16] [g] Ps. 39:6 [h] Eccl. 2:18–21 **5:1** [a] Ex. 3:5 [b] [1 Sam. 15:22] **5:2** [c] Prov. 20:25 [d] Matt. 6:7 **5:3** [e] Prov. 10:19 **5:4** [f] Num. 30:2 [g] Ps. 66:13, 14 **5:5** [h] Acts 5:4 **5:6** [i] Prov. 6:2 [j] 1 Cor. 11:10 **5:7** [k] [Eccl. 12:13] **5:8** [l] Eccl. 3:16 [m] [Ps. 12:5; 58:11; 82:1]

11 When goods increase,
They increase who eat them;
So what profit have the owners
Except to see *them* with their eyes?

12 The sleep of a laboring man *is* sweet,
Whether he eats little or much;
But the abundance of the rich will not
permit him to sleep.

13 [n]There is a severe evil *which* I have
seen under the sun:
Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.
14 But those riches perish through
misfortune;
When he begets a son, *there is* nothing
in his hand.
15 [o]As he came from his mother's womb,
naked shall he return,
To go as he came;
And he shall take nothing from his
labor
Which he may carry away in his hand.

16 And this also *is* a severe evil—
Just exactly as he came, so shall he go.
And [p]what profit has he [q]who has
labored for the wind?
17 All his days [r]he also eats in darkness,
And *he has* much sorrow and sickness
and anger.

18 Here is what I have seen: [s]*It is* good
and fitting *for one* to eat and drink, and to
enjoy the good of all his labor in which he
toils under the sun all the days of his life
which God gives him; [t]for it *is* his heritage.
19 As for [u]every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power
to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor—this *is* the [v]gift of God.
20 For he will not dwell unduly on the days
of his life, because God keeps *him* busy
with the joy of his heart.

6 There[a] is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among
men: 2 A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor, [b]so that he lacks
nothing for himself of all he desires; [c]yet
God does not give him power to eat of it,
but a foreigner consumes it. This *is* vanity,
and it *is* an evil affliction.

3 If a man begets a hundred *children* and
lives many years, so that the days of his
years are many, but his soul is not satisfied
with goodness, or [d]indeed he has no burial,
I say *that* [e]a stillborn child *is* better than
he— 4 for it comes in vanity and departs
in darkness, and its name is covered with
darkness. 5 Though it has not seen the sun
or known *anything*, this has more rest than
that man, 6 even if he lives a thousand years
twice—but has not seen goodness. Do not
all go to one [f]place?

7 [g]All the labor of man *is* for his mouth,
And yet the soul is not satisfied.
8 For what more has the wise *man* than
the fool?
What does the poor man have,
Who knows *how* to walk before the
living?
9 Better *is* the [h]sight of the eyes than the
wandering of desire.
This also *is* vanity and grasping for
the wind.

10 Whatever one is, he has been named
[i]already,
For it is known that he *is* man;
[j]And he cannot contend with Him who
is mightier than he.
11 Since there are many things that
increase vanity,
How *is* man the better?

12 For who knows what *is* good for man
in life, all the days of his vain life which he
passes like [k]a shadow? [l]Who can tell a man
what will happen after him under the sun?

The Value of Practical Wisdom

7 A [a]good name *is* better than precious
ointment,
And the day of death than the day of
one's [b]birth;
2 Better to go to the house of mourning
Than to go to the house of feasting,
For that *is* the end of all men;
And the living will take *it* to [c]heart.
3 Sorrow *is* better than laughter,
[d]For by a sad countenance the heart is
made better.

5:15 ***As he came . . . naked.*** The maxim that "you can't take it with you" is affirmed here (2:21).
5:19 ***this is the gift of God.*** God has separated the gift of enjoying something from the gift of the object itself so that we might be driven back to the Giver.
6:2 ***God does not give him power.*** Prosperity without the divine gift of enjoyment amounts to nothing (5:19).
6:6 ***Do not all go to one place?*** That *one place* is the grave (3:20). If a long life terminates in death with no prospect of anything else, will that life have been worthwhile? Long life without knowing God and without the power to enjoy it is indeed frustrating and useless.
6:12 ***like a shadow.*** This phrase is a confirmation of the meaning of the Hebrew word translated *vanity.* Life passes away quickly, like a vapor. ***what will happen after him.*** The implied answer is that only God knows what will happen to us after death. Rather than imply that nothing exists beyond the grave, this book teaches that each person's life will be reviewed by God after death.
7:2–4 ***house of mourning.*** We may learn more about the meaning of life in the house of mourning than in the house of mirth.

5:13 [n] Eccl. 6:1, 2 **5:15** [o] 1 Tim. 6:7 **5:16** [p] Eccl. 1:3 [q] Prov. 11:29 **5:17** [r] Ps. 127:2 **5:18** [s] [1 Tim. 6:17] [t] Eccl. 2:10; 3:22 **5:19** [u] [Eccl. 6:2] [v] Eccl. 2:24; 3:13 **6:1** [a] Eccl. 5:13 **6:2** [b] Job 21:10 [c] Luke 12:20 **6:3** [d] Is. 14:19, 20 [e] Job 3:16 **6:6** [f] Eccl. 2:14, 15 **6:7** [g] Prov. 16:26 **6:9** [h] Eccl. 11:9 **6:10** [i] Eccl. 1:9; 3:15 [j] Job 9:32 **6:12** [k] James 4:14 [l] Eccl. 3:22 **7:1** [a] Prov. 22:1 [b] Eccl. 4:2 **7:2** [c] [Ps. 90:12] **7:3** [d] [2 Cor. 7:10]

4 The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning,
But the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

5 [e]*It is* better to hear the rebuke of the wise
Than for a man to hear the song of fools.
6 [f]For like the crackling of thorns under a pot,
So *is* the laughter of the fool.
This also is vanity.
7 Surely oppression destroys a wise *man's* reason,
[g]And a bribe debases the heart.

8 The end of a thing *is* better than its beginning;
[h]The patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.
9 [i]Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry,
For anger rests in the bosom of fools.
10 Do not say,
"Why were the former days better than these?"
For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom *is* good with an inheritance,
And profitable [j]to those who see the sun.
12 For wisdom *is* a [k]defense *as* money *is* a defense,
But the excellence of knowledge *is that* wisdom gives [l]life to those who have it.

13 Consider the work of God;
For [m]who can make straight what He has made crooked?
14 [n]In the day of prosperity be joyful,
But in the day of adversity consider:
Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other,
So that man can find out nothing *that will come* after him.

15 I have seen everything in my days of vanity:

[o]There is a just *man* who perishes in his righteousness,
And there is a wicked *man* who prolongs *life* in his wickedness.

16 [p]Do not be overly righteous,
[q]Nor be overly wise:
Why should you destroy yourself?
17 Do not be overly wicked,
Nor be foolish:
[r]Why should you die before your time?
18 *It is* good that you grasp this,
And also not remove your hand from the other;
For he who [s]fears God will escape them all.

19 [t]Wisdom strengthens the wise
More than ten rulers of the city.

20 [u]For *there is* not a just man on earth who does good
And does not sin.

21 Also do not take to heart everything people say,
Lest you hear your servant cursing you.
22 For many times, also, your own heart has known
That even you have cursed others.

23 All this I have proved by wisdom.
[v]I said, "I will be wise";
But it *was* far from me.
24 [w]As for that which is far off and [x]exceedingly deep,
Who can find it out?
25 [y]I applied my heart to know,
To search and seek out wisdom and the reason *of things*,
To know the wickedness of folly,
Even of foolishness *and* madness.

7:9 *anger rests in the bosom of fools.* Anger is a destructive flood, working all kinds of havoc in our lives. It often leads to protracted and bitter strife (Prov. 30:33). It disrupts and disunites families (1 Sam. 20:30) and may lead to murder (Gen. 4:4–5; 49:6).
7:13 *straight what He has made crooked.* The bend that needs straightening is the presence of afflictions and adversities in life. Both prosperity and adversity come from the hand of God. For prosperity give thanks, but in adversity reflect on the goodness and the comprehensiveness of the plan of God.
7:15 *There is a just man.* There are inequities in life that will always be a mystery (3:16—4:3; 8:14).
7:16–18 *Be not be overly righteous.* Few verses in Ecclesiastes are more susceptible to incorrect interpretation than these. This one is not the so-called golden mean that advises: "Don't be too holy and don't be too wicked; sin to a moderate degree." The Preacher was warning instead about pseudo-religiosity and showy forms of worship as well as self-righteousness and judgmental legalism.
7:20 Individual Sin—The depravity of man is verifiable. In Romans 3:23, Paul echoes this when he says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." All we have to do is watch the news or check the headlines and we are forced to deal with this reality. Each individual man, woman, and child needs the righteousness of God. Without God's righteousness no one can ever enter or stand in God's presence. We all need new life in Christ because we are all sinners.
7:24 *Who can find it out?* The theme of wisdom's inaccessibility also appears in Job 28. The answer to this search for wisdom is that God can find wisdom (Job 28:23–28).

7:5 [e] Ps. 141:5 **7:6** [f] Eccl. 2:2 **7:7** [g] Ex. 23:8 **7:8** [h] Prov. 14:29 **7:9** [i] James 1:19 **7:11** [j] Eccl. 11:7 **7:12** [k] Eccl. 9:18 [l] Prov. 3:18 **7:13** [m] Job 12:14 **7:14** [n] Deut. 28:47 **7:15** [o] Eccl. 8:12–14 **7:16** [p] Prov. 25:16 [q] Rom. 12:3 **7:17** [r] Job 15:32 **7:18** [s] Eccl. 3:14; 5:7; 8:12, 13 **7:19** [t] Prov. 21:22 **7:20** [u] 1 John 1:8 **7:23** [v] Rom. 1:22 **7:24** [w] 1 Tim. 6:16 [x] Rom. 11:33 **7:25** [y] Eccl. 1:17

26 [z]And I find more bitter than death
The woman whose heart *is* snares and nets,
Whose hands *are* fetters.
He who pleases God shall escape from her,
But the sinner shall be trapped by her.

27 "Here is what I have found," says [a]the Preacher,
"*Adding* one thing to the other to find out the reason,
28 Which my soul still seeks but I cannot find:
[b]One man among a thousand I have found,
But a woman among all these I have not found.
29 Truly, this only I have found:
[c]That God made man upright,
But [d]they have sought out many schemes."

8 Who *is* like a wise *man?*
And who knows the interpretation of a thing?
[a]A man's wisdom makes his face shine,
And [b]the sternness of his face is changed.

Obey Authorities for God's Sake

2 I *say,* "Keep the king's commandment [c]for the sake of your oath to God. 3 [d]Do not be hasty to go from his presence. Do not take your stand for an evil thing, for he does whatever pleases him."

4 Where the word of a king *is, there is* power;
And [e]who may say to him, "What are you doing?"
5 He who keeps his command will experience nothing harmful;
And a wise man's heart discerns both time and judgment,
6 Because [f]for every matter there is a time and judgment,
Though the misery of man increases greatly.
7 [g]For he does not know what will happen;
So who can tell him when it will occur?
8 [h]No one has power over the spirit to retain the spirit,
And no one has power in the day of death.
There is [i]no release from that war,
And wickedness will not deliver those who are given to it.

9 All this I have seen, and applied my heart to every work that is done under the sun: *There is* a time in which one man rules over another to his own hurt.

Death Comes to All

10 Then I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of holiness, and they were [j]forgotten* in the city where they had so done. This also *is* vanity. 11 [k]Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. 12 [l]Though a sinner does evil a hundred *times,* and his *days* are prolonged, yet I surely know that [m]it will be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him. 13 But it will not be well with the wicked; nor will he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow, because he does not fear before God.

14 There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just *men* to whom it [n]happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked *men* to whom it happens according to the work of the [o]righteous. I said that this also *is* vanity.

15 [p]So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor *all* the days of his life which God gives him under the sun.

16 When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on earth, even though one sees no sleep day or night, 17 then I saw all the work of God, that [q]a man cannot find out the work that

* **8:10** Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *praised.*

7:29 *God made man upright.* God created men to do right. They have preferred to search out their own path.

8:1 *makes his face shine . . . sternness of his face is changed.* This idiom is an image of a person who is stable. Out of the depths of experience and understanding, that person is able to enjoy life and build up others.

8:8 *power over the spirit to retain the spirit.* In this context *spirit* could mean "life force" (3:19). God is in charge.

8:15 *eat, drink, and be merry.* In contrast to the search for the meaning of all things is the contentment that a wise, loving God gives to those who will receive His gifts. Here is one of the central themes of Ecclesiastes. The Preacher marks the end of the third major section of his book with this refrain. The wicked person (the fool) decides that the best thing to do is "to eat, drink, and be merry" with no thought given to the living God. But the righteous person (the wise) can enjoy life while thinking of God and His good gifts.

7:26 [z] Prov. 5:3, 4 **7:27** [a] Ecc. 1:1, 2 **7:28** [b] Job 33:23 **7:29** [c] Gen. 1:27 [d] Gen. 3:6, 7 **8:1** [a] Acts 6:15 [b] Deut. 28:50 **8:2** [c] 1 Chr. 29:24 **8:3** [d] Ecc. 10:4 **8:4** [e] Job 34:18 **8:6** [f] Ecc. 3:1, 17 **8:7** [g] Ecc. 6:12 **8:8** [h] Ps. 49:6, 7 [i] Deut. 20:5–8 **8:10** [j] Ecc. 2:16; 9:5 **8:11** [k] Is. 26:10 **8:12** [l] Is. 65:20 [m] [Is. 3:10] **8:14** [n] Ps. 73:14 [o] Ecc. 2:14; 7:15; 9:1–3 **8:15** [p] Ecc. 2:24 **8:17** [q] Rom. 11:33

is done under the sun. For though a man labors to discover *it,* yet he will not find *it;* moreover, though a wise *man* attempts to know *it,* he will not be able to find *it*.

9 For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: [a]that the righteous and the wise and their works *are* in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred *by* anything *they see* before them. 2[b]All things *come* alike to all:

One event *happens* to the righteous
and the wicked;
To the good,* the clean, and the
unclean;
To him who sacrifices and him who
does not sacrifice.
As is the good, so *is* the sinner;
He who takes an oath as *he* who fears
an oath.

3This *is* an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing *happens* to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness *is* in their hearts while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead. 4But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know that they will
die;
But [c]the dead know nothing,
And they have no more reward,
For [d]the memory of them is
forgotten.
6 Also their love, their hatred, and their
envy have now perished;
Nevermore will they have a share
In anything done under the sun.

7 Go, [e]eat your bread with joy,
And drink your wine with a merry
heart;
For God has already accepted your
works.
8 Let your garments always be white,
And let your head lack no oil.

9Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; [f]for that *is* your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

10[g]Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with your [h]might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

11I returned [i]and saw under the sun that—

The race *is* not to the swift,
Nor the battle to the strong,
Nor bread to the wise,
Nor riches to men of understanding,
Nor favor to men of skill;
But time and [j]chance happen to them
all.
12 For [k]man also does not know his
time:
Like fish taken in a cruel net,
Like birds caught in a snare,
So the sons of men *are* [l]snared in an
evil time,
When it falls suddenly upon them.

Wisdom Superior to Folly

13This wisdom I have also seen under the sun, and it *seemed* great to me: 14[m]*There was* a little city with few men in it; and a great king came against it, besieged it, and built great snares* around it. 15Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that same poor man.

16Then I said:

"Wisdom *is* better than [n]strength.
Nevertheless [o]the poor man's wisdom
is despised,
And his words are not heard.
17 Words of the wise, *spoken* quietly,
should be heard
Rather than the shout of a ruler of
fools.
18 Wisdom *is* better than weapons of
war;
But [p]one sinner destroys much
good."

* **9:2** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *good and bad.* * **9:14** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *bulwarks.*

9:1 ***neither love nor hatred.*** Sometimes in Hebrew two opposites together are a way of saying "everything." Love and hate are best viewed as words for God's favor and disfavor.

9:5 ***the dead know nothing.*** This is not a flat denial of any hope beyond the grave. The point of view is limited to what can be known strictly from the human point of view, "under the sun."

9:8 ***Let your garments always be white.*** It was difficult in ancient times to keep white clothing clean (see analogy in Is. 1:18). White clothing and ointments—oil—were symbols of joy and purity.

9:11 ***not to the swift . . . to the strong . . . wise . . . understanding . . . men of skill.*** We would like to think that the best always win, that the deserving are always rewarded. But our experience shows that these expectations are not always realized. These five assets were enjoyed by individuals. But while some planned and counted on their assets, God in the end determined their lot.

9:14–18 ***There was a little city.*** Here is a parable about how an unstoppable military operation against a small city was prevented by the wisdom of one poor but wise man. The conclusion is that wisdom is preferable to strength, and should be heeded.

9:1 [a] Eccl. 8:14 **9:2** [b] Mal. 3:15 **9:5** [c] Is. 63:16 [d] Is. 26:14 **9:7** [e] Eccl. 8:15 **9:9** [f] Eccl. 2:10 **9:10** [g] [Col. 3:17] [h] Rom. 12:11 **9:11** [i] Amos 2:14, 15 [j] 1 Sam. 6:9 **9:12** [k] Eccl. 8:7 [l] Prov. 29:6 **9:14** [m] 2 Sam. 20:16–22 **9:16** [n] Eccl. 7:12, 19 [o] Mark 6:2, 3 **9:18** [p] Josh. 7:1–26

10 Dead flies putrefy* the perfumer's
ointment,
And cause it to give off a foul odor;
So does a little folly to one respected
for wisdom *and* honor.
2 A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand,
But a fool's heart at his left.
3 Even when a fool walks along the way,
He lacks wisdom,
[a]And he shows everyone *that* he *is* a
fool.
4 If the spirit of the ruler rises against
you,
[b]Do not leave your post;
For [c]conciliation pacifies great
offenses.
5 There is an evil I have seen under the
sun,
As an error proceeding from the ruler:
6 [d]Folly is set in great dignity,
While the rich sit in a lowly place.
7 I have seen servants [e]on horses,
While princes walk on the ground like
servants.
8 [f]He who digs a pit will fall into it,
And whoever breaks through a wall
will be bitten by a serpent.
9 He who quarries stones may be hurt
by them,
And he who splits wood may be
endangered by it.
10 If the ax is dull,
And one does not sharpen the edge,
Then he must use more strength;
But wisdom brings success.
11 A serpent may bite [g]when *it is* not
charmed;
The babbler is no different.
12 [h]The words of a wise man's mouth *are*
gracious,
But [i]the lips of a fool shall swallow
him up;
13 The words of his mouth begin with
foolishness,
And the end of his talk *is* raving
madness.
14 [j]A fool also multiplies words.
No man knows what is to be;
Who can tell him [k]what will be after
him?
15 The labor of fools wearies them,
For they do not even know how to go
to the city!
16 [l]Woe to you, O land, when your king *is*
a child,
And your princes feast in the morning!
17 Blessed *are* you, O land, when your
king *is* the son of nobles,
And your [m]princes feast at the proper
time—
For strength and not for drunkenness!
18 Because of laziness the building
decays,
And [n]through idleness of hands the
house leaks.
19 A feast is made for laughter,
And [o]wine makes merry;
But money answers everything.
20 [p]Do not curse the king, even in your
thought;
Do not curse the rich, even in your
bedroom;
For a bird of the air may carry your
voice,
And a bird in flight may tell the
matter.

The Value of Diligence

11 Cast your bread [a]upon the waters,
[b]For you will find it after many days.
2 [c]Give a serving [d]to seven, and also to
eight,
[e]For you do not know what evil will be
on the earth.
3 If the clouds are full of rain,
They empty *themselves* upon the
earth;
And if a tree falls to the south or the
north,
In the place where the tree falls, there
it shall lie.
4 He who observes the wind will not sow,
And he who regards the clouds will
not reap.

* **10:1** Targum and Vulgate omit *putrefy*.

10:1 ***Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment.*** Just as one fly can ruin a whole batch of ointment, so an ounce of folly will spoil a pound of wisdom.
10:2 ***A wise man's heart is at his right hand.*** In ancient thought, the right hand was the place of honor and favor, while the left hand was the reverse.
10:10 ***If the ax is dull.*** The wise person will sharpen the ax. A person of limited training will have to work harder, as though with a dull ax, than someone wiser whose tools are maintained.
10:17 ***Blessed are you, O land.*** Useful nobility expresses itself in a sense of responsibility and deference to social order. This verse is an argument for propriety.
11:1 ***Cast your bread upon the waters.*** Verses 1–6 emphasize the element of risk and uncertainty in commercial and agricultural enterprises. Thus if the preceding proverbs in chapter 10 deal with royalty and leaders, these in verses 1–6 deal with common people. Men and women must venture forth judiciously if they are ever to realize a gain, even though there is always a certain amount of risk.
11:2 ***to seven, and also to eight.*** This urges us to be generous to as many as possible—and then some.
11:4 ***will not sow . . . will not reap.*** The person who

10:3 [a] Prov. 13:16; 18:2 **10:4** [b] Eccl. 8:3 [c] 1 Sam. 25:24–33 **10:6** [d] Esth. 3:1 **10:7** [e] Prov. 19:10; 30:22 **10:8** [f] Prov. 26:27 **10:11** [g] Jer. 8:17 **10:12** [h] Prov. 10:32 [i] Prov. 10:14 **10:14** [j] [Prov. 15:2] [k] Eccl. 3:22; 8:7 **10:16** [l] Is. 3:4, 5; 5:11 **10:17** [m] Prov. 31:4 **10:18** [n] Prov. 24:30–34 **10:19** [o] Ps. 104:15 **10:20** [p] Acts 23:5 **11:1** [a] Is. 32:20 [b] [Deut. 15:10] **11:2** [c] [1 Tim. 6:18, 19] [d] Mic. 5:5 [e] Eph. 5:16

5 As [f]you do not know what *is* the way
of the wind,*
[g]*Or* how the bones *grow* in the womb of
her who is with child,
So you do not know the works of God
who makes everything.
6 In the morning sow your seed,
And in the evening do not withhold
your hand;
For you do not know which will
prosper,
Either this or that,
Or whether both alike *will be* good.
7 Truly the light is sweet,
And *it is* pleasant for the eyes [h]to
behold the sun;
8 But if a man lives many years
And [i]rejoices in them all,
Yet let him [j]remember the days of
darkness,
For they will be many.
All that is coming *is* vanity.

Seek God in Early Life

9 Rejoice, O young man, in your
youth,
And let your heart cheer you in the
days of your youth;
[k]Walk in the ways of your heart,
And in the sight of your eyes;
But know that for all these
[l]God will bring you into judgment.
10 Therefore remove sorrow from your
heart,
And [m]put away evil from your
flesh,
[n]For childhood and youth *are*
vanity.

12 Remember[a] now your Creator in the
days of your youth,
Before the difficult days come,
And the years draw near [b]when you
say,
"I have no pleasure in them":
2 While the sun and the light,
The moon and the stars,
Are not darkened,
And the clouds do not return after the
rain;
3 In the day when the keepers of the
house tremble,
And the strong men bow down;
When the grinders cease because they
are few,
And those that look through the
windows grow dim;
4 When the doors are shut in the
streets,
And the sound of grinding is low;
When one rises up at the sound of a
bird,
And all [c]the daughters of music are
brought low.
5 Also they are afraid of height,
And of terrors in the way;
When the almond tree blossoms,
The grasshopper is a burden,
And desire fails.
For man goes to [d]his eternal home,
And [e]the mourners go about the
streets.
6 *Remember your Creator* before the
silver cord is loosed,*
Or the golden bowl is broken,
Or the pitcher shattered at the
fountain,
Or the wheel broken at the well.
7 [f]Then the dust will return to the earth
as it was,
[g]And the spirit will return to God [h]who
gave it.
8 "Vanity[i] of vanities," says the
Preacher,
"All *is* vanity."

The Whole Duty of Man

9 And moreover, because the Preacher
was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out
and [j]set in order many proverbs. 10 The
Preacher sought to find acceptable words;
and *what was* written *was* upright—words
of truth. 11 The words of the wise are like
goads, and the words of scholars* are like

* **11:5** Or *spirit* * **12:6** Following Qere and Targum; Kethib reads *removed;* Septuagint and Vulgate read *broken.* * **12:11** Literally *masters of the assemblies*

is so cautious that he must wait for the ideal time before he makes a move is doomed to fail.

11:9 ***Walk in the ways of your heart.*** This verse is not an invitation to live sinfully in sensual pleasure (as Num. 15:39 describes). Instead, it urges young people to enjoy themselves completely while not forgetting that God will review the quality of their life (3:17; 12:14).

12:1–8 ***Remember now your Creator.*** Most interpreters have argued that this poem is an allegory of old age.

12:2 ***Are not darkened.*** The person is losing his sight.

12:4 ***sound of grinding is low.*** A depiction of toothless old age when eating only soft foods makes little or no noise.

12:6 ***the wheel broken at the well.*** The system of veins and arteries radiating out from the heart might have appeared to the ancients like the spokes on a wheel.

12:11 ***The words of the wise are like goads.*** Just as an ox goad prods an animal in the right direction, so will the words of this book, when they are properly understood. ***well-driven nails.*** The nails or "pegs" referred to here are the same as in 2 Chronicles 3:9 and Jeremiah 10:4. These are hooks in tents where

11:5 [f] John 3:8 [g] Ps. 139:14 **11:7** [h] Eccl. 7:11 **11:8** [i] Eccl. 9:7 [j] Eccl. 12:1 **11:9** [k] Num. 15:39 [l] Eccl. 3:17; 12:14 **11:10** [m] 2 Cor. 7:1 [n] Ps. 39:5 **12:1** [a] Lam. 3:27 [b] 2 Sam. 19:35 **12:4** [c] 2 Sam. 19:35 **12:5** [d] Job 17:13 [e] Jer. 9:17 **12:7** [f] Gen. 3:19 [g] Eccl. 3:21 [h] Job 34:14 **12:8** [i] Ps. 62:9 **12:9** [j] 1 Kin. 4:32

well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.
12 And further, my son, be admonished by
these. Of making many books *there is* no
end, and [k]much study *is* wearisome to the
flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole
matter:

[l]Fear God and keep His
commandments,
For this is man's all.
14 For [m]God will bring every work into
judgment,
Including every secret thing,
Whether good or evil.

families hung the clothes and pots needed for everyday life. Here they refer to mental hooks giving stability and perspective to life.

12:13 ***keep His commandments.*** The commandments of the law are in view here. Jesus summed them up as to "love the Lord your God" and "your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:34–40). We are whole or complete only when we fear God and obey His commandments. What profit is there in living? If we follow what this book has said, we will have a relationship with God and find life in Him.

12:12 [k] Eccl. 1:18 **12:13** [l] [Deut. 6:2; 10:12]
12:14 [m] Matt. 12:36

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

▶ **AUTHOR:** According to 1 Kings 4:32, Solomon wrote 1,005 songs, but this eulogy of love stood out among them as the "song of songs." Tradition strongly favors Solomon as the author of this book. Solomon is specifically mentioned seven times, and he is identified as the groom. There is also evidence in the book of incredible royal luxury and expensive imported goods, things that characterized Solomon's reign.

▶ **TIME:** c. 965 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Song 7:10

▶ **THEME:** Song of Solomon, or Song of Songs as it is sometimes known, is a one-of-a-kind love poem that concentrates on elements of the physical attraction between the sexes. It is possible that the Shulamite maiden was Abishag, who attended to David in his last days. Like Jesus' presence at a wedding, Song of Solomon is an indication of God's blessing on the physical union of man and woman. God created us for each other, and we should delight in physical intimacy within the context of marriage that God has sanctioned for us.

1 The [a]song of songs, which *is* Solomon's.

The Banquet

THE SHULAMITE*

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—
[b]For your* love *is* better than wine.
3 Because of the fragrance of your good ointments,
Your name *is* ointment poured forth;
Therefore the virgins love you.
4 [c]Draw me away!

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

[d]We will run after you.*

THE SHULAMITE

The king [e]has brought me into his chambers.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

We will be glad and rejoice in you.*
We will remember your* love more than wine.

THE SHULAMITE

Rightly do they love you.*

5 I *am* dark, but lovely,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
Like the tents of Kedar,
Like the curtains of Solomon.
6 Do not look upon me, because I *am* dark,
Because the sun has tanned me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;

* **1:2** A young woman from the town of Shulam or Shunem (compare 6:13). The speaker and audience are identified according to the number, gender, and person of the Hebrew words. Occasionally the identity is not certain. * **1:2** Masculine singular, that is, the Beloved * **1:4** Masculine singular, that is, the Beloved • Feminine singular, that is, the Shulamite • Masculine singular, that is, the Beloved • Masculine singular, that is, the Beloved

1:1 ***song of songs.*** Like the superlative expressions "holy of holies" or "King of kings," *song of songs* means "the loveliest of songs." There are two principal speakers in this book, the woman (the Shulamite) and the man (Solomon).

1:2 ***for your love is better than wine.*** The Hebrew noun used here means sexual love, as it clearly does in Ezekiel 16:8. This is the Hebrew word that most approximates the Greek word *eros*. In the Song of Solomon, this plural word (a mark of intensity) speaks of divinely blessed lovemaking.

1:3 ***your good ointments.*** It was customary in biblical times to rub the body with fragrant oils after a bath in preparation for a festive occasion (Ruth 3:3).

1:5 ***I am dark, but lovely.*** The Shulamite compares her dark coloring acquired from long hours working in the vineyards (v. 6) with the lighter complexion of the city maidens. The point here is her class and station in life. Unlike the young women of the court in Jerusalem who had been raised in comfort and conditions of ease, this woman had worked as a field

1:1 [a] 1 Kin. 4:32 **1:2** [b] Song 4:10 **1:4** [c] Hos. 11:4 [d] Phil. 3:12–14 [e] Ps. 45:14, 15

They made me the keeper of the
vineyards,
But my own [f]vineyard I have not kept.

(To Her Beloved)

7 Tell me, O you whom I love,
Where you feed *your flock*,
Where you make *it* rest at noon.
For why should I be as one who veils
herself*
By the flocks of your companions?

The Beloved

8 If you do not know, [g]O fairest among
women,
Follow in the footsteps of the flock,
And feed your little goats
Beside the shepherds' tents.
9 I have compared you, [h]my love,
[i]To my filly among Pharaoh's chariots.
10 [j]Your cheeks are lovely with
ornaments,
Your neck with chains *of gold.*

The Daughters of Jerusalem

11 We will make you* ornaments of gold
With studs of silver.

The Shulamite

12 While the king *is* at his table,
My spikenard sends forth its
fragrance.
13 A bundle of myrrh *is* my beloved to
me,
That lies all night between my
breasts.
14 My beloved *is* to me a cluster of henna
blooms
In the vineyards of En Gedi.

The Beloved

15 [k]Behold, you *are* fair, my love!
Behold, you *are* fair!
You *have* dove's eyes.

The Shulamite

16 Behold, you *are* [l]handsome, my
beloved!
Yes, pleasant!
Also our bed *is* green.
17 The beams of our houses *are* cedar,
And our rafters of fir.

2 I *am* the rose of Sharon,
And the lily of the valleys.

The Beloved

2 Like a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.

The Shulamite

3 Like an apple tree among the trees of
the woods,
So *is* my beloved among the sons.
I sat down in his shade with great
delight,
And [a]his fruit *was* sweet to my taste.

The Shulamite to the Daughters of Jerusalem

4 He brought me to the banqueting
house,
And his banner over me *was* love.
5 Sustain me with cakes of raisins,
Refresh me with apples,
For I *am* lovesick.

6 [b]His left hand *is* under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.
7 [c]I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the does of the
field,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

The Beloved's Request

The Shulamite

8 The voice of my beloved!
Behold, he comes
Leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.

* **1:7** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *wanders.* * **1:11** Feminine singular, that is, the Shulamite

hand in the sun. She knows her beauty is not diminished by her more rugged manner of living.

1:7 *O you whom I love.* Here the woman mentally addresses Solomon, her husband. She pictures him as the shepherd of Israel.

1:8 *Follow in the footsteps of the flock.* It would be better if she returned to the borders of Lebanon and the life of the farm rather than live alone and anxious in Solomon's palace. The point of this verse is that one should always count the cost of marriage to a particular person before the marriage.

1:13 *A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me.* This verse refers to an oriental custom for a woman to wear a small bag of myrrh, a perfumed ointment, around her neck at night. All the next day a lovely fragrance would linger about her.

1:17 *The beams of our houses are cedar.* As the Shulamite lies on their wedding bed (v. 16), she observes the marvelous cedar beams above her head. The opulence of Solomon's personal and public buildings in Jerusalem is well documented (1 Kin. 7:1–12).

2:3 *Like an apple tree.* Raisin cakes (v. 5) and apples are symbols for sexual passion in ancient love songs.

2:4 *to the banqueting house.* The literal meaning of the phrase is "the house of wine," used because of the role that wine plays not only in feasting, but especially in weddings in biblical cultures (1:2). In the Bible, wine is a symbol of joy (Ps. 104:15).

2:8 *Skipping upon the hills.* This is the young bride's imaginative way of recalling the joy she experienced at her husband's arrival.

1:6 [f] Song 8:11, 12 **1:8** [g] Song 5:9 **1:9** [h] Song 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7 [i] 2 Chr. 1:16 **1:10** [j] Ezek. 16:11 **1:15** [k] Song 4:1; 5:12 **1:16** [l] Song 5:10–16 **2:3** [a] Rev. 22:1, 2 **2:6** [b] Song 8:3 **2:7** [c] Song 3:5; 8:4

9 [d]My beloved is like a gazelle or a young
stag.
Behold, he stands behind our wall;
He is looking through the windows,
Gazing through the lattice.

10 My beloved spoke, and said to me:
"Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away.
11 For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over *and* gone.
12 The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing has come,
And the voice of the turtledove
Is heard in our land.
13 The fig tree puts forth her green
figs,
And the vines *with* the tender grapes
Give a *good* smell.
Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away!

14 "O my [e]dove, in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret *places* of the cliff,
Let me see your face,
[f]Let me hear your voice;
For your voice *is* sweet,
And your face *is* lovely."

Her Brothers

15 Catch us [g]the foxes,
The little foxes that spoil the vines,
For our vines *have* tender grapes.

The Shulamite

16 [h]My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his.
He feeds *his flock* among the lilies.

(To Her Beloved)

17 [i]Until the day breaks
And the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved,
And be [j]like a gazelle
Or a young stag
Upon the mountains of Bether.*

A Troubled Night

The Shulamite

3 By [a]night on my bed I sought the one
I love;
I sought him, but I did not find him.
2 "I will rise now," *I said,*
"And go about the city;
In the streets and in the squares
I will seek the one I love."
I sought him, but I did not find him.
3 [b]The watchmen who go about the city
found me;
I said,
"Have you seen the one I love?"

4 Scarcely had I passed by them,
When I found the one I love.
I held him and would not let him go,
Until I had brought him to the [c]house
of my mother,
And into the chamber of her who
conceived me.

5 [d]I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the does of the
field,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

The Coming of Solomon

The Shulamite

6 [e]Who *is* this coming out of the
wilderness
Like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and
frankincense,
With all the merchant's fragrant
powders?
7 Behold, it *is* Solomon's couch,
With sixty valiant men around it,
Of the valiant of Israel.
8 They all hold swords,
Being expert in war.
Every man *has* his sword on his thigh
Because of fear in the night.

9 Of the wood of Lebanon
Solomon the King
Made himself a palanquin:*
10 He made its pillars *of* silver,
Its support *of* gold,

* **2:17** Literally *Separation* * **3:9** A portable enclosed chair

2:11–13 ***the winter is past.*** By this Solomon means that the time of joy has come; it is the summer of their love. Solomon may have come at a time of great beauty in the fields and forests where the young woman lived; he uses the beauty of creation to describe the ripeness of time for their love.

2:15 ***Catch us the foxes.*** The Shulamite's brothers called on Solomon to catch them the foxes. Many times they had seen little foxes creep into the vineyards they tended and destroy the roots by gnawing on them.

3:1 ***on my bed.*** This is a dream that took place before they were married. The young woman was becoming concerned about what she would be getting into in the royal marriage.

3:3 ***Have you seen.*** Her frantic search for her beloved is initially unsuccessful.

3:4 ***the one I love.*** At last she finds him and in her dream takes him to her mother's house. The worry of his absence is intolerable to her; she wants him to move back with her to her familiar home and lifestyle.

3:7 ***Solomon's couch.*** This was a sedan chair with poles projecting from the front and back so that a person could be carried by several bearers. (vv. 9–10). The Shulamite was being carried to the wedding and to her groom on Solomon's own couch.

2:9 [d] Song 2:17 **2:14** [e] Song 5:2 [f] Song 8:13 **2:15** [g] Ezek. 13:4 **2:16** [h] Song 6:3 **2:17** [i] Song 4:6 [j] Song 8:14 **3:1** [a] Is. 26:9 **3:3** [b] Song 5:7 **3:4** [c] Song 8:2 **3:5** [d] Song 2:7; 8:4 **3:6** [e] Song 8:5

Its seat *of* purple,
Its interior paved *with* love
By the daughters of Jerusalem.
11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
And see King Solomon with the crown
With which his mother crowned him
On the day of his wedding,
The day of the gladness of his heart.

The Bridegroom Praises the Bride

The Beloved

4 Behold, [a]you *are* fair, my love!
Behold, you *are* fair!
You *have* dove's eyes behind your veil.
Your hair *is* like a [b]flock of goats,
Going down from Mount Gilead.
2 [c]Your teeth *are* like a flock of shorn *sheep*
Which have come up from the washing,
Every one of which bears twins,
And none *is* barren among them.
3 Your lips *are* like a strand of scarlet,
And your mouth is lovely.
[d]Your temples behind your veil
Are like a piece of pomegranate.
4 [e]Your neck *is* like the tower of David,
Built [f]for an armory,
On which hang a thousand bucklers,
All shields of mighty men.
5 [g]Your two breasts *are* like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle,
Which feed among the lilies.

6 [h]Until the day breaks
And the shadows flee away,
I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense.

7 [i]You *are* all fair, my love,
And *there is* no spot in you.
8 Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse,
With me from Lebanon.
Look from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir [j]and Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards.

9 You have ravished my heart,
My sister, *my* spouse;
You have ravished my heart
With one *look* of your eyes,
With one link of your necklace.
10 How fair is your love,
My sister, *my* spouse!
[k]How much better than wine is your love,
And the scent of your perfumes
Than all spices!
11 Your lips, O *my* spouse,
Drip as the honeycomb;
[l]Honey and milk *are* under your tongue;
And the fragrance of your garments
Is [m]like the fragrance of Lebanon.

12 A garden enclosed
Is my sister, *my* spouse,
A spring shut up,
A fountain sealed.
13 Your plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates
With pleasant fruits,
Fragrant henna with spikenard,
14 Spikenard and saffron,
Calamus and cinnamon,
With all trees of frankincense,
Myrrh and aloes,
With all the chief spices—
15 A fountain of gardens,
A well of [n]living waters,
And streams from Lebanon.

The Shulamite

16 Awake, O north *wind*,
And come, O south!
Blow upon my garden,
That its spices may flow out.
[o]Let my beloved come to his garden
And eat its pleasant [p]fruits.

The Beloved

5 I [a]have come to my garden, my [b]sister, *my* spouse;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
[c]I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.

4:1 ***Behold, you are fair.*** Solomon lavishly praises his bride's great beauty. He uses verbal symbols of loveliness to paint a picture of the breathtaking charm of the Shulamite. Dove's eyes are a picture of purity, innocence, and beauty. The king compared the movement of her flowing hair to the graceful movement of a flock of goats in their descent down from Mount Gilead.

4:2–5 ***teeth . . . lips . . . neck . . . breasts.*** The king rhapsodizes of the perfection of her physical features. Her beauty is exquisite.

4:9 ***My sister, my spouse.*** This strange pairing of words was based on the idea that in marriage a couple became "related." The woman was dignified as a member of the king's family.

4:11 ***lips . . . Honey and milk.*** The sweetness of his bride's kisses are like food to him (5:1; compare 1:2).

4:12 ***A garden enclosed . . . A spring shut up.*** Solomon evokes thoughts of refreshment and delight. His use of the words "shut up" and "sealed" indicate, in a poetic manner, his wife's virginity on their wedding night. This was the treasure she brought to him, and which she charged the other young women in the court to maintain for their wedding nights as well (2:7).

4:16 ***Let my beloved come to his garden.*** The bride is now ready to accept her lover for the first time to her "garden." She calls on the wind to blow through. That is, she is ready to make love to her husband for the first time.

5:1 ***I have drunk my wine with my milk.*** At the

4:1 [a] Song 1:15; 5:12 [b] Song 6:5 **4:2** [c] Song 6:6 **4:3** [d] Song 6:7 **4:4** [e] Song 7:4 [f] Neh. 3:19 **4:5** [g] Song 7:3 **4:6** [h] Song 2:17 **4:7** [i] Eph. 5:27 **4:8** [j] Deut. 3:9 **4:10** [k] Song 1:2, 4 **4:11** [l] Prov. 24:13, 14 [m] Hos. 14:6, 7 **4:15** [n] Zech. 14:8 **4:16** [o] Song 5:1 [p] Song 7:13
5:1 [a] Song 4:16 [b] Song 4:9 [c] Song 4:11

(To His Friends)
Eat, O [d]friends!
Drink, yes, drink deeply,
O beloved ones!

The Shulamite's Troubled Evening

The Shulamite
2 I sleep, but my heart is awake;
It is the voice of my beloved!
[e]He knocks, *saying*,
"Open for me, my sister, my love,
My dove, my perfect one;
For my head is covered with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night."
3 I have taken off my robe;
How can I put it on *again?*
I have washed my feet;
How can I defile them?
4 My beloved put his hand
By the latch *of the door,*
And my heart yearned for him.
5 I arose to open for my beloved,
And my hands dripped *with* myrrh,
My fingers with liquid myrrh,
On the handles of the lock.
6 I opened for my beloved,
But my beloved had turned away *and* was gone.
My heart leaped up when he spoke.
[f]I sought him, but I could not find him;
I called him, but he gave me no answer.
7 [g]The watchmen who went about the city found me.
They struck me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls
Took my veil away from me.
8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
If you find my beloved,
That you tell him I *am* lovesick!

The Daughters of Jerusalem
9 What *is* your beloved
More than *another* beloved,
[h]O fairest among women?
What *is* your beloved
More than *another* beloved,
That you so charge us?

The Shulamite
10 My beloved *is* white and ruddy,
Chief among ten thousand.
11 His head *is like* the finest gold;
His locks *are* wavy,
And black as a raven.
12 [i]His eyes *are* like doves
By the rivers of waters,
Washed with milk,
And fitly set.
13 His cheeks *are* like a bed of spices,
Banks of scented herbs.
His lips *are* lilies,
Dripping liquid myrrh.
14 His hands *are* rods of gold
Set with beryl.
His body *is* carved ivory
Inlaid *with* sapphires.
15 His legs *are* pillars of marble
Set on bases of fine gold.
His countenance *is* like Lebanon,
Excellent as the cedars.
16 His mouth *is* most sweet,
Yes, he *is* altogether lovely.
This *is* my beloved,
And this *is* my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem!

The Daughters of Jerusalem
6 Where has your beloved gone,
[a]O fairest among women?
Where has your beloved turned aside,
That we may seek him with you?

The Shulamite
2 My beloved has gone to his [b]garden,
To the beds of spices,
To feed *his flock* in the gardens,
And to gather lilies.
3 [c]I *am* my beloved's,
And my beloved *is* mine.
He feeds *his flock* among the lilies.

Praise of the Shulamite's Beauty

The Beloved
4 O my love, you *are as* beautiful as Tirzah,
Lovely as Jerusalem,
Awesome as *an army* with banners!

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conclusion of their lovemaking, the groom speaks of his complete satisfaction in his beautiful bride.

5:2–7 *I sleep.* These words begin a section (vv. 2–8) that most likely is another dream sequence (3:1–5). The bride dreams that her lover is coming to her, but she has already washed, removed her robe, and gotten into bed. (v. 3). She finally goes to the door to let him in, but he is gone. Her sorrow at this drives her into the city to search for him.

5:8–9 *O daughters of Jerusalem.* She asks for help in her search, but the daughters question what is so special about the one for whom she seeks.

6:1 *that we may seek him with you.* The chorus members now join in the search. In the dream sequence, we suspect that the chorus is well aware of his location. It is only the bride who needs to discover his whereabouts.

6:3 *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.* These words are an inversion of the words of 2:16; compare also 7:10. ***he feeds his flock among the lilies.*** With these words the bride comes to terms with the reality that, as much as she and the king are in love, he still has other responsibilities and so does she. His work as king makes him the shepherd of

5:1 [d] Luke 15:7, 10 **5:2** [e] Rev. 3:20 **5:6** [f] Song 3:1 **5:7** [g] Song 3:3 **5:9** [h] Song 1:8; 6:1 **5:12** [i] Song 1:15; 4:1 **6:1** [a] Song 1:8; 5:9 **6:2** [b] Song 4:16; 5:1 **6:3** [c] Song 2:16; 7:10

5 Turn your eyes away from me,
For they have overcome me.
Your hair *is* [d]like a flock of goats
Going down from Gilead.
6 [e]Your teeth *are* like a flock of sheep
Which have come up from the washing;
Every one bears twins,
And none *is* barren among them.
7 [f]Like a piece of pomegranate
Are your temples behind your veil.

8 There are sixty queens
And eighty concubines,
And [g]virgins without number.
9 My dove, my [h]perfect one,
Is the only one,
The only one of her mother,
The favorite of the one who bore her.
The daughters saw her
And called her blessed,
The queens and the concubines,
And they praised her.

10 Who is she who looks forth as the morning,
Fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun,
[i]Awesome as *an army* with banners?

The Shulamite

11 I went down to the garden of nuts
To see the verdure of the valley,
[j]To see whether the vine had budded
And the pomegranates had bloomed.
12 Before I was even aware,
My soul had made me
As the chariots of my noble people.*

The Beloved and His Friends

13 Return, return, O Shulamite;
Return, return, that we may look upon you!

The Shulamite

What would you see in the Shulamite—
As it were, the dance of the two camps?*

Expressions of Praise

The Beloved

7 How beautiful are your feet in sandals,
[a]O prince's daughter!
The curves of your thighs *are* like jewels,
The work of the hands of a skillful workman.
2 Your navel *is* a rounded goblet;
It lacks no blended beverage.
Your waist *is* a heap of wheat
Set about with lilies.
3 [b]Your two breasts *are* like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle.
4 [c]Your neck *is* like an ivory tower,
Your eyes *like* the pools in Heshbon
By the gate of Bath Rabbim.
Your nose *is* like the tower of Lebanon
Which looks toward Damascus.
5 Your head *crowns* you like *Mount* Carmel,
And the hair of your head *is* like purple;
A king *is* held captive by *your* tresses.

6 How fair and how pleasant you are,
O love, with your delights!
7 This stature of yours is like a palm tree,
And your breasts *like* its clusters.
8 I said, "I will go up to the palm tree,
I will take hold of its branches."
Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
The fragrance of your breath like apples,
9 And the roof of your mouth like the best wine.

The Shulamite

The wine goes *down* smoothly for my beloved,
Moving gently the lips of sleepers.*
10 [d]I *am* my beloved's,
And [e]his desire *is* toward me.

11 Come, my beloved,
Let us go forth to the field;
Let us lodge in the villages.
12 Let us get up early to the vineyards;
Let us [f]see if the vine has budded,
Whether the grape blossoms are open,
And the pomegranates are in bloom.
There I will give you my love.

* **6:12** Hebrew *Ammi Nadib* * **6:13** Hebrew *Mahanaim* * **7:9** Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *lips and teeth.*

his people, yet his love for her does not necessarily diminish because of his devotion to his work.

6:8–9 *sixty . . . eighty.* This use of numbers is a rhetorical device to emphasize that the bride alone is Solomon's love.

6:13 *Return, return, O Shulamite.* The chorus calls the bride back from her daydreams and reminds her that she is Solomon's queen.

7:1 *The curves of your thighs.* The Hebrew wording suggests not only her form but also the fluid motion of her dance (6:13).

7:7–8 *like a palm tree.* This is a sexual image that has its basis in the pollination of palm trees. To fertilize a female palm tree, the gardener climbs the male tree and takes some of its flowers. Then he climbs the female tree and ties the pollen-bearing flowers among its branches.

6:5 [d] Song 4:1 **6:6** [e] Song 4:2 **6:7** [f] Song 4:3 **6:8** [g] Song 1:3 **6:9** [h] Song 2:14; 5:2 **6:10** [i] Song 6:4 **6:11** [j] Song 7:12 **7:1** [a] Ps. 45:13 **7:3** [b] Song 4:5 **7:4** [c] Song 4:4 **7:10** [d] Song 2:16; 6:3 [e] Ps. 45:11 **7:12** [f] Song 6:11

13 The [g]mandrakes give off a fragrance,
And at our gates [h]*are* pleasant *fruits,*
All manner, new and old,
Which I have laid up for you, my beloved.

8 Oh, that you were like my brother,
Who nursed at my mother's breasts!
If I should find you outside,
I would kiss you;
I would not be despised.
2 I would lead you *and* bring you
Into the [a]house of my mother,
She *who* used to instruct me.
I would cause you to drink of [b]spiced wine,
Of the juice of my pomegranate.

(To the Daughters of Jerusalem)

3 [c]His left hand *is* under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.
4 [d]I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

Love Renewed in Lebanon

A Relative

5 [e]Who *is* this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?

I awakened you under the apple tree.
There your mother brought you forth;
There she *who* bore you brought *you* forth.

The Shulamite to Her Beloved

6 [f]Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love *is as* strong as death,
[g]Jealousy *as* cruel as the grave;*
Its flames *are* flames of fire,
A most vehement flame.*
7 Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.
[h]If a man would give for love
All the wealth of his house,
It would be utterly despised.

The Shulamite's Brothers

8 [i]We have a little sister,
And she has no breasts.
What shall we do for our sister
In the day when she is spoken for?
9 If she *is* a wall,
We will build upon her
A battlement of silver;
And if she *is* a door,
We will enclose her
With boards of cedar.

The Shulamite

10 I *am* a wall,
And my breasts like towers;
Then I became in his eyes
As one who found peace.
11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon;
[j]He leased the vineyard to keepers;
Everyone was to bring for its fruit
A thousand silver *coins*.

(To Solomon)

12 My own vineyard *is* before me.
You, O Solomon, *may have* a thousand,
And those who tend its fruit two hundred.

The Beloved

13 You who dwell in the gardens,
The companions listen for your voice—
[k]Let me hear it!

The Shulamite

14 [l]Make haste, my beloved,
And [m]be like a gazelle
Or a young stag
On the mountains of spices.

* **8:6** Or *Sheol* • Literally *A flame of YAH* (a poetic form of *YHWH, the* LORD)

7:13 ***The mandrakes.*** The yellow fruit of the mandrake was small, sweet-tasting, and fragrant. It was considered a love potion (Gen. 30:16).
8:3 ***left . . . right.*** The repetition of 2:6–7 punctuates both the joy of sexual intimacy with marriage and the warnings against sexual activity before marriage.
8:6 ***as a seal.*** This is a symbol of possession or ownership. The Shulamite wants the king to feel a total ownership of her in his heart. She is committed only to him; and she wants him to be completely committed to her. As long as she resides in his heart, she feels secure.
8:7 ***quench . . . despised.*** The point of this verse is that true love cannot be destroyed or purchased.
8:10 ***I am a wall . . . towers.*** The woman explains that she has been virtuous in youth and that she will remain faithful in her adulthood.
8:14 ***mountains of spices.*** That is, she wants him to return to her loving embrace (1:13).

7:13 [g] Gen. 30:14 [h] Matt. 13:52 **8:2** [a] Song 3:4 [b] Prov. 9:2 **8:3** [c] Song 2:6 **8:4** [d] Song 2:7; 3:5 **8:5** [e] Song 3:6 **8:6** [f] Jer. 22:24 [g] Prov. 6:34, 35 **8:7** [h] Prov. 6:35 **8:8** [i] Ezek. 23:33 **8:11** [j] Matt. 21:33 **8:13** [k] Song 2:14 **8:14** [l] Rev. 22:17, 20 [m] Song 2:7, 9, 17

THE BOOK OF
ISAIAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** Although there is much argument regarding the unity of the work, Isaiah is the commonly accepted author of this book. He was from a distinguished Jewish family and his education is evident in his impressive vocabulary and style. The New Testament writers John, Paul, Matthew, and Luke, as well as Jesus Himself, all quote from the Book of Isaiah and credit him with its authorship. This great poet was uncompromising, sincere, and compassionate. Isaiah maintained close contact with the royal court, but his exhortations against alliances with foreign powers were not always well received.

▶ **TIME:** c. 740–680 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Is. 9:6–7

▶ **THEME:** Because of the length of the book and Isaiah's interactions with the politics of the time, we probably get a better picture of Isaiah's ministry than we do of any of the other prophets. It also contains more of the well-known, classic prophecy texts than any other book. One commentator calls Isaiah "the Romans of the Old Testament," as in Isaiah we get a broad perspective on how and why God is working in history. Both God's holiness and grace come clearly into perspective through a careful study of this book.

1 The [a]vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the [b]days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The Wickedness of Judah

2 [c]Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth!
For the LORD has spoken:
"I have nourished and brought up children,
And they have rebelled against Me;
3 [d]The ox knows its owner
And the donkey its master's crib;
But Israel [e]does not know,
My people do not consider."

4 Alas, sinful nation,
A people laden with iniquity,
[f]A brood of evildoers,
Children who are corrupters!
They have forsaken the LORD,
They have provoked to anger
The Holy One of Israel,
They have turned away backward.

5 [g]Why should you be stricken again?
You will revolt more and more.
The whole head is sick,
And the whole heart faints.
6 From the sole of the foot even to the head,
There is no soundness in it,
But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores;
They have not been closed or bound up,
Or soothed with ointment.

7 [h]Your country *is* desolate,
Your cities *are* burned with fire;
Strangers devour your land in your presence;
And *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers.
8 So the daughter of Zion is left [i]as a booth in a vineyard,
As a hut in a garden of cucumbers,
[j]As a besieged city.

1:1 ***Isaiah the son of Amoz.*** God sent His message through Isaiah to Judah, the people of the southern kingdom—specifically to their magistrates, priests, and prophets in Jerusalem. The nation had been divided into two parts: Judah (the southern kingdom) and Israel (the northern kingdom). While Isaiah's message was primarily for the southern kingdom, it was also for the northern kingdom. The entire nation was heading down a path of sin and idolatry that would end in destruction. Isaiah lived to see the nation of Assyria take the northern kingdom into captivity in 722 B.C. The record of Isaiah's visions contains the revelations that God gave during the reigns of Uzziah (792–740 B.C.), Jotham (752–736 B.C.), Ahaz (736–720 B.C.), and Hezekiah (729–699 B.C.). God never changes, and this revelation is still relevant for His people today.

1:1 [a] Num. 12:6 [b] 2 Chr. 26–32 **1:2** [c] Jer. 2:12
1:3 [d] Jer. 8:7 [e] Jer. 9:3, 6 **1:4** [f] Matt. 3:7 **1:5** [g] Jer. 5:3
1:7 [h] Deut. 28:51, 52 **1:8** [i] Job 27:18 [j] Jer. 4:17

9 [k]Unless the LORD of hosts
Had left to us a very small remnant,
We would have become like [l]Sodom,
We would have been made like
Gomorrah.

10 Hear the word of the LORD,
You rulers [m]of Sodom;
Give ear to the law of our God,
You people of Gomorrah:
11 "To what purpose *is* the multitude of
your [n]sacrifices to Me?"
Says the LORD.
"I have had enough of burnt offerings
of rams
And the fat of fed cattle.
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
Or of lambs or goats.

12 "When you come [o]to appear before Me,
Who has required this from your hand,
To trample My courts?
13 Bring no more [p]futile sacrifices;
Incense is an abomination to Me.
The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and
[q]the calling of assemblies—
I cannot endure iniquity and the
sacred meeting.
14 Your [r]New Moons and your [s]appointed
feasts
My soul hates;
They are a trouble to Me,
I am weary of bearing *them*.
15 [t]When you spread out your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you;
[u]Even though you make many prayers,
I will not hear.
Your hands are full of blood.

16 "Wash[v] yourselves, make yourselves
clean;
Put away the evil of your doings from
before My eyes.
[w]Cease to do evil,

17 Learn to do good;
Seek justice,
Rebuke the oppressor;*
Defend the fatherless,
Plead for the widow.

18 "Come now, and let us [x]reason together,"
Says the LORD,
"Though your sins are like scarlet,
[y]They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.
19 If you are willing and obedient,
You shall eat the good of the land;
20 But if you refuse and rebel,
You shall be devoured by the sword";
[z]For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

The Degenerate City

21 [a]How the faithful city has become a
harlot!
It was full of justice;
Righteousness lodged in it,
But now [b]murderers.
22 [c]Your silver has become dross,
Your wine mixed with water.
23 [d]Your princes *are* rebellious,
And [e]companions of thieves;
[f]Everyone loves bribes,
And follows after rewards.
They [g]do not defend the fatherless,
Nor does the cause of the widow come
before them.

24 Therefore the Lord says,
The LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of
Israel,
"Ah, [h]I will rid Myself of My
adversaries,
And take vengeance on My
enemies.

* **1:17** Some ancient versions read *the oppressed.*

1:9 ***LORD of hosts.*** Isaiah describes God as ruler over all powers in heaven and earth through His command of His angelic armies. ***remnant.*** Though God punished His sinful people, He always preserved a remnant, or survivor (Gen. 22:16–17; Ex. 34:6–7; Mic. 7:19–20; Rom. 9:29; 11:15). ***Sodom . . . Gomorrah.*** These two cities were regarded as the epitome of sinfulness. It was a scathing condemnation to say that Jerusalem had become like those cities.

1:18–20 The Message of the Prophets—These verses contain the essence of the prophet's message to Israel, which is also meant for us today. We need to recognize the reality of our condition. We are a stiff-necked and rebellious people, who would rather do what we want, when we want. Even today, we want the benefits of God's grace without accepting any accountability to God.

Just as in the days of Isaiah, God's people attempt to replace obedience with ceremony. We ignore God's commands to care for the destitute, and we lose sight of God's requirements for justice and righteousness. Each of us stands before God dirty and bloody, saying we are still His people, when we are clearly not ready to fellowship with a holy God. We need to be cleaned up first.

Our God is a redeeming God who knows how to deal with sin. Although there is no rebellion that goes beyond His reach, the remedy has to be His. The first step in obedience is repentance—turning away from the direction we are going in order to see God.

1:18 ***reason together.*** This term means "to come to a legal decision." It is not an invitation to negotiate or compromise. The people were to come to an agreement with God concerning the enormous gravity of their sin. God was not declaring His people innocent of wickedness, but He was prepared to pardon their sins if they would repent and turn to Him.

1:20 ***has spoken.*** The verb "has spoken" indicates finality (contrast the verb "says" in v. 18). God had graciously extended His offer of mercy over a significant period of time, but this was the only offer He made. They could not "cut another deal" with Him (40:5; 55:11).

1:9 [k] Lam. 3:22 [l] Gen. 19:24 **1:10** [m] Deut. 32:32 **1:11** [n] [1 Sam. 15:22] **1:12** [o] Ex. 23:17 **1:13** [p] Matt. 15:9 [q] Joel 1:14 **1:14** [r] Num. 28:11 [s] Lam. 2:6 **1:15** [t] Prov. 1:28 [u] Mic. 3:4 **1:16** [v] Jer. 4:14 [w] Rom. 12:9 **1:18** [x] Is. 43:26 [y] Ps. 51:7 **1:20** [z] [Titus 1:2] **1:21** [a] Jer. 2:20 [b] Mic. 3:1–3 **1:22** [c] Jer. 6:28 **1:23** [d] Hos. 9:15 [e] Prov. 29:24 [f] Jer. 22:17 [g] Jer. 5:28 **1:24** [h] Deut. 28:63

25 I will turn My hand against you,
And [i]thoroughly purge away your dross,
And take away all your alloy.
26 I will restore your judges [j]as at the first,
And your counselors as at the beginning.
Afterward [k]you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."

27 Zion shall be redeemed with justice,
And her penitents with righteousness.
28 The [l]destruction of transgressors and of sinners *shall be* together,
And those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed.
29 For they* shall be ashamed of the terebinth trees
Which you have desired;
And you shall be embarrassed because of the gardens
Which you have chosen.
30 For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades,
And as a garden that has no water.
31 [m]The strong shall be as tinder,
And the work of it as a spark;
Both will burn together,
And no one shall [n]quench *them*.

The Future House of God

2 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Now [a]it shall come to pass [b]in the latter days
[c]*That* the mountain of the LORD's house
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow to it.
3 Many people shall come and say,
[d]"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths."
[e]For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
4 He shall judge between the nations,
And rebuke many people;
They shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war anymore.

The Day of the LORD

5 O house of Jacob, come and let us [f]walk
In the light of the LORD.

6 For You have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob,
Because they are filled [g]with eastern ways;
They *are* [h]soothsayers like the Philistines,
[i]And they are pleased with the children of foreigners.
7 [j]Their land is also full of silver and gold,
And there is no end to their treasures;
Their land is also full of horses,
And there is no end to their chariots.

* **1:29** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts and Targum read *you*.

1:27 *redeemed.* The Hebrew word for "redeemed" means "ransomed" or "freed" from another's ownership through the payment of a price. ***penitents.*** Zion's penitents, those who turned their backs on idolatry and injustice, found freedom from sin and judgment.
1:29 *terebinth trees . . . gardens.* The terebinth was a sacred tree, and the gardens with sacred groves for fertility rites were part of idol worship, which the people had chosen instead of worshiping only the living God.
2:2 *in the latter days.* The latter days refer to the conditions in Christ's (the Messiah's) future kingdom. At the time of the writing of the Book of Isaiah, no one had a clear idea of what the coming of the Messiah would mean. They believed that, under His rule, earthly kingdoms and authorities would vanish, and everything would at last be the way God originally planned before the fall (Gen. 3:1–22). But they did not yet have an understanding of Christ dying on the cross for the sins of the whole world, or of the church age. Isaiah was looking forward to what Christians are still looking forward to—what we call the second coming, or return of Christ (Acts 1:11; Rev. 21–22).
2:4 *Neither shall they learn war anymore.* The Old Testament term for "peace" meant soundness or completeness. Just as man can never be truly at peace apart from his Creator, so a nation of sinful humanity cannot truly achieve peace apart from God. Men or nations will be rebellious, self-centered, and at odds with each other unless their harmony with God is restored. This can only happen when, person by person, peace is provided by the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. To look forward to the day when there will be this peace for the whole world is to understand the magnitude of God's promise in this passage.
2:6 *You have forsaken.* This was a present condition—but not a permanent condition—for the Israelites. God's covenant with Israel had always been based on their obedience, and the Israelites (or house of Jacob) were finally going to experience the results of their disobedience (Deut. 27–30). ***filled with eastern ways . . . soothsayers.*** Copying other religions and participating in the occult practices of peoples of Canaan were strictly forbidden (Deut. 18:9–14). Whoever did these things was detestable to the Lord.
2:7 *full of silver and gold . . . full of horses.* The king was not to multiply horses, wives, or gold and silver for himself, for this would cause his heart to turn away from the Lord (Deut. 17:14–17).

1:25 [i] Mal. 3:3 **1:26** [j] Jer. 33:7–11 [k] Zech. 8:3
1:28 [l] [2 Thess. 1:8, 9] **1:31** [m] Ezek. 32:21 [n] Mark 9:43
2:2 [a] Mic. 4:1 [b] Gen. 49:1 [c] Ps. 68:15 **2:3** [d] Jer. 50:5
[e] Luke 24:47 **2:5** [f] Eph. 5:8 **2:6** [g] Num. 23:7 [h] Deut. 18:14 [i] Ps. 106:35 **2:7** [j] Deut. 17:16

8 [k]Their land is also full of idols;
They worship the work of their own hands,
That which their own fingers have made.
9 People bow down,
And each man humbles himself;
Therefore do not forgive them.

10 [l]Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust,
From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty.
11 The lofty looks of man shall be [m]humbled,
The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down,
And the LORD alone shall be exalted [n]in that day.

12 For the day of the LORD of hosts
Shall come upon everything proud and lofty,
Upon everything lifted up—
And it shall be brought low—
13 Upon all [o]the cedars of Lebanon *that are* high and lifted up,
And upon all the oaks of Bashan;
14 [p]Upon all the high mountains,
And upon all the hills *that are* lifted up;
15 Upon every high tower,
And upon every fortified wall;
16 [q]Upon all the ships of Tarshish,
And upon all the beautiful sloops.
17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down,
And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low;
The LORD alone will be exalted in that day,
18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish.

19 They shall go into the [r]holes of the rocks,
And into the caves of the earth,
[s]From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty,
When He arises [t]to shake the earth mightily.

20 In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver
And his idols of gold,
Which they made, *each* for himself to worship,
To the moles and bats,
21 To go into the clefts of the rocks,
And into the crags of the rugged rocks,
From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty,
When He arises to shake the earth mightily.

22 [u]Sever yourselves from such a man,
Whose [v]breath *is* in his nostrils;
For of what account is he?

Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem

3 For behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts,
[a]Takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah
[b]The stock and the store,
The whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water;
2 [c]The mighty man and the man of war,
The judge and the prophet,
And the diviner and the elder;
3 The captain of fifty and the honorable man,
The counselor and the skillful artisan,
And the expert enchanter.

4 "I will give [d]children *to be* their princes,
And babes shall rule over them.
5 The people will be oppressed,
Every one by another and every one by his neighbor;
The child will be insolent toward the elder,
And the base toward the honorable."

6 When a man takes hold of his brother
In the house of his father, *saying*,
"You have clothing;
You be our ruler,
And *let* these ruins *be* under your power,"*
7 In that day he will protest, saying,
"I cannot cure *your* ills,
For in my house *is* neither food nor clothing;
Do not make me a ruler of the people."

8 For [e]Jerusalem stumbled,
And Judah is fallen,
Because their tongue and their doings
Are against the LORD,
To provoke the eyes of His glory.

* **3:6** Literally *hand*

2:8 ***full of idols.*** Idolatry was forbidden in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:4; Deut. 13), and it was a flagrant rebellion against the Lord who had rescued them from the land of Egypt and redeemed them from slavery. It was a seduction to unfaithfulness and was to be punished with death.

2:19 ***caves of the earth . . . terror of the LORD.*** Men will want to hide from the Lord whom they have not been willing to obey (Rev. 6:15–17).

3:4 ***children . . . babes.*** The rulers would be incompetent and inexperienced.

3:8 ***against the LORD.*** Prior to entering Canaan, Moses had the blessings and the curses of the law of God recited to the people, warning of the serious consequences of unbelief. Unfaithfulness would result in captivity, worldwide dispersion, and aimless wandering among the Gentile nations (Deut. 28). Joshua gave the same warning after bringing them into the land (Josh. 24). Both warnings went unheeded. From

2:8 [k] Jer. 2:28 **2:10** [l] Rev. 6:15, 16 **2:11** [m] Prov. 16:5 [n] Hos. 2:16 **2:13** [o] Zech. 11:1, 2 **2:14** [p] Is. 30:25 **2:16** [q] 1 Kin. 10:22 **2:19** [r] Hos. 10:8 [s] [2 Thess. 1:9] [t] Hag. 2:6, 7 **2:22** [u] Jer. 17:5 [v] Job 27:3 **3:1** [a] Jer. 37:21 [b] Lev. 26:26 **3:2** [c] 2 Kin. 24:14 **3:4** [d] Eccl. 10:16 **3:8** [e] Mic. 3:12

9 The look on their countenance
witnesses against them,
And they declare their sin as [f]Sodom;
They do not hide *it*.
Woe to their soul!
For they have brought evil upon
themselves.

10 "Say to the righteous [g]that *it shall be*
well *with them*,
[h]For they shall eat the fruit of their
doings.
11 Woe to the wicked! [i]*It shall be* ill *with*
him,
For the reward of his hands shall be
given him.
12 *As for* My people, children *are* their
oppressors,
And women rule over them.
O My people! [j]Those who lead you
cause *you* to err,
And destroy the way of your
paths."

Oppression and Luxury Condemned

13 The LORD stands up [k]to plead,
And stands to judge the people.
14 The LORD will enter into judgment
With the elders of His people
And His princes:
"For you have eaten up [l]the vineyard;
The plunder of the poor *is* in your
houses.
15 What do you mean by [m]crushing My
people
And grinding the faces of the poor?"
Says the Lord GOD of hosts.

16 Moreover the LORD says:

"Because the daughters of Zion are
haughty,
And walk with outstretched necks
And wanton eyes,
Walking and mincing *as* they go,
Making a jingling with their feet,
17 Therefore the Lord will strike with [n]a
scab
The crown of the head of the
daughters of Zion,
And the LORD will [o]uncover their
secret parts."

18 In that day the Lord will take away the
finery:
The jingling anklets, the scarves, and
the [p]crescents;
19 The pendants, the bracelets, and the
veils;
20 The headdresses, the leg ornaments,
and the headbands;
The perfume boxes, the charms,
21 and the rings;
The nose jewels,
22 the festal apparel, and the mantles;
The outer garments, the purses,
23 and the mirrors;
The fine linen, the turbans, and the
robes.

24 And so it shall be:

Instead of a sweet smell there will be
a stench;
Instead of a sash, a rope;
Instead of well-set hair, [q]baldness;
Instead of a rich robe, a girding of
sackcloth;
And branding instead of beauty.
25 Your men shall fall by the sword,
And your mighty in the war.

26 [r]Her gates shall lament and mourn,
And she *being* desolate [s]shall sit on the
ground.

4 And [a]in that day seven women shall
take hold of one man, saying,
"We will [b]eat our own food and wear
our own apparel;
Only let us be called by your name,
To take away [c]our reproach."

The Renewal of Zion

2 In that day [d]the Branch of the LORD
shall be beautiful and glorious;
And the fruit of the earth *shall be*
excellent and appealing
For those of Israel who have escaped.

3 And it shall come to pass that *he who is*
left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem [e]will
be called holy—everyone who is [f]record-
ed among the living in Jerusalem. 4 When
[g]the Lord has washed away the filth of the
daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of

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a historical perspective, it is easy to be appalled at the people's heedlessness. They ignored specific and direct commands, apparently knowing well that they were courting disaster. But, if we as believers examine ourselves carefully, we might be appalled at our own unfaithfulness in certain areas. God's directives are always there for a reason, and unfaithfulness, even in little things, causes a rift in our relationship with God.

3:16 ***daughters of Zion.*** The plural "daughters" suggests the women of the city as well as a personification of Jerusalem. The list of finery (vv. 18–23), whether applied figuratively to the city of Jerusalem or to specific women, indicated a preoccupation with frivolity and wealth.

4:1 ***take away our reproach.*** It was considered a sign of inadequacy to have no children.

4:2 ***In that day.*** Isaiah is speaking of the future revelation of the glory of the Lord on earth (2:2–4). ***the Branch of the LORD.*** Jesus Christ is the fruitful Branch (Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8). The reign of Jesus, the King of Creation, will be marked by plenty. The earth will be released from its curse, producing all that God intended it to produce in the beginning.

3:9 [f] Gen. 13:13 **3:10** [g] [Eccl. 8:12] [h] Ps. 128:2 **3:11** [i] [Ps. 11:6] **3:12** [j] Is. 9:16 **3:13** [k] Mic. 6:2 **3:14** [l] Matt. 21:33 **3:15** [m] Mic. 3:2, 3 **3:17** [n] Deut. 28:27 [o] Jer. 13:22 **3:18** [p] Judg. 8:21, 26 **3:24** [q] Is. 22:12 **3:26** [r] Jer. 14:2 [s] Lam. 2:10 **4:1** [a] Is. 2:11, 17 [b] 2 Thess. 3:12 [c] Luke 1:25 **4:2** [d] [Jer. 23:5] **4:3** [e] Is. 60:21 [f] Phil. 4:3 **4:4** [g] Mal. 3:2, 3

Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, 5then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, [h]a cloud and smoke by day and [i]the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there *will be* a covering. 6And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, [j]for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.

God's Disappointing Vineyard

5 Now let me sing to my Well-beloved
A song of my Beloved [a]regarding His vineyard:

My Well-beloved has a vineyard
On a very fruitful hill.
2 He dug it up and cleared out its stones,
And planted it with the choicest vine.
He built a tower in its midst,
And also made a winepress in it;
[b]So He expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes,
But it brought forth wild grapes.

3 "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
[c]Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard.
4 What more could have been done to My vineyard
That I have not done in [d]it?
Why then, when I expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes,
Did it bring forth wild grapes?
5 And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard:
[e]I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned;
And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.
6 I will lay it [f]waste;
It shall not be pruned or dug,
But there shall come up briers and [g]thorns.
I will also command the clouds
That they rain no rain on it."

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.
He looked for justice, but behold, oppression;
For righteousness, but behold, a cry *for help.*

Impending Judgment on Excesses

8 Woe to those who join [h]house to house;
They add field to field,
Till *there is* no place
Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!
9 [i]In my hearing the LORD of hosts *said,*
"Truly, many houses shall be desolate,
Great and beautiful ones, without inhabitant.
10 For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one [j]bath,
And a homer of seed shall yield one ephah."

11 [k]Woe to those who rise early in the morning,
That they may follow intoxicating drink;
Who continue until night, *till* wine inflames them!
12 [l]The harp and the strings,
The tambourine and flute,
And wine are in their feasts;
But [m]they do not regard the work of the LORD,
Nor consider the operation of His hands.

13 [n]Therefore my people have gone into captivity,
Because *they have* no [o]knowledge;
Their honorable men *are* famished,
And their multitude dried up with thirst.
14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself
And opened its mouth beyond measure;
Their glory and their multitude and their pomp,
And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it.
15 People shall be brought down,
[p]Each man shall be humbled,
And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.
16 But the LORD of hosts shall be [q]exalted in judgment,
And God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.
17 Then the lambs shall feed in their pasture,
And in the waste places of [r]the fat ones strangers shall eat.

5:4 ***What more could have been done to My vineyard.*** This is a rhetorical question. There was nothing more that God could or should have done to bring forth good fruit from His vineyard. The failure was on the part of the people, not God (John 15:1).

5:6 ***briers and thorns.*** Briers and thorns symbolize the anarchy that will take over the land after the exile (3:4–5). ***no rain.*** As God promised in His covenant on Mount Sinai, sufficient rainfall would come to the people who were faithful to His commands, but the rain would be withheld if the people were rebellious (Deut. 28:12,23–24).

5:14 ***Sheol.*** This word is used for the grave or the place where the body goes after death. Its meaning is not precise, but this word is sometimes translated

4:5 [h] Ex. 13:21, 22 [i] Zech. 2:5 **4:6** [j] Is. 25:4 **5:1** [a] Matt. 21:33 **5:2** [b] Deut. 32:6 **5:3** [c] [Rom. 3:4] **5:4** [d] 2 Chr. 36:15, 16 **5:5** [e] Ps. 80:12; 89:40, 41 **5:6** [f] 2 Chr. 36:19–21 [g] Is. 7:19–25 **5:8** [h] Mic. 2:2 **5:9** [i] Is. 22:14 **5:10** [j] Ezek. 45:11 **5:11** [k] Prov. 23:29, 30 **5:12** [l] Amos 6:5 [m] Job 34:27 **5:13** [n] 2 Kin. 24:14–16 [o] Hos. 4:6 **5:15** [p] Is. 2:9, 11 **5:16** [q] Is. 2:11 **5:17** [r] Is. 10:16

18 Woe to those who draw iniquity with
cords of vanity,
And sin as if with a cart rope;
19 [s]That say, "Let Him make speed *and*
hasten His work,
That we may see *it;*
And let the counsel of the Holy One of
Israel draw near and come,
That we may know *it*."

20 Woe to those who call evil good, and
good evil;
Who put darkness for light, and light
for darkness;
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet
for bitter!

21 Woe to *those who are* [t]wise in their
own eyes,
And prudent in their own sight!

22 Woe to men mighty at drinking wine,
Woe to men valiant for mixing
intoxicating drink,
23 Who [u]justify the wicked for a bribe,
And take away justice from the
righteous man!

24 Therefore, [v]as the fire devours the
stubble,
And the flame consumes the chaff,
So [w]their root will be as rottenness,
And their blossom will ascend like
dust;
Because they have rejected the law of
the LORD of hosts,
And despised the word of the Holy
One of Israel.
25 [x]Therefore the anger of the LORD is
aroused against His people;
He has stretched out His hand against
them
And stricken them,
And [y]the hills trembled.
Their carcasses *were* as refuse in the
midst of the streets.
[z]For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

26 [a]He will lift up a banner to the nations
from afar,
And will [b]whistle to them from [c]the
end of the earth;
Surely [d]they shall come with speed,
swiftly.
27 No one will be weary or stumble
among them,
No one will slumber or sleep;
Nor [e]will the belt on their loins be
loosed,
Nor the strap of their sandals be
broken;
28 [f]Whose arrows *are* sharp,
And all their bows bent;
Their horses' hooves will seem like
flint,
And their wheels like a whirlwind.
29 Their roaring *will be* like a lion,
They will roar like young lions;
Yes, they will roar
And lay hold of the prey;
They will carry *it* away safely,
And no one will deliver.
30 In that day they will roar against them
Like the roaring of the sea.
And if *one* [g]looks to the land,
Behold, darkness *and* sorrow;
And the light is darkened by the
clouds.

Isaiah Called to Be a Prophet

6 In the year that [a]King Uzziah died, I [b]saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. 2Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, [c]with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3And one cried to another and said:

"hell" where the context considers the "grave" in a negative sense.

5:18 ***vanity.*** A falsehood is a lie. Those who "draw iniquity with cords of vanity" are those who are dragging sin behind them with ropes of lies. Essentially, these lies are the various ways people have of justifying sin. They are not ashamed of their sin, but are quite openly attached to it, carrying it wherever they go. Of course, the big lie is the lie that sin does not matter, that judgment will not come. The truth is that the fruits of sin always catch up with us, and, unless we make peace with God through Christ, the judgment for sin will follow.

6:1 ***King Uzziah died.*** King Uzziah died in 740 B.C., signaling the end of an age. He is described as a good king (2 Chr. 26:1–15), but in his pride he was unfaithful to God (2 Chr. 26:16–23), and he died a leper. He was succeeded by his son Jotham, who did right, and then by wicked Ahaz (7:1). The relative prosperity of the first half of the eighth century was replaced by the Syro-Ephraimite wars and the Assyrian campaigns into Israel.

6:3 ***Holy, holy, holy.*** To say the word "holy" twice in Hebrew is to describe someone as "most holy." To say the word three times intensifies the idea to the highest level. ***The whole earth is full of His glory.*** We know that the glory of God transcends the universe, yet this phrase emphasizes God's closeness to His creation—His involvement with the earth and its people.

We know that our greatest failing is not realizing who God is nor what His character is like. This is particularly true in the case of God's holiness. To be holy means "to be set apart." God is set apart from the power, practice, and presence of sin, and is set apart to absolute righteousness and goodness. There is no sin in God and God can have nothing to do with sin. If we are to approach God, we must do so on God's terms. We must be made holy by God's action in Christ.

Most of our lives are so caught up in the mundane

5:19 [s] Jer. 17:15 **5:21** [t] Rom. 1:22; 12:16 **5:23** [u] Prov. 17:15 **5:24** [v] Ex. 15:7 [w] Job 18:16 **5:25** [x] 2 Kin. 22:13, 17 [y] Jer. 4:24 [z] Is. 9:12, 17 **5:26** [a] Is. 11:10, 12 [b] Is. 7:18 [c] Mal. 1:11 [d] Joel 2:7 **5:27** [e] Dan. 5:6 **5:28** [f] Jer. 5:16 **5:30** [g] Is. 8:22 **6:1** [a] 2 Kin. 15:7 [b] John 12:41 **6:2** [c] Ezek. 1:11

[d]"Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts;
[e]The whole earth *is* full of His glory!"

4 And the posts of the door were shaken
by the voice of him who cried out, and the
house was filled with smoke.
5 So I said:

"Woe *is* me, for I am undone!
Because I *am* a man of [f]unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of
unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts."

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me,
having in his hand a live coal *which* he had
taken with the tongs from [g]the altar. 7 And
he [h]touched my mouth *with it,* and said:

"Behold, this has touched your lips;
Your iniquity is taken away,
And your sin purged."

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, say-
ing:

"Whom shall I send,
And who will go for [i]Us?"

Then I said, "Here *am* I! Send me."
9 And He said, "Go, and [j]tell this people:

'Keep on hearing, but do not
understand;
Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

10 "Make [k]the heart of this people dull,
And their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
[l]Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And return and be healed."

11 Then I said, "Lord, how long?"
And He answered:

[m]"Until the cities are laid waste and
without inhabitant,
The houses are without a man,
The land is utterly desolate,
12 [n]The LORD has removed men far
away,
And the forsaken places *are* many in
the midst of the land.
13 But yet a tenth *will be* in it,
And will return and be for consuming,
As a terebinth tree or as an oak,
Whose stump *remains* when it is cut
down.
So [o]the holy seed *shall be* its stump."

Isaiah Sent to King Ahaz

7 Now it came to pass in the days of [a]Ahaz
the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah,
king of Judah, *that* Rezin king of Syria and
Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel,
went up to Jerusalem to *make* war against
[b]it, but could not prevail against it. 2 And
it was told to the house of David, saying,
"Syria's forces are deployed in Ephraim."
So his heart and the heart of his people
were moved as the trees of the woods are
moved with the wind.

3 Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out
now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub*
your son, at the end of the aqueduct from
the upper pool, on the highway to the Full-
er's Field, 4 and say to him: 'Take heed, and
be [c]quiet; do not fear or be fainthearted for
these two stubs of smoking firebrands, for

* **7:3** Literally *A Remnant Shall Return*

that we don't understand and experience God's holiness as we should. There is little appreciation or understanding of the sacred "otherness" of God. We have too often reduced Him to only friend and advisor. We do so at our own peril; for it is that sacred "otherness" that brings us to our knees. That is where the relationship needs to begin. Isaiah received God's call in that position. He recognized God's holiness and his own uncleanness and the need for God to purify him before he would be fit to serve as a prophet.

The experience of coming to understand God's holiness is simultaneously humbling, challenging, and exhilarating. We touch the fullness of our potential as we are touched and purified by God in Christ's sacrifice for us.

6:6 *live coal . . . from the altar.* Brought face to face with the holiness of the Lord, Isaiah was stunned by his own uncleanness. Without taking any action on his own, Isaiah was offered forgiveness and cleansing. This was a unique event, especially for Isaiah, but not the last time that the Lord reached out to man to offer forgiveness and cleansing. Salvation through Christ is a gift, not received through works (Eph. 2:8–9).

6:10 *heart . . . dull.* Isaiah's call was to a very discouraging ministry. People with "fat" hearts were insensitive. They were "padded" with self-satisfaction so they could not feel the prick of the Lord's words. The more Isaiah proclaimed the Word of God, the less response he received from the people. In truth, the call of God was for faithfulness to God, to His word, and to the call itself.

6:13 *tenth.* A "tenth" is one of Isaiah's expressions for the "remnant."

7:1 *it came to pass.* The next five chapters contain a series of prophecies related specifically to the Syro-Ephraimite wars—the invasion of Judah by Rezin and Pekah (2 Kin. 16). These prophecies aimed to call Judah back to faith in God.

7:2 *house of David.* The king was descended from David and was referred to as "from the house of David." ***Ephraim.*** The word Ephraim represents the northern kingdom of Israel.

7:3 *Shear-Jashub.* The name of Isaiah's son meant "a remnant will return." This name referred to a coming exile and the salvation of the remaining faithful, although all of those events occurred long after Isaiah's lifetime.

7:4 *son of Remaliah.* The son of Remaliah is Pekah, king of Israel.

6:3 [d] Rev. 4:8 [e] Num. 14:21 **6:5** [f] Ex. 6:12, 30 **6:6** [g] Rev. 8:3 **6:7** [h] Jer. 1:9 **6:8** [i] Gen. 1:26 **6:9** [j] Matt. 13:14 **6:10** [k] Ps. 119:70 [l] Jer. 5:21 **6:11** [m] Mic. 3:12 **6:12** [n] 2 Kin. 25:21 **6:13** [o] Ezra 9:2 **7:1** [a] 2 Chr. 28 [b] 2 Kin. 16:5, 9 **7:4** [c] Is. 30:15

the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and the son of Remaliah. 5Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, 6"Let us go up against Judah and trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over them, the son of Tabel"— 7thus says the Lord GOD:

[d]"It shall not stand,
Nor shall it come to pass.
8 [e]For the head of Syria *is* Damascus,
And the head of Damascus *is* Rezin.
Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken,
So that it will not *be* a people.
9 The head of Ephraim *is* Samaria,
And the head of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son.
[f]If you will not believe,
Surely you shall not be established."'"

The Immanuel Prophecy

10Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 11[g]"Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above."

12But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!"

13Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! *Is it* a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? 14Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: [h]Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear [i]a Son, and shall call His name [j]Immanuel.* 15Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16[k]For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by [l]both her kings. 17[m]The LORD will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house—days that have not come since the day that [n]Ephraim departed from Judah."

18 And it shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD [o]will whistle for the fly
That *is* in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt,
And for the bee that *is* in the land of Assyria.
19 They will come, and all of them will rest
In the desolate valleys and in [p]the clefts of the rocks,
And on all thorns and in all pastures.

20 In the same day the Lord will shave with a [q]hired [r]razor,
With those from beyond the River,* with the king of Assyria,
The head and the hair of the legs,
And will also remove the beard.

21 It shall be in that day
That a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep;
22 So it shall be, from the abundance of milk they give,
That he will eat curds;
For curds and honey everyone will eat who is left in the land.

23 It shall happen in that day,
That wherever there could be a thousand vines
Worth a thousand *shekels* of silver,
[s]It will be for briers and thorns.
24 With arrows and bows *men* will come there,
Because all the land will become briers and thorns.

25 And to any hill which could be dug with the hoe,
You will not go there for fear of briers and thorns;
But it will become a range for oxen
And a place for sheep to roam.

* **7:14** Literally *God-With-Us* * **7:20** That is, the Euphrates

7:6 *son of Tabel.* Tabel means "good for nothing." Syria and Israel wanted to place an incompetent puppet king over Judah.

7:12 *not ask, nor will I test.* In the mouth of the wicked Ahaz, these words rang hollow. Ahaz was continually testing the Lord's patience by his disobedience.

7:14 *Immanuel.* The Christian church traditionally has seen this verse as a prophecy of the Christ child, in whose incarnation God became present in physical form with mankind. The name "Immanuel" means "God with us." Christ, as a descendant of the house of David, fulfills the requirements of the sign and reinforces Isaiah's message that the nation's destiny does not rest with a foreign people, but with the God of Sinai.

7:15 *Curds and honey.* Curds and honey contrast with "bread and wine" from cultivated lands and symbolically represent the Judean's simple diet after the Assyrian invasion. Thus, the Child, similar to Isaiah's son Shear-Jashub (v. 3), would be identified with the remnant.

7:16 *For before.* Similar prophecies were spoken of the child's birth and Isaiah's other son, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (8:3). Israel and Syria would be destroyed before the child and Isaiah's son would reach maturity (see 8:4, where Syria is referred to as Damascus and Israel as Samaria). It is not uncommon for biblical prophecies to have one level of fulfillment in the immediate future and a final fulfillment many years later in the person and work of the Savior, Jesus. Thus, the birth of Isaiah's son could have been a sign to King Ahaz. However, this would have been an early fulfillment, not the ultimate fulfillment. It was the coming of Jesus, God's only Son, which was the complete fulfillment.

7:20 *shave . . . beard.* This was a symbol of humiliation.

7:7 [d] Is. 8:10 **7:8** [e] 2 Sam. 8:6 **7:9** [f] 2 Chr. 20:20 **7:11** [g] Matt. 12:38 **7:14** [h] Matt. 1:23 [i] [Is. 9:6] [j] Is. 8:8, 10 **7:16** [k] Is. 8:4 [l] 2 Kin. 15:30 **7:17** [m] 2 Chr. 28:19, 20 [n] 1 Kin. 12:16 **7:18** [o] Is. 5:26 **7:19** [p] Jer. 16:16 **7:20** [q] Is. 10:5, 15 [r] 2 Kin. 16:7 **7:23** [s] Is. 5:6

Assyria Will Invade the Land

8 Moreover the LORD said to me, "Take a large scroll, and [a]write on it with a man's pen concerning Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.* **2**And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, [b]Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah."

3Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz; **4**[c]for before the child shall have knowledge to cry 'My father' and 'My mother,' [d]the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria."

5The LORD also spoke to me again, saying:

6 "Inasmuch as these people refused
The waters of [e]Shiloah that flow softly,
And rejoice [f]in Rezin and in
Remaliah's son;
7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings
up over them
The waters of the River,* strong and
mighty—
The king of Assyria and all his glory;
He will go up over all his channels
And go over all his banks.
8 He will pass through Judah,
He will overflow and pass over,
[g]He will reach up to the neck;
And the stretching out of his
wings
Will fill the breadth of Your land,
O [h]Immanuel.*

9 "Be[i] shattered, O you peoples, and be
broken in pieces!
Give ear, all you from far countries.
Gird yourselves, but be broken in
pieces;
Gird yourselves, but be broken in
pieces.
10 [j]Take counsel together, but it will come
to nothing;
Speak the word, [k]but it will not stand,
[l]For God *is* with us."*

Fear God, Heed His Word

11For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

12 "Do not say, 'A conspiracy,'
Concerning all that this people call a
conspiracy,
Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be
troubled.
13 The LORD of hosts, Him you shall
hallow;
Let Him *be* your fear,
And *let* Him *be* your dread.
14 [m]He will be as a sanctuary,
But [n]a stone of stumbling and a rock
of offense
To both the houses of Israel,
As a trap and a snare to the
inhabitants of Jerusalem.
15 And many among them shall [o]stumble;
They shall fall and be broken,
Be snared and taken."

16 Bind up the testimony,
Seal the law among my disciples.
17 And I will wait on the LORD,
Who [p]hides His face from the house
of Jacob;
And I [q]will hope in Him.
18 [r]Here am I and the children whom the
LORD has given me!
We [s]are for signs and wonders in Israel
From the LORD of hosts,
Who dwells in Mount Zion.

19And when they say to you, [t]"Seek those who are mediums and wizards, [u]who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? *Should they* [v]*seek* the dead on behalf of the living? **20**[w]To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, *it is* because [x]*there is* no light in them.

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* **8:1** Literally *Speed the Spoil, Hasten the Booty*
* **8:7** That is, the Euphrates * **8:8** Literally *God-With-Us* * **8:10** Hebrew *Immanuel*

8:2 ***Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.*** This was not the Zechariah who wrote the Book of Zechariah.
8:3 ***the prophetess.*** Isaiah's wife was a prophetess in her own right. It is possible that this was a new wife, following the death of the mother of Shear-Jashub (7:3). ***Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.*** The child's name means "speed the spoil, hasten the booty."
8:4 ***spoil of Samaria . . . king of Assyria.*** This was a specific prediction of the fall of Samaria to the Assyrians in 722 B.C. This prophecy must have been written shortly before that time, as the fulfillment would come before the new child would be able to speak.
8:8 ***O Immanuel.*** Isaiah bestowed on Judah the name of the promised Child, Immanuel, which means "God with us" (7:14), because it would be preserved only because God was with that nation.
8:14 ***a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.*** God is a stone of stumbling for unbelievers (Ps. 118:22; Luke 20:17–18; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6–8).
8:16 ***testimony . . . law.*** The testimony refers to a legal transaction. The law refers to God's instruction revealed through Isaiah. Isaiah's disciples put his prophecies in the form of a legal transaction, probably to prove their authenticity when they were fulfilled (see vv. 1–2; compare Jer. 28:9; 32:12–14).
8:18 ***children.*** Isaiah's name means "Jehovah has saved," and his two sons' names speak of the impending judgment of God (7:3; 8:3). They were symbols of God's intentions for the nation.
8:19 ***Seek those who are mediums and wizards.*** This indicates that the people were involved in necromancy, the practice of conjuring up the spirits of

8:1 [a] Hab. 2:2 **8:2** [b] 2 Kin. 16:10 **8:4** [c] 2 Kin. 17:6; Is. 7:16 [d] 2 Kin. 15:29 **8:6** [e] John 9:7 [f] Is. 7:1, 2 **8:8** [g] Is. 30:28 [h] Is. 7:14 **8:9** [i] Joel 3:9 **8:10** [j] Is. 7:7 [k] Is. 7:14 [l] Rom. 8:31 **8:14** [m] Ezek. 11:16 [n] Luke 2:34; 20:17 **8:15** [o] Matt. 21:44 **8:17** [p] Is. 54:8 [q] Hab. 2:3 **8:18** [r] Heb. 2:13 [s] Ps. 71:7 **8:19** [t] 1 Sam. 28:8 [u] Is. 29:4 [v] Ps. 106:28 **8:20** [w] Luke 16:29 [x] Mic. 3:6

21 They will pass through it hard-pressed
and hungry; and it shall happen, when they
are hungry, that they will be enraged and
[y]curse their king and their God, and look
upward. 22 Then they will look to the earth,
and see trouble and darkness, gloom of an-
guish; and *they will be* driven into darkness.

The Government of the Promised Son

9 Nevertheless [a]the gloom *will* not *be*
upon her who *is* distressed,
As when at [b]first He lightly esteemed
The land of Zebulun and the land of
Naphtali,
And [c]afterward more heavily
oppressed *her,*
By the way of the sea, beyond the
Jordan,
In Galilee of the Gentiles.
2 [d]The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the
shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.
3 You have multiplied the nation
And increased its joy;*
They rejoice before You
According to the joy of harvest,
As *men* rejoice [e]when they divide the
spoil.
4 For You have broken the yoke of his
burden
And the staff of his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor,
As in the day of [f]Midian.
5 For every warrior's sandal from the
noisy battle,
And garments rolled in blood,
[g]Will be used for burning *and* fuel of
fire.
6 [h]For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a [i]Son is given;
And [j]the government will be upon His
shoulder.
And His name will be called
[k]Wonderful, Counselor, [l]Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, [m]Prince of Peace.
7 Of the increase of *His* government and
peace
[n]*There will be* no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His
kingdom,
To order it and establish it with
judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.
The [o]zeal of the LORD of hosts will
perform this.

* **9:3** Following Qere and Targum; Kethib and Vulgate read *not increased joy;* Septuagint reads *Most of the people You brought down in Your joy.*

the dead in order to influence events. This practice, as well as the use of any mediums or spiritists, was strictly forbidden (Deut. 18:9–14).

9:1 ***lightly esteemed.*** The ancient tribal allotments of Zebulun and Naphtali (Josh. 19:10–16,32–39), which included Galilee, were the first to feel the brunt of the Assyrian invasions (2 Kin. 15:29). ***the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles.*** These three phrases indicate administrative districts of the Assyrian conqueror Tiglath-Pileser III as a result of the three campaigns he waged in the west around 733 B.C. The city of Capernaum is "by the way of the sea," (Galilee) in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. This is where Jesus began His ministry, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1–2 (Matt. 4:15–16).

9:2 ***Have seen a great light.*** The light stands for God's blessings, presence, and revelation, fulfilled in Jesus who came in the flesh (Matt. 4:15–16). The coming of Jesus revealed the mercy and grace of God in the same way that the rising sun reveals the nature of the land it shines upon. All history is labeled from that definitive moment: before the Light, or after the Light (John 1:9).

9:6–7 ***a Child.*** In this triumphant song Isaiah rejoices as though the promised Child of the house of David has already been born. The Child's birthright involves authority and rule, while His character is depicted with descriptive names. As "Wonderful" and "Counselor," He represents the sum of wisdom and knowledge, and His divinity is established clearly by the title "Mighty God." The Fatherhood of the Messiah is eternal, which again demonstrates His identity with God (John 10:30). Finally, as the "Prince of Peace" He brings peace into the world by His atoning death on the cross, paying the price of human sin and reconciling us to God. The line of David will be the human line for the source of these blessings (2 Sam. 7:8–16; Luke 1:32–33), and the divine nature of the Messiah will guarantee their permanence.

9:7 The Son of God— In Luke 24:25–27 Jesus goes to great lengths to help two of His disciples understand what the Jewish Scriptures (the Old Testament) said about Him. Throughout the Old Testament there are numerous passages that point towards Jesus Christ in several ways. This prophecy in Isaiah is one of the most important of these passages. Here He is spoken of as a son before He became a man (see also Gal. 4:4). Micah prophesies His birth, but also states that His "goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2). John says that He existed "in the beginning" before anything was created (John 1:1–3).

Even before He was born of Mary, He appeared to men in the Old Testament as the "Angel of the LORD." It is clear that this is no ordinary angel because He is identified as God (Ex. 3:2). He pardons sin (Ex. 23:20–21), and He is worshiped (Josh. 5:13–15). While these passages do not say that this member of the Godhead was the preincarnate Christ, we may conclude that they are the same person since their work is the same.

While Christ occasionally appeared to men in the Old Testament, He took on a physical, human body when He was conceived in Mary's womb. This incomparable event of God's becoming man in Jesus Christ

8:21 [y] Rev. 16:11 **9:1** [a] Is. 8:22 [b] 2 Kin. 15:29 [c] Matt. 4:13–16 **9:2** [d] Matt. 4:16 **9:3** [e] Judg. 5:30 **9:4** [f] Judg. 7:22 **9:5** [g] Is. 66:15 **9:6** [h] [Luke 2:11] [i] [John 3:16] [j] [Matt. 28:18] [k] Judg. 13:18 [l] Titus 2:13 [m] Eph. 2:14 **9:7** [n] Dan. 2:44 [o] Is. 37:32

The Punishment of Samaria

8 The Lord sent a word against [p]Jacob,
And it has fallen on Israel.
9 All the people will know—
Ephraim and the inhabitant of
Samaria—
Who say in pride and arrogance of
heart:
10 "The bricks have fallen down,
But we will rebuild with hewn
stones;
The sycamores are cut down,
But we will replace *them* with cedars."
11 Therefore the LORD shall set up
The adversaries of Rezin against him,
And spur his enemies on,
12 The Syrians before and the Philistines
behind;
And they shall devour Israel with an
open mouth.

For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

13 For the people do not turn to Him who
strikes them,
Nor do they seek the LORD of hosts.
14 Therefore the LORD will cut off head
and tail from Israel,
Palm branch and bulrush [q]in one day.
15 The elder and honorable, he *is* the head;
The prophet who teaches lies, he *is*
the tail.
16 For [r]the leaders of this people cause
them to err,
And *those who are* led by them are
destroyed.
17 Therefore the Lord [s]will have no joy in
their young men,
Nor have mercy on their fatherless and
widows;
For everyone *is* a hypocrite and an
evildoer,
And every mouth speaks folly.

[t]For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

18 For wickedness [u]burns as the fire;
It shall devour the briers and thorns,
And kindle in the thickets of the
forest;
They shall mount up *like* rising smoke.
19 Through the wrath of the LORD of
hosts
[v]The land is burned up,
And the people shall be as fuel for the
fire;
[w]No man shall spare his brother.
20 And he shall snatch on the right
hand
And be hungry;
He shall devour on the left hand
[x]And not be satisfied;
[y]Every man shall eat the flesh of his
own arm.
21 Manasseh *shall devour* Ephraim, and
Ephraim Manasseh;
Together they *shall be* [z]against Judah.

[a]For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

10 "Woe to those who [a]decree
unrighteous decrees,
Who write misfortune,
Which they have prescribed
2 To rob the needy of justice,
And to take what is right from the
poor of My people,
That widows may be their prey,
And *that* they may rob the fatherless.
3 [b]What will you do in [c]the day of
punishment,
And in the desolation *which* will come
from [d]afar?
To whom will you flee for help?
And where will you leave your
glory?

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is called the incarnation. This miracle was prophesied hundreds of years previously (7:14) and was fulfilled historically when Christ was born (Luke 2:7). Thus Christ, the sinless God-man, was qualified to become our Redeemer (2 Cor. 5:21).

As a man, Christ experienced normal physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth as others did (Luke 2:52). He had pain, hunger, thirst, fatigue, temptation, pleasure, rest, and even lack of knowledge (Mark 13:32). Because of His complete humanity He can be sympathetic and compassionate toward us (Heb. 4:15).

While Christ was fully man He was also fully God, as these facts indicate: He is called God (John 1:1; Heb. 1:8); He did works that only God could do, such as forgive sins (Mark 2:7) and create (Col. 1:16); He had attributes that only God could have, such as truth (John 14:6) and omniscience (John 2:24–25); and He claimed equality with God (John 10:30).

The question may be raised as to whether Christ lost anything of deity when He became a man (Phil. 2:6–8). While there is an inscrutable mystery involved in this unparalleled act of condescension, one can be certain that He lost none of God's attributes, because He was still God (John 20:28). He is fully God and fully man united in one person forever. Even now, at the right hand of God, He is the God-man (1 Tim. 2:5). The great condescension of the Son of God in becoming a man serves eternally as a perfect model of humility and self-giving love (Phil. 2:8).

9:8 *word against Jacob.* The message was a judgment against the northern kingdom. The Lord would destroy it and its capital, Samaria.

10:1 *Woe.* Woe is a chilling word when spoken by God (5:8–23; 10:5). The leaders who make laws that affect a community for good or evil bear a fearful responsibility before God, whether they acknowledge it or not.

10:3 *from afar.* The Assyrians were the devastation that came from afar.

9:8 [p] Gen. 32:28 **9:14** [q] Rev. 18:8 **9:16** [r] Is. 3:12 **9:17** [s] Ps. 147:10 [t] Is. 5:25 **9:18** [u] Mal. 4:1 **9:19** [v] Is. 8:22 [w] Mic. 7:2, 6 **9:20** [x] Lev. 26:26 [y] Jer. 19:9 **9:21** [z] 2 Chr. 28:6, 8 [a] Is. 9:12, 17 **10:1** [a] Ps. 58:2 **10:3** [b] Job 31:14 [c] Hos. 9:7 [d] Is. 5:26

4 Without Me they shall bow down
among the [e]prisoners,
And they shall fall among the slain."

[f]For all this His anger is not turned
away,
But His hand *is* stretched out still.

Arrogant Assyria Also Judged

5 "Woe to Assyria, [g]the rod of My anger
And the staff in whose hand is My
indignation.
6 I will send him against [h]an ungodly
nation,
And against the people of My wrath
I will [i]give him charge,
To seize the spoil, to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire
of the streets.
7 [j]Yet he does not mean so,
Nor does his heart think so;
But *it is* in his heart to destroy,
And cut off not a few nations.
8 [k]For he says,
'*Are* not my princes altogether kings?
9 *Is* not [l]Calno [m]like Carchemish?
Is not Hamath like Arpad?
Is not Samaria [n]like Damascus?
10 As my hand has found the kingdoms
of the idols,
Whose carved images excelled those
of Jerusalem and Samaria,
11 As I have done to Samaria and her
idols,
Shall I not do also to Jerusalem and
her idols?'"

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work [o]on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, *that He will say,* [p]"I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks."

13 [q]For he says:

"By the strength of my hand I have
done *it*,
And by my wisdom, for I am
prudent;
Also I have removed the boundaries of
the people,
And have robbed their treasuries;
So I have put down the inhabitants
like a valiant *man*.
14 [r]My hand has found like a nest the
riches of the people,
And as one gathers eggs *that are* left,
I have gathered all the earth;
And there was no one who moved *his*
wing,
Nor opened *his* mouth with even a peep."

15 Shall [s]the ax boast itself against him
who chops with it?
Or shall the saw exalt itself against
him who saws with it?
As if a rod could wield *itself* against
those who lift it up,
Or as if a staff could lift up, *as if it
were* not wood!
16 Therefore the Lord, the Lord* of hosts,
Will send leanness among his fat ones;
And under his glory
He will kindle a burning
Like the burning of a fire.
17 So the Light of Israel will be for a fire,
And his Holy One for a flame;
[t]It will burn and devour
His thorns and his briers in one day.
18 And it will consume the glory of his
forest and of [u]his fruitful field,
Both soul and body;
And they will be as when a sick man
wastes away.
19 Then the rest of the trees of his forest
Will be so few in number
That a child may write them.

The Returning Remnant of Israel

20 And it shall come to pass in that day
That the remnant of Israel,
And such as have escaped of the house
of Jacob,
[v]Will never again depend on him who
defeated them,
But will depend on the LORD, the Holy
One of Israel, in truth.
21 The remnant will return, the remnant
of Jacob,
To the [w]Mighty God.

* **10:16** Following Bomberg; Masoretic Text and Dead Sea Scrolls read *YHWH* (*the* LORD).

10:5 ***Assyria.*** Though God uses sinners as instruments of His will (7:17; 13:5), they will still be held accountable for their own wickedness. In this, God shows that He is just in all His ways (Hab. 1–3).
10:6 ***an ungodly nation.*** The ungodly nation is Judah (vv. 11–12).
10:9 ***Calno . . . Damascus.*** This is a list of cities that had already fallen to Assyria.
10:10 ***idols . . . images.*** The Assyrians had conquered the nations who had false gods. Surely, they believed, they would also have an easy time against "Jerusalem and her idols." Only the living God was to be worshiped by the Israelites, but they had repeatedly broken that command (Ex. 20:4–6; Judg. 2:19).
10:15 ***Shall the ax boast.*** The ax that boasted was the Assyrian army. They were an instrument in the hands of God.
10:16 ***his fat ones.*** The fat warriors who come under judgment are the Assyrians.
10:20 ***remnant.*** The Hebrew word used here for "remnant" is different than the word used in 1:9. The difference may be considered slight; it is the difference between those who were left, or remained (10:20,22), and those who survived (1:9).

10:4 [e] Is. 24:22 [f] Is. 5:25 **10:5** [g] Jer. 51:20 **10:6** [h] Is. 9:17 [i] Jer. 34:22 **10:7** [j] Gen. 50:20 **10:8** [k] 2 Kin. 19:10 **10:9** [l] Amos 6:2 [m] 2 Chr. 35:20 [n] 2 Kin. 16:9 **10:12** [o] 2 Kin. 19:31 [p] Jer. 50:18 **10:13** [q] Is. 37:24–27 **10:14** [r] Job 31:25 **10:15** [s] Jer. 51:20 **10:17** [t] Is. 9:18 **10:18** [u] 2 Kin. 19:23 **10:20** [v] 2 Kin. 16:7 **10:21** [w] [Is. 9:6]

22 [x]For though your people, O Israel, be as
the sand of the sea,
[y]A remnant of them will return;
The destruction decreed shall
overflow with righteousness.
23 [z]For the Lord GOD of hosts
Will make a determined end
In the midst of all the land.

24Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: "O My people, who dwell in Zion, [a]do not be afraid of the Assyrian. He shall strike you with a rod and lift up his staff against you, in the manner of [b]Egypt. 25For yet a very little while [c]and the indignation will cease, as will My anger in their destruction." 26And the LORD of hosts will stir up [d]a scourge for him like the slaughter of [e]Midian at the rock of Oreb; [f]*as* His rod was on the sea, so will He lift it up in the manner of Egypt.

27 It shall come to pass in that day
That his burden will be taken away
from your shoulder,
And his yoke from your neck,
And the yoke will be destroyed
because of [g]the anointing oil.

28 He has come to Aiath,
He has passed Migron;
At Michmash he has attended to his
equipment.
29 They have gone along [h]the ridge,
They have taken up lodging at Geba.
Ramah is afraid,
[i]Gibeah of Saul has fled.
30 Lift up your voice,
O daughter [j]of Gallim!
Cause it to be heard as far as [k]Laish—
O poor Anathoth!*
31 [l]Madmenah has fled,
The inhabitants of Gebim seek refuge.
32 As yet he will remain [m]at Nob that
day;
He will [n]shake his fist at the mount of
[o]the daughter of Zion,
The hill of Jerusalem.

33 Behold, the Lord,
The LORD of hosts,
Will lop off the bough with terror;
[p]Those of high stature *will be* hewn
down,
And the haughty will be humbled.
34 He will cut down the thickets of the
forest with iron,
And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty
One.

The Reign of Jesse's Offspring

11 There [a]shall come forth a Rod from
the stem of [b]Jesse,
And [c]a Branch shall grow out of his
roots.
2 [d]The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon
Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and
understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the
fear of the LORD.

3 His delight *is* in the fear of the LORD,
And He shall not judge by the sight of
His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;
4 But [e]with righteousness He shall judge
the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of
the earth;

* **10:30** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *Listen to her, O Anathoth.*

10:22 ***A remnant.*** Most of the people of the northern kingdom were carried off into captivity. But some Israelites made their way to Judah and became part of the southern kingdom. These people and their descendants would act as a remnant by preserving the names of the northern tribes among the people of God.

10:28–32 ***Aiath . . . Jerusalem.*** These verses depict Isaiah's vision of the king of Assyria's relentless march south over difficult terrain from Aiath (or Ai), which was ten miles north of Jerusalem on a point overlooking the city. The cities as listed in these verses are closer and closer to the capital at Jerusalem.

10:32 ***he.*** "He" refers to Assyria, the enemy.

10:33–34 ***bough . . . thickets.*** The bough and the thickets are the Assyrian leaders and the Assyrian army. The point is that God will bring judgment on the instruments He used to judge Israel.

11:1 ***a Rod from the stem of Jesse.*** Jesse was King David's father (1 Sam. 16:10–13). As David inaugurated a kingdom of righteousness and peace, the new David—the "rod" or "root" (53:2) from David's line—will establish an incomparably greater kingdom. The words "rod" and "root" are messianic terms. They are figurative words for the great descendant of the household of David, the Seed of the woman promised in Genesis 3:15, Jesus Christ Himself (Matt. 1:17).

11:2 ***Spirit.*** As in the case of David (1 Sam. 16:13), the Messiah would be empowered by the Holy Spirit (4:4; 42:1; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1; Luke 3:22), who was the Agent for establishing God's kingdom (Gen. 1:1–2; Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 1 Sam. 10:6). ***wisdom and understanding.*** The Messiah will be the ideal king. He will embody the administrative skill to govern with righteousness and justice far more than even Solomon (1 Kin. 3:9), who asked for those gifts when he became king. ***counsel.*** The Holy Spirit's "counsel" is not advice, but authoritative plans and decisions. ***fear of the LORD.*** The Messiah would demonstrate in all His life the correct response to God; He would honor and obey Him (Ex. 20:20).

11:4 ***judge.*** In this context, judge does not mean to

10:22 [x] Rom. 9:27, 28 [y] Is. 6:13 **10:23** [z] Dan. 9:27 **10:24** [a] Is. 7:4; 12:2 [b] Ex. 14 **10:25** [c] Dan. 11:36 **10:26** [d] 2 Kin. 19:35 [e] Is. 9:4 [f] Ex. 14:26, 27 **10:27** [g] Ps. 105:15 **10:29** [h] 1 Sam. 13:23 [i] 1 Sam. 11:4 **10:30** [j] 1 Sam. 25:44 [k] Judg. 18:7 **10:31** [l] Josh. 15:31 **10:32** [m] 1 Sam. 21:1 [n] Is. 13:2 [o] Is. 37:22 **10:33** [p] Amos 2:9 **11:1** [a] [Zech. 6:12] [b] [Acts 13:23] [c] Is. 4:2 **11:2** [d] [John 1:32] **11:4** [e] Rev. 19:11

He shall [f]strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.
5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

6 "The[g] wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
The calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
Their young ones shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole,
And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.
9 [h]They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,
For [i]the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.

10 "And[j] in that day [k]there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a [l]banner to the people;
For the [m]Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious."

11 It shall come to pass in that day
That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of His people who are left,
[n]From Assyria and Egypt,
From Pathros and Cush,
From Elam and Shinar,
From Hamath and the islands of the sea.

12 He will set up a banner for the nations,
And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together [o]the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.
13 Also [p]the envy of Ephraim shall depart,
And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not envy Judah,
And Judah shall not harass Ephraim.
14 But they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west;
Together they shall plunder the people of the East;
[q]They shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab;
And the people of Ammon shall obey them.
15 The LORD [r]will utterly destroy* the tongue of the Sea of Egypt;
With His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the River,*
And strike it in the seven streams,
And make *men* cross over dry-shod.
16 [s]There will be a highway for the remnant of His people
Who will be left from Assyria,
[t]As it was for Israel
In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.

A Hymn of Praise

12 And [a]in that day you will say:

"O LORD, I will praise You;
Though You were angry with me,
Your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.
2 Behold, God *is* my salvation,
I will trust and not be afraid;
[b]'For [c]YAH, the LORD, *is* my strength and song;
He also has become my salvation.'"*

* **11:15** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum read *dry up.* • That is, the Euphrates * **12:2** Exodus 15:2

bring people to account, but to act on their behalf. As the Judge of His people, God sentences the wicked and offers protection and defense for the innocent and oppressed. ***rod of His mouth . . . breath of His lips.*** This concept is repeated in Revelation 19:15, when the Lord Jesus returns with power and great glory.

11:6–9 *wolf also shall dwell with the lamb . . . shall not hurt nor destroy.* This picture of cruel beasts regenerated with a new nature that makes them protect their natural prey portrays a reign of peace and security. This can only be realized in the return of the Messiah to establish the kingdom of God (65:17–25; Rev. 21:1–8).

11:10 *the Gentiles.* The revelation of the Messiah is for people of all nations.

11:11 *the second time.* The "second time" may refer to the remnant coming back to the land in 538 B.C., in contrast to the first exodus from Egypt. Beyond that, it could also refer to the remnant's coming to Christ in the present age (Rom. 11:5) or to its future return to Christ (Rom. 11:11–27; Rev. 7:4–8).

12:1 *in that day.* The day refers to the day that the Lord rescues His people, whether it was the return of the remnant or the future return of Christ as portrayed in the Book of Revelation.

12:2 *my strength and song.* This psalm of redemption is based on the first psalm of redemption in Exodus (Ex. 15:2; Ps. 118:14).

11:4 [f] Job 4:9 **11:6** [g] Hos. 2:18 **11:9** [h] Job 5:23 [i] Hab. 2:14 **11:10** [j] Is. 2:11 [k] Rom. 15:12 [l] Is. 27:12, 13 [m] Rom. 15:10 **11:11** [n] Zech. 10:10 **11:12** [o] John 7:35 **11:13** [p] Jer. 3:18 **11:14** [q] Dan. 11:41 **11:15** [r] Zech. 10:10, 11 **11:16** [s] Is. 19:23 [t] Ex. 14:29 **12:1** [a] Is. 2:11 **12:2** [b] Ps. 83:18 [c] Ex. 15:2

3 Therefore with joy you will draw [d]water
From the wells of salvation.

4 And in that day you will say:

[e]"Praise the LORD, call upon His name;
[f]Declare His deeds among the peoples,
Make mention that His [g]name is exalted.
5 [h]Sing to the LORD,
For He has done excellent things;
This *is* known in all the earth.
6 [i]Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion,
For great *is* [j]the Holy One of Israel in your midst!"

Proclamation Against Babylon

13 The [a]burden against Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

2 "Lift[b] up a banner [c]on the high mountain,
Raise your voice to them;
[d]Wave your hand, that they may enter the gates of the nobles.
3 I have commanded My sanctified ones;
I have also called [e]My mighty ones for My anger—
Those who [f]rejoice in My exaltation."

4 The [g]noise of a multitude in the mountains,
Like that of many people!
A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together!
The LORD of hosts musters
The army for battle.
5 They come from a far country,
From the end of heaven—
The [h]LORD and His weapons of indignation,
To destroy the whole [i]land.

6 Wail, [j]for the day of the LORD *is* at hand!
[k]It will come as destruction from the Almighty.
7 Therefore all hands will be limp,
Every man's heart will melt,
8 And they will be afraid.
[l]Pangs and sorrows will take hold of *them;*
They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth;
They will be amazed at one another;
Their faces *will be like* flames.

9 Behold, [m]the day of the LORD comes,
Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger,
To lay the land desolate;
And He will destroy [n]its sinners from it.
10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not give their light;
The sun will be [o]darkened in its going forth,
And the moon will not cause its light to shine.

11 "I will [p]punish the world for *its* evil,
And the wicked for their iniquity;
[q]I will halt the arrogance of the proud,
And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.
12 I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold,
A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.
13 [r]Therefore I will shake the heavens,
And the earth will move out of her place,
In the wrath of the LORD of hosts
And in [s]the day of His fierce anger.
14 It shall be as the hunted gazelle,
And as a sheep that no man takes up;
[t]Every man will turn to his own people,
And everyone will flee to his own land.
15 Everyone who is found will be thrust through,
And everyone who is captured will fall by the sword.
16 Their children also will be [u]dashed to pieces before their eyes;
Their houses will be plundered
And their wives [v]ravished.

12:3 ***wells of salvation.*** In an arid land, the provision of wells and springs was regarded as a divine gift. Hebrew poets often associate water with salvation (Ex. 17:1–7).

13:1 ***burden . . . which Isaiah . . . saw.*** The Book of Isaiah takes a major turn at chapter 13, which continues through chapter 27. The focus in this extended section is first on the Lord's judgments against the nations, through chapter 23, followed by an end-time prophecy in chapters 24–27. ***Babylon.*** Babylon was the crown jewel of the Assyrian Empire. This burden may refer to its destruction around 689 B.C. when Sennacherib quelled a rebellion there. Yet the Lord's overthrow of Babylon, the "glory of kingdoms" (v. 19), symbolizes His triumph over the world (v. 11). Babylon is the epitome of religion and culture in the ancient Middle East. Thus the burden is indirectly against all nations, especially Assyria (14:24–27). Peter uses the term Babylon symbolically in the New Testament (1 Pet. 5:13), as does John (Rev. 14:8; 18:2,10–21).

13:6 ***the day of the LORD.*** This designated "day" refers to a time of unusual activity of God in the lives of people, for judgment or for mercy. ***is at hand.*** The basic idea of this term is not that of approaching a fixed date, but that the day of the Lord is about to burst into one's world. The day of the Lord is imminent—able to happen at any time—not because people have almost reached it as a destination, but because it may burst in upon people without further warning.

12:3 [d] [John 4:10, 14; 7:37, 38] **12:4** [e] 1 Chr. 16:8 [f] Ps. 145:4–6 [g] Ps. 34:3 **12:5** [h] Ex. 15:1 **12:6** [i] Zeph. 3:14, 15 [j] Ps. 89:18 **13:1** [a] Jer. 50; 51 **13:2** [b] Is. 18:3 [c] Jer. 51:25 [d] Is. 10:32 **13:3** [e] Joel 3:11 [f] Ps. 149:2 **13:4** [g] Is. 17:12 **13:5** [h] Is. 42:13 [i] Is. 24:1; 34:2 **13:6** [j] Zeph. 1:7 [k] Joel 1:15 **13:8** [l] Ps. 48:6 **13:9** [m] Mal. 4:1 [n] Prov. 2:22 **13:10** [o] Joel 2:31 **13:11** [p] Is. 26:21 [q] [Is. 2:17] **13:13** [r] Hag. 2:6 [s] Lam. 1:12 **13:14** [t] Jer. 50:16; 51:9 **13:16** [u] Nah. 3:10 [v] Zech. 14:2

17 "Behold,[w] I will stir up the Medes
against them,
Who will not regard silver;
And *as for* gold, they will not delight
in it.
18 Also *their* bows will dash the young
men to pieces,
And they will have no pity on the fruit
of the womb;
Their eye will not spare children.
19 [x]And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride,
Will be as when God overthrew
[y]Sodom and Gomorrah.
20 [z]It will never be inhabited,
Nor will it be settled from generation
to generation;
Nor will the Arabian pitch tents there,
Nor will the shepherds make their
sheepfolds there.
21 [a]But wild beasts of the desert will lie
there,
And their houses will be full of owls;
Ostriches will dwell there,
And wild goats will caper there.
22 The hyenas will howl in their citadels,
And jackals in their pleasant palaces.
[b]Her time *is* near to come,
And her days will not be prolonged."

Mercy on Jacob

14 For the LORD [a]will have mercy on Jacob, and [b]will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. [c]The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. 2Then people will take them [d]and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the LORD; they will take them captive whose captives they were, [e]and rule over their oppressors.

Fall of the King of Babylon

3It shall come to pass in the day the LORD gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve, 4that you [f]will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say:

"How the oppressor has ceased,
The [g]golden* city ceased!
5 The LORD has broken [h]the staff of the
wicked,
The scepter of the rulers;
6 He who struck the people in wrath
with a continual stroke,
He who ruled the nations in anger,
Is persecuted *and* no one hinders.
7 The whole earth is at rest *and* quiet;
They break forth into singing.
8 [i]Indeed the cypress trees rejoice over
you,
And the cedars of Lebanon,
Saying, 'Since you were cut down,
No woodsman has come up against us.'
9 "Hell[j] from beneath is excited about you,
To meet *you* at your coming;
It stirs up the dead for you,
All the chief ones of the earth;
It has raised up from their thrones
All the kings of the nations.
10 They all shall [k]speak and say to you:
'Have you also become as weak as we?
Have you become like us?
11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,
And the sound of your stringed
instruments;
The maggot is spread under you,
And worms cover you.'

The Fall of Lucifer

12 "How[l] you are fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer,* son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground,
You who weakened the nations!
13 For you have said in your heart:
[m]'I will ascend into heaven,
[n]I will exalt my throne above the stars
of God;

* **14:4** Or *insolent* * **14:12** Literally *Day Star*

13:21–22 *owls . . . jackals.* With the exception of the goat, all of the animals mentioned in these verses are unclean. This image created a clear message to the people of Israel of a place that was desolate and unfit to inhabit.

14:4 *Babylon.* Babylon is often used in Scripture for Satan's kingdom. This passage can be read with a double point of view. One, as if it were talking about an unnamed political king; and two, as a reference to and description of Satan's career. Both views are sobering and worth taking note of.

14:8 *the cypress trees rejoice.* The trees will no longer be cut down to construct machines of war.

14:9 *Hell from beneath is excited.* The commotion in the "grave" when the king of Babylon (or Satan; see Rev. 20:1–3) arrives contrasts sharply with the rest on earth when he is gone (v. 7).

14:12 *fallen from heaven.* This is a figure of speech meaning cast down from an exalted political position. Jesus said, "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades" (Luke 10:15); and, apparently with the same meaning, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). The "son of the morning," called Lucifer or Day Star in Hebrew, is the planet Venus. The poetic language of this verse describes the aspiration of this brightest star to climb to the zenith of the heavens and its extinction before the rising sun. This is an apt summary of the failed goal of Satan (or the king of Babylon, v. 4), who wanted to grasp universal and eternal domination (Ezek. 28:14–16; Rev. 12:12–13; 20:2).

13:17 [w] Dan. 5:28, 31 **13:19** [x] Is. 14:4 [y] Gen. 19:24 **13:20** [z] Jer. 50:3 **13:21** [a] Is. 34:11–15 **13:22** [b] Jer. 51:33 **14:1** [a] Ps. 102:13 [b] Zech. 1:17; 2:12 [c] Is. 60:4, 5, 10 **14:2** [d] Is. 49:22; 60:9; 66:20 [e] Is. 60:14 **14:4** [f] Hab. 2:6 [g] Rev. 18:16 **14:5** [h] Ps. 125:3 **14:8** [i] Ezek. 31:16 **14:9** [j] Ezek. 32:21 **14:10** [k] Ezek. 32:21 **14:12** [l] Is. 34:4 **14:13** [m] Ezek. 28:2 [n] Dan. 8:10

I will also sit on the [o]mount of the congregation
[p]On the farthest sides of the north;
14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
[q]I will be like the Most High.'
15 Yet you [r]shall be brought down to Sheol,
To the lowest depths of the Pit.

16 "Those who see you will gaze at you,
And consider you, *saying:*
'*Is* this the man who made the earth tremble,
Who shook kingdoms,
17 Who made the world as a wilderness
And destroyed its cities,
Who did not open the house of his prisoners?'

18 "All the kings of the nations,
All of them, sleep in glory,
Everyone in his own house;
19 But you are cast out of your grave
Like an abominable branch,
Like the garment of those who are slain,
Thrust through with a sword,
Who go down to the stones of the pit,
Like a corpse trodden underfoot.
20 You will not be joined with them in burial,
Because you have destroyed your land
And slain your people.
[s]The brood of evildoers shall never be named.
21 Prepare slaughter for his children
[t]Because of the iniquity of their fathers,
Lest they rise up and possess the land,
And fill the face of the world with cities."

Babylon Destroyed

22 "For I will rise up against them," says the LORD of hosts,
"And cut off from Babylon [u]the name and [v]remnant,
[w]And offspring and posterity," says the LORD.
23 "I will also make it a possession for the [x]porcupine,
And marshes of muddy water;
I will sweep it with the broom of destruction," says the LORD of hosts.

Assyria Destroyed

24 The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying,
"Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass,
And as I have purposed, *so* it shall [y]stand:
25 That I will break the [z]Assyrian in My land,
And on My mountains tread him underfoot.
Then [a]his yoke shall be removed from them,
And his burden removed from their shoulders.
26 This *is* the [b]purpose that is purposed against the whole earth,
And this *is* the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.
27 For the LORD of hosts has [c]purposed,
And who will annul *it?*
His hand *is* stretched out,
And who will turn it back?"

Philistia Destroyed

28 This is the burden which came in the year that [d]King Ahaz died.

29 "Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia,
[e]Because the rod that struck you is broken;
For out of the serpent's roots will come forth a viper,
[f]And its offspring *will be* a fiery flying serpent.
30 The firstborn of the poor will feed,
And the needy will lie down in safety;
I will kill your roots with famine,
And it will slay your remnant.
31 Wail, O gate! Cry, O city!
All you of Philistia *are* dissolved;
For smoke will come from the north,
And no one *will be* alone in his appointed times."

32 What will they answer the messengers of the nation?
That [g]the LORD has founded Zion,
And [h]the poor of His people shall take refuge in it.

14:14 ***I will be like the Most High.*** This is the most outrageous of the arrogant desires of Satan (or of this unnamed king). He wanted to surpass the Most High, a term for the Lord that is often used in connection with the nations of the world (Ps. 87:5; 91:1; 92:1). This statement strongly speaks of Satan (v. 12), who purposes to work against God in every possible way. Satan's sin is centered in pride, the desire to be in submission to no one, not even God (1 Tim. 3:6). Ezekiel saw Satan's work in the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28), and Isaiah sees the parallel between the character and goals of Satan and this unnamed Babylonian king.

14:28 ***Ahaz.*** King Ahaz died in 720 B.C.

14:29 ***rod.*** The rod is probably a metaphor for the Assyrian king (10:5).

14:31 ***gate.*** The gate of a walled city was its weakest point. When the gate fell, the city could be taken.

from the north. The Assyrian army would come from the north.

14:13 [o] Ezek. 28:14 [p] Ps. 48:2 **14:14** [q] 2 Thess. 2:4 **14:15** [r] Matt. 11:23 **14:20** [s] Ps. 21:10; 109:13 **14:21** [t] Ex. 20:5 **14:22** [u] Prov. 10:7 [v] 1 Kin. 14:10 [w] Job 18:19 **14:23** [x] Zeph. 2:14 **14:24** [y] Is. 43:13 **14:25** [z] Mic. 5:5, 6 [a] Is. 10:27 **14:26** [b] Is. 23:9 **14:27** [c] Dan. 4:31, 35 **14:28** [d] 2 Kin. 16:20 **14:29** [e] 2 Chr. 26:6 [f] 2 Kin. 18:8 **14:32** [g] Ps. 87:1, 5 [h] Zech. 11:11

Proclamation Against Moab

15 The [a]burden against Moab.
Because in the night [b]Ar of [c]Moab is
laid waste
And destroyed,
Because in the night Kir of Moab is
laid waste
And destroyed,
2 He has gone up to the temple* and
Dibon,
To the high places to weep.
Moab will wail over Nebo and over
Medeba;
[d]On all their heads *will be* baldness,
And every beard cut off.
3 In their streets they will clothe
themselves with sackcloth;
On the tops of their houses
And in their streets
Everyone will wail, [e]weeping bitterly.
4 Heshbon and Elealeh will cry out,
Their voice shall be heard as far as
[f]Jahaz;
Therefore the armed soldiers* of Moab
will cry out;
His life will be burdensome to him.

5 "My[g] heart will cry out for Moab;
His fugitives *shall flee* to Zoar,
Like a three-year-old heifer.*
For [h]by the Ascent of Luhith
They will go up with weeping;
For in the way of Horonaim
They will raise up a cry of destruction,
6 For the waters [i]of Nimrim will be
desolate,
For the green grass has withered away;
The grass fails, there is nothing green.
7 Therefore the abundance they have
gained,
And what they have laid up,
They will carry away to the Brook of
the Willows.
8 For the cry has gone all around the
borders of Moab,
Its wailing to Eglaim
And its wailing to Beer Elim.
9 For the waters of Dimon* will be full of
blood;
Because I will bring more upon Dimon,*
[j]Lions upon him who escapes from
Moab,
And on the remnant of the land."

Moab Destroyed

16 Send [a]the lamb to the ruler of the
land,
[b]From Sela to the wilderness,
To the mount of the daughter of Zion.
2 For it shall be as a [c]wandering bird
thrown out of the nest;
So shall be the daughters of Moab at
the fords of the [d]Arnon.

3 "Take counsel, execute judgment;
Make your shadow like the night in
the middle of the day;
Hide the outcasts,
Do not betray him who escapes.
4 Let My outcasts dwell with you,
O Moab;
Be a shelter to them from the face of
the spoiler.
For the extortioner is at an end,
Devastation ceases,
The oppressors are consumed out of
the land.
5 In mercy [e]the throne will be established;
And One will sit on it in truth, in the
tabernacle of David,
[f]Judging and seeking justice and
hastening [g]righteousness."

6 We have heard of the [h]pride of Moab—
He is very proud—
Of his haughtiness and his pride and
his wrath;
[i]*But* his lies *shall* not *be* so.
7 Therefore Moab shall [j]wail for Moab;
Everyone shall wail.
For the foundations [k]of Kir Hareseth
you shall mourn;
Surely *they are* stricken.

* **15:2** Hebrew *bayith*, literally *house* * **15:4** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *loins.* * **15:5** Or *The Third Eglath*, an unknown city (compare Jeremiah 48:34) * **15:9** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls and Vulgate read *Dibon;* Septuagint reads *Rimon.* • Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls and Vulgate read *Dibon;* Septuagint reads *Rimon.*

15:1 ***Moab.*** For the origin of the people of Moab, see the story of Lot and his daughters in Genesis 19:30–38 (also Num. 22–25; Deut. 1:5).
15:2 ***high places.*** High places were sites of pagan worship (16:12).
15:5 ***heart will cry out.*** Isaiah does not rejoice in the downfall of Moab. He knew that the judgment from God was righteous, and he remembered that Moab had been a treacherous enemy to his nation, yet his heart cried out in pity. It is the mark of God's people that they do not rejoice in the downfall of the wicked, even though they may be glad to be free from oppression.
15:9 ***Dimon.*** The term Dimon sounds like "blood" in Hebrew. ***Lions.*** Fleeing from one tragedy after another in their flight southward, the refugees turned to Judah in the west for asylum (16:1–5). A remnant would survive in Moab, as would be the case with Israel (1:9; 6:13; 10:20; 11:16)—but not with Assyria (14:22) and Philistia (14:30).
16:5 ***the throne will be established.*** Moab's salvation ultimately lies in the coming one, Jesus the Messiah, whose throne will be established (9:1–7; 11:1–5; Amos 9:11–12; Acts 15:16–17).
16:6 ***pride.*** In the end, it was the pride and the

15:1 [a] 2 Kin. 3:4 [b] Deut. 2:9 [c] Amos 2:1–3 **15:2** [d] Lev. 21:5 **15:3** [e] Jer. 48:38 **15:4** [f] Jer. 48:34 **15:5** [g] Jer. 48:31 [h] Jer. 48:5 **15:6** [i] Num. 32:36 **15:9** [j] 2 Kin. 17:25 **16:1** [a] 2 Kin. 3:4 [b] 2 Kin. 14:7 **16:2** [c] Prov. 27:8 [d] Num. 21:13 **16:5** [e] [Dan. 7:14] [f] Ps. 72:2 [g] Is. 9:7 **16:6** [h] Jer. 48:29 [i] Is. 28:15 **16:7** [j] Jer. 48:20 [k] 2 Kin. 3:25

8 For [l]the fields of Heshbon
languish,
And [m]the vine of Sibmah;
The lords of the nations have broken
down its choice plants,
Which have reached to Jazer
And wandered through the
wilderness.
Her branches are stretched out,
They are gone over the [n]sea.
9 Therefore I will bewail the vine of
Sibmah,
With the weeping of Jazer;
I will drench you with my
tears,
[o]O Heshbon and Elealeh;
For battle cries have fallen
Over your summer fruits and your
harvest.
10 [p]Gladness is taken away,
And joy from the plentiful field;
In the vineyards there will be no
singing,
Nor will there be shouting;
No treaders will tread out wine in the
presses;
I have made their shouting
cease.
11 Therefore [q]my heart shall resound like
a harp for Moab,
And my inner being for Kir Heres.
12 And it shall come to pass,
When it is seen that Moab is weary on
[r]the high place,
That he will come to his sanctuary to
pray;
But he will not prevail.
13 This *is* the word which the LORD has
spoken concerning Moab since that time.
14 But now the LORD has spoken, saying,
"Within three years, [s]as the years of a
hired man, the glory of Moab will be
despised with all that great multitude,
and the remnant *will be* very small *and*
feeble."

Proclamation Against Syria and Israel

17 The [a]burden against Damascus.
"Behold, Damascus will cease from
being a city,
And it will be a ruinous heap.
2 The cities of [b]Aroer *are* forsaken;*
They will be for flocks
Which lie down, and [c]no one will
make *them* afraid.
3 [d]The fortress also will cease from
Ephraim,
The kingdom from Damascus,
And the remnant of Syria;
They will be as the glory of the
children of Israel,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
4 "In that day it shall come to pass
That the glory of Jacob will
wane,
And [e]the fatness of his flesh grow
lean.
5 [f]It shall be as when the harvester
gathers the grain,
And reaps the heads with his arm;
It shall be as he who gathers heads of
grain
In the Valley of Rephaim.
6 [g]Yet gleaning grapes will be left
in it,
Like the shaking of an olive tree,
Two *or* three olives at the top of the
uppermost bough,
Four *or* five in its most fruitful
branches,"
Says the LORD God of Israel.
7 In that day a man will [h]look to his
Maker,
And his eyes will have respect for the
Holy One of Israel.

* **17:2** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *It shall be forsaken forever;* Targum reads *Its cities shall be forsaken and desolate.*

haughtiness and the wrath of Moab that brought the nation into judgment. The pride of Moab is not the honest pride in a difficult task well done, but the pride of a haughty, disdainful people who considered themselves above remonstrance. The third element of Moab's downfall, wrath, is closely linked with pride. A people who consider themselves the center of interest and importance lose their natural inhibition. They feel free to indulge in wrath because they are convinced that whatever they do is right.

16:8 ***vine.*** The vine refers to Moab.

16:9 ***Heshbon and Elealeh.*** These cities were among the principal settlements in ancient Moab (15:4).

16:12 ***high place . . . sanctuary.*** As long as people worship false gods, they will be doomed to pain, judgment, and recurring trouble (15:2–4). Even when the people weary of the false gods and try to pray to the one true God, they will not be able to communicate with Him because they have not repented and renounced the false gods.

16:14 ***Within three years.*** A former prophecy against Moab (15:2) would be realized within three years, perhaps referring to the quelling of a rebellion against Sargon in 715 B.C. However, a remnant would remain (15:9). Moab had far more hope for salvation than did either Babylon or Philistia.

17:3 ***fortress.*** This city may be Samaria, the capital city. ***Ephraim.*** Ephraim designates northern Israel.

17:5 ***Rephaim.*** The word "Rephaim" is the Hebrew word for "shades" or "ghosts." The "Valley of Rephaim" is the valley of death.

17:6 ***left.*** A remnant would be left (10:20) even though it would be pitifully small.

16:8 [l] Is. 24:7 [m] Is. 16:9 [n] Jer. 48:32 **16:9** [o] Is. 15:4 **16:10** [p] Is. 24:8 **16:11** [q] Jer. 48:36 **16:12** [r] Is. 15:2 **16:14** [s] Is. 21:16 **17:1** [a] Zech. 9:1 **17:2** [b] Num. 32:34 [c] Jer. 7:33 **17:3** [d] Is. 7:16; 8:4 **17:4** [e] Is. 10:16 **17:5** [f] Jer. 51:33 **17:6** [g] Is. 24:13 **17:7** [h] Mic. 7:7

8 He will not look to the altars,
The work of his hands;
He will not respect what his [i]fingers have made,
Nor the wooden images* nor the incense altars.

9 In that day his strong cities will be as a forsaken bough*
And an uppermost branch,*
Which they left because of the children of Israel;
And there will be desolation.

10 Because you have forgotten [j]the God of your salvation,
And have not been mindful of the Rock of your stronghold,
Therefore you will plant pleasant plants
And set out foreign seedlings;
11 In the day you will make your plant to grow,
And in the morning you will make your seed to flourish;
But the harvest *will be* a heap of ruins
In the day of grief and desperate sorrow.

12 Woe to the multitude of many people
Who make a noise [k]like the roar of the seas,
And to the rushing of nations
That make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!
13 The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters;
But *God* will [l]rebuke them and they will flee far away,
And [m]be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind,
Like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.
14 Then behold, at eventide, trouble!
And before the morning, he *is* no more.
This *is* the portion of those who plunder us,
And the lot of those who rob us.

Proclamation Against Ethiopia

18 Woe [a]to the land shadowed with buzzing wings,
Which *is* beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,
2 Which sends ambassadors by sea,
Even in vessels of reed on the waters, *saying,*
"Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth *of skin,*
To a people terrible from their beginning onward,
A nation powerful and treading down,
Whose land the rivers divide."

3 All inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth:
[b]When he lifts up a banner on the mountains, you see *it;*
And when he blows a trumpet, you hear *it.*
4 For so the LORD said to me,
"I will take My rest,
And I will look from My dwelling place
Like clear heat in sunshine,
Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."
5 For before the harvest, when the bud is perfect
And the sour grape is ripening in the flower,
He will both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks
And take away *and* cut down the branches.
6 They will be left together for the mountain birds of prey
And for the beasts of the earth;
The birds of prey will summer on them,
And all the beasts of the earth will winter on them.

7 In that time [c]a present will be brought to the LORD of hosts
From* a people tall and smooth *of skin,*

* **17:8** Hebrew *Asherim,* Canaanite deities
* **17:9** Septuagint reads *Hivites;* Targum reads *laid waste;* Vulgate reads *as the plows.* • Septuagint reads *Amorites;* Targum reads *in ruins;* Vulgate reads *corn.* * **18:7** Following Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text omits *From;* Targum reads *To.*

17:10 *forgotten.* Forgetting God is letting the truth of God fade by ignoring Him. In the end, such neglect is unbelief, refusing to believe in God and refusing to believe His Word. The safe caring place, the Refuge from storms, is forgotten. God becomes like a friend whom you never visit any more or think much about and finally do not remember at all. This slippery slope takes us far from the Rock of our refuge, the God of our Salvation.
17:11 *make your seed to flourish.* This phrase may allude to the ancient practice of force-blooming potted plants and allowing them to die. Pagans believed that this reenactment of the life cycle would secure fertile fields. But even after performing this rite, the harvest would be in ruin. Just as the choice vines of the Lord's vineyard disappointed Him (5:1–7), so His errant people would find their harvest hopes shattered.
17:12 *many people.* The many people are the nations that plunder Israel (v. 14).
17:14 *before the morning.* Sennacherib's army would be destroyed between evening time and morning (37:36–38). ***us.*** Isaiah identified himself with his plundered people.
18:1 *Ethiopia.* Also called Cush in the Bible, Ethiopia was at the southern end of Isaiah's world. A Cushite dynasty took over Egypt in 715 B.C. and probably sent ambassadors to Jerusalem.
18:5 *before the harvest . . . cut off.* This is another example of a bad harvest (17:10–11).
18:7 *place of the name.* Note how closely the Lord identifies with Mount Zion. This was the one place for the true worship of God.

17:8 [i] Is. 2:8; 31:7 **17:10** [j] Ps. 68:19 **17:12** [k] Jer. 6:23
17:13 [l] Ps. 9:5 [m] Hos. 13:3 **18:1** [a] Zeph. 2:12; 3:10
18:3 [b] Is. 5:26 **18:7** [c] Zeph. 3:10

And from a people terrible from their
beginning onward,
A nation powerful and treading down,
Whose land the rivers divide—
To the place of the name of the LORD
of hosts,
To Mount Zion.

Proclamation Against Egypt

19 The [a]burden against Egypt.

Behold, the LORD [b]rides on a swift
cloud,
And will come into Egypt;
[c]The idols of Egypt will totter at His
presence,
And the heart of Egypt will melt in its
midst.

2 "I will [d]set Egyptians against
Egyptians;
Everyone will fight against his brother,
And everyone against his neighbor,
City against city, kingdom against
kingdom.

3 The spirit of Egypt will fail in its
midst;
I will destroy their counsel,
And they will [e]consult the idols and
the charmers,
The mediums and the sorcerers.

4 And the Egyptians I will give
[f]Into the hand of a cruel master,
And a fierce king will rule over them,"
Says the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

5 [g]The waters will fail from the sea,
And the river will be wasted and
dried up.

6 The rivers will turn foul;
The brooks [h]of defense will be emptied
and dried up;
The reeds and rushes will wither.

7 The papyrus reeds by the River,* by
the mouth of the River,
And everything sown by the River,
Will wither, be driven away, and be no
more.

8 The fishermen also will mourn;
All those will lament who cast hooks
into the River,
And they will languish who spread
nets on the waters.

9 Moreover those who work in [i]fine flax
And those who weave fine fabric will
be ashamed;

10 And its foundations will be broken.
All who make wages *will be* troubled
of soul.

11 Surely the princes of [j]Zoan *are* fools;
Pharaoh's wise counselors give foolish
counsel.
[k]How do you say to Pharaoh, "I *am* the
son of the wise,
The son of ancient kings?"

12 [l]Where *are* they?
Where are your wise men?
Let them tell you now,
And let them know what the LORD
of hosts has [m]purposed against
Egypt.

13 The princes of Zoan have become fools;
[n]The princes of Noph* are deceived;
They have also deluded Egypt,
Those who are the mainstay of its
tribes.

14 The LORD has mingled [o]a perverse
spirit in her midst;
And they have caused Egypt to err in
all her work,
As a drunken man staggers in his
vomit.

15 Neither will there be *any* work for
Egypt,
Which [p]the head or tail,
Palm branch or bulrush, may do.*

16 In that day Egypt will [q]be like women,
and will be afraid and fear because of the
waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts,
[r]which He waves over it. 17 And the land
of Judah will be a terror to Egypt; every-
one who makes mention of it will be afraid
in himself, because of the counsel of the
LORD of hosts which He has [s]determined
against it.

Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed

18 In that day five cities in the land of
Egypt will [t]speak the language of Canaan
and [u]swear by the LORD of hosts; one will
be called the City of Destruction.*

19 In that day [v]there will be an altar to the
LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and
a pillar to the [w]LORD at its border. 20 And

* **19:7** That is, the Nile * **19:13** That is, ancient Memphis * **19:15** Compare Isaiah 9:14–16 * **19:18** Some Hebrew manuscripts, Arabic, Dead Sea Scrolls, Targum, and Vulgate read *Sun;* Septuagint reads *Asedek* (literally *Righteousness*).

19:2 ***Egyptians against Egyptians.*** The political anarchy of the Egyptians has religious roots: their many gods failed them.

19:3 ***spirit of Egypt.*** The principal key for understanding the world of ancient Egypt is the concept of order, or *ma'at*. When the spirit of the Egyptians was demoralized, they lost their sense of order and purpose. This would completely confuse and disarm any aggression and would cause economic and political upheaval.

19:13 ***Noph.*** This was Memphis, Egypt's ancient capital.

19:19–21 Worship—The prophets spoke of the future when the Gentile nations would come to know God and worship Him. Egypt is one of these nations

19:1 [a] Joel 3:19 [b] Ps. 18:10; 104:3 [c] Jer. 43:12 **19:2** [d] Judg. 7:22 **19:3** [e] Is. 8:19; 47:12 **19:4** [f] Ezek. 29:19 **19:5** [g] Jer. 51:36 **19:6** [h] 2 Kin. 19:24 **19:9** [i] Prov. 7:16 **19:11** [j] Num. 13:22 [k] 1 Kin. 4:29, 30 **19:12** [l] 1 Cor. 1:20 [m] Ps. 33:11 **19:13** [n] Jer. 2:16 **19:14** [o] Is. 29:10 **19:15** [p] Is. 9:14–16 **19:16** [q] Nah. 3:13 [r] Is. 11:15 **19:17** [s] Dan. 4:35 **19:18** [t] Zeph. 3:9 [u] Is. 45:23 **19:19** [v] Ex. 24:4 [w] Ps. 68:31

[x]it will be for a sign and for a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of the oppressors, and He will send them a [y]Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them. 21Then the LORD will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will [z]know the LORD in that day, and [a]will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the LORD and perform *it*. 22And the LORD will strike Egypt, He will strike and [b]heal *it;* they will return to the LORD, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.

23In that day [c]there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will [d]serve with the Assyrians.

24In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, 25whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, "Blessed *is* Egypt My people, and Assyria [e]the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

The Sign Against Egypt and Ethiopia

20 In the year that [a]Tartan* came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it, 2at the same time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go, and remove [b]the sackcloth from your body, and take your sandals off your feet." And he did so, [c]walking naked and barefoot.

3Then the LORD said, "Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years [d]*for* a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia, 4so shall the [e]king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners and the Ethiopians as captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, [f]with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. 5[g]Then they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation and Egypt their glory. 6And the inhabitant of this territory will say in that day, 'Surely such *is* our expectation, wherever we flee for [h]help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape?'"

The Fall of Babylon Proclaimed

21 The burden against the Wilderness of the Sea.

As [a]whirlwinds in the South pass through,
So it comes from the desert, from a terrible land.

2 A distressing vision is declared to me;
[b]The treacherous dealer deals treacherously,
And the plunderer plunders.
[c]Go up, O Elam!
Besiege, O Media!
All its sighing I have made to cease.

3 Therefore [d]my loins are filled with pain;
[e]Pangs have taken hold of me, like the pangs of a woman in labor.
I was distressed when *I* heard *it;*
I was dismayed when *I* saw *it*.

4 My heart wavered, fearfulness frightened me;
[f]The night for which I longed He turned into fear for me.

5 [g]Prepare the table,
Set a watchman in the tower,
Eat and drink.
Arise, you princes,
Anoint the shield!

6 For thus has the Lord said to me:
"Go, set a watchman,
Let him declare what he sees."

7 And he saw a chariot *with* a pair of horsemen,
A chariot of donkeys, *and* a chariot of camels,
And he listened earnestly with great care.

8 Then he cried, "A lion,* my Lord!

*20:1 Or *the Commander in Chief* *21:8 Dead Sea Scrolls read *Then the observer cried.*

for which there is a future mercy. The Egyptians will swear allegiance to the true God, institute extensive public worship of God, and become equal partners in the community of believers. This is a remarkable promise from our God, and one that is worth remembering in troubling political times.

19:25 *My people . . . the work of My hands.* Historically, Egypt and Assyria were enemies. When they change and turn to the Lord (symbolic of all converted Gentiles), they will be healed (v. 22) and blessed by God.

20:2 *sackcloth.* Isaiah replaced the garb of spiritual mourning with the signs of being exiled into captivity.

20:3 *three years.* Three years means "involving three years," a minimum of 14 months, but possibly more.

20:6 *inhabitant of this territory.* This probably refers to the nations, including Judah, bordering on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, who looked to Egypt to save them from Assyria.

21:2 *Elam . . . Media.* Elam, a major part of Persia, and Media were allied in 700 B.C. Perhaps as a part of the Assyrian army (5:26), they helped to bring about the fall of Babylon in 689 B.C., since they certainly did so in 539 B.C. (11:11; 13:17).

21:4 *heart wavered.* Isaiah saw that even a longed-for event can have terrible consequences in its wake. The judgment of God on Babylon would not be easy to look at.

21:7 *donkeys . . . camels.* The Persians, who overthrew Babylon in 539 B.C., used donkeys and camels in their army.

19:20 [x] Josh. 4:20; 22:27 [y] Is. 43:11 **19:21** [z] [Is. 2:3, 4; 11:9] [a] Mal. 1:11 **19:22** [b] Deut. 32:39 **19:23** [c] Is. 11:16; 35:8; 49:11; 62:10 [d] Is. 27:13 **19:25** [e] Is. 29:23
20:1 [a] 2 Kin. 18:17 **20:2** [b] Zech. 13:4 [c] 1 Sam. 19:24
20:3 [d] Is. 8:18 **20:4** [e] Is. 19:4 [f] Jer. 13:22 **20:5** [g] 2 Kin. 18:21 **20:6** [h] Is. 30:5, 7 **21:1** [a] Zech. 9:14 **21:2** [b] Is. 33:1 [c] Jer. 49:34 **21:3** [d] Is. 15:5; 16:11 [e] Is. 13:8
21:4 [f] Deut. 28:67 **21:5** [g] Dan. 5:5

I stand continually on the [h]watchtower
in the daytime;
I have sat at my post every night.
9 And look, here comes a chariot of men
with a pair of horsemen!"
Then he answered and said,
[i]"Babylon is fallen, is fallen!
And [j]all the carved images of her gods
He has broken to the ground."

10 [k]Oh, my threshing and the grain of my
floor!
That which I have heard from the
LORD of hosts,
The God of Israel,
I have declared to you.

Proclamation Against Edom

11 [l]The burden against Dumah.

He calls to me out of [m]Seir,
"Watchman, what of the night?
Watchman, what of the night?"
12 The watchman said,
"The morning comes, and also the
night.
If you will inquire, inquire;
Return! Come back!"

Proclamation Against Arabia

13 [n]The burden against Arabia.

In the forest in Arabia you will
lodge,
O you traveling companies [o]of
Dedanites.
14 O inhabitants of the land of Tema,
Bring water to him who is thirsty;
With their bread they met him who
fled.
15 For they fled from the swords, from
the drawn sword,
From the bent bow, and from the
distress of war.

16 For thus the LORD has said to me: "Within a year, [p]according to the year of a hired man, all the glory of [q]Kedar will fail; 17 and the remainder of the number of archers, the mighty men of the people of Kedar, will be diminished; for the LORD God of Israel has spoken *it*."

Proclamation Against Jerusalem

22 The burden against the Valley of Vision.

What ails you now, that you have all
gone up to the housetops,
2 You who are full of noise,
A tumultuous city, [a]a joyous city?
Your slain *men are* not slain with the
sword,
Nor dead in battle.
3 All your rulers have fled together;
They are captured by the archers.
All who are found in you are bound
together;
They have fled from afar.
4 Therefore I said, "Look away from me,
[b]I will weep bitterly;
Do not labor to comfort me
Because of the plundering of the
daughter of my people."

5 [c]For *it is* a day of trouble and treading
down and perplexity
[d]By the Lord GOD of hosts
In the Valley of Vision—
Breaking down the walls
And of crying to the mountain.
6 [e]Elam bore the quiver
With chariots of men *and* horsemen,
And [f]Kir uncovered the shield.
7 It shall come to pass *that* your choicest
valleys
Shall be full of chariots,
And the horsemen shall set themselves
in array at the gate.

8 [g]He removed the protection of Judah.
You looked in that day to the armor [h]of
the House of the Forest;
9 [i]You also saw the damage to the city of
David,
That it was great;
And you gathered together the waters
of the lower pool.
10 You numbered the houses of
Jerusalem,
And the houses you broke down
To fortify the wall.
11 [j]You also made a reservoir between the
two walls
For the water of the old [k]pool.
But you did not look to its Maker,
Nor did you have respect for Him who
fashioned it long ago.

12 And in that day the Lord GOD of
hosts
[l]Called for weeping and for mourning,
[m]For baldness and for girding with
sackcloth.

21:11 ***Watchman.*** The watchman was the night patrol who kept watch on the city. The metaphor refers to the prophet Isaiah, who, as a guard on the walls, could see the dawn—the light of salvation—in the east before the others.

21:13 ***companies of Dedanites.*** The Dedanites may refer to the refugees (v. 15) from Dedan, which was about 90 miles southeast of Tema (v. 14).

22:11 ***reservoir between the two walls.*** The defense of the city depended upon the availability of water within its walls. Hezekiah addressed this need by digging a tunnel beneath the city, connecting the lower pool in Jerusalem's southwestern valley with the old pool, the source of water in the eastern valley.

21:8 [h] Hab. 2:1 **21:9** [i] Jer. 51:8 [j] Is. 46:1 **21:10** [k] Jer. 51:33 **21:11** [l] Gen. 25:14 [m] Gen. 32:3 **21:13** [n] Jer. 25:24; 49:28 [o] 1 Chr. 1:9, 32 **21:16** [p] Is. 16:14 [q] Ps. 120:5 **22:2** [a] Is. 32:13 **22:4** [b] Jer. 4:19 **22:5** [c] Is. 37:3 [d] Lam. 1:5; 2:2 **22:6** [e] Jer. 49:35 [f] Is. 15:1 **22:8** [g] 2 Kin. 18:15, 16 [h] 1 Kin. 7:2; 10:17 **22:9** [i] 2 Kin. 20:20 **22:11** [j] Neh. 3:16 [k] 2 Chr. 32:3, 4 **22:12** [l] Joel 1:13; 2:17 [m] Mic. 1:16

13 But instead, joy and gladness,
Slaying oxen and killing sheep,
Eating meat and [n]drinking wine:
[o]"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"

14 [p]Then it was revealed in my hearing by the LORD of hosts,
"Surely for this iniquity there [q]will be no atonement for you,
Even to your death," says the Lord GOD of hosts.

The Judgment on Shebna

15 Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts:

"Go, proceed to this steward,
To [r]Shebna, who *is* over the house, *and say:*
16 'What have you here, and whom have you here,
That you have hewn a sepulcher here,
As he [s]who hews himself a sepulcher on high,
Who carves a tomb for himself in a rock?
17 Indeed, the LORD will throw you away violently,
O mighty man,
[t]And will surely seize you.
18 He will surely turn violently and toss you like a ball
Into a large country;
There you shall die, and there [u]your glorious chariots
Shall be the shame of your master's house.
19 So I will drive you out of your office,
And from your position he will pull you down.*

20 'Then it shall be in that day,
That I will call My servant [v]Eliakim the son of Hilkiah;
21 I will clothe him with your robe
And strengthen him with your belt;
I will commit your responsibility into his hand.
He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem
And to the house of Judah.
22 The key of the house of David
I will lay on his [w]shoulder;
So he shall [x]open, and no one shall shut;
And he shall shut, and no one shall open.
23 I will fasten him *as* [y]a peg in a secure place,
And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house.
24 'They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the pitchers. 25 In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'the peg that is fastened in the secure place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that *was* on it will be cut off; for the LORD has spoken.'"

Proclamation Against Tyre

23 The [a]burden against Tyre.

Wail, you ships of Tarshish!
For it is laid waste,
So that there is no house, no harbor;
From the land of Cyprus* it is revealed to them.

2 Be still, you inhabitants of the coastland,
You merchants of Sidon,
Whom those who cross the sea have filled.*
3 And on great waters the grain of Shihor,
The harvest of the River,* *is* her revenue;
And [b]she is a marketplace for the nations.

4 Be ashamed, O Sidon;
For the sea has spoken,
The strength of the sea, saying,
"I do not labor, nor bring forth children;
Neither do I rear young men,
Nor bring up virgins."
5 [c]When the report *reaches* Egypt,
They also will be in agony at the report of Tyre.

6 Cross over to Tarshish;
Wail, you inhabitants of the coastland!
7 *Is* this your [d]joyous *city,*
Whose antiquity *is* from ancient days,
Whose feet carried her far off to dwell?
8 Who has taken this counsel against Tyre, [e]the crowning *city,*
Whose merchants *are* princes,
Whose traders *are* the honorable of the earth?

* **22:19** Septuagint omits *he will pull you down;* Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *I will pull you down.* * **23:1** Hebrew *Kittim*, western lands, especially Cyprus * **23:2** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint and Targum read *Passing over the water;* Dead Sea Scrolls read *Your messengers passing over the sea.* * **23:3** That is, the Nile

22:25 ***peg . . . be cut off.*** Even the firmly reliable Eliakim could not sustain the burden of government. Only Immanuel could do that (9:6–7).
23:1 ***Tyre.*** Tyre was besieged several times over a period of about 400 years before it was finally laid waste by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.
23:6 ***Tarshish.*** Tarshish is Tartessus in Spain and represents the most distant place to the ancient Israelites.

22:13 [n] Luke 17:26–29 [o] 1 Cor. 15:32 **22:14** [p] Is. 5:9 [q] Ezek. 24:13 **22:15** [r] Is. 36:3 **22:16** [s] Matt. 27:60 **22:17** [t] Esth. 7:8 **22:18** [u] Is. 2:7 **22:20** [v] 2 Kin. 18:18 **22:22** [w] Is. 9:6 [x] Job 12:14; Rev. 3:7 **22:23** [y] Ezra 9:8 **23:1** [a] Zech. 9:2, 4 **23:3** [b] Ezek. 27:3–23 **23:5** [c] Is. 19:16 **23:7** [d] Is. 22:2; 32:13 **23:8** [e] Ezek. 28:2, 12

9 The LORD of hosts has [f]purposed it,
To bring to dishonor the [g]pride of all glory,
To bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth.

10 Overflow through your land like the River,*
O daughter of Tarshish;
There is no more strength.

11 He stretched out His hand over the sea,
He shook the kingdoms;
The LORD has given a commandment [h]against Canaan
To destroy its strongholds.

12 And He said, "You will rejoice no more,
O you oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon.
Arise, [i]cross over to Cyprus;
There also you will have no rest."

13 Behold, the land of the [j]Chaldeans,
This people *which* was not;
Assyria founded it for [k]wild beasts of the desert.
They set up its towers,
They raised up its palaces,
And brought it to ruin.

14 [l]Wail, you ships of Tarshish!
For your strength is laid waste.

15 Now it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre will be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as *in* the song of the harlot:

16 "Take a harp, go about the city,
You forgotten harlot;
Make sweet melody, sing many songs,
That you may be remembered."

17 And it shall be, at the end of seventy years, that the LORD will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire, and [m]commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth. 18 Her gain and her pay [n]will be set apart for the LORD; it will not be treasured nor laid up, for her gain will be for those who dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for fine clothing.

Impending Judgment on the Earth

24 Behold, the LORD makes the earth empty and makes it waste,
Distorts its surface
And scatters abroad its inhabitants.

2 And it shall be:
As with the people, so with the [a]priest;
As with the servant, so with his master;
As with the maid, so with her mistress;
[b]As with the buyer, so with the seller;
As with the lender, so with the borrower;
As with the creditor, so with the debtor.

3 The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered,
For the LORD has spoken this word.

4 The earth mourns *and* fades away,
The world languishes *and* fades away;
The [c]haughty people of the earth languish.

5 [d]The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants,
Because they have [e]transgressed the laws,
Changed the ordinance,
Broken the [f]everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore [g]the curse has devoured the earth,
And those who dwell in it are desolate.
Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are [h]burned,
And few men *are* left.

7 [i]The new wine fails, the vine languishes,
All the merry-hearted sigh.

8 The mirth [j]of the tambourine ceases,
The noise of the jubilant ends,
The joy of the harp ceases.

9 They shall not drink wine with a song;
Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

10 The city of confusion is broken down;
Every house is shut up, so that none may go in.

11 *There is* a cry for wine in the streets,
All joy is darkened,
The mirth of the land is gone.

12 In the city desolation is left,
And the gate is stricken with destruction.

* **23:10** That is, the Nile

23:15 ***seventy years.*** Seventy years symbolizes a full measure of time, a lifetime.

23:18 ***Her gain . . . set apart for the LORD.*** This was not a violation of God's command (Deut. 23:18) which forbade bringing a harlot's pay (v. 17) to the temple. Tyre's destruction was part of the Lord's war against the unrighteous. The spoils would belong to Him as the Victor (Deut. 2:35; Josh. 6:17,19).

24:1—27:12 ***Behold, the LORD.*** The section describing the Lord's "burdens" against particular nations (chs. 13–23) is now placed in a larger framework that shows God's triumph over the entire earth for His elect. Chapter 24 focuses on God's overthrow of the corrupted earth; chapter 25 focuses on the responsive praise to His actions. Chapters 26 and 27 focus on God's efforts for His people.

24:4 ***The earth mourns.*** For a similar idea, see Romans 8:22.

24:5 ***laws . . . ordinance . . . covenant.*** The usual language concerning a breach of the covenant is applied more generally to the wicked nations. Perhaps these words speak of that innate sense of right and wrong—the conscience—that God has given to all mankind, but which everyone violates (Acts 24:16; Rom. 1:18–32).

23:9 [f] Is. 14:26 [g] Dan. 4:37 **23:11** [h] Zech. 9:2–4 **23:12** [i] Rev. 18:22 **23:13** [j] Is. 47:1 [k] Ps. 72:9 **23:14** [l] Ezek. 27:25–30 **23:17** [m] Rev. 17:2 **23:18** [n] Zech. 14:20, 21 **24:2** [a] Hos. 4:9 [b] Ezek. 7:12, 13 **24:4** [c] Is. 25:11 **24:5** [d] Num. 35:33 [e] Is. 59:12 [f] 1 Chr. 16:14–19 **24:6** [g] Mal. 4:6 [h] Is. 9:19 **24:7** [i] Joel 1:10, 12 **24:8** [j] Ezek. 26:13

13 When it shall be thus in the midst of the land among the people,
[k]*It shall be* like the shaking of an olive tree,
Like the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done.

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing;
For the majesty of the LORD
They shall cry aloud from the sea.
15 Therefore [l]glorify the LORD in the dawning light,
[m]The name of the LORD God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea.
16 From the ends of the earth we have heard songs:
"Glory to the righteous!"
But I said, "I am ruined, ruined!
Woe to me!
[n]The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously,
Indeed, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously."

17 [o]Fear and the pit and the snare
Are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth.
18 And it shall be
That he who flees from the noise of the fear
Shall fall into the pit,
And he who comes up from the midst of the pit
Shall be caught in the snare;
For [p]the windows from on high are open,
And [q]the foundations of the earth are shaken.

19 [r]The earth is violently broken,
The earth is split open,
The earth is shaken exceedingly.
20 The earth shall [s]reel to and fro like a drunkard,
And shall totter like a hut;
Its transgression shall be heavy upon it,
And it will fall, and not rise again.

21 It shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones,
And on the earth [t]the kings of the earth.

22 They will be gathered together,
As prisoners are gathered in the pit,
And will be shut up in the prison;
After many days they will be punished.
23 Then the [u]moon will be disgraced
And the sun ashamed;
For the LORD of hosts will [v]reign
On [w]Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
And before His elders, gloriously.

Praise to God

25 O LORD, You *are* my God.
[a]I will exalt You,
I will praise Your name,
[b]For You have done wonderful *things;*
[c]*Your* counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth.
2 For You have made [d]a city a ruin,
A fortified city a ruin,
A palace of foreigners to be a city no more;
It will never be rebuilt.
3 Therefore the strong people will [e]glorify You;
The city of the terrible nations will fear You.
4 For You have been a strength to the poor,
A strength to the needy in his distress,
[f]A refuge from the storm,
A shade from the heat;
For the blast of the terrible ones *is* as a storm *against* the wall.
5 You will reduce the noise of aliens,
As heat in a dry place;
As heat in the shadow of a cloud,
The song of the terrible ones will be diminished.

6 And in [g]this mountain
[h]The LORD of hosts will make for [i]all people
A feast of choice pieces,
A feast of wines on the lees,
Of fat things full of marrow,
Of well-refined wines on the lees.
7 And He will destroy on this mountain
The surface of the covering cast over all people,
And [j]the veil that is spread over all nations.

24:14–16 ***lift up their voice.*** Isaiah cannot join in the chorus of praise, because he, like Daniel (Dan. 7:28; 8:27), was too overwhelmed by the tragedy that was to come. It is impossible to tell whether the people who praised the Lord were faithful followers who had been oppressed by the treacherous leaders, or whether those who praised were the unfaithful leaders who were beginning to remember the Lord. There comes a time when the Lord does not wait any more, but He carries out the promised punishment for sinful behavior. Those who have trusted in Him will always find their souls secure, but that does not mean that they will not see dreadful sights or perhaps even be martyred for their faith.

24:21 ***that day.*** "That day" is the day that the Lord will finally judge the whole world (Rev. 20:11–15).

25:5 ***terrible ones.*** The use of the term "terrible" three times in verses 3–5 emphasizes divine judgment on the nations represented.

24:13 [k] [Is. 17:5, 6; 27:12] **24:15** [l] Is. 25:3 [m] Mal. 1:11 **24:16** [n] Jer. 3:20; 5:11 **24:17** [o] Jer. 48:43 **24:18** [p] Gen. 7:11 [q] Ps. 18:7; 46:2 **24:19** [r] Jer. 4:23 **24:20** [s] Is. 19:14; 24:1; 28:7 **24:21** [t] Ps. 76:12 **24:23** [u] Is. 13:10; 60:19 [v] Rev. 19:4, 6 [w] [Heb. 12:22] **25:1** [a] Ex. 15:2 [b] Ps. 98:1 [c] Num. 23:19 **25:2** [d] Jer. 51:37 **25:3** [e] Is. 24:15 **25:4** [f] Is. 4:6 **25:6** [g] [Is. 2:2–4; 56:7] [h] Prov. 9:2 [i] [Dan. 7:14] **25:7** [j] [Eph. 4:18]

8 He will [k]swallow up death forever,
And the Lord GOD will [l]wipe away
tears from all faces;
The rebuke of His people
He will take away from all the earth;
For the LORD has spoken.

9 And it will be said in that day:
"Behold, this *is* our God;
[m]We have waited for Him, and He will
save us.
This *is* the LORD;
We have waited for Him;
[n]We will be glad and rejoice in His
salvation."

10 For on this mountain the hand of the
LORD will rest,
And [o]Moab shall be trampled down
under Him,
As straw is trampled down for the
refuse heap.
11 And He will spread out His hands in
their midst
As a swimmer reaches out to swim,
And He will bring down their [p]pride
Together with the trickery of their
hands.
12 The [q]fortress of the high fort of your
walls
He will bring down, lay low,
And bring to the ground, down to the
dust.

A Song of Salvation

26 In [a]that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

"We have a strong city;
[b]*God* will appoint salvation *for* walls
and bulwarks.
2 [c]Open the gates,
That the righteous nation which keeps
the truth may enter in.
3 You will keep *him* in perfect [d]peace,
Whose mind *is* stayed *on You,*
Because he trusts in You.
4 Trust in the LORD forever,
[e]For in YAH, the LORD, *is* everlasting
strength.*
5 For He brings down those who dwell
on high,
[f]The lofty city;
He lays it low,
He lays it low to the ground,
He brings it down to the dust.
6 The foot shall tread it down—
The feet of the poor
And the steps of the needy."

7 The way of the just *is* uprightness;
[g]O Most Upright,
You weigh the path of the just.
8 Yes, [h]in the way of Your judgments,
O LORD, we have [i]waited for You;
The desire of *our* soul *is* for Your name
And for the remembrance of You.
9 [j]With my soul I have desired You in the
night,
Yes, by my spirit within me I will seek
You early;
For when Your judgments *are* in the
earth,
The inhabitants of the world will learn
righteousness.

10 [k]Let grace be shown to the wicked,
Yet he will not learn righteousness;
In [l]the land of uprightness he will deal
unjustly,
And will not behold the majesty of the
LORD.
11 LORD, *when* Your hand is lifted up,
[m]they will not see.
But they will see and be ashamed
For *their* envy of people;
Yes, the fire of Your enemies shall
devour them.

12 LORD, You will establish peace for us,
For You have also done all our works
in us.
13 O LORD our God, [n]masters besides You
Have had dominion over us;
But by You only we make mention of
Your name.
14 *They are* dead, they will not live;
They are deceased, they will not rise.
Therefore You have punished and
destroyed them,
And made all their memory to [o]perish.
15 You have increased the nation, O LORD,
You have [p]increased the nation;
You are glorified;
You have expanded all the borders of
the land.

* **26:4** Or *Rock of Ages*

25:8 ***wipe away tears.*** When the first earth passes away and the tabernacle of God is among men, finally the whole creation will be as it should be, and God will tenderly wipe away the tears of His people (Rev. 7:17; 21:4).

26:3 ***peace.*** The result of a settled faith in God is "perfect peace." Faith in God is the only thing that brings inner peace to man. One must come to the point of recognizing his own utter sinfulness and his deep need of a redeemer before he can find peace. Only when one is at peace with God can he have peace with others. Only a mind settled in God can tolerate the changing circumstances of life.

26:8 ***waited.*** Waiting for—or on—the Lord is a waiting with expectation. Perhaps one could describe it as the difference between waiting for the arrival of an airplane with a loved one arriving, and the waiting one does at a traffic light. (For a similar idea, see 40:31.)

25:8 [k] [Hos. 13:14] [l] Rev. 7:17; 21:4 **25:9** [m] Gen. 49:18 [n] Ps. 20:5 **25:10** [o] Amos 2:1–3 **25:11** [p] Is. 24:4; 26:5 **25:12** [q] Is. 26:5 **26:1** [a] Is. 2:11; 12:1 [b] Is. 60:18 **26:2** [c] Ps. 118:19, 20 **26:3** [d] Is. 57:19 **26:4** [e] Is. 12:2; 45:17 **26:5** [f] Is. 25:11, 12 **26:7** [g] Ps. 37:23 **26:8** [h] Is. 64:5 [i] Is. 25:9; 33:2 **26:9** [j] Ps. 63:6 **26:10** [k] [Rom. 2:4] [l] Ps. 143:10 **26:11** [m] Is. 5:12 **26:13** [n] 2 Chr. 12:8 **26:14** [o] Eccl. 9:5 **26:15** [p] Is. 9:3

16 LORD, [q]in trouble they have visited
You,
They poured out a prayer *when* Your
chastening *was* upon them.
17 As [r]a woman with child
Is in pain and cries out in her pangs,
When she draws near the time of her
delivery,
So have we been in Your sight,
O LORD.
18 We have been with child, we have
been in pain;
We have, as it were, brought forth
wind;
We have not accomplished any
deliverance in the earth,
Nor have [s]the inhabitants of the world
fallen.
19 [t]Your dead shall live;
Together with my dead body* they
shall arise.
[u]Awake and sing, you who dwell in
dust;
For your dew *is like* the dew of herbs,
And the earth shall cast out the dead.

Take Refuge from the Coming Judgment

20 Come, my people, [v]enter your
chambers,
And shut your doors behind you;
Hide yourself, as it were, [w]for a little
moment,
Until the indignation is past.
21 For behold, the LORD [x]comes out of
His place
To punish the inhabitants of the earth
for their iniquity;
The earth will also disclose her blood,
And will no more cover her slain.

27 In that day the LORD with His severe
sword, great and strong,
Will punish Leviathan the fleeing
serpent,
[a]Leviathan that twisted serpent;
And He will slay [b]the reptile that *is* in
the sea.

The Restoration of Israel

2 In that day [c]sing to her,
[d]"A vineyard of red wine!*
3 [e]I, the LORD, keep it,
I water it every moment;
Lest any hurt it,
I keep it night and day.
4 Fury *is* not in Me.
Who would set [f]briers *and* thorns
Against Me in battle?
I would go through them,
I would burn them together.
5 Or let him take hold [g]of My strength,
That he may [h]make peace with Me;
And he shall make peace with Me."
6 Those who come He shall cause [i]to
take root in Jacob;
Israel shall blossom and bud,
And fill the face of the world with
fruit.
7 [j]Has He struck Israel as He struck
those who struck him?
Or has He been slain according to the
slaughter of those who were slain
by Him?
8 [k]In measure, by sending it away,
You contended with it.
[l]He removes *it* by His rough wind
In the day of the east wind.
9 Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob
will be covered;
And this *is* all the fruit of taking away
his sin:
When he makes all the stones of the
altar
Like chalkstones that are beaten to
dust,
Wooden images* and incense altars
shall not stand.

* **26:19** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Syriac and Targum read *their dead bodies;* Septuagint reads *those in the tombs.* * **27:2** Following Masoretic Text (Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*), Bomberg, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*), some Hebrew manuscripts, and Septuagint read *delight;* Targum reads *choice vineyard.* * **27:9** Hebrew *Asherim,* Canaanite deities

26:18 *brought forth wind.* Even the faithful followers of the Lord cannot bring new life to the earth. Only God can regenerate the world and its inhabitants. The new life can come only through Jesus Christ, whose coming was still in the future at the time of Isaiah's writing.

26:21 *The earth will also disclose her blood.* In that day of judgment, there will be no unsolved murders, no injustice that is unrevealed.

27:1 *punish.* The punishment in this verse links it with 26:21; this verse is the climax of the preceding section. ***Leviathan.*** This creature was used to poetically describe various evil forces over which God has ultimate control and victory (Job 3:8; Ps. 74:14). Eventually Leviathan (Job 41:1) became a symbol for Satan, who is "the dragon, that serpent of old" (Rev. 20:2).

27:2 *vineyard.* The vineyard is Israel (5:7; 27:6). The language of the vineyard is used frequently in Scripture. The good vines are planted or cared for by God and His servants. They are supposed to bear good fruit and be worthy of the care of the Master. Sometimes the fruit is bad, sometimes the servants are unfaithful, but the vines always belong to God (Matt. 21:33–46; Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19).

27:3 *keep it . . . water it.* The "keeper" of the vineyard contrasts with the one who will lay waste, and watering it "every moment" contrasts with "no rain" (5:6).

26:16 [q] Hos. 5:15 **26:17** [r] [John 16:21] **26:18** [s] Ps. 17:14 **26:19** [t] [Ezek. 37:1–14] [u] [Dan. 12:2] **26:20** [v] Ex. 12:22, 23 [w] [Ps. 30:5] **26:21** [x] Mic. 1:3 **27:1** [a] Ps. 74:13, 14 [b] Is. 51:9 **27:2** [c] Is. 5:1 [d] Is. 5:7 **27:3** [e] Is. 31:5 **27:4** [f] 2 Sam. 23:6 **27:5** [g] Is. 25:4 [h] Job 22:21 **27:6** [i] Is. 37:31 **27:7** [j] Is. 10:12, 17; 30:30–33 **27:8** [k] Job 23:6 [l] [Ps. 78:38]

10 Yet the fortified city *will be* [m]desolate,
The habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness;
There the calf will feed, and there it will lie down
And consume its branches.
11 When its boughs are withered, they will be broken off;
The women come *and* set them on fire.
For [n]it *is* a people of no understanding;
Therefore He who made them will [o]not have mercy on them,
And [p]He who formed them will show them no favor.

12 And it shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD will thresh,
From the channel of the River* to the Brook of Egypt;
And you will be [q]gathered one by one,
O you children of Israel.

13 [r]So it shall be in that day:
[s]The great trumpet will be blown;
They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria,
And they who are outcasts in the land of [t]Egypt,
And shall [u]worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Woe to Ephraim and Jerusalem

28 Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim,
Whose glorious beauty *is* a fading flower
Which *is* at the head of the verdant valleys,
To those who are overcome with wine!
2 Behold, the Lord has a mighty and strong one,
[a]Like a tempest of hail and a destroying storm,
Like a flood of mighty waters overflowing,
Who will bring *them* down to the earth with *His* hand.
3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim,
Will be trampled underfoot;
4 And the glorious beauty is a fading flower
Which *is* at the head of the verdant valley,
Like the first fruit before the summer,
Which an observer sees;
He eats it up while it is still in his hand.

5 In that day the LORD of hosts will be
For a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty
To the remnant of His people,
6 For a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment,
And for strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.

7 But they also [b]have erred through wine,
And through intoxicating drink are out of the way;
[c]The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink,
They are swallowed up by wine,
They are out of the way through intoxicating drink;
They err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.
8 For all tables are full of vomit *and* filth;
No place *is clean.*

9 "Whom[d] will he teach knowledge?
And whom will he make to understand the message?
Those *just* weaned from milk?
Those *just* drawn from the breasts?
10 [e]For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, there a little."

11 For with [f]stammering lips and another tongue
He will speak to this people,
12 To whom He said, "This *is* the [g]rest *with which*
You may cause the weary to rest,"
And, "This *is* the refreshing";
Yet they would not hear.

* **27:12** That is, the Euphrates

27:12 ***thresh . . . be gathered.*** Threshing and gathering describe how the grain is separated from the chaff. The grain is saved or "gathered," and the chaff is thrown away. Threshing can be accomplished by beating the grain heads with flails or driving a cart over the grain to separate the grain from the stalks and husks. The grain is then gathered in baskets and tossed in the air, where the wind blows away the chaff and bits of straw, and the ripe grain falls back down into the basket.

28:1 ***crown of pride.*** The "crown of pride" on Ephraim's drunkards is part of a word picture (v. 3) contrasting the debasing actions of a drunkard with the crown of flowers, which was customary to wear at feasts. The incongruity of this image parallels God's view of the debauchery of the Israelites in the beautiful land He had given them.

28:5 ***diadem of beauty.*** The crown of the Lord of Hosts, which is Himself, sits in true beauty on the remnant of His people. Unlike the fading beauty of the crown of flowers, the glorious crown will be a lasting beauty.

28:9 ***Those just weaned.*** A child was weaned between the ages of three and five, the time for elementary moral education, which is described in verse 10.

27:10 [m] Is. 5:6, 17; 32:14 **27:11** [n] Deut. 32:28 [o] Is. 9:17 [p] Deut. 32:18 **27:12** [q] [Is. 11:11; 56:8] **27:13** [r] Is. 2:11 [s] Rev. 11:15 [t] Is. 19:21, 22 [u] Zech. 14:16 **28:2** [a] Ezek. 13:11 **28:7** [b] Hos. 4:11 [c] Is. 56:10, 12 **28:9** [d] Jer. 6:10 **28:10** [e] [2 Chr. 36:15] **28:11** [f] 1 Cor. 14:21 **28:12** [g] Is. 30:15

13 But the word of the LORD was to them,
"Precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, there a little,"
That they might go and fall backward,
and be broken
And snared and caught.

14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD,
you scornful men,
Who rule this people who *are* in Jerusalem,
15 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death,
And with Sheol we are in agreement.
When the overflowing scourge passes through,
It will not come to us,
[h]For we have made lies our refuge,
And under falsehood we have hidden ourselves."

A Cornerstone in Zion

16 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, I lay in Zion [i]a stone for a foundation,
A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;
Whoever believes will not act hastily.
17 Also I will make justice the measuring line,
And righteousness the plummet;
The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
And the waters will overflow the hiding place.
18 Your covenant with death will be annulled,
And your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
When the overflowing scourge passes through,
Then you will be trampled down by it.
19 As often as it goes out it will take you;
For morning by morning it will pass over,
And by day and by night;
It will be a terror just to understand the report."

20 For the bed is too short to stretch out *on,*
And the covering so narrow that one cannot wrap himself *in it*.

21 For the LORD will rise up as *at* Mount [j]Perazim,
He will be angry as in the Valley of [k]Gibeon—
That He may do His work, [l]His awesome work,
And bring to pass His act, His unusual act.
22 Now therefore, do not be mockers,
Lest your bonds be made strong;
For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts,
[m]A destruction determined even upon the whole earth.

Listen to the Teaching of God

23 Give ear and hear my voice,
Listen and hear my speech.
24 Does the plowman keep plowing all day to sow?
Does he keep turning his soil and breaking the clods?
25 When he has leveled its surface,
Does he not sow the black cummin
And scatter the cummin,
Plant the wheat in rows,
The barley in the appointed place,
And the spelt in its place?
26 For He instructs him in right judgment,
His God teaches him.

27 For the black cummin is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
Nor is a cartwheel rolled over the cummin;
But the black cummin is beaten out with a stick,
And the cummin with a rod.
28 Bread *flour* must be ground;
Therefore he does not thresh it forever,
Break *it with* his cartwheel,
Or crush it *with* his horsemen.
29 This also comes from the LORD of hosts,
[n]*Who* is wonderful in counsel *and* excellent in guidance.

Woe to Jerusalem

29 "Woe [a]to Ariel,* to Ariel, the city [b]*where* David dwelt!
Add year to year;
Let feasts come around.

* **29:1** That is, Jerusalem

28:13 ***fall backward, and be broken.*** In keeping with their drunken habits, the people would not be able to hear the teaching of the Lord.
28:14 ***scornful.*** The scornful, or scoffers, are worse than fools. Beyond choosing what is bad, they despise what is good (Ps. 1:1).
28:16 ***precious cornerstone.*** The apostles identified the cornerstone as Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:4–6).
28:20 ***bed . . . covering.*** The word picture of the short bed and inadequate covering is an illustration of the inadequacy of any security that is not based on a relationship with the living God as He has outlined it in Scripture.
28:27 ***cummin . . . threshing sledge.*** Cummin cannot be threshed with a sledge. The cart and sledge are too large for such a fine seed (27:12).
28:29 ***wonderful in counsel.*** The wisdom that the farmer uses to tend his crops comes from God, the source of all good counsel.
29:1 ***Ariel.*** Ariel probably means "altar" (Ezek. 43:15–16). The destruction and bloodshed in Jeru-

28:15 [h] Is. 9:15 **28:16** [i] Matt. 21:42 **28:21** [j] 2 Sam. 5:20 [k] Josh. 10:10, 12 [l] [Lam. 3:33] **28:22** [m] Is. 10:22 **28:29** [n] Ps. 92:5 **29:1** [a] Ezek. 24:6, 9 [b] 2 Sam. 5:9

2 Yet I will distress Ariel;
There shall be heaviness and sorrow,
And it shall be to Me as Ariel.
3 I will encamp against you all around,
I will lay siege against you with a mound,
And I will raise siegeworks against you.
4 You shall be brought down,
You shall speak out of the ground;
Your speech shall be low, out of the dust;
Your voice shall be like a medium's,
[c]out of the ground;
And your speech shall whisper out of the dust.

5 "Moreover the multitude of your [d]foes
Shall be like fine dust,
And the multitude of the terrible ones
Like [e]chaff that passes away;
Yes, it shall be [f]in an instant, suddenly.
6 [g]You will be punished by the LORD of hosts
With thunder and [h]earthquake and great noise,
With storm and tempest
And the flame of devouring fire.
7 [i]The multitude of all the nations who fight against Ariel,
Even all who fight against her and her fortress,
And distress her,
Shall be [j]as a dream of a night vision.
8 [k]It shall even be as when a hungry man dreams,
And look—he eats;
But he awakes, and his soul is still empty;
Or as when a thirsty man dreams,
And look—he drinks;
But he awakes, and indeed *he is* faint,
And his soul still craves:
So the multitude of all the nations shall be,
Who fight against Mount Zion."

The Blindness of Disobedience

9 Pause and wonder!
Blind yourselves and be blind!
[l]They are drunk, [m]but not with wine;
They stagger, but not with intoxicating drink.
10 For [n]the LORD has poured out on you
The spirit of deep sleep,
And has [o]closed your eyes, namely, the prophets;
And He has covered your heads, *namely,* [p]the seers.

11 The whole vision has become to you like the words of a book [q]that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one who is literate, saying, "Read this, please."
[r]And he says, "I cannot, for it *is* sealed."
12 Then the book is delivered to one who is illiterate, saying, "Read this, please."
And he says, "I am not literate."
13 Therefore the Lord said:

[s]"Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths
And honor Me [t]with their lips,
But have removed their hearts far from Me,
And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,
14 [u]Therefore, behold, I will again do a marvelous work
Among this people,
A marvelous work and a wonder;
[v]For the wisdom of their wise *men* shall perish,
And the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hidden."

15 [w]Woe to those who seek deep to hide their counsel far from the LORD,
And their works are in the dark;
[x]They say, "Who sees us?" and, "Who knows us?"
16 Surely you have things turned around!
Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay;
For shall the [y]thing made say of him who made it,
"He did not make me"?
Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it,
"He has no understanding"?

Future Recovery of Wisdom

17 *Is* it not yet a very little while
Till [z]Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,
And the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest?

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salem would make the city appear like an altar. The repetition of the term *Ariel* indicates the Lord's sorrow over the state to which His city had fallen. ***where David dwelt.*** David made Jerusalem his capital and planned the temple that Solomon later built in that city. These words show God's continuing love for His servant David.

29:7 *as a dream.* No city has suffered desolation and later been rebuilt like Jerusalem. One final time the fires of God's wrath will be allowed to burn on the City of Peace. God's eternal purpose will bring the city to its knees. Judgment is God's unwilling work. He never allows the fires of discipline to punish His own for no reason. When His disciplines have accomplished His task, peace is sure to follow.

29:17 *Lebanon . . . fruitful field.* This is a statement of sharp changes. Lebanon was a land of forests. As valuable as a fertile field was, a forest was even more

29:4 [c] Is. 8:19 **29:5** [d] Is. 25:5 [e] Job 21:18 [f] Is. 30:13; 47:11 **29:6** [g] Is. 28:2; 30:30 [h] Rev. 16:18, 19 **29:7** [i] Mic. 4:11, 12 [j] Job 20:8 **29:8** [k] Ps. 73:20 **29:9** [l] Is. 28:7, 8 [m] Is. 51:21 **29:10** [n] Rom. 11:8 [o] Ps. 69:23 [p] Is. 44:18 **29:11** [q] Is. 8:16 [r] Dan. 12:4, 9 **29:13** [s] Ezek. 33:31 [t] Col. 2:22 **29:14** [u] Hab. 1:5 [v] Jer. 49:7 **29:15** [w] Is. 30:1 [x] Ps. 10:11; 94:7 **29:16** [y] Is. 45:9 **29:17** [z] Is. 32:15

18 [a]In that day the deaf shall hear the
words of the book,
And the eyes of the blind shall see out
of obscurity and out of darkness.
19 [b]The humble also shall increase *their*
joy in the LORD,
And [c]the poor among men shall rejoice
In the Holy One of Israel.
20 For the terrible one is brought to
nothing,
[d]The scornful one is consumed,
And all who [e]watch for iniquity are
cut off—
21 Who make a man an offender by a
word,
And [f]lay a snare for him who reproves
in the gate,
And turn aside the just [g]by empty
words.

22 Therefore thus says the LORD, [h]who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

"Jacob shall not now be [i]ashamed,
Nor shall his face now grow pale;
23 But when he sees his children,
[j]The work of My hands, in his midst,
They will hallow My name,
And hallow the Holy One of Jacob,
And fear the God of Israel.
24 These also [k]who erred in spirit will
come to understanding,
And those who complained will learn
doctrine."

Futile Confidence in Egypt

30 "Woe to the rebellious children,"
says the LORD,
[a]"Who take counsel, but not of Me,
And who devise plans, but not of My
Spirit,
[b]That they may add sin to sin;
2 [c]Who walk to go down to Egypt,
And [d]have not asked My advice,
To strengthen themselves in the
strength of Pharaoh,
And to trust in the shadow of Egypt!
3 [e]Therefore the strength of Pharaoh
Shall be your shame,
And trust in the shadow of Egypt
Shall be *your* humiliation.
4 For his princes were at [f]Zoan,
And his ambassadors came to Hanes.
5 [g]They were all ashamed of a people
who could not benefit them,
Or be help or benefit,
But a shame and also a reproach."

6 [h]The burden against the beasts of the South.

Through a land of trouble and anguish,
From which *came* the lioness and lion,
[i]The viper and fiery flying serpent,
They will carry their riches on the
backs of young donkeys,
And their treasures on the humps of
camels,
To a people *who* shall not profit;
7 [j]For the Egyptians shall help in vain
and to no purpose.
Therefore I have called her
Rahab-Hem-Shebeth.*

A Rebellious People

8 Now go, [k]write it before them on a
tablet,
And note it on a scroll,
That it may be for time to come,
Forever and ever:
9 That [l]this *is* a rebellious people,
Lying children,
Children *who* will not hear the law of
the LORD;
10 [m]Who say to the seers, "Do not see,"
And to the prophets, "Do not prophesy
to us right things;
[n]Speak to us smooth things, prophesy
deceits.
11 Get out of the way,
Turn aside from the path,
Cause the Holy One of Israel
To cease from before us."

12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel:

"Because you [o]despise this word,
And trust in oppression and
perversity,
And rely on them,

* **30:7** Literally *Rahab Sits Idle*

valuable in Israel and Judah, which did not have large stands of trees suitable for lumber. It would indicate some major economic and physical changes for Lebanon to become a field and for a fertile field to be as valuable as a forest.

29:19 ***poor . . . rejoice.*** God always notices the poor and commands His people to do likewise. The poor and the humble are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, and God in His justice does not forget this when He is dealing with disobedient leaders.

29:21 ***by a word . . . lay a snare . . . empty words.*** The central issue in this passage is justice. The evil ones miscarry justice with "a word" or false testimony, "snare" through legal technicalities, and win cases with empty words or lies and clever arguments that obscure true justice.

30:1 ***Woe.*** This is the fourth woe. The rebellious children are Hezekiah's advisors. To the sin of injustice they add the sin of devising plans independently of God.

30:4 ***Zoan . . . Hanes.*** Zoan, which was in the Nile delta, was the capital of Egypt at this time (19:11–13). Hanes was 50 miles south of Cairo.

29:18 [a] Is. 35:5 **29:19** [b] [Is. 11:4; 61:1] [c] [James 2:5] **29:20** [d] Is. 28:14 [e] Mic. 2:1 **29:21** [f] Amos 5:10, 12 [g] Prov. 28:21 **29:22** [h] Josh. 24:3 [i] Is. 45:17 **29:23** [j] [Is. 45:11; 49:20–26] **29:24** [k] Is. 28:7 **30:1** [a] Is. 29:15 [b] Deut. 29:19 **30:2** [c] Is. 31:1 [d] Josh. 9:14 **30:3** [e] Is. 20:5 **30:4** [f] Is. 19:11 **30:5** [g] Jer. 2:36 **30:6** [h] Is. 57:9 [i] Deut. 8:15 **30:7** [j] Jer. 37:7 **30:8** [k] Hab. 2:2 **30:9** [l] Is. 1:2, 4; 65:2 **30:10** [m] Jer. 11:21 [n] 1 Kin. 22:8, 13 **30:12** [o] Is. 5:24

13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you
[p]Like a breach ready to fall,
A bulge in a high wall,
Whose breaking [q]comes suddenly, in an instant.
14 And [r]He shall break it like the breaking of the potter's vessel,
Which is broken in pieces;
He shall not spare.
So there shall not be found among its fragments
A shard to take fire from the hearth,
Or to take water from the cistern."

15 For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel:

[s]"In returning and rest you shall be saved;
In quietness and confidence shall be your strength."
[t]But you would not,
16 And you said, "No, for we will flee on horses"—
Therefore you shall flee!
And, "We will ride on swift *horses*"—
Therefore those who pursue you shall be swift!

17 [u]One thousand *shall flee* at the threat of one,
At the threat of five you shall flee,
Till you are left as a pole on top of a mountain
And as a banner on a hill.

God Will Be Gracious

18 Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be [v]gracious to you;
And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you.
For the LORD *is* a God of justice;
[w]Blessed *are* all those who [x]wait for Him.

19 For the people [y]shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem;
You shall [z]weep no more.
He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry;
When He hears it, He will [a]answer you.
20 And *though* the Lord gives you
[b]The bread of adversity and the water of affliction,
Yet [c]your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore,
But your eyes shall see your teachers.
21 Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying,
"This *is* the way, walk in it,"
Whenever you [d]turn to the right hand
Or whenever you turn to the left.
22 [e]You will also defile the covering of your images of silver,
And the ornament of your molded images of gold.
You will throw them away as an unclean thing;
[f]You will say to them, "Get away!"

23 [g]Then He will give the rain for your seed
With which you sow the ground,
And bread of the increase of the earth;
It will be fat and plentiful.
In that day your cattle will feed
In large pastures.
24 Likewise the oxen and the young donkeys that work the ground
Will eat cured fodder,
Which has been winnowed with the shovel and fan.
25 There will be [h]on every high mountain
And on every high hill
Rivers *and* streams of waters,
In the day of the [i]great slaughter,
When the towers fall.
26 Moreover [j]the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun,
And the light of the sun will be sevenfold,
As the light of seven days,
In the day that the LORD binds up the bruise of His people
And heals the stroke of their wound.

Judgment on Assyria

27 Behold, the name of the LORD comes from afar,
Burning *with* His anger,
And *His* burden *is* heavy;
His lips are full of indignation,
And His tongue like a devouring fire.
28 [k]His breath is like an overflowing stream,
[l]Which reaches up to the neck,
To sift the nations with the sieve of futility;
And *there shall be* [m]a bridle in the jaws of the people,
Causing *them* to err.

30:15 *confidence.* A quiet, patient trust in God provides more strength for a follower of God than any alliance with any other person or system. When danger threatens, it is difficult not to look for ways to use one's own strength. It is also difficult to maintain inward composure and not trust in external sources of help. Even if we cannot imagine how we can be helped, if we are trusting God, we can have confidence and therefore have peace that He will not forsake us in our hour of need. God may use our strength or the help of others, but, when we turn to God first, we can learn which resources, if any, are the ones He wants us to use. When God is first, then our decisions are wise.

30:23–24 *give the rain.* The promises that were part of the original Mosaic covenant were in force again.

30:13 [p] Ps. 62:3, 4 [q] Is. 29:5 **30:14** [r] Jer. 19:11
30:15 [s] Is. 7:4; 28:12 [t] Matt. 23:37 **30:17** [u] Josh. 23:10 **30:18** [v] Is. 33:2 [w] Jer. 17:7 [x] Is. 26:8 **30:19** [y] Is. 65:9 [z] Is. 25:8 [a] Is. 65:24 **30:20** [b] 1 Kin. 22:27 [c] Amos 8:11 **30:21** [d] Josh. 1:7 **30:22** [e] Is. 2:20; 31:7 [f] Hos. 14:8
30:23 [g] [Matt. 6:33] **30:25** [h] Is. 2:14, 15 [i] Is. 2:10–21; 34:2
30:26 [j] [Is. 60:19, 20] **30:28** [k] Is. 11:4 [l] Is. 8:8 [m] Is. 37:29

29 You shall have a song
As in the night *when* a holy festival is kept,
And gladness of heart as when one goes with a flute,
To come into [n]the mountain of the LORD,
To the Mighty One of Israel.
30 [o]The LORD will cause His glorious voice to be heard,
And show the descent of His arm,
With the indignation of *His* anger
And the flame of a devouring fire,
With scattering, tempest, [p]and hailstones.
31 For [q]through the voice of the LORD
Assyria will be beaten down,
As He strikes with the [r]rod.
32 And *in* every place where the staff of punishment passes,
Which the LORD lays on him,
It will be with tambourines and harps;
And in battles of [s]brandishing He will fight with it.
33 [t]For Tophet *was* established of old,
Yes, for the king it is prepared.
He has made *it* deep and large;
Its pyre *is* fire with much wood;
The breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone,
Kindles it.

The Folly of Not Trusting God

31 Woe to those [a]who go down to Egypt for help,
And [b]rely on horses,
Who trust in chariots because *they are* many,
And in horsemen because they are very strong,
But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel,
[c]Nor seek the LORD!
2 Yet He also *is* wise and will bring disaster,
And [d]will not call back His words,
But will arise against the house of evildoers,
And against the help of those who work iniquity.
3 Now the Egyptians *are* men, and not God;
And their horses are flesh, and not spirit.
When the LORD stretches out His hand,
Both he who helps will fall,
And he who is helped will fall down;
They all will perish [e]together.

God Will Deliver Jerusalem

4 For thus the LORD has spoken to me:

[f]"As a lion roars,
And a young lion over his prey
(When a multitude of shepherds is summoned against him,
He will not be afraid of their voice
Nor be disturbed by their noise),
So the LORD of hosts will come down
To fight for Mount Zion and for its hill.
5 [g]Like birds flying about,
So will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem.
Defending, He will also deliver *it;*
Passing over, He will preserve *it*."

6 Return *to Him* against whom the children of Israel have [h]deeply revolted. 7 For in that day every man shall [i]throw away his idols of silver and his idols of gold—[j]sin, which your own hands have made for yourselves.

8 "Then Assyria shall [k]fall by a sword not of man,
And a sword not of mankind shall [l]devour him.
But he shall flee from the sword,
And his young men shall become forced labor.
9 [m]He shall cross over to his stronghold for fear,
And his princes shall be afraid of the banner,"
Says the LORD,
Whose fire *is* in Zion
And whose furnace *is* in Jerusalem.

Blessing would extend from field to flock (Deut. 28:11–12).

30:30 *descent of His arm.* The strong arm of God had delivered the Israelites from Egypt. Now His arm would descend in judgment (Ex. 6:6).

30:33 *Tophet.* Tophet was a place where Judah made human sacrifices to the heathen god Molech. The prophet uses it as a picture of God's vengeance on the wicked. He is not picturing temporal punishment, but everlasting destruction. This punishment will be in a place that is "deep" or inescapable. Then Isaiah draws the picture of the punishment by fire in hell. Some claim that the fire is symbolic, but it should be remembered that the reality is always greater than the symbol. The bliss of the righteous cannot be fully comprehended, and neither can the terror that awaits the wicked.

31:1 *Woe.* The fifth woe reaffirms the fourth woe (30:1–33). It, too, was addressed to those who replace faith in the Lord with reliance on Egypt.

31:2 *house of evildoers . . . help.* This "house" refers to Judah, and their "help" refers to Egypt.

31:7 *that day.* "That day" refers to the day when God will judge the rebellious (24:21; 26:1). God had judged nations from time to time over the ages (Canaan, Egypt, Babylon, Israel, etc.), but the final day of judgment when everything will be made new is still in the future (Rev. 20:11–15).

30:29 [n] [Is. 2:3] **30:30** [o] Is. 29:6 [p] Is. 28:2 **30:31** [q] Is. 14:25; 37:36 [r] Is. 10:5, 24 **30:32** [s] Is. 11:15 **30:33** [t] Jer. 7:31 **31:1** [a] Is. 30:1, 2 [b] Ps. 20:7 [c] Dan. 9:13 **31:2** [d] Num. 23:19 **31:3** [e] Is. 20:6 **31:4** [f] Hos. 11:10 **31:5** [g] Deut. 32:11 **31:6** [h] Hos. 9:9 **31:7** [i] Is. 2:20; 30:22 [j] 1 Kin. 12:30 **31:8** [k] 2 Kin. 19:35, 36 [l] Is. 37:36 **31:9** [m] Is. 37:37

A Reign of Righteousness

32 Behold, [a]a king will reign in
righteousness,
And princes will rule with justice.
2 A man will be as a hiding place from
the wind,
And [b]a cover from the tempest,
As rivers of water in a dry place,
As the shadow of a great rock in a
weary land.
3 [c]The eyes of those who see will not be
dim,
And the ears of those who hear will
listen.
4 Also the heart of the rash will
[d]understand knowledge,
And the tongue of the stammerers will
be ready to speak plainly.
5 The foolish person will no longer be
called generous,
Nor the miser said *to be* bountiful;
6 For the foolish person will speak
foolishness,
And his heart will work [e]iniquity:
To practice ungodliness,
To utter error against the LORD,
To keep the hungry unsatisfied,
And he will cause the drink of the
thirsty to fail.
7 Also the schemes of the schemer *are*
evil;
He devises wicked plans
To destroy the poor with [f]lying words,
Even when the needy speaks justice.
8 But a generous man devises generous
things,
And by generosity he shall stand.

Consequences of Complacency

9 Rise up, you women [g]who are at ease,
Hear my voice;
You complacent daughters,
Give ear to my speech.
10 In a year and *some* days
You will be troubled, you complacent
women;
For the vintage will fail,
The gathering will not come.
11 Tremble, you *women* who are at ease;
Be troubled, you complacent ones;
Strip yourselves, make yourselves
bare,
And gird *sackcloth* on *your*
waists.
12 People shall mourn upon their breasts
For the pleasant fields, for the fruitful
vine.
13 [h]On the land of my people will come up
thorns *and* briers,
Yes, on all the happy homes *in* [i]the
joyous city;
14 [j]Because the palaces will be forsaken,
The bustling city will be deserted.
The forts and towers will become lairs
forever,
A joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of
flocks—
15 Until [k]the Spirit is poured upon us
from on high,
And [l]the wilderness becomes a fruitful
field,
And the fruitful field is counted as a
forest.

The Peace of God's Reign

16 Then justice will dwell in the
wilderness,
And righteousness remain in the
fruitful field.
17 [m]The work of righteousness will be
peace,
And the effect of righteousness,
quietness and assurance forever.
18 My people will dwell in a peaceful
habitation,
In secure dwellings, and in quiet
[n]resting places,
19 [o]Though hail comes down [p]on the
forest,
And the city is brought low in
humiliation.
20 Blessed *are* you who sow beside all
waters,
Who send out freely the feet of [q]the ox
and the donkey.

A Prayer in Deep Distress

33 Woe to you [a]who plunder, though
you *have* not *been* plundered;
And you who deal treacherously,
though they have not dealt
treacherously with you!
[b]When you cease plundering,
You will be [c]plundered;
When you make an end of dealing
treacherously,
They will deal treacherously with you.

32:1 ***Behold.*** The fifth woe concludes with a prophecy about leadership and its effects. ***a king will reign in righteousness.*** The prophecy concerning this king is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ (7:14; 9:1–7; 11:1–5; 28:16; John 10:11). ***princes.*** The princes are Jesus' shepherds (1 Pet. 5:2–4).

32:9–11 ***complacent.*** The word "complacent" has connotations of "trust," as one who has taken refuge, or who is secure and without care. These women were complacent, but it was a false security. ***sackcloth.*** Mourning women removed their clothing and wore sackcloth around their waists (Gen. 37:34).

33:1 ***Woe.*** The sixth woe differs from the others in that it is addressed to Assyria, not to Judah. By focusing exclusively on Assyria's defeat and Judah's salvation, the prophecy magnifies Judah's exalted King.

32:1 [a] Ps. 45:1 **32:2** [b] Is. 4:6 **32:3** [c] Is. 29:18; 35:5 **32:4** [d] Is. 29:24 **32:6** [e] Prov. 24:7–9 **32:7** [f] Jer. 5:26–28 **32:9** [g] Amos 6:1 **32:13** [h] Hos. 9:6 [i] Is. 22:2 **32:14** [j] Is. 27:10 **32:15** [k] Joel 2:28] [l] Is. 29:17 **32:17** [m] James 3:18 **32:18** [n] [Zech. 2:5; 3:10] **32:19** [o] Is. 30:30 [p] Zech. 11:2 **32:20** [q] Is. 30:23, 24 **33:1** [a] Hab. 2:8 [b] Rev. 13:10 [c] Is. 10:12; 14:25; 31:8

2 O LORD, be gracious to us;
[d]We have waited for You.
Be their* arm every morning,
Our salvation also in the time of trouble.
3 At the noise of the tumult the people [e]shall flee;
When You lift Yourself up, the nations shall be scattered;
4 And Your plunder shall be gathered
Like the gathering of the caterpillar;
As the running to and fro of locusts,
He shall run upon them.
5 [f]The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high;
He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.
6 Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times,
And the strength of salvation;
The fear of the LORD *is* His treasure.
7 Surely their valiant ones shall cry outside,
[g]The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.
8 [h]The highways lie waste,
The traveling man ceases.
[i]He has broken the covenant,
He has despised the cities,*
He regards no man.
9 [j]The earth mourns *and* languishes,
Lebanon is shamed *and* shriveled;
Sharon is like a wilderness,
And Bashan and Carmel shake off *their fruits.*

Impending Judgment on Zion

10 "Now[k] I will rise," says the LORD;
"Now I will be exalted,
Now I will lift Myself up.
11 [l]You shall conceive chaff,
You shall bring forth stubble;
Your breath, *as* fire, shall devour you.
12 And the people shall be *like* the burnings of lime;
[m]*Like* thorns cut up they shall be burned in the fire.
13 Hear, [n]you *who are* afar off, what I have done;
And you *who are* near, acknowledge My might."
14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;
Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites:
"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring [o]fire?
Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"
15 He who [p]walks righteously and speaks uprightly,
He who despises the gain of oppressions,
Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes,
Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed,
And [q]shuts his eyes from seeing evil:
16 He will dwell on high;
His place of defense *will be* the fortress of rocks;
Bread will be given him,
His water *will be* sure.

The Land of the Majestic King

17 Your eyes will see the King in His [r]beauty;
They will see the land that is very far off.
18 Your heart will meditate on terror:
[s]"Where *is* the scribe?
Where *is* he who weighs?
Where *is* he who counts the towers?"
19 [t]You will not see a fierce people,
[u]A people of obscure speech, beyond perception,
Of a stammering tongue *that you* cannot understand.
20 [v]Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts;
Your eyes will see [w]Jerusalem, a quiet home,
A tabernacle *that* will not be taken down;
[x]Not one of [y]its stakes will ever be removed,
Nor will any of its cords be broken.

* **33:2** Septuagint omits *their*; Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *our.* * **33:8** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls read *witnesses*; Septuagint omits *cities;* Targum reads *They have been removed from their cities.*

33:3 ***lift Yourself up.*** This passage refers to an exaltation of the heavenly King (vv. 5,10) as He rises to demonstrate His glory and vindicate His justice.
33:4 ***plunder.*** The plunder of God's war with His enemies belongs to the Lord, the true Victor (23:18; 34:2).
33:9 ***Sharon . . . Bashan.*** Sharon was on the western coastal plain, and Bashan was on the east side of the Jordan.
33:15 ***walks righteously.*** For a similar description of the person who can approach the Holy One, see Psalm 1:1–2; 15:2; Galatians 5:22–25; and Ephesians 5:1–2.
33:17 ***land that is very far off.*** The prophet's land was continually threatened by the Assyrian army. But, in prophetic vision, Isaiah saw a little picture of the beauty of heaven. In the mind of the believer, the trials of the present fade into insignificance if he only contemplates that glorious time when he will dwell in the presence of his King.
33:18 ***the scribe.*** The scribe who counted was the one who took tribute (2 Kin. 18:14).
33:19 ***people of obscure speech.*** For a similar idea concerning Israel's enemies, see Deuteronomy 28:49.

33:2 [d] Is. 25:9; 26:8 **33:3** [e] Is. 17:13 **33:5** [f] Ps. 97:9 **33:7** [g] 2 Kin. 18:18, 37 **33:8** [h] Judg. 5:6 [i] 2 Kin. 18:13–17 **33:9** [j] Is. 24:4 **33:10** [k] Ps. 12:5 **33:11** [l] [Ps. 7:14] **33:12** [m] Is. 9:18 **33:13** [n] Is. 49:1 **33:14** [o] Heb. 12:29 **33:15** [p] Ps. 15:2; 24:3, 4 [q] Ps. 119:37 **33:17** [r] Ps. 27:4 **33:18** [s] 1 Cor. 1:20 **33:19** [t] 2 Kin. 19:32 [u] Jer. 5:15 **33:20** [v] Ps. 48:12 [w] Ps. 46:5; 125:1 [x] Is. 37:33 [y] Is. 54:2

21 But there the majestic LORD *will be* for
us
A place of broad rivers *and* streams,
In which no galley with oars will sail,
Nor majestic ships pass by
22 (For the LORD *is* our [z]Judge,
The LORD *is* our [a]Lawgiver,
[b]The LORD *is* our King;
He will save us);
23 Your tackle is loosed,
They could not strengthen their mast,
They could not spread the sail.

Then the prey of great plunder is
divided;
The lame take the prey.
24 And the inhabitant will not say, "I am
sick";
[c]The people who dwell in it *will be*
forgiven *their* iniquity.

Judgment on the Nations

34 Come [a]near, you nations, to hear;
And heed, you people!
[b]Let the earth hear, and all that is in it,
The world and all things that come
forth from it.
2 For the indignation of the LORD *is*
against all nations,
And *His* fury against all their armies;
He has utterly destroyed them,
He has given them over to the
[c]slaughter.
3 Also their slain shall be thrown out;
[d]Their stench shall rise from their
corpses,
And the mountains shall be melted
with their blood.
4 [e]All the host of heaven shall be
dissolved,
And the heavens shall be rolled up like
a scroll;
[f]All their host shall fall down
As the leaf falls from the vine,
And as [g]*fruit* falling from a fig tree.

5 "For [h]My sword shall be bathed in
heaven;
Indeed it [i]shall come down on Edom,
And on the people of My curse, for
judgment.
6 The [j]sword of the LORD is filled with
blood,
It is made overflowing with fatness,
With the blood of lambs and goats,
With the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For [k]the LORD has a sacrifice in
Bozrah,
And a great slaughter in the land of
Edom.
7 The wild oxen shall come down with
them,
And the young bulls with the mighty
bulls;
Their land shall be soaked with blood,
And their dust saturated with fatness."

8 For *it is* the day of the LORD's
[l]vengeance,
The year of recompense for the cause
of Zion.
9 [m]Its streams shall be turned into pitch,
And its dust into brimstone;
Its land shall become burning pitch.
10 It shall not be quenched night or day;
[n]Its smoke shall ascend forever.
[o]From generation to generation it shall
lie waste;
No one shall pass through it forever
and ever.
11 [p]But the pelican and the porcupine
shall possess it,
Also the owl and the raven shall dwell
in it.
And [q]He shall stretch out over it
The line of confusion and the stones of
emptiness.
12 They shall call its nobles to the
kingdom,
But none *shall be* there, and all its
princes shall be nothing.

13 And [r]thorns shall come up in its
palaces,
Nettles and brambles in its fortresses;
[s]It shall be a habitation of jackals,
A courtyard for ostriches.
14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also
meet with the jackals,
And the wild goat shall bleat to its
companion;
Also the night creature shall rest
there,
And find for herself a place of rest.
15 There the arrow snake shall make her
nest and lay *eggs*
And hatch, and gather *them* under her
shadow;
There also shall the hawks be
gathered,
Every one with her mate.

33:22 ***The LORD is our Lawgiver.*** The Lawgiver is associated with other acts of mercy (Deut. 6:1–3; John 1:14–18); the giving of the law was God's way to point out the correct path for the Israelites to follow. His commitment to set our feet on the right path is one of His acts of mercy.

34:4 ***host of heaven.*** The host of heaven here refers to pagan deities (24:21; 2 Kin. 17:16). ***heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll.*** The old cosmos will give way to the new (51:6; Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:13–14; 21:1).

34:8 ***vengeance.*** The Lord has promised that He will one day right the wrongs suffered by His followers, but that vengeance is His and His alone (Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19).

34:9 ***brimstone . . . burning pitch.*** Brimstone and burning pitch may be allusions to Sodom and Gomorrah (30:33; Gen. 19:24; Ezek. 38:22).

33:22 [z] [Acts 10:42] [a] James 4:12 [b] Ps. 89:18 **33:24** [c] Is. 40:2 **34:1** [a] Ps. 49:1 [b] Deut. 32:1 **34:2** [c] Is. 13:5 **34:3** [d] Joel 2:20 **34:4** [e] Is. 13:13 [f] Is. 14:12 [g] Rev. 6:12–14 **34:5** [h] Jer. 46:10 [i] Mal. 1:4 **34:6** [j] Is. 66:16 [k] Zeph. 1:7 **34:8** [l] Is. 63:4 **34:9** [m] Deut. 29:23 **34:10** [n] Rev. 14:11; 18:18; 19:3 [o] Mal. 1:3, 4 **34:11** [p] Zeph. 2:14 [q] Lam. 2:8 **34:13** [r] Is. 32:13 [s] Is. 13:21

16 "Search from [t]the book of the LORD,
and read:
Not one of these shall fail;
Not one shall lack her mate.
For My mouth has commanded it, and
His Spirit has gathered them.
17 He has cast the lot for them,
And His hand has divided it among
them with a measuring line.
They shall possess it forever;
From generation to generation they
shall dwell in it."

The Future Glory of Zion

35 The [a]wilderness and the wasteland
shall be glad for them,
And the [b]desert shall rejoice and
blossom as the rose;
2 [c]It shall blossom abundantly and
rejoice,
Even with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given
to it,
The excellence of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the [d]glory of the LORD,
The excellency of our God.
3 [e]Strengthen the weak hands,
And make firm the feeble knees.
4 Say to those *who are* fearful-hearted,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Behold, your God will come *with*
[f]vengeance,
With the recompense of God;
He will come and [g]save you."
5 Then the [h]eyes of the blind shall be
opened,
And [i]the ears of the deaf shall be
unstopped.
6 Then the [j]lame shall leap like a deer,
And the [k]tongue of the dumb sing.
For [l]waters shall burst forth in the
wilderness,
And streams in the desert.
7 The parched ground shall become a
pool,
And the thirsty land springs of water;
In [m]the habitation of jackals, where
each lay,
There shall be grass with reeds and
rushes.
8 A [n]highway shall be there, and a road,
And it shall be called the Highway of
Holiness.
[o]The unclean shall not pass over it,
But it *shall be* for others.
Whoever walks the road, although a
fool,
Shall not go astray.
9 [p]No lion shall be there,
Nor shall *any* ravenous beast go up on it;
It shall not be found there.
But the redeemed shall walk *there*,
10 And the [q]ransomed of the LORD shall
return,
And come to Zion with singing,
With everlasting joy on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and gladness,
And [r]sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD

36 Now [a]it came to pass in the four-
teenth year of King Hezekiah *that*
Sennacherib king of Assyria came up
against all the fortified cities of Judah and
took them. 2Then the king of Assyria sent
the Rabshakeh* with a great army from
Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem.
And he stood by the aqueduct from the
upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's
Field. 3And [b]Eliakim the son of Hilkiah,
who was over the household, [c]Shebna the
scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the re-
corder, came out to him.

* **36:2** A title, probably *Chief of Staff* or *Governor*

35:1–2 *rejoice.* Isaiah 35 stands in contrast to Isaiah 34. This chapter opens with the lilt of joy. The Arabah, or desert plain, shall blossom and break into bloom. Centuries before, Moses had warned of a day when the rain of this land would become "powder and dust" (Deut. 28:24). That day came because Israel was disobedient to God. But, at the second coming of Christ (Rev. 20:1–6), Israel will be restored spiritually, and with spiritual restoration comes physical blessing. When judgment is removed, great blessing follows. Restoration follows repentance, and restoration is accompanied by joy.

35:3 *Strengthen the weak hands.* This phrase is cited in Hebrews 12:12 (Josh. 1:6–7,9,18). We can reassure ourselves with the knowledge that our Savior is coming. In that day, justice will be restored.

35:5–6 *eyes . . . ears . . . lame . . . tongue.* This prophecy of healings was fulfilled by Jesus (Matt. 12:22; Luke 4:18; 7:22), and it was this passage in Isaiah that Jesus referred to when He answered John the Baptist's disciples who asked if He was the Expected One. The reply was somewhat cryptic, but it was something that John would understand in prison, without requiring Jesus to reveal Himself before it was time (Matt. 11:27; Luke 7:22).

35:10 *ransomed.* Someone who is ransomed is someone who has had a price paid to set him free from captivity. This promise looked forward to the return of the political captives and, in a much fuller sense, to the salvation through Jesus Christ, who gave "His life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Tim. 2:6).

36:1 *fourteenth year.* The 14th year of King Hezekiah's sole reign was 701 B.C. ***all.*** In his annals, Sennacherib mentions 46 cities that he attacked.

36:2 *the Rabshakeh.* This was probably the title of one of Sennacherib's officials (2 Kin. 18:17).

34:16 [t] [Mal. 3:16] **35:1** [a] Is. 32:15; 55:12 [b] Is. 41:19; 51:3 **35:2** [c] Is. 32:15 [d] Is. 40:5 **35:3** [e] Heb. 12:12 **35:4** [f] Is. 34:8 [g] Is. 33:22 **35:5** [h] Is. 29:18 [i] [Matt. 11:5] **35:6** [j] Acts 8:7 [k] Is. 32:4 [l] [John 7:38] **35:7** [m] Is. 34:13 **35:8** [n] Is. 19:23 [o] Joel 3:17 **35:9** [p] Lev. 26:6 **35:10** [q] Is. 51:11 [r] [Rev. 7:17; 21:4] **36:1** [a] 2 Chr. 32:1 **36:3** [b] Is. 22:20 [c] Is. 22:15

4 [d]Then *the* Rabshakeh said to them,
"Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the
great king, the king of Assyria: "What
confidence is this in which you trust? 5 I
say you speak of having plans and power
for war; but *they are* mere words. Now in
whom do you trust, that you rebel against
me? 6 Look! You are trusting in the [e]staff of
this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man
leans, it will go into his hand and pierce
it. So *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who
[f]trust in him.
7 "But if you say to me, 'We trust in the
LORD our God,' *is it* not He whose high
places and whose altars Hezekiah has tak-
en away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem,
'You shall worship before this altar'?"'
8 Now therefore, I urge you, give a pledge
to my master the king of Assyria, and I
will give you two thousand horses—if you
are able on your part to put riders on them!
9 How then will you repel one captain of the
least of my master's servants, and put your
trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen?
10 Have I now come up without the LORD
against this land to destroy it? The LORD
said to me, 'Go up against this land, and
destroy it.'"
11 Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said
to *the* Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your
servants in Aramaic, for we understand *it;*
and do not speak to us in Hebrew* in the
hearing of the people who *are* on the wall."
12 But *the* Rabshakeh said, "Has my mas-
ter sent me to your master and to you to
speak these words, and not to the men who
sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their
own waste with you?"
13 Then *the* Rabshakeh stood and called
out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and said,
"Hear the words of the great king, the king
of Assyria! 14 Thus says the king: 'Do not
let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not
be able to deliver you; 15 nor let Hezekiah
make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The
LORD will surely deliver us; this city will
not be given into the hand of the king of
Assyria."' 16 Do not listen to Hezekiah; for
thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make *peace*
with me *by a* present and come out to me;
[g]and every one of you eat from his own
vine and every one from his own fig tree,
and every one of you drink the waters of
his own cistern; 17 until I come and take you
away to a land like your own land, a land
of grain and new wine, a land of bread and
vineyards. 18 *Beware* lest Hezekiah per-
suade you, saying, "The LORD will deliver
us." Has any one of the [h]gods of the nations
delivered its land from the hand of the king
of Assyria? 19 Where *are* the gods of Ha-
math and Arpad? Where *are* the gods of
Sepharvaim? Indeed, have they delivered
[i]Samaria from my hand? 20 Who among all
the gods of these lands have delivered their
countries from my hand, that the LORD
should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"
21 But they held their peace and answered
him not a word; for the king's command-
ment was, "Do not answer him." 22 Then
Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who *was* over
the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah
the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to
Hezekiah with *their* clothes torn, and told
him the words of *the* Rabshakeh.

Isaiah Assures Deliverance

37 And [a]so it was, when King Hezeki-
ah heard *it*, that he tore his clothes,
covered himself with sackcloth, and went
into the house of the LORD. 2 Then he sent
Eliakim, who *was* over the household,
Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the
priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah
the prophet, the son of Amoz. 3 And they
said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This
day *is* a day of [b]trouble and rebuke and
blasphemy; for the children have come
to birth, but *there is* no strength to bring
them forth. 4 It may be that the LORD your
God will hear the words of *the* Rabshakeh,
whom his master the king of Assyria has
sent to [c]reproach the living God, and will
rebuke the words which the LORD your God
has heard. Therefore lift up *your* prayer for
the remnant that is left.'"
5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came
to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said to them, "Thus
you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the
LORD: "Do not be afraid of the words which
you have heard, with which the servants
of the king of Assyria have blasphemed
Me. 7 Surely I will send a spirit upon him,
and he shall hear a rumor and return to his

* **36:11** Literally *Judean*

36:7 *taken away.* Hezekiah had destroyed the idolatrous high places and altars that his father Ahaz had built (2 Kin. 18:1–5; 2 Chr. 31:1–3).
36:8 *riders.* Micah referred to Jerusalem's soldiers as merely "troops" (Mic. 5:1) compared to the enormous international army of Assyria.
36:10 *The LORD said to me.* Ancient Middle Eastern conquerors liked to claim that the gods of their defeated enemies had joined their side (2 Chr. 35:21). These words about the Lord were no more than a boast.
36:11 *Aramaic.* The Syrian language was Aramaic, which was the language of international diplomacy.
36:19 *have they delivered Samaria.* Like the Assyrian king (10:11), the Rabshakeh assumed that different gods were worshiped in Samaria than in Jerusalem.
36:22 *Shebna.* Isaiah had earlier condemned Shebna for presumption (22:15–23). Apparently that was a warning which was heeded, for his attitude was of mourning, repentance, and humility at this time.
37:6 *Do not be afraid.* The Lord commonly reassured

36:4 [d] 2 Kin. 18:19 **36:6** [e] Ezek. 29:6 [f] Ps. 146:3 **36:16** [g] Zech. 3:10 **36:18** [h] Is. 37:12 **36:19** [i] 2 Kin. 17:6 **37:1** [a] 2 Kin. 19:1–37 **37:3** [b] Is. 22:5; 26:16; 33:2 **37:4** [c] Is. 36:15, 18, 20

own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'"

Sennacherib's Threat and Hezekiah's Prayer

8 Then *the* Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish. 9 And the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, "He has come out to make war with you." So when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10 "Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." 11 Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by utterly destroying them; and shall you be delivered? 12 Have the [d]gods of the nations delivered those whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezeph, and the people of Eden who *were* in Telassar? 13 Where *is* the king of [e]Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?'"

14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 Then Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, saying: 16 "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, *the One* who dwells *between* the cherubim, You *are* God, You [f]alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 17 [g]Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and [h]hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 18 Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their [i]lands, 19 and have cast their gods into the fire; for they *were* [i]not gods, but the work of men's hands—wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. 20 Now therefore, O LORD our God, [k]save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may [l]know that You *are* the LORD, You alone."

The Word of the LORD Concerning Sennacherib

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, 22 this *is* the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him:

"The virgin, the daughter of Zion,
Has despised you, laughed you to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
Has shaken *her* head behind your back!

23 "Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
Against whom have you raised *your* voice,
And lifted up your eyes on high?
Against the Holy One of Israel.
24 By your servants you have reproached the Lord,
And said, 'By the multitude of my chariots
I have come up to the height of the mountains,
To the limits of Lebanon;
I will cut down its tall cedars
And its choice cypress trees;
I will enter its farthest height,
To its fruitful forest.
25 I have dug and drunk water,
And with the soles of my feet I have dried up
All the brooks of defense.'

26 "Did you not hear [m]long ago
How I made it,
From ancient times that I formed it?
Now I have brought it to pass,
That you should be
For crushing fortified cities *into* heaps of ruins.
27 Therefore their inhabitants *had* little power;
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were *as* the grass of the field
And the green herb,
As the grass on the housetops
And *grain* blighted before it is grown.

28 "But I know your dwelling place,
Your going out and your coming in,
And your rage against Me.
29 Because your rage against Me and your tumult
Have come up to My ears,

His servants with these words (7:4; 35:4; Gen. 15:1; Josh. 1:9). We have no reason to fear if our trust is in the all-powerful God (Heb. 13:6).

37:10 ***Thus you shall speak.*** Blasphemous and malicious designs against God and His people should motivate us to rely completely on the Lord and earnestly seek His strength. The response of God's people to blasphemers must never be incited by personal feelings, but by the desire that "all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD, You alone" (v. 20).

37:21 ***Thus says the LORD God.*** Hezekiah's plea for help against the Assyrian menace brought a word from the Lord. Hezekiah was assured that the Lord was in absolute charge, even to the extent that the Assyrian king's activities were brought about through God's own plan (v. 26). Sennacherib's forces fell before the mighty power of the angel of the Lord (v. 36), as a witness to the truth of the Word of God that the king's heart is turned by the hand of the Lord (Prov. 21:1).

37:29 ***My hook in your nose.*** The Assyrians dragged prisoners away with a hook in the nose. The Lord's

37:12 [d] Is. 36:18, 19 **37:13** [e] Is. 49:23 **37:16** [f] Is. 43:10, 11 **37:17** [g] Dan. 9:18 [h] Ps. 74:22 **37:18** [i] 2 Kin. 15:29; 16:9; 17:6, 24 **37:19** [j] Is. 40:19, 20 **37:20** [k] Is. 33:22 [l] Ps. 83:18 **37:26** [m] Is. 25:1; 40:21; 45:21

Therefore [n]I will put My hook in your
nose
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will [o]turn you back
By the way which you came."'

30 "This *shall be* a sign to you:

You shall eat this year such as grows
of itself,
And the second year what springs
from the same;
Also in the third year sow and reap,
Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of
them.
31 And the remnant who have escaped of
the house of Judah
Shall again take root downward,
And bear fruit upward.
32 For out of Jerusalem shall go a
remnant,
And those who escape from Mount
Zion.
The [p]zeal of the LORD of hosts will do
this.

33 "Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria:

'He shall not come into this city,
Nor shoot an arrow there,
Nor come before it with shield,
Nor build a siege mound against it.
34 By the way that he came,
By the same shall he return;
And he shall not come into this city,'
Says the LORD.
35 'For I will [q]defend this city, to save it
For My own sake and for My servant
[r]David's sake.'"

Sennacherib's Defeat and Death

36 Then the [s]angel* of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. 37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned *home*, and remained at Nineveh. 38 Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then [t]Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

Hezekiah's Life Extended

38 In [a]those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: [b]'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.'"

2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, 3 and said, [c]"Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done *what is* good in Your [d]sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 And the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying, 5 "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years. 6 I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and [e]I will defend this city."' 7 And this *is* [f]the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing which He has spoken: 8 Behold, I will bring the shadow on the sundial, which has gone down with the sun on the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward." So the sun returned ten degrees on the dial by which it had gone down.

9 This is the writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness:

10 I said,
"In the prime of my life
I shall go to the gates of Sheol;
I am deprived of the remainder of my
years."
11 I said,
"I shall not see YAH,
The LORD* [g]in the land of the
living;
I shall observe man no more among
the inhabitants of the world.*
12 [h]My life span is gone,
Taken from me like a shepherd's
tent;
I have cut off my life like a weaver.

* **37:36** Or *Angel* * **38:11** Hebrew *YAH, YAH* • Following some Hebrew manuscripts; Masoretic Text and Vulgate read *rest;* Septuagint omits *among the inhabitants of the world;* Targum reads *land.*

judgment was coming, and soon the Assyrians would experience being pulled away where they did not want to go.

37:36 ***angel of the LORD . . . killed.*** This verse is the fulfillment of God's promise to take vengeance on those who trouble His people (34:8).

37:38 ***Esarhaddon.*** Esarhaddon began his reign in 681 B.C.

38:5 ***add to your days.*** Hezekiah had no male heir at the time of his illness. Manasseh, the successor to his throne, was 12 when Hezekiah died (2 Kin. 20:21—21:1).

38:9 ***writing of Hezekiah.*** Scriptures attest to King Hezekiah's interest in devotional literature. Apparently, he instructed his scribes to compile some of the proverbs of Solomon (Prov. 25:1). He ordered the Levites to worship God with the psalms of David and Asaph (2 Chr. 29:30), and the song of praise (vv. 10–20) has some similarities with those psalms.

37:29 [n] Is. 30:28 [o] Ezek. 38:4; 39:2 **37:32** [p] 2 Kin. 19:31 **37:35** [q] Is. 31:5; 38:6 [r] 1 Kin. 11:13 **37:36** [s] 2 Kin. 19:35 **37:38** [t] Ezra 4:2 **38:1** [a] 2 Chr. 32:24 [b] 2 Sam. 17:23 **38:3** [c] Neh. 13:14 [d] 2 Kin. 18:5, 6 **38:6** [e] Is. 31:5; 37:35 **38:7** [f] Is. 7:11 **38:11** [g] Ps. 27:13; 116:9 **38:12** [h] Job 7:6

He cuts me off from the loom;
From day until night You make an end
of me.
13 I have considered until morning—
Like a lion,
So He breaks all my bones;
From day until night You make an end
of me.
14 Like a crane *or* a swallow, so I
chattered;
[i]I mourned like a dove;
My eyes fail *from looking*
upward.
O LORD,* I am oppressed;
Undertake for me!
15 "What shall I say?
He has both spoken to me,*
And He Himself has done *it*.
I shall walk carefully all my
years
[j]In the bitterness of my soul.
16 O Lord, by these *things men* live;
And in all these *things is* the life of my
spirit;
So You will restore me and make me
live.
17 Indeed *it was* for *my own* peace
That I had great bitterness;
But You have lovingly *delivered* my
soul from the pit of
corruption,
For You have cast all my sins behind
Your back.
18 For [k]Sheol cannot thank You,
Death cannot praise You;
Those who go down to the pit cannot
hope for Your truth.
19 The living, the living man, he shall
praise You,
As I *do* this day;
[l]The father shall make known Your
truth to the children.
20 "The LORD *was ready* to save me;
Therefore we will sing my songs with
stringed instruments
All the days of our life, in the house of
the LORD."

21 Now [m]Isaiah had said, "Let them take a lump of figs, and apply *it* as a poultice on the boil, and he shall recover."

22 And [n]Hezekiah had said, "What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?"

The Babylonian Envoys

39 At [a]that time Merodach-Baladan* the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. 2 [b]And Hezekiah was pleased with them, and showed them the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

3 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?"

So Hezekiah said, "They came to me from a [c]far country, from Babylon."

4 And he said, "What have they seen in your house?"

So Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that *is* in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them."

5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 6 'Behold, the days are coming [d]when all that *is* in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the LORD. 7 'And they shall take away *some* of your [e]sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

8 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, [f]"The word of the LORD which you have spoken *is* good!" For he said, "At least there will be peace and truth in my days."

God's People Are Comforted

40 "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!"
Says your God.

* **38:14** Following Bomberg; Masoretic Text and Dead Sea Scrolls read *Lord*. * **38:15** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls and Targum read *And shall I say to Him;* Septuagint omits first half of this verse. * **39:1** Spelled *Berodach-Baladan* in 2 Kings 20:12

38:22 *sign.* Depending on one's attitude, the request for a sign may express either unbelief (Matt. 12:39; John 6:30) or faith (v. 7). The healing of a boil would be the sign that the Lord would save Hezekiah (vv. 20–21).

39:1 *recovered.* The miracle of the sundial (38:8) would have held special interest for the astronomy-minded Babylonians (2 Chr. 32:31).

39:2 *showed them the house of his treasures.* Hezekiah was flattered to receive the attention of the Babylonian delegation and wanted to show how important he was.

40:1—55:13 *Comfort.* This section is addressed to the Babylonian exiles in a prophetic manner. This book of comfort, written about 150 years before the time of Cyrus, promised the exiles from Judah that they would return to Jerusalem (40:1–2). The restoration after the exile pointed to the coming of the Lord's kingdom. In Isaiah's prophecy, this first taste of salvation merges with predictions of the full salvation that Jesus Christ would bring.

38:14 [i] Is. 59:11 **38:15** [j] Job 7:11; 10:1 **38:18** [k] Ps. 6:5; 30:9; 88:11; 115:17 **38:19** [l] Deut. 4:9; 6:7 **38:21** [m] 2 Kin. 20:7 **38:22** [n] 2 Kin. 20:8 **39:1** [a] 2 Kin. 20:12–19 **39:2** [b] 2 Chr. 32:25, 31 **39:3** [c] Deut. 28:49 **39:6** [d] Jer. 20:5 **39:7** [e] Dan. 1:1–7 **39:8** [f] 1 Sam. 3:18

2 "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her,
That her warfare is ended,
That her iniquity is pardoned;
[a]For she has received from the LORD's hand
Double for all her sins."

3 [b]The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
[c]"Prepare the way of the LORD;
[d]Make straight in the desert*
A highway for our God.
4 Every valley shall be exalted
And every mountain and hill brought low;
[e]The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough places smooth;
5 The [f]glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see *it* together;
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

6 The voice said, "Cry out!"
And he* said, "What shall I cry?"
[g]"All flesh *is* grass,
And all its loveliness *is* like the flower of the field.
7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
Surely the people *are* grass.
8 The grass withers, the flower fades,
But [h]the word of our God stands forever."

9 O Zion,
You who bring good tidings,
Get up into the high mountain;
O Jerusalem,
You who bring good tidings,
Lift up your voice with strength,
Lift *it* up, be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

10 Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong *hand*,
And [i]His arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, [j]His reward *is* with Him,
And His work before Him.
11 He will [k]feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry *them* in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with young.

12 [l]Who has measured the waters* in the hollow of His hand,
Measured heaven with a span

* **40:3** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint omits *in the desert*.
* **40:6** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, and Vulgate read *I*.
* **40:12** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls read *waters of the sea;* Targum reads *waters of the world.*

40:2–5 Preparing the Way—Biblical scholars think this passage was originally intended to encourage the Israelite exiles, who were looking forward to their return to Israel. The obstacles to getting back home included both a release from slavery and a journey of hundreds of miles on foot through hostile territory. There was also much to be apprehensive about when they arrived home. How were they ever going to be able to rebuild their communities when they were virtually penniless and without resources?

Scholars also see this passage as one of the key messianic prophecies. The image of verses 3–4 is that of the ancient Near Eastern practice of "rolling out the red carpet" for a visiting monarch. Mark makes use of these verses to describe the ministry of John the Baptist, as the prophet urges people to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

Both applications point to the same concepts. God is saying, "Trust Me, I will make it right. I will make a way through the obstacles. No matter how large the obstacles, I will overcome them." We should see these as some of the strongest words of comfort in the Bible.

40:2 *Jerusalem.* In this case, Jerusalem represents the exiles. ***warfare.*** Warfare refers to Israel's hard service in Babylon.

40:3 *voice of one crying.* John referred to this passage to explain who he was (John 1:23) as the forerunner of Christ.

40:5 *glory . . . shall be revealed.* The glory of the Lord is revealed in the restoration of the captives, but in a fuller sense it is revealed in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 2:29–32; John 1:14).

40:9 *good tidings*. Good news from God to man can always be properly described as "gospel." Here, the glad tidings are that the God who once delivered His captive people from bondage in Egypt is again at hand to rescue and protect His beleaguered Israelites. The assurance that God is with us (7:14; John 1:14) to save is at the heart of the Christian gospel (1 Cor. 15:3–4), and it is always "good news," even when it is something we have heard before.

40:12–31 God's Sovereignty over the Nations—God controls the destinies of rulers and politicians and public figures, no matter how much power they think they have. When times are rough, we wonder if God is really in charge. We wonder why He lets us get moved around by so many economic and political forces beyond our control. We sometimes wonder if He really even cares about what is going on in the world or our lives. If He really is in charge, does He know what He is doing?

The testimony of Isaiah is a resounding Yes! Nations may rise and fall. Rulers may come and go. God remains both Starter and Finisher. The circumstances that surround us are temporary conditions in the scheme of eternity. As God sustains the stars in heaven and the whole universe, He sustains our lives. We may not be able to say that easily every day, but if we keep coming back to Him, He will not disappoint us.

40:12 *span.* A span is the width of an outstretched

40:2 [a] Is. 61:7 **40:3** [b] Matt. 3:3 [c] [Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6] [d] Ps. 68:4 **40:4** [e] Is. 45:2 **40:5** [f] Is. 35:2 **40:6** [g] Job 14:2 **40:8** [h] [John 12:34] **40:10** [i] Is. 59:16, 18 [j] Is. 62:11 **40:11** [k] [John 10:11, 14–16] **40:12** [l] Prov. 30:4

And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure?
Weighed the mountains in scales
And the hills in a balance?
13 [m]Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,
Or *as* His counselor has taught Him?
14 With whom did He take counsel, and *who* instructed Him,
And [n]taught Him in the path of justice?
Who taught Him knowledge,
And showed Him the way of understanding?
15 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop in a bucket,
And are counted as the small dust on the scales;
Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing.
16 And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn,
Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering.
17 All nations before Him *are* as [o]nothing,
And [p]they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.
18 To whom then will you [q]liken God?
Or what likeness will you compare to Him?
19 [r]The workman molds an image,
The goldsmith overspreads it with gold,
And the silversmith casts silver chains.
20 Whoever *is* too impoverished for *such* a contribution
Chooses a tree *that* will not rot;
He seeks for himself a skillful workman
[s]To prepare a carved image *that* will not totter.
21 [t]Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
22 *It is* He who sits above the circle of the earth,
And its inhabitants *are* like grasshoppers,
Who [u]stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
And spreads them out like a [v]tent to dwell in.
23 He brings the [w]princes to nothing;
He makes the judges of the earth useless.
24 Scarcely shall they be planted,
Scarcely shall they be sown,
Scarcely shall their stock take root in the earth,
When He will also blow on them,
And they will wither,
And the whirlwind will take them away like stubble.
25 "To[x] whom then will you liken Me,
Or *to whom* shall I be equal?" says the Holy One.
26 Lift up your eyes on high,
And see who has created these *things*,
Who brings out their host by number;
[y]He calls them all by name,
By the greatness of His might
And the strength of *His* power;
Not one is missing.
27 [z]Why do you say, O Jacob,
And speak, O Israel:
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
And my just claim is passed over by my God"?
28 Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
The everlasting God, the LORD,
The Creator of the ends of the earth,
Neither faints nor is weary.
[a]His understanding is unsearchable.
29 He gives power to the weak,
And to *those who have* no might He increases strength.
30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary,
And the young men shall utterly fall,
31 But those who [b]wait on the LORD
[c]Shall renew *their* strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

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hand. This verse dramatically imposes images of the grandeur of God.

40:15 ***nations are as a drop in a bucket.*** Wicked nations have no power to thwart the purposes of God (Ps. 2:1–6).

40:19–20 ***image.*** Many idols were made with wood, then overlaid with gold. The poor had to choose the best wood available and hope it was good enough. But of what value is the prayer of a poor man to a plain idol? What is the value of the rich to one covered with gold? To both questions, the answer is "none."

40:26 ***who has created these things.*** The Babylonian gods were identified with the heavenly bodies. These words would have been comforting and encouraging to the Israelites who had learned to say no to Babylon and yes to the Lord.

40:27 ***my just claim is passed over.*** The captives in their weariness may have complained that they were forgotten by God.

40:31 ***wait.*** To "wait" for the Lord entails confident expectation and active hope, never passive resignation.

40:13 [m] [1 Cor. 2:16] **40:14** [n] Job 36:22, 23 **40:17** [o] Dan. 4:35 [p] Ps. 62:9 **40:18** [q] Is. 46:5 **40:19** [r] Is. 41:7; 44:10 **40:20** [s] Is. 41:7; 46:7 **40:21** [t] Rom. 1:19 **40:22** [u] Jer. 10:12 [v] Ps. 19:4 **40:23** [w] Ps. 107:40 **40:25** [x] Is. 40:18 **40:26** [y] Ps. 147:4 **40:27** [z] Is. 54:7, 8 **40:28** [a] Rom. 11:33 **40:31** [b] Is. 30:15; 49:23 [c] Ps. 103:5

Israel Assured of God's Help

41 "Keep [a]silence before Me,
O coastlands,
And let the people renew *their* strength!
Let them come near, then let them speak;
Let us [b]come near together for judgment.

2 "Who raised up one [c]from the east?
Who in righteousness called him to His feet?
Who [d]gave the nations before him,
And made *him* rule over kings?
Who gave *them* as the dust *to* his sword,
As driven stubble to his bow?
3 Who pursued them, *and* passed safely
By the way *that* he had not gone with his feet?
4 [e]Who has performed and done *it*,
Calling the generations from the beginning?
'I, the LORD, am [f]the first;
And with the last I *am* [g]He.'"

5 The coastlands saw *it* and feared,
The ends of the earth were afraid;
They drew near and came.
6 [h]Everyone helped his neighbor,
And said to his brother,
"Be of good courage!"
7 [i]So the craftsman encouraged the [j]goldsmith;
He who smooths *with* the hammer *inspired* him who strikes the anvil,
Saying, "It *is* ready for the soldering";
Then he fastened it with pegs,
[k]*That* it might not totter.

8 "But you, Israel, *are* My servant,
Jacob whom I have [l]chosen,
The descendants of Abraham My [m]friend.
9 *You* whom I have taken from the ends of the earth,
And called from its farthest regions,
And said to you,
'You *are* My servant,
I have chosen you and have not cast you away:
10 [n]Fear not, [o]for I *am* with you;
Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

11 "Behold, all those who were incensed against you
Shall be [p]ashamed and disgraced;
They shall be as nothing,
And those who strive with you shall perish.
12 You shall seek them and not find them—
Those who contended with you.
Those who war against you
Shall be as nothing,
As a nonexistent thing.
13 For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand,
Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

14 "Fear not, you [q]worm Jacob,
You men of Israel!
I will help you," says the LORD
And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.
15 "Behold, [r]I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth;
You shall thresh the mountains and beat *them* small,
And make the hills like chaff.
16 You shall [s]winnow them, the wind shall carry them away,
And the whirlwind shall scatter them;
You shall rejoice in the LORD,
And[t] glory in the Holy One of Israel.

17 "The poor and needy seek water, but *there is* none,
Their tongues fail for thirst.
I, the LORD, will hear them;
I, the God of Israel, will not [u]forsake them.
18 I will open [v]rivers in desolate heights,
And fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the [w]wilderness a pool of water,
And the dry land springs of water.
19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree,
The myrtle and the oil tree;
I will set in the [x]desert the cypress tree *and* the pine
And the box tree together,

41:2 ***one from the east.*** This refers to Cyrus, king of Persia (559–530 B.C.; see 46:11).

41:4 ***first . . . last.*** The Lord also refers to Himself as the first and last in Revelation 22:13, when He is speaking to the apostle John of the things that will happen at the end of the age. This description speaks of His sovereignty over all time.

41:14 ***Redeemer.*** For Israel, the redeemer was the family protector of distressed relatives, who could avenge murder (Num. 35:19) and redeem indentured slaves (Lev. 25:47–49). When the Lord is called the Redeemer, the title highlights His zeal to defend, protect, and purchase back His people (49:26).

41:16 ***winnow them.*** As threshed grain is tossed in the air or "winnowed" to separate the chaff, so the victorious people of God would be able to "blow away" their enemies.

41:1 [a] Zech. 2:13 [b] Is. 1:18 **41:2** [c] Is. 46:11 [d] Is. 45:1, 13 **41:4** [e] Is. 41:26 [f] Rev. 1:8, 17; 22:13 [g] Is. 43:10; 44:6 **41:6** [h] Is. 40:19 **41:7** [i] Is. 44:13 [j] Is. 40:19 [k] Is. 40:20 **41:8** [l] Deut. 7:6; 10:15 [m] James 2:23 **41:10** [n] Is. 41:13, 14; 43:5 [o] [Deut. 31:6] **41:11** [p] Zech. 12:3 **41:14** [q] Job 25:6 **41:15** [r] Mic. 4:13 **41:16** [s] Jer. 51:2 [t] Is. 45:25 **41:17** [u] Rom. 11:2 **41:18** [v] Is. 35:6, 7; 43:19; 44:3 [w] Ps. 107:35 **41:19** [x] Is. 35:1

20 [y]That they may see and know,
And consider and understand together,
That the hand of the LORD has done this,
And the Holy One of Israel has created it.

The Futility of Idols

21 "Present your case," says the LORD.
"Bring forth your strong *reasons*," says the [z]King of Jacob.
22 "Let[a] them bring forth and show us what will happen;
Let them show the [b]former things, what they *were*,
That we may consider them,
And know the latter end of them;
Or declare to us things to come.
23 [c]Show the things that are to come hereafter,
That we may know that you *are* gods;
Yes, [d]do good or do evil,
That we may be dismayed and see *it* together.
24 Indeed [e]you *are* nothing,
And your work *is* nothing;
He who chooses you *is* an abomination.

25 "I have raised up one from the north,
And he shall come;
From the rising of the sun [f]he shall call on My name;
[g]And he shall come against princes as *though* mortar,
As the potter treads clay.
26 [h]Who has declared from the beginning, that we may know?
And former times, that we may say, '*He is* righteous'?
Surely *there is* no one who shows,
Surely *there is* no one who declares,
Surely *there is* no one who hears your words.
27 [i]The first time [j]*I said* to Zion,
'Look, there they are!'
And I will give to Jerusalem one who brings good tidings.
28 [k]For I looked, and *there was* no man;
I looked among them, but *there was* no counselor,
Who, when I asked of them, could answer a word.
29 [l]Indeed they *are* all worthless;*
Their works *are* nothing;
Their molded images *are* wind and confusion.

The Servant of the LORD

42 "Behold! [a]My Servant whom I uphold,
My Elect One *in whom* My soul [b]delights!
[c]I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.
2 He will not cry out, nor raise *His voice*,
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.
3 A bruised reed He will not break,
And smoking flax He will not quench;
He will bring forth justice for truth.
4 He will not fail nor be discouraged,
Till He has established justice in the earth;
[d]And the coastlands shall wait for His law."

5 Thus says God the LORD,
[e]Who created the heavens and stretched them out,
Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it,
[f]Who gives breath to the people on it,
And spirit to those who walk on it:
6 "I,[g] the LORD, have called You in righteousness,
And will hold Your hand;
I will keep You [h]and give You as a covenant to the people,
As [i]a light to the Gentiles,
7 [j]To open blind eyes,
To [k]bring out prisoners from the prison,
Those who sit in [l]darkness from the prison house.
8 I *am* the LORD, that *is* My name;
And My [m]glory I will not give to another,
Nor My praise to carved images.

* **41:29** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls, Syriac, and Targum read *nothing*; Septuagint omits the first line.

41:21 ***Present your case.*** The Lord is addressing the idols in this passage. He is pointing out that only the Lord can tell the past or the future; He challenges the idols to prove themselves, but they cannot.

41:24 ***abomination.*** An abomination is something that causes revulsion. If the Lord regards idol worshipers as an abomination, we should too.

41:25 ***from the north.*** The conquest of Media by Cyrus (550 B.C.) made him master of the territories north of Babylon. Cyrus did not personally know God (45:4), but he nevertheless called on God's name when he released the exiles (2 Chr. 36:23; Ezra 1:1–4).

42:1 ***My Servant.*** The Lord formally presents His servant. This title is identified with Jesus Christ in the New Testament. This is the beginning of the first song of the Suffering Servant (vv. 1–13).

42:3 ***bruised reed . . . smoking flax.*** The Servant will restore that which is broken; He will not break or snuff out the needy.

42:6 ***covenant.*** The Servant will institute a new covenant binding Israel to the Lord (49:8). The prophets refer to this new covenant as a "covenant of peace" (54:10; Ezek. 34:25); an "everlasting covenant" (which

41:20 [y] Job 12:9 **41:21** [z] Is. 43:15 **41:22** [a] Is. 45:21 [b] Is. 43:9 **41:23** [c] [John 13:19] [d] Jer. 10:5 **41:24** [e] [1 Cor. 8:4] **41:25** [f] Ezra 1:2 [g] Is. 41:2 **41:26** [h] Is. 43:9 **41:27** [i] Is. 41:4 [j] Is. 40:9 **41:28** [k] Is. 63:5 **41:29** [l] Is. 41:24 **42:1** [a] [Phil. 2:7] [b] Matt. 3:17; 17:5 [c] [Is. 11:2] **42:4** [d] [Gen. 49:10] **42:5** [e] Zech. 12:1 [f] Acts 17:25 **42:6** [g] Is. 43:1 [h] Is. 49:8 [i] Luke 2:32 **42:7** [j] Is. 35:5 [k] Luke 4:18 [l] Is. 9:2 **42:8** [m] Is. 48:11

9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
And new things I declare;
Before they spring forth I tell you of them."

Praise to the LORD

10 [n]Sing to the LORD a new song,
And His praise from the ends of the earth,
[o]You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it,
You coastlands and you inhabitants of them!
11 Let the wilderness and its cities lift up *their voice,*
The villages *that* Kedar inhabits.
Let the inhabitants of Sela sing,
Let them shout from the top of the mountains.
12 Let them give glory to the LORD,
And declare His praise in the coastlands.
13 The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man;
He shall stir up *His* zeal like a man of war.
He shall cry out, [p]yes, shout aloud;
He shall prevail against His enemies.

Promise of the LORD's Help

14 "I have held My peace a long time,
I have been still and restrained Myself.
Now I will cry like a woman in labor,
I will pant and gasp at once.
15 I will lay waste the mountains and hills,
And dry up all their vegetation;
I will make the rivers coastlands,
And I will dry up the pools.
16 I will bring the blind by a way they did not know;
I will lead them in paths they have not known.
I will make darkness light before them,
And crooked places straight.
These things I will do for them,
And not forsake them.
17 They shall be [q]turned back,
They shall be greatly ashamed,
Who trust in carved images,
Who say to the molded images,
'You *are* our gods.'
18 "Hear, you deaf;
And look, you blind, that you may see.
19 [r]Who *is* blind but My servant,
Or deaf as My messenger *whom* I send?
Who *is* blind as *he who is* perfect,
And blind as the LORD's servant?
20 Seeing many things, [s]but you do not observe;
Opening the ears, but he does not hear."

Israel's Obstinate Disobedience

21 The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake;
He will exalt the law and make *it* honorable.
22 But this *is* a people robbed and plundered;
All of them are snared in holes,
And they are hidden in prison houses;
They are for prey, and no one delivers;
For plunder, and no one says, "Restore!"
23 Who among you will give ear to this?
Who will listen and hear for the time to come?
24 Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers?
Was it not the LORD,
He against whom we have sinned?
[t]For they would not walk in His ways,
Nor were they obedient to His law.
25 Therefore He has poured on him the fury of His anger
And the strength of battle;
[u]It has set him on fire all around,
[v]Yet he did not know;
And it burned him,
Yet he did not take *it* to [w]heart.

The Redeemer of Israel

43 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob,
And He who formed you, O Israel:
"Fear not, [a]for I have redeemed you;
[b]I have called *you* by your name;
You *are* Mine.

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is also associated with the Davidic covenant, 55:3); a "new covenant" (Jer. 31:31–34); and most often simply as covenant. ***people.*** The "people" refers to the Gentiles.

42:17 ***molded images.*** Why is idolatry so terrible in God's sight? Several reasons may be given. It displays a total ignorance of the true nature and being of the Creator. He is invisible, eternal, all-knowing, and all-present Spirit, without limitations. Idolatry usually reduces the concept of God to an ugly metal or wooden object, which is almost always perceived as evil and bloodthirsty, selfish and capricious. Finally, idolatry provides absolutely no indication of those characteristics closest to God's heart—His love, mercy, grace, and holiness.

42:18–25 ***Hear, you deaf.*** This prophecy, justifying the exile as punishment, consists of two parts. First, the Lord addresses the fact that the people did not listen to Him.

42:24 ***sinned.*** The second part of the prophecy addresses the sin of the exiles, which was the reason for the punishment.

43:1 ***thus says the LORD.*** This statement emphasizes the authority of the words that will follow.

42:10 [n] Ps. 33:3; 40:3; 98:1 [o] Ps. 107:23 **42:13** [p] Is. 31:4 **42:17** [q] Ps. 97:7 **42:19** [r] [John 9:39, 41] **42:20** [s] Rom. 2:21 **42:24** [t] Is. 65:2 **42:25** [u] 2 Kin. 25:9 [v] Hos. 7:9 [w] Is. 29:13 **43:1** [a] Is. 43:5; 44:6 [b] Is. 42:6; 45:4

2 [c]When you pass through the waters, [d]I *will be* with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.
When you [e]walk through the fire, you shall not be burned,
Nor shall the flame scorch you.
3 For I *am* the LORD your God,
The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;
[f]I gave Egypt for your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in your place.
4 Since you were precious in My sight,
You have been honored,
And I have [g]loved you;
Therefore I will give men for you,
And people for your life.
5 [h]Fear not, for I *am* with you;
I will bring your descendants from the east,
And [i]gather you from the west;
6 I will say to the [j]north, 'Give them up!'
And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!'
Bring My sons from afar,
And My daughters from the ends of the earth—
7 Everyone who is [k]called by My name,
Whom [l]I have created for My glory;
I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

8 [m]Bring out the blind people who have eyes,
And the [n]deaf who have ears.
9 Let all the nations be gathered together,
And let the people be assembled.
[o]Who among them can declare this,
And show us former things?
Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified;
Or let them hear and say, "*It is* truth."
10 "You[p] *are* My witnesses," says the LORD,
[q]"And My servant whom I have chosen,
That you may know and [r]believe Me,
And understand that I *am* He.
Before Me there was no God formed,
Nor shall there be after Me.
11 I, *even* I, [s]*am* the LORD,
And besides Me *there is* no savior.
12 I have declared and saved,
I have proclaimed,
And *there was* no [t]foreign *god* among you;
[u]Therefore you *are* My witnesses,"
Says the LORD, "that I *am* God.
13 [v]Indeed before the day *was,* I *am* He;
And *there is* no one who can deliver out of My hand;
I work, and who will [w]reverse it?"

14 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer,
The Holy One of Israel:
"For your sake I will send to Babylon,
And bring them all down as fugitives—
The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships.
15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One,
The Creator of Israel, your [x]King."

16 Thus says the LORD, who [y]makes a way in the sea
And a [z]path through the mighty waters,
17 Who [a]brings forth the chariot and horse,
The army and the power
(They shall lie down together, they shall not rise;
They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick):
18 "Do[b] not remember the former things,
Nor consider the things of old.
19 Behold, I will do a [c]new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
[d]I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.
20 The beast of the field will honor Me,
The jackals and the ostriches,
Because [e]I give waters in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert,
To give drink to My people, My chosen.
21 [f]This people I have formed for Myself;
They shall declare My [g]praise.

Pleading with Unfaithful Israel

22 "But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob;
And you [h]have been weary of Me, O Israel.
23 [i]You have not brought Me the sheep for your burnt offerings,
Nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.
I have not caused you to serve with grain offerings,
Nor wearied you with incense.

43:14 ***Thus says the LORD.*** The same phrase (v. 1) is used to emphasize the ultimate source of this prophecy, God Himself. ***Redeemer.*** The Lord is described as Redeemer because He zealously defends, protects, and purchases back His people (41:14).
43:22 ***But you.*** After the splendid and glorious declarations of His faithfulness, the Lord addresses the unfaithfulness of His people.

43:2 [c] [Ps. 66:12; 91:3] [d] [Deut. 31:6] [e] Dan. 3:25 **43:3** [f] [Prov. 11:8; 21:18] **43:4** [g] Is. 63:9 **43:5** [h] Is. 41:10; 44:2 [i] Is. 54:7 **43:6** [j] Is. 49:12 **43:7** [k] James 2:7 [l] [2 Cor. 5:17] **43:8** [m] Ezek. 12:2 [n] Is. 29:18 **43:9** [o] Is. 41:21, 22, 26 **43:10** [p] Is. 44:8 [q] Is. 55:4 [r] Is. 41:4; 44:6 **43:11** [s] Hos. 13:4 **43:12** [t] Deut. 32:16 [u] Is. 44:8 **43:13** [v] Ps. 90:2 [w] Job 9:12 **43:15** [x] Is. 41:20, 21 **43:16** [y] Ex. 14:16, 21, 22 [z] Josh. 3:13 **43:17** [a] Ex. 14:4–9, 25 **43:18** [b] Jer. 16:14 **43:19** [c] [2 Cor. 5:17] [d] Ex. 17:6 **43:20** [e] Is. 48:21 **43:21** [f] Ps. 102:18 [g] Jer. 13:11 **43:22** [h] Mal. 1:13; 3:14 **43:23** [i] Amos 5:25

24 You have bought Me no sweet cane
with money,
Nor have you satisfied Me with the fat
of your sacrifices;
But you have burdened Me with your
sins,
You have [j]wearied Me with your
iniquities.

25 "I, *even* I, *am* He who [k]blots out your
transgressions [l]for My own sake;
[m]And I will not remember your sins.
26 Put Me in remembrance;
Let us contend together;
State your *case,* that you may be
acquitted.
27 Your first father sinned,
And your mediators have transgressed
against Me.
28 Therefore I will profane the princes of
the sanctuary;
[n]I will give Jacob to the curse,
And Israel to reproaches.

God's Blessing on Israel

44 "Yet hear now, O Jacob My servant,
And Israel whom I have chosen.
2 Thus says the LORD who made you
And formed you from the womb, *who*
will help you:
'Fear not, O Jacob My servant;
And you, Jeshurun, whom I have
chosen.
3 For I will pour water on him who is
thirsty,
And floods on the dry ground;
I will pour My Spirit on your
descendants,
And My blessing on your offspring;
4 They will spring up among the grass
Like willows by the watercourses.'
5 One will say, 'I *am* the LORD's';
Another will call *himself* by the name
of Jacob;
Another will write *with* his hand, 'The
LORD's,'
And name *himself* by the name of
Israel.

There Is No Other God

6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel,
And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
[a]'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last;
Besides Me *there is* no God.
7 And [b]who can proclaim as I do?
Then let him declare it and set it in
order for Me,
Since I appointed the ancient people.
And the things that are coming and
shall come,
Let them show these to them.
8 Do not fear, nor be afraid;
[c]Have I not told you from that time, and
declared *it?*
[d]You *are* My witnesses.
Is there a God besides Me?
Indeed [e]*there is* no other Rock;
I know not *one.*'"

Idolatry Is Foolishness

9 [f]Those who make an image, all of them
are useless,
And their precious things shall not
profit;
They *are* their own witnesses;
[g]They neither see nor know, that they
may be ashamed.
10 Who would form a god or mold an
image
[h]*That* profits him nothing?
11 Surely all his companions would be
[i]ashamed;
And the workmen, they *are* mere men.
Let them all be gathered together,
Let them stand up;
Yet they shall fear,
They shall be ashamed together.

12 [j]The blacksmith with the tongs works
one in the coals,
Fashions it with hammers,
And works it with the strength of his
arms.
Even so, he is hungry, and his strength
fails;
He drinks no water and is faint.

13 The craftsman stretches out *his* rule,
He marks one out with chalk;
He fashions it with a plane,
He marks it out with the compass,
And makes it like the figure of a man,
According to the beauty of a man, that
it may remain in the house.
14 He cuts down cedars for himself,
And takes the cypress and the oak;
He secures *it* for himself among the
trees of the forest.
He plants a pine, and the rain
nourishes *it.*

43:25 ***for My own sake.*** The Lord chooses to save and forgive. This arises out of His own character (37:35; 42:21; 48:9,11).

44:2 ***Jeshurun.*** Jeshurun, meaning "upright one," is a poetic word for the nation of Israel (Deut. 32:15).

44:6 ***King of Israel.*** For background, read Psalm 99, which begins by declaring, "The LORD reigns."

44:8 ***You are My witnesses.*** The people of Israel had already witnessed great miracles on their behalf (43:10).

44:9–20 ***Those who make an image.*** This passage skillfully displays the utter absurdity of trusting in idols. Idolatry is a source of shame (v. 11), and it is caused by a deceived heart (v. 20). This is a passage to remember and to come back to, for idolatry was a continual snare to the Israelites. We need to remember in our modern age that we are not immune to this sin; it is the Second Commandment, the reminder that nothing must come between us and our relationship to God.

43:24 [j] Is. 1:14; 7:13 **43:25** [k] Jer. 50:20 [l] Ezek. 36:22 [m] Is. 1:18 **43:28** [n] Dan. 9:11 **44:6** [a] Is. 41:4 **44:7** [b] Is. 41:4, 22, 26 **44:8** [c] Is. 41:22 [d] Is. 43:10, 12 [e] 1 Sam. 2:2 **44:9** [f] Is. 41:24 [g] Ps. 115:4 **44:10** [h] Hab. 2:18 **44:11** [i] Ps. 97:7 **44:12** [j] Jer. 10:3–5

15 Then it shall be for a man to burn,
For he will take some of it and warm himself;
Yes, he kindles *it* and bakes bread;
Indeed he makes a god and worships *it;*
He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it.
16 He burns half of it in the fire;
With this half he eats meat;
He roasts a roast, and is satisfied.
He even warms *himself* and says,
"Ah! I am warm,
I have seen the fire."
17 And the rest of it he makes into a god,
His carved image.
He falls down before it and worships *it,*
Prays to it and says,
"Deliver me, for you *are* my god!"

18 [k]They do not know nor understand;
For [l]He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see,
And their hearts, so that they cannot [m]understand.
19 And no one [n]considers in his heart,
Nor *is there* knowledge nor understanding to say,
"I have burned half of it in the fire,
Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals;
I have roasted meat and eaten *it;*
And shall I make the rest of it an abomination?
Shall I fall down before a block of wood?"
20 He feeds on ashes;
[o]A deceived heart has turned him aside;
And he cannot deliver his soul,
Nor say, "*Is there* not a [p]lie in my right hand?"

Israel Is Not Forgotten

21 "Remember these, O Jacob,
And Israel, for you *are* My servant;
I have formed you, you *are* My servant;
O Israel, you will not be [q]forgotten by Me!
22 [r]I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions,
And like a cloud, your sins.
Return to Me, for [s]I have redeemed you."

23 [t]Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done *it!*
Shout, you lower parts of the earth;
Break forth into singing, you mountains,
O forest, and every tree in it!
For the LORD has redeemed Jacob,
And [u]glorified Himself in Israel.

Judah Will Be Restored

24 Thus says the LORD, [v]your Redeemer,
And [w]He who formed you from the womb:
"I *am* the LORD, who makes all *things,*
[x]Who stretches out the heavens all alone,
Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself;
25 Who [y]frustrates the signs [z]of the babblers,
And drives diviners mad;
Who turns wise men backward,
[a]And makes their knowledge foolishness;
26 [b]Who confirms the word of His servant,
And performs the counsel of His messengers;
Who says to Jerusalem, 'You shall be inhabited,'
To the cities of Judah, 'You shall be built,'
And I will raise up her waste places;
27 [c]Who says to the deep, 'Be dry!
And I will dry up your rivers';
28 Who says of [d]Cyrus, '*He is* My shepherd,
And he shall perform all My pleasure,
Saying to Jerusalem, [e]"You shall be built,"
And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."'

44:22 ***blotted out.*** The idea of total forgiveness of sins is also found in 40:2 and 43:25.
44:23 ***glorified Himself.*** When He saves, the Lord demonstrates to the world His mercy and His power and His glory.
44:24 ***Thus says the LORD.*** Because the Lord says it, it will come to pass.
44:25 ***diviners.*** This term refers to people who attempt to foretell the future through occult practices. They are often mentioned along with other practitioners of the occult—all of whom were forbidden in Israel (Deut. 18:10–22). Diviners brought trouble on themselves, and on their nations as well (Deut. 18:10; 2 Kin. 17:17–18; Mic. 3:6–7).
44:28 ***Cyrus.*** Here, Isaiah mentions by name the king of Persia who would allow the Israelites to return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1–4). He was a chosen servant of God, even though he was not an Israelite. Isaiah's prophecy was made more than 150 years before it was fulfilled.

44:18 [k] Is. 45:20 [l] Is. 6:9, 10; 29:10 [m] Jer. 10:14 **44:19** [n] Is. 46:8 **44:20** [o] 2 Thess. 2:11 [p] Rom. 1:25 **44:21** [q] Is. 49:15 **44:22** [r] Is. 43:25 [s] 1 Cor. 6:20 **44:23** [t] Ps. 69:34 [u] Is. 49:3; 60:21 **44:24** [v] Is. 43:14 [w] Is. 43:1 [x] Job 9:8 **44:25** [y] Is. 47:13 [z] Jer. 50:36 [a] 1 Cor. 1:20, 27 **44:26** [b] Zech. 1:6 **44:27** [c] Jer. 50:38; 51:36 **44:28** [d] Ezra 1:1 [e] Ezra 6:7

Cyrus, God's Instrument

45 "Thus says the LORD to His anointed,
To [a]Cyrus, whose [b]right hand I have held—
[c]To subdue nations before him
And [d]loose the armor of kings,
To open before him the double doors,
So that the gates will not be shut:
2 'I will go before you
[e]And make the crooked places* straight;
[f]I will break in pieces the gates of bronze
And cut the bars of iron.
3 I will give you the treasures of darkness
And hidden riches of secret places,
[g]That you may know that I, the LORD,
Who [h]call *you* by your name,
Am the God of Israel.
4 For [i]Jacob My servant's sake,
And Israel My elect,
I have even called you by your name;
I have named you, though you have not known Me.
5 I [j]*am* the LORD, and [k]*there is* no other;
There is no God besides Me.
[l]I will gird you, though you have not known Me,
6 [m]That they may [n]know from the rising of the sun to its setting
That *there is* none besides Me.
I *am* the LORD, and *there is* no other;
7 I form the light and create darkness,
I make peace and [o]create calamity;
I, the LORD, do all these *things*.'
8 "Rain[p] down, you heavens, from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness;
Let the earth open, let them bring forth salvation,
And let righteousness spring up together.
I, the LORD, have created it.
9 "Woe to him who strives with [q]his Maker!
Let the potsherd *strive* with the potsherds of the earth!
[r]Shall the clay say to him who forms it,
'What are you making?'
Or shall your handiwork *say*, 'He has no hands'?
10 Woe to him who says to *his* father,
'What are you begetting?'
Or to the woman, 'What have you brought forth?'"
11 Thus says the LORD,
The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker:
[s]"Ask Me of things to come concerning [t]My sons;
And concerning [u]the work of My hands, you command Me.
12 [v]I have made the earth,
And [w]created man on it.
I—My hands—stretched out the heavens,
And [x]all their host I have commanded.
13 [y]I have raised him up in righteousness,
And I will direct all his ways;
He shall [z]build My city
And let My exiles go free,
[a]Not for price nor reward,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

The LORD, the Only Savior

14 Thus says the LORD:

[b]"The labor of Egypt and merchandise of Cush
And of the Sabeans, men of stature,
Shall come over to you, and they shall be yours;

* **45:2** Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint read *mountains;* Targum reads *I will trample down the walls;* Vulgate reads *I will humble the great ones of the earth.*

45:3 ***treasures of darkness.*** These treasures are an allusion to the fabled wealth of Sardis captured by Cyrus in 546 B.C. ***Who call you by your name.*** The Lord specifically named Cyrus and appointed his work before he became king, and even before he was born. Isaiah was ministering from approximately 740 to 701 B.C., which was at least 150 years before Cyrus became prominent. The Lord picked out Cyrus, but He picked out each of us, too, to do good works which He had planned beforehand for us to do (Eph. 2:10).
45:8 ***have created it.*** In the Middle East, pagan people commonly believed that the fertility of the earth and maintenance of the social order depended on the king's right relationship with a deity. Isaiah was proclaiming the Lord's clear statement that it is the Lord alone who made the earth and blesses it with rain and with righteousness.
45:9 ***potsherds.*** The ultimate act of insanity committed by the human soul is unfaithfulness. As the prophet Isaiah shows, how inconceivable and ridiculous it would be for a simple piece of pottery to lash out at the craftsman. And yet, that was what Israel had consistently done from the exodus of Egypt to the destruction of the second temple by Titus in A.D. 70. Jonah was a classic example of unfaithfulness. In the Book of Jonah, all nature spontaneously obeyed its Creator. The ocean churned, the fish appeared, the gourd grew, the worm ate, and the east wind blew at the command of God. The only object in that narrative that dared disobey was Jonah the prophet. What law of logic would allow a finite and sinful creature to brazenly speak out against the infinite and sovereign Creator of all things? (Compare Romans 9:20.)
45:13 ***him.*** That is, Cyrus.
45:14 ***Shall come over to you, and they shall be yours.*** The "you" and "yours" are both feminine singular, referring to the Daughter of Zion.

45:1 [a] Is. 44:28 [b] Is. 41:13 [c] Dan. 5:30 [d] Job 12:21 **45:2** [e] Is. 40:4 [f] Ps. 107:16 **45:3** [g] Is. 41:23 [h] Ex. 33:12 **45:4** [i] Is. 44:1 **45:5** [j] Deut. 4:35; 32:39 [k] Is. 45:14, 18 [l] Ps. 18:32 **45:6** [m] Mal. 1:11 [n] [Is. 11:9; 52:10] **45:7** [o] Amos 3:6 **45:8** [p] Ps. 85:11 **45:9** [q] Is. 64:8 [r] Jer. 18:6 **45:11** [s] Is. 8:19 [t] Jer. 31:9 [u] Is. 29:23; 60:21; 64:8 **45:12** [v] Is. 42:5 [w] Gen. 1:26 [x] Gen. 2:1 **45:13** [y] Is. 41:2 [z] 2 Chr. 36:22 [a] [Rom. 3:24] **45:14** [b] Zech. 8:22, 23

They shall walk behind you,
They shall come over [c]in chains;
And they shall bow down to you.
They will make supplication to you,
saying, [d]'Surely God *is* in you,
And *there is* no other;
[e]*There is* no other God.'"

15 Truly You *are* God, [f]who hide Yourself,
O God of Israel, the Savior!
16 They shall be [g]ashamed
And also disgraced, all of them;
They shall go in confusion together,
Who are makers of idols.
17 [h]*But* Israel shall be saved by the LORD
With an [i]everlasting salvation;
You shall not be ashamed or [j]disgraced
Forever and ever.

18 For thus says the LORD,
[k]Who created the heavens,
Who is God,
Who formed the earth and made it,
Who has established it,
Who did not create it in vain,
Who formed it to be [l]inhabited:
[m]"I *am* the LORD, and *there is* no other.
19 I have not spoken in [n]secret,
In a dark place of the earth;
I did not say to the seed of Jacob,
'Seek Me in vain';
[o]I, the LORD, speak righteousness,
I declare things that are right.

20 "Assemble yourselves and come;
Draw near together,
You *who have* escaped from the nations.
[p]They have no knowledge,
Who carry the wood of their carved image,
And pray to a god *that* cannot save.
21 Tell and bring forth *your case;*
Yes, let them take counsel together.
[q]Who has declared this from ancient time?
Who has told it from that time?
Have not I, the LORD?
[r]And *there is* no other God besides Me,
A just God and a Savior;
There is none besides Me.

22 "Look to Me, and be saved,
[s]All you ends of the earth!
For I *am* God, and *there is* no other.
23 [t]I have sworn by Myself;
The word has gone out of My mouth *in* righteousness,
And shall not return,
That to Me every [u]knee shall bow,
[v]Every tongue shall take an oath.
24 He shall say,
'Surely in the LORD I have [w]righteousness and strength.
To Him *men* shall come,
And [x]all shall be ashamed
Who are incensed against Him.
25 [y]In the LORD all the descendants of Israel
Shall be justified, and [z]shall glory.'"

Dead Idols and the Living God

46 Bel [a]bows down, Nebo stoops;
Their idols were on the beasts and on the cattle.
Your carriages *were* heavily loaded,
[b]A burden to the weary *beast*.
2 They stoop, they bow down together;
They could not deliver the burden,
[c]But have themselves gone into captivity.

3 "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob,
And all the remnant of the house of Israel,
[d]Who have been upheld *by Me* from birth,
Who have been carried from the womb:
4 Even to *your* old age, [e]I *am* He,
And *even* to gray hairs [f]I will carry *you!*
I have made, and I will bear;
Even I will carry, and will deliver *you*.

45:19 ***in secret . . . dark.*** The diviners pronounced their mysterious and ambiguous oracles in secret and dark places. The Lord's prophets proclaimed the truth openly to all who would listen.

45:23 ***I have sworn by Myself.*** The Lord's promise to Abraham was sworn by Himself (Gen. 22:16; Heb. 6:13), and whatever God promises will come to pass, for He cannot lie. The certainty of the Word of the Lord is emphasized strongly in the Book of Isaiah (40:8). ***to Me every knee shall bow.*** This promise will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Rom. 14:11; 1 Cor. 15:24–25; Phil. 2:10–11).

45:24–25 ***justified.*** God breaks the stranglehold of nations to secure the release of His people from captivity. In the same way, God also breaks the stranglehold of sin to release His people from spiritual bondage. He does so by pouring forth righteousness through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. This is the centerpiece of God's salvation, which is worldwide in its scope. It is the only ground for acceptance by God, the only foundation for fellowship with God, and the only platform of service to God. Those who embrace it find that they are released from sin's guilt and that they are also given strength to have victory over sin. No wonder this all evokes jubilant praise!

46:1 ***Bel . . . Nebo.*** Bel, meaning "Lord," was a title of Marduk, Babylon's chief deity. Nebo, Marduk's son, was the god of fate, writing, and wisdom.

45:14 [c] Ps. 149:8 [d] 1 Cor. 14:25 [e] Is. 45:5 **45:15** [f] Ps. 44:24 **45:16** [g] Is. 44:11 **45:17** [h] Is. 26:4 [i] Is. 51:6 [j] Is. 29:22 **45:18** [k] Is. 42:5 [l] Ps. 115:16 [m] Is. 45:5 **45:19** [n] Deut. 30:11 [o] Ps. 19:8 **45:20** [p] Is. 44:9; 46:7 **45:21** [q] Is. 41:22; 43:9 [r] Is. 44:8 **45:22** [s] Ps. 22:27; 65:5 **45:23** [t] [Heb. 6:13] [u] Rom. 14:11 [v] Deut. 6:13 **45:24** [w] [1 Cor. 1:30] [x] Is. 41:11 **45:25** [y] Is. 45:17 [z] 1 Cor. 1:31 **46:1** [a] Jer. 50:2 [b] Jer. 10:5 **46:2** [c] Jer. 48:7 **46:3** [d] Ps. 71:6 **46:4** [e] Mal. 3:6 [f] Ps. 48:14

5 "To[g] whom will you liken Me, and make
Me equal
And compare Me, that we should be
alike?
6 [h]They lavish gold out of the bag,
And weigh silver on the scales;
They hire a [i]goldsmith, and he makes
it a god;
They prostrate themselves, yes, they
worship.
7 [j]They bear it on the shoulder, they
carry it
And set it in its place, and it stands;
From its place it shall not move.
Though [k]*one* cries out to it, yet it
cannot answer
Nor save him out of his trouble.

8 "Remember this, and show yourselves
men;
[l]Recall to mind, O you transgressors.
9 [m]Remember the former things of old,
For I *am* God, and [n]*there is* no other;
I am God, and *there is* none like Me,
10 [o]Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times *things* that are
not *yet* done,
Saying, [p]'My counsel shall stand,
And I will do all My pleasure,'
11 Calling a bird of prey [q]from the east,
The man [r]who executes My counsel,
from a far country.
Indeed [s]I have spoken *it;*
I will also bring it to pass.
I have purposed *it;*
I will also do it.

12 "Listen to Me, you [t]stubborn-hearted,
[u]Who *are* far from righteousness:
13 [v]I bring My righteousness near, it shall
not be far off;
My salvation [w]shall not linger.
And I will place [x]salvation in Zion,
For Israel My glory.

The Humiliation of Babylon

47 "Come [a]down and [b]sit in the dust,
O virgin daughter of [c]Babylon;
Sit on the ground without a throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans!
For you shall no more be called
Tender and delicate.
2 [d]Take the millstones and grind meal.
Remove your veil,
Take off the skirt,
Uncover the thigh,
Pass through the rivers.
3 [e]Your nakedness shall be uncovered,
Yes, your shame will be seen;
[f]I will take vengeance,
And I will not arbitrate with a man."

4 *As for* [g]our Redeemer, the LORD of
hosts *is* His name,
The Holy One of Israel.

5 "Sit in [h]silence, and go into darkness,
O daughter of the Chaldeans;
[i]For you shall no longer be called
The Lady of Kingdoms.
6 [j]I was angry with My people;
[k]I have profaned My inheritance,
And given them into your hand.
You showed them no mercy;
[l]On the elderly you laid your yoke very
heavily.
7 And you said, 'I shall be [m]a lady forever,'
So that you did not [n]take these *things*
to heart,
[o]Nor remember the latter end of them.

8 "Therefore hear this now, *you who are*
given to pleasures,
Who dwell securely,
Who say in your heart, 'I *am*, and
there is no one else besides me;
I shall not sit *as* a widow,
Nor shall I know the loss of children';
9 But these two *things* shall come to you
[p]In a moment, in one day:
The loss of children, and widowhood.
They shall come upon you in their
fullness
Because of the multitude of your
sorceries,
For the great abundance of your
enchantments.

10 "For you have trusted in your wickedness;
You have said, 'No one [q]sees me';
Your wisdom and your knowledge
have warped you;
And you have said in your heart,
'I *am*, and *there is* no one else besides
me.'

46:11 ***a bird of prey from the east.*** The bird of prey refers to Cyrus (41:2) and to the speed and power of his conquests.

47:2 ***grind meal.*** Grinding meal was usually a job for female slaves (Ex. 11:5). ***Uncover the thigh.*** This phrase suggests doing menial labor with overtones of the shame of indecent exposure. A woman who was doing heavy labor may have needed more freedom of movement than was possible without shortening her skirts.

47:3 ***nakedness.*** Nakedness indicates disgrace, impropriety, lack of dignity, and vulnerability (Gen. 9:22–23).

47:6 ***You showed them no mercy.*** Babylon's cruel abuse of Israel when the Lord had given them into Babylon's hand would be avenged, as in the case of the Assyrians (10:1–19; 49:25). When God chooses to punish, He is never pleased with a bystander who cheers over the downfall of another.

47:10 ***trusted in your wickedness.*** The selfish pride of the wicked is based in part on believing that there is not an all-knowing, all-seeing God in the universe.

46:5 [g] Is. 40:18, 25 **46:6** [h] Is. 40:19; 41:6 [i] Is. 44:12 **46:7** [j] Jer. 10:5 [k] Is. 45:20 **46:8** [l] Is. 44:19 **46:9** [m] Deut. 32:7 [n] Is. 45:5, 21 **46:10** [o] Is. 45:21; 48:3 [p] Ps. 33:11 **46:11** [q] Is. 41:2, 25 [r] Is. 44:28 [s] Num. 23:19 **46:12** [t] Ps. 76:5 [u] [Rom. 10:3] **46:13** [v] [Rom. 1:17] [w] Hab. 2:3 [x] Is. 62:11 **47:1** [a] Jer. 48:18 [b] Is. 3:26 [c] Jer. 25:12; 50:1—51:64 **47:2** [d] Ex. 11:5 **47:3** [e] Is. 3:17; 20:4 [f] [Rom. 12:19] **47:4** [g] Jer. 50:34 **47:5** [h] 1 Sam. 2:9 [i] [Dan. 2:37] **47:6** [j] 2 Sam. 24:14 [k] Is. 43:28 [l] Deut. 28:49, 50 **47:7** [m] Rev. 18:7 [n] Is. 42:25; 46:8 [o] Deut. 32:29 **47:9** [p] 1 Thess. 5:3 **47:10** [q] Is. 29:15

11 Therefore evil shall come upon you;
You shall not know from where it arises.
And trouble shall fall upon you;
You will not be able to put it off.
And [r]desolation shall come upon you [s]suddenly,
Which you shall not know.

12 "Stand now with your enchantments
And the multitude of your sorceries,
In which you have labored from your youth—
Perhaps you will be able to profit,
Perhaps you will prevail.
13 [t]You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels;
Let now [u]the astrologers, the stargazers,
And the monthly prognosticators
Stand up and save you
From what shall come upon you.
14 Behold, they shall be [v]as stubble,
The fire shall [w]burn them;
They shall not deliver themselves
From the power of the flame;
It shall not *be* a coal to be warmed by,
Nor a fire to sit before!
15 Thus shall they be to you
With whom you have labored,
[x]Your merchants from your youth;
They shall wander each one to his quarter.
No one shall save you.

Israel Refined for God's Glory

48 "Hear this, O house of Jacob,
Who are called by the name of Israel,
And have come forth from the wellsprings of Judah;
Who swear by the name of the LORD,
And make mention of the God of Israel,
But [a]not in truth or in righteousness;
2 For they call themselves [b]after the holy city,
And [c]lean on the God of Israel;
The LORD of hosts *is* His name:

3 "I have [d]declared the former things from the beginning;
They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it.
Suddenly I did *them*, [e]and they came to pass.
4 Because I knew that you *were* obstinate,
And [f]your neck *was* an iron sinew,
And your brow bronze,
5 Even from the beginning I have declared *it* to you;
Before it came to pass I proclaimed *it* to you,
Lest you should say, 'My idol has done them,
And my carved image and my molded image
Have commanded them.'
6 "You have heard;
See all this.
And will you not declare *it?*
I have made you hear new things from this time,
Even hidden things, and you did not know them.
7 They are created now and not from the beginning;
And before this day you have not heard them,
Lest you should say, 'Of course I knew them.'
8 Surely you did not hear,
Surely you did not know;
Surely from long ago your ear was not opened.
For I knew that you would deal very treacherously,
And were called [g]a transgressor from the womb.

9 "For[h] My name's sake [i]I will defer My anger,
And *for* My praise I will restrain it from you,
So that I do not cut you off.
10 Behold, [j]I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tested you in the [k]furnace of affliction.
11 For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do *it;*
For [l]how should *My name* be profaned?
And [m]I will not give My glory to another.

God's Ancient Plan to Redeem Israel

12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob,
And Israel, My called:
I *am* He, [n]I *am* the [o]First,
I *am* also the Last.

47:12 ***Stand now.*** The admonition to "stand" is facetious. The sorcerers and astrologers have nothing real to offer a person or nation that is having trouble.

48:5 ***declared it to you.*** God told His people of events that would come to pass in the future so that they would know that it was He, and He alone, who controlled history.

48:6 ***new things . . . hidden things.*** God did not tell His people all that the future would unfold. He knew that, if they had possessed such knowledge, they would have misused that knowledge to the detriment of God's plan and themselves.

48:11 ***For My own sake.*** God's acts of mercy are His own initiative, springing from the depths of His mercy (37:35; 42:21; 43:25).

47:11 [r] 1 Thess. 5:3 [s] Is. 29:5 **47:13** [t] Is. 57:10 [u] Dan. 2:2, 10 **47:14** [v] Nah. 1:10 [w] Jer. 51:58 **47:15** [x] Rev. 18:11 **48:1** [a] Jer. 4:2; 5:2 **48:2** [b] Is. 52:1; 64:10 [c] Mic. 3:11 **48:3** [d] Is. 44:7, 8; 46:10 [e] Josh. 21:45 **48:4** [f] Deut. 31:27 **48:8** [g] Ps. 58:3 **48:9** [h] Ezek. 20:9, 14, 22, 44 [i] Ps. 78:38 **48:10** [j] Ps. 66:10 [k] Deut. 4:20 **48:11** [l] Ezek. 20:9 [m] Is. 42:8 **48:12** [n] Deut. 32:39 [o] [Rev. 22:13]

13 Indeed [p]My hand has laid the
foundation of the earth,
And My right hand has stretched out
the heavens;
When [q]I call to them,
They stand up together.

14 "All of you, assemble yourselves, and
hear!
Who among them has declared these
things?
[r]The LORD loves him;
[s]He shall do His pleasure on Babylon,
And His arm *shall be against* the
Chaldeans.

15 I, *even* I, have spoken;
Yes, [t]I have called him,
I have brought him, and his way will
prosper.

16 "Come near to Me, hear this:
[u]I have not spoken in secret from the
beginning;
From the time that it was, I *was* there.
And now [v]the Lord GOD and His Spirit
Have* sent Me."

17 Thus says [w]the LORD, your Redeemer,
The Holy One of Israel:
"I *am* the LORD your God,
Who teaches you to profit,
[x]Who leads you by the way you should go.

18 [y]Oh, that you had heeded My
commandments!
[z]Then your peace would have been like
a river,
And your righteousness like the waves
of the sea.

19 [a]Your descendants also would have
been like the sand,
And the offspring of your body like
the grains of sand;
His name would not have been cut off
Nor destroyed from before Me."

20 [b]Go forth from Babylon!
Flee from the Chaldeans!
With a voice of singing,
Declare, proclaim this,
Utter it to the end of the earth;
Say, "The LORD has [c]redeemed
His servant Jacob!"

21 And they [d]did not thirst
When He led them through the deserts;
He [e]caused the waters to flow from the
rock for them;
He also split the rock, and the waters
gushed out.

22 "*There*[f] *is* no peace," says the LORD, "for
the wicked."

The Servant, the Light to the Gentiles

49 "Listen, [a]O coastlands, to Me,
And take heed, you peoples from
afar!
[b]The LORD has called Me from the womb;
From the matrix of My mother He has
made mention of My name.

2 And He has made [c]My mouth like a
sharp sword;
[d]In the shadow of His hand He has
hidden Me,
And made Me [e]a polished shaft;
In His quiver He has hidden Me."

3 "And He said to me,
[f]'You *are* My servant, O Israel,
[g]In whom I will be glorified.'

4 [h]Then I said, 'I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for nothing
and in vain;
Yet surely my just reward *is* with the
LORD,
And my work with my God.'"

5 "And now the LORD says,
Who formed Me from the womb *to be*
His Servant,
To bring Jacob back to Him,
So that Israel [i]is gathered to Him*
(For I shall be glorious in the eyes of
the LORD,
And My God shall be My strength),

* **48:16** The Hebrew verb is singular. * **49:5** Qere, Dead Sea Scrolls, and Septuagint read *is gathered to Him;* Kethib reads *is not gathered.*

48:12 *Listen to Me.* This section (vv. 12–22) is directed to all Israel and encourages the unrighteous to participate in the Lord's redemption of the nation from Babylon.

48:16 *His Spirit.* One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to empower believers and their message. Isaiah recognized this task of the Spirit of God. The prophet had delivered unbelievable prophecies in a time when Assyria reigned supreme, speaking of a day when Babylon would replace the Assyrians. He even named the Persian King Cyrus, who would rescue Judah from Babylon. Knowing that these things were hard to believe, he urged the people to listen. He appealed to them on the basis that the Lord had sent him "and his Spirit." Isaiah's message was not simply the message of a man, but the Word of the Holy Spirit, the teacher and director of God's messengers.

48:20 *Declare.* By putting the command "declare" in the present tense, the future salvation is brought vividly into the present.

49:1–13 *Listen.* This second song of the Suffering Servant (42:1–13) consists of two parts: the Servant's soliloquy (vv. 1–6) and the Lord's oracles to Him (vv. 7–9). The song is followed by Isaiah's elaboration (vv. 9–12), and it concludes with a hymn of praise.

49:2 *mouth like a sharp sword.* The truth is "sharp." It cuts through lies and deception like a sharp sword (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16; 19:15).

49:5 *bring Jacob back.* The political mission of Cyrus to bring Jacob back from Babylon (44:28; 45:13) foreshadows the spiritually redemptive mission of the

48:13 [p] Ps. 102:25 [q] Is. 40:26 **48:14** [r] Is. 45:1 [s] Is. 44:28; 47:1–15 **48:15** [t] Is. 45:1, 2 **48:16** [u] Is. 45:19 [v] Zech. 2:8, 9, 11 **48:17** [w] Is. 43:14 [x] Ps. 32:8 **48:18** [y] Ps. 81:13 [z] Ps. 119:165 **48:19** [a] Gen. 22:17 **48:20** [b] Zech. 2:6, 7 [c] [Ex. 19:4–6] **48:21** [d] [Is. 41:17, 18] [e] Ex. 17:6 **48:22** [f] [Is. 57:21] **49:1** [a] Is. 41:1 [b] Jer. 1:5 **49:2** [c] Rev. 1:16; 2:12 [d] Is. 51:16 [e] Ps. 45:5 **49:3** [f] [Zech. 3:8] [g] Is. 44:23 **49:4** [h] [Ezek. 3:19] **49:5** [i] Matt. 23:37

6 Indeed He says,
'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a [j]light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

7 Thus says the LORD,
The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One,
[k]To Him whom man despises,
To Him whom the nation abhors,
To the Servant of rulers:
[l]"Kings shall see and arise,
Princes also shall worship,
Because of the LORD who is faithful,
The Holy One of Israel;
And He has chosen You."

8 Thus says the LORD:

"In an [m]acceptable time I have heard You,
And in the day of salvation I have helped You;
I will preserve You [n]and give You
As a covenant to the people,
To restore the earth,
To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;
9 That You may say [o]to the prisoners,
'Go forth,'
To those who *are* in darkness, 'Show yourselves.'

"They shall feed along the roads,
And their pastures *shall be* on all desolate heights.
10 They shall neither [p]hunger nor thirst,
[q]Neither heat nor sun shall strike them;
For He who has mercy on them [r]will lead them,
Even by the springs of water He will guide them.
11 [s]I will make each of My mountains a road,
And My highways shall be elevated.
12 Surely [t]these shall come from afar;
Look! Those from the north and the west,
And these from the land of Sinim."

13 [u]Sing, O heavens!
Be joyful, O earth!
And break out in singing, O mountains!
For the LORD has comforted His people,
And will have mercy on His afflicted.

God Will Remember Zion

14 [v]But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me,
And my Lord has forgotten me."

15 "Can[w] a woman forget her nursing child,
And not have compassion on the son of her womb?
Surely they may forget,
[x]Yet I will not forget you.
16 See, [y]I have inscribed you on the palms *of My hands;*
Your walls *are* continually before Me.
17 Your sons* shall make haste;
Your destroyers and those who laid you waste
Shall go away from you.
18 [z]Lift up your eyes, look around and see;
All these gather together *and* come to you.
As I live," says the LORD,
"You shall surely clothe yourselves with them all [a]as an ornament,
And bind them *on you* as a bride *does.*

19 "For your waste and desolate places,
And the land of your destruction,
[b]Will even now be too small for the inhabitants;
And those who swallowed you up will be far away.
20 [c]The children you will have,
[d]After you have lost the others,
Will say again in your ears,
'The place *is* too small for me;
Give me a place where I may dwell.'

* **49:17** Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *builders.*

Servant to free His people from their captivity to sin (42:7).

49:6 ***to the Gentiles.*** The "Gentiles" refers to those who are not Israel.

49:9 ***Go forth.*** This is an allusion to Isaiah's command for the exiles to leave Babylon (48:20).

49:14 ***has forsaken me.*** The complaint that the Lord had forsaken Zion resembles that in 40:27–31. The Lord disciplined the Israelites briefly because of their sin (54:7; Lam. 5:20–22), but the things that Isaiah was saying about captivity were still in the future. A message such as this would be good to remember in the days of captivity when it seemed that they were waiting a long time for the Lord to rescue them.

49:15 ***Can a woman forget.*** In the strongest of human ties, the tenderness of the mother for her precious and dependent child, the Lord draws a parallel picture of Himself. Even if the mother could forget, the Lord will never forget. Human parents often fail, but the Lord is the parent who never forgets how much His child needs Him.

49:20 ***too small.*** The complaint that the place is too small is in fact a cause for rejoicing (54:1–3; Zech. 2:4–5), because it means that the Lord would cause

49:6 *j* [Luke 2:32] **49:7** *k* [Is. 53:3] *l* [Is. 52:15] **49:8** *m* 2 Cor. 6:2 *n* Is. 42:6 **49:9** *o* Is. 61:1 **49:10** *p* Rev. 7:16 *q* Ps. 121:6 *r* Ps. 23:2 **49:11** *s* Is. 40:4 **49:12** *t* Is. 43:5, 6 **49:13** *u* Is. 44:23 **49:14** *v* Is. 40:27 **49:15** *w* Ps. 103:13 *x* Rom. 11:29 **49:16** *y* Song 8:6 **49:18** *z* Is. 60:4 *a* Prov. 17:6 **49:19** *b* Zech. 10:10 **49:20** *c* Is. 60:4 *d* [Rom. 11:11]

21 Then you will say in your heart,
'Who has begotten these for me,
Since I have lost my children and am desolate,
A captive, and wandering to and fro?
And who has brought these up?
There I was, left alone;
But these, where *were* they?'"

22 [e]Thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations,
And set up My standard for the peoples;
They shall bring your sons in *their* arms,
And your daughters shall be carried on *their* shoulders;
23 [f]Kings shall be your foster fathers,
And their queens your nursing mothers;
They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth,
And [g]lick up the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I *am* the LORD,
[h]For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."
24 [i]Shall the prey be taken from the mighty,
Or the captives of the righteous* be delivered?

25 But thus says the LORD:

"Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away,
And the prey of the terrible be delivered;
For I will contend with him who contends with you,
And I will save your children.
26 I will [j]feed those who oppress you with their own flesh,
And they shall be drunk with their own [k]blood as with sweet wine.
All flesh [l]shall know
That I, the LORD, *am* your Savior,
And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

The Servant, Israel's Hope

50 Thus says the LORD:

"Where *is* [a]the certificate of your mother's divorce,
Whom I have put away?
Or which of My [b]creditors *is it* to whom I have sold you?
For your iniquities [c]you have sold yourselves,
And for your transgressions your mother has been put away.
2 Why, when I came, *was there* no man?
Why, when I called, *was there* none to answer?
Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem?
Or have I no power to deliver?
Indeed with My [d]rebuke I dry up the sea,
I make the rivers a wilderness;
Their fish stink because *there is* no water,
And die of thirst.
3 [e]I clothe the heavens with blackness,
[f]And I make sackcloth their covering."

4 "The[g] Lord GOD has given Me
The tongue of the learned,
That I should know how to speak
A word in season to *him who is* [h]weary.
He awakens Me morning by morning,
He awakens My ear
To hear as the learned.
5 The Lord GOD [i]has opened My ear;
And I was not [j]rebellious,
Nor did I turn away.

* **49:24** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Dead Sea Scrolls, Syriac, and Vulgate read *the mighty;* Septuagint reads *unjustly.*

His people to grow. This prophecy points to the return of the exiles to Jerusalem, for under Ezra and Nehemiah the exiles built a relatively small city (Ezra 2; Neh. 7). Some view the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy to be the gathering of the Lord's people at the coming of Jesus' kingdom.

49:22 ***lift My hand in an oath to the nations.*** The return of the Israelites from all the nations, not only from Babylon, shows that the future salvation of all Israel is in view (Rom. 11:26).

50:1 ***divorce.*** The Lord had put away Israel as a husband might put away a wife, but it was for only a short period of exile (54:5–7; 62:4) and not permanently. Permanent exile would have required a certificate of divorce (Deut. 24:1–4). If the Lord had issued one, He could not have taken Israel back (Jer. 3:1,8). No prophet suggested that God had completely broken His covenant; rather, they predicted God's faithfulness to a remnant who would return (Mic. 4:9–10). ***creditors.*** If the Lord had sold Israel to creditors (Ex. 21:7; 2 Kin. 4:1; Neh. 5:5), He would not have any authority over its destiny. But the Israelites sold themselves because of their own iniquities (42:23–25). Therefore God as their Redeemer could buy them back (41:14; 52:3). ***your mother.*** The mother is Jerusalem—more specifically, the inhabitants of the preceding generation that had gone into exile.

50:2 ***I came.*** God came to Israel at the time of the exile through the prophets whom He sent. Later God came to this earth through His Servant and Son, Jesus (41:9).

50:4 ***tongue of the learned.*** The third Servant song consists of a reflection by the Servant (vv. 4–9) and the prophet's address to the believing and unbelieving Israel (vv. 10–11).

49:22 [e] Is. 60:4 **49:23** [f] Is. 52:15 [g] Ps. 72:9 [h] [Rom. 5:5] **49:24** [i] Luke 11:21, 22 **49:26** [j] Is. 9:20 [k] Rev. 14:20 [l] Ps. 9:16 **50:1** [a] Deut. 24:1 [b] Deut. 32:30; 2 Kin. 4:1 [c] Is. 52:3 **50:2** [d] Nah. 1:4 **50:3** [e] Ex. 10:21 [f] Rev. 6:12 **50:4** [g] Ex. 4:11 [h] Matt. 11:28 **50:5** [i] Ps. 40:6 [j] Matt. 26:39

6 [k]I gave My back to those who struck *Me,*
And [l]My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard;
I did not hide My face from shame and [m]spitting.

7 "For the Lord GOD will help Me;
Therefore I will not be disgraced;
Therefore [n]I have set My face like a flint,
And I know that I will not be ashamed.

8 [o]*He is* near who justifies Me;
Who will contend with Me?
Let us stand together.
Who *is* My adversary?
Let him come near Me.

9 Surely the Lord GOD will help Me;
Who *is* he *who* will condemn Me?
[p]Indeed they will all grow old like a garment;
[q]The moth will eat them up.

10 "Who among you fears the LORD?
Who obeys the voice of His Servant?
Who [r]walks in darkness
And has no light?
[s]Let him trust in the name of the LORD
And rely upon his God.

11 Look, all you who kindle a fire,
Who encircle *yourselves* with sparks:
Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks you have kindled—
[t]This you shall have from My hand:
You shall lie down [u]in torment.

The LORD Comforts Zion

51 "Listen to Me, [a]you who follow after righteousness,
You who seek the LORD:
Look to the rock *from which* you were hewn,
And to the hole of the pit *from which* you were dug.

2 [b]Look to Abraham your father,
And to Sarah *who* bore you;
[c]For I called him alone,
And [d]blessed him and increased him."

3 For the LORD will [e]comfort Zion,
He will comfort all her waste places;
He will make her wilderness like Eden,
And her desert [f]like the garden of the LORD;
Joy and gladness will be found in it,
Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

4 "Listen to Me, My people;
And give ear to Me, O My nation:
[g]For law will proceed from Me,
And I will make My justice rest
[h]As a light of the peoples.

5 [i]My righteousness *is* near,
My salvation has gone forth,
[j]And My arms will judge the peoples;
[k]The coastlands will wait upon Me,
And [l]on My arm they will trust.

6 [m]Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
And look on the earth beneath.
For [n]the heavens will vanish away like smoke,
[o]The earth will grow old like a garment,
And those who dwell in it will die in like manner;
But My salvation will be [p]forever,
And My righteousness will not be abolished.

7 "Listen to Me, you who know righteousness,
You people [q]in whose heart *is* My law:
[r]Do not fear the reproach of men,
Nor be afraid of their insults.

8 For [s]the moth will eat them up like a garment,
And the worm will eat them like wool;
But My righteousness will be forever,
And My salvation from generation to generation."

9 [t]Awake, awake, [u]put on strength,
O arm of the LORD!
Awake [v]as in the ancient days,
In the generations of old.
[w]*Are* You not *the arm* that cut [x]Rahab apart,
And wounded the [y]serpent?

50:6 ***shame and spitting.*** This prophecy was fulfilled in the suffering of Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:30).

50:7 ***face like a flint.*** Setting one's face like a flint indicates determination in the face of opposition (Ezek. 3:8–9; Luke 9:51).

50:8 ***justifies.*** God's Servant fully anticipates vindication before the bar of God's justice. He was told to obey God perfectly, and He did. He was sent to suffer sacrificially, and He did. No prosecutor has a case against Him. In a stupendous development, God discloses that the sinners who identify themselves with the Servant may expect the same, although they are not righteous. Sin does carry the death penalty, but identification with the Servant brings exchange and substitution, in which the Servant takes the sinners' place. This makes the justification of sinners both possible and just. Their sins are transferred to Him, and He dies in their place. His shed blood removes their guilt, and they will be declared not guilty. His perfection makes them righteous, and they will be declared righteous. Every accuser will be silenced. Every attempt to have them convicted will be thrown out of court. God is just when He justifies those who belong to the Servant Savior (Rom. 8:31–34).

50:6 [k] Matt. 27:26 [l] Matt. 26:67; 27:30 [m] Lam. 3:30 **50:7** [n] Ezek. 3:8, 9 **50:8** [o] [Rom. 8:32–34] **50:9** [p] Job 13:28 [q] Is. 51:6, 8 **50:10** [r] Ps. 23:4 [s] 2 Chr. 20:20 **50:11** [t] [John 9:39] [u] Ps. 16:4 **51:1** [a] [Rom. 9:30–32] **51:2** [b] Heb. 11:11 [c] Gen. 12:1 [d] Gen. 24:35 **51:3** [e] Is. 40:1; 52:9 [f] Gen. 13:10 **51:4** [g] Is. 2:3 [h] Is. 42:6 **51:5** [i] Is. 46:13 [j] Ps. 67:4 [k] Is. 60:9 [l] [Rom. 1:16] **51:6** [m] Is. 40:26 [n] Matt. 24:35 [o] Is. 24:19, 20; 50:9 [p] Is. 45:17 **51:7** [q] Ps. 37:31 [r] [Matt. 5:11, 12; 10:28] **51:8** [s] Is. 50:9 **51:9** [t] Ps. 44:23 [u] Ps. 93:1 [v] Ps. 44:1 [w] Job 26:12 [x] Ps. 87:4 [y] Ps. 74:13

10 *Are* You not *the One* who [z]dried up the sea,
The waters of the great deep;
That made the depths of the sea a road
For the redeemed to cross over?
11 So [a]the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
And come to Zion with singing,
With everlasting joy on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and gladness;
Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
12 "I, *even* I, *am* He [b]who comforts you.
Who *are* you that you should be afraid
[c]Of a man *who* will die,
And of the son of a man *who* will be made [d]like grass?
13 And [e]you forget the LORD your Maker,
[f]Who stretched out the heavens
And laid the foundations of the earth;
You have feared continually every day
Because of the fury of the oppressor,
When *he has* prepared to destroy.
[g]And where *is* the fury of the oppressor?
14 The captive exile hastens, that he may be loosed,
[h]That he should not die in the pit,
And that his bread should not fail.
15 But I *am* the LORD your God,
Who [i]divided the sea whose waves roared—
The LORD of hosts *is* His name.
16 And [j]I have put My words in your mouth;
[k]I have covered you with the shadow of My hand,
[l]That I may plant the heavens,
Lay the foundations of the earth,
And say to Zion, 'You *are* My people.'"

God's Fury Removed

17 [m]Awake, awake!
Stand up, O Jerusalem,
You who [n]have drunk at the hand of the LORD
The cup of His fury;
You have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling,
And drained *it* out.
18 *There is* no one to guide her
Among all the sons she has brought forth;
Nor *is there any* who takes her by the hand
Among all the sons she has brought up.
19 [o]These two *things* have come to you;
Who will be sorry for you?—
Desolation and destruction, famine and sword—
[p]By whom will I comfort you?
20 [q]Your sons have fainted,
They lie at the head of all the streets,
Like an antelope in a net;
They are full of the fury of the LORD,
The rebuke of your God.
21 Therefore please hear this, you afflicted,
And drunk [r]but not with wine.
22 Thus says your Lord,
The LORD and your God,
Who [s]pleads the cause of His people:
"See, I have taken out of your hand
The cup of trembling,
The dregs of the cup of My fury;
You shall no longer drink it.
23 [t]But I will put it into the hand of those who afflict you,
Who have said to you,*
'Lie down, that we may walk over you.'
And you have laid your body like the ground,
And as the street, for those who walk over."

God Redeems Jerusalem

52 Awake, awake!
Put on your strength, O Zion;
Put on your beautiful garments,
O Jerusalem, the holy city!
For the uncircumcised [a]and the unclean
Shall no longer come to you.
2 [b]Shake yourself from the dust, arise;
Sit down, O Jerusalem!
[c]Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck,
O captive daughter of Zion!

3 For thus says the LORD:

[d]"You have sold yourselves for nothing,
And you shall be redeemed [e]without money."

4 For thus says the Lord GOD:

"My people went down at first
Into [f]Egypt to dwell there;
Then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

* **51:23** Literally *your soul*

50:11 ***kindle a fire.*** Those who kindle a fire instead of the Light from God are those who are self-reliant. When the Light comes into the world, some will choose darkness (John 3:17–18).
51:14 ***exile . . . in the pit.*** The exile refers to those who were captive in Babylon. The meaning also extends to all who experience the darkness of sin and alienation from God (48:20; 49:9).
51:19 ***These two things.*** The two things are the desolation of the land and the destruction of the people.
51:21 ***drunk but not with wine.*** The cause of drunkenness was not wine, but the "cup of trembling" (v. 22), the terror of God's judgment.

51:10 [z] Ex. 14:21 **51:11** [a] Is. 35:10 **51:12** [b] 2 Cor. 1:3 [c] Ps. 118:6 [d] Is. 40:6, 7 **51:13** [e] Is. 17:10 [f] Ps. 104:2 [g] Job 20:7 **51:14** [h] Zech. 9:11 **51:15** [i] Job 26:12 **51:16** [j] Deut. 18:18 [k] Is. 49:2 [l] Is. 65:17 **51:17** [m] Is. 52:1 [n] Job 21:20 **51:19** [o] Is. 47:9 [p] Amos 7:2 **51:20** [q] Lam. 2:11 **51:21** [r] Lam. 3:15 **51:22** [s] Jer. 50:34 **51:23** [t] Zech. 12:2 **52:1** [a] [Rev. 21:2–27] **52:2** [b] Is. 3:26 [c] Zech. 2:7 **52:3** [d] Ps. 44:12 [e] Is. 45:13 **52:4** [f] Gen. 46:6

5 Now therefore, what have I here," says the LORD,
"That My people are taken away for nothing?
Those who rule over them
Make them wail,"* says the LORD,
"And My name *is* [g]blasphemed continually every day.
6 Therefore My people shall know My name;
Therefore *they shall know* in that day
That I *am* He who speaks:
'Behold, *it is* I.'"

7 [h]How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who proclaims peace,
Who brings glad tidings of good *things*,
Who proclaims salvation,
Who says to Zion,
[i]"Your God reigns!"
8 Your watchmen shall lift up *their* voices,
With their voices they shall sing together;
For they shall see eye to eye
When the LORD brings back Zion.
9 Break forth into joy, sing together,
You waste places of Jerusalem!
For the LORD has comforted His people,
He has redeemed Jerusalem.
10 [j]The LORD has made bare His holy arm
In the eyes of [k]all the nations;
And all the ends of the earth shall see
The salvation of our God.

11 [l]Depart! Depart! Go out from there,
Touch no unclean *thing;*
Go out from the midst of her,
[m]Be clean,
You who bear the vessels of the LORD.
12 For [n]you shall not go out with haste,
Nor go by flight;
[o]For the LORD will go before you,
[p]And the God of Israel *will be* your rear guard.

The Sin-Bearing Servant

13 Behold, [q]My Servant shall deal prudently;
[r]He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.
14 Just as many were astonished at you,
So His [s]visage was marred more than any man,
And His form more than the sons of men;
15 [t]So shall He sprinkle* many nations.
Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;
For [u]what had not been told them they shall see,
And what they had not heard they shall consider.

53 Who [a]has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
3 [b]He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and [c]acquainted with grief.

* **52:5** Dead Sea Scrolls read *Mock;* Septuagint reads *Marvel and wail;* Targum reads *Boast themselves;* Vulgate reads *Treat them unjustly.*
* **52:15** Or *startle*

52:6 *shall know My name.* The people are the redeemed exiles, as well as the people who believe in and follow the Servant (Messiah). Isaiah was speaking of a time beyond his own time, to people who were not yet born (1 Pet. 1:10–12). Jesus speaks strongly of this concept when He says, I "know My sheep, and am known by My own" (John 10:11–18).
52:12 *go before you . . . rear guard.* This is an allusion to the pillar of cloud and fire that protected Israel in its flight from Egypt (Ex. 13:21–22; 14:19–20).
52:13—53:12 *Behold.* The fourth of the Servant songs, which form the central unit of chapters 40–66, begins with the praise of the Father for the work of the Servant.
52:14 *visage was marred.* This speaks of the physical punishment that the Servant, Jesus Christ, endured when He was bearing the sins of the world on the cross. He was cruelly beaten, even before He was crucified (Matt. 27:27–31; Mark 15:16–20; John 19:1–3).
52:15 *shut their mouths.* The kings are silent in stunned respect.
53:1–12 The Suffering Servant—Along with Psalm 22, this Scripture is understood to be one of the key prophetic Old Testament passages pointing to the saving work of Christ. This passage presents the whole idea of the "Suffering Servant," which is one of the central concepts of Isaiah, and for many, Judaism. Christ's fulfillment of this passage in His passion is remarkable. The New Testament writers point often to Isaiah 53 and how Christ fulfilled this prophecy (Matt. 8:17; Luke 23:8–9; John 12:38; Rom. 10:16; 1 Pet. 2:25). It is also the Scripture that Philip explained to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:32–33.

In the Old Testament sacrificial system people offered animals to atone for sin (Lev. 16). The Bible presents Christ as the ultimate sacrifice that died once and for all for the sins of the world (Heb. 8–10). Our sins are forgiven and we become righteous through Christ's great work on the cross (2 Cor. 5:21).
53:2 *no form or comeliness.* There was nothing in the Promised Servant's appearance to mark His special calling.
53:3 *despised and rejected.* The Servant was not received joyfully by the people who needed Him so much (Mark 9:12). ***Man of sorrows.*** This phrase does

52:5 [g] Ezek. 36:20, 23 **52:7** [h] Rom. 10:15 [i] Ps. 93:1 **52:10** [j] Ps. 98:1–3 [k] Luke 3:6 **52:11** [l] Is. 48:20 [m] Lev. 22:2 **52:12** [n] Ex. 12:11, 33 [o] Mic. 2:13 [p] Ex. 14:19, 20 **52:13** [q] Is. 42:1 [r] Phil. 2:9 **52:14** [s] Ps. 22:6, 7 **52:15** [t] Ezek. 36:25 [u] Rom. 15:21 **53:1** [a] John 12:38 **53:3** [b] Ps. 22:6 [c] [Heb. 4:15]

And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from
Him;
He was despised, and [d]we did not
esteem Him.

4 Surely [e]He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
5 But He *was* [f]wounded for our
transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was*
upon Him,
And by His [g]stripes we are healed.
6 All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own
way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the
iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet [h]He opened not His mouth;
[i]He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is
silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
8 He was [j]taken from prison and from
judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For [k]He was cut off from the land of
the living;
For the transgressions of My people
He was stricken.
9 [l]And they* made His grave with the
wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor *was any* [m]deceit in His mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul [n]an offering
for sin,
He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong
His days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall
prosper in His hand.

11 He shall see the labor of His soul,* *and*
be satisfied.
By His knowledge [o]My righteous
[p]Servant shall [q]justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
12 [r]Therefore I will divide Him a portion
with the great,
[s]And He shall divide the spoil with the
strong,
Because He [t]poured out His soul unto
death,
And He was [u]numbered with the
transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And [v]made intercession for the
transgressors.

A Perpetual Covenant of Peace

54 "Sing, O [a]barren,
You *who* have not borne!
Break forth into singing, and cry
aloud,
You *who* have not labored with child!
For more *are* the children of the
desolate
Than the children of the married
woman," says the LORD.
2 "Enlarge[b] the place of your tent,
And let them stretch out the curtains
of your dwellings;
Do not spare;
Lengthen your cords,
And strengthen your stakes.
3 For you shall expand to the right and
to the left,
And your descendants will [c]inherit the
nations,
And make the desolate cities inhabited.

4 "Do[d] not fear, for you will not be
ashamed;
Neither be disgraced, for you will not
be put to shame;

* **53:9** Literally *he* or *He* * **53:11** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint read *From the labor of His soul He shall see light.*

not indicate that the Servant would be dour, but that He knew better than anyone the havoc that sin brings into human life, and, as the kindest of friends, He was sorry for the pain of His people.

53:4 *borne our griefs.* The Savior Jesus came to suffer and die for the sins of others (Matt. 8:17; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24). Griefs, sorrows, and affliction refer to the consequences of sin.

53:7 *He opened not His mouth.* Jesus did not open His mouth to defend Himself or to answer the false charges made against Him (Matt. 26:63; Mark 14:61; Luke 23:9; John 19:9).

53:10 *it pleased the LORD to bruise Him.* The Old Testament pointed to the doctrine of the atonement long before Jesus died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3). In fact, the atonement was part of God's eternal plan (Eph. 1:4–7). The Father was pleased that His Son should die because it would cover up the sins of many and reconcile them to Himself. ***offering for sin.*** The offering for sin, or "trespass offering," was the sacrifice of a ram to secure the Lord's atonement for sin (Lev. 5:6–7,15; 7:1; 14:12; 19:21). Here, the prophet Isaiah describes the Servant Jesus as a trespass offering. ***His seed.*** If the Spirit of God dwells in us (Rom. 8:9–11), and if we are led by the Spirit, then we are sons of God—His offspring (Rom. 8:14).

54:1 *have not labored.* The Israelites received a liberation (through the promised Cyrus for the Babylonian exiles, or through the Messiah, in the fullest sense) that they did not work for—it was God's idea.

54:4 *widowhood.* The widowhood was the time

53:3 [d] [John 1:10, 11] **53:4** [e] [Matt. 8:17] **53:5** [f] [Rom. 4:25] [g] [1 Pet. 2:24, 25] **53:7** [h] Matt. 26:63; 27:12–14 [i] Acts 8:32, 33 **53:8** [j] Luke 23:1–25 [k] [Dan. 9:26] **53:9** [l] Matt. 27:57–60 [m] 1 Pet. 2:22 **53:10** [n] [2 Cor. 5:21] **53:11** [o] [1 John 2:1] [p] Is. 42:1 [q] [Rom. 5:15–19] **53:12** [r] Ps. 2:8 [s] Col. 2:15 [t] Is. 50:6 [u] Matt. 27:38 [v] Luke 23:34 **54:1** [a] Gal. 4:27 **54:2** [b] Is. 49:19, 20 **54:3** [c] Is. 14:2; 49:22, 23; 60:9 **54:4** [d] Is. 41:10

For you will forget the shame of your
youth,
And will not remember the reproach
of your widowhood anymore.
5 [e]For your Maker *is* your husband,
The LORD of hosts *is* His name;
And your Redeemer *is* the Holy One
of Israel;
He is called [f]the God of the whole
earth.
6 For the LORD [g]has called you
Like a woman forsaken and grieved
in spirit,
Like a youthful wife when you were
refused,"
Says your God.
7 "For[h] a mere moment I have forsaken
you,
But with great mercies [i]I will gather
you.
8 With a little wrath I hid My face from
you for a moment;
[j]But with everlasting kindness I will
have mercy on you,"
Says the LORD, your Redeemer.
9 "For this *is* like the waters of [k]Noah to
Me;
For as I have sworn
That the waters of Noah would no
longer cover the earth,
So have I sworn
That I would not be angry with [l]you,
nor rebuke you.
10 For [m]the mountains shall depart
And the hills be removed,
[n]But My kindness shall not depart from
you,
Nor shall My covenant of peace be
removed,"
Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.
11 "O you afflicted one,
Tossed with tempest, *and* not
comforted,
Behold, I will lay your stones with
[o]colorful gems,
And lay your foundations with
sapphires.
12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies,
Your gates of crystal,
And all your walls of precious stones.
13 All your children *shall be* [p]taught by
the LORD,
And [q]great *shall be* the peace of your
children.
14 In righteousness you shall be
established;
You shall be far from oppression, for
you shall not fear;
And from terror, for it shall not come
near you.
15 Indeed they shall surely assemble, *but*
not because of Me.
Whoever assembles against you shall
[r]fall for your sake.
16 "Behold, I have created the blacksmith
Who blows the coals in the fire,
Who brings forth an instrument for
his work;
And I have created the spoiler to
destroy.
17 No weapon formed against you shall
[s]prosper,
And every tongue *which* rises against
you in judgment
You shall condemn.
This *is* the heritage of the servants of
the LORD,
[t]And their righteousness *is* from Me,"
Says the LORD.

An Invitation to Abundant Life

55 "Ho! [a]Everyone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;
And you who have no money,
[b]Come, buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.
2 Why do you spend money for *what is*
not bread,
And your wages for *what* does not
satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what*
is good,
And let your soul delight itself in
abundance.
3 Incline your ear, and [c]come to Me.
Hear, and your soul shall live;
[d]And I will make an everlasting
covenant with you—
The [e]sure mercies of David.
4 Indeed I have given him *as* [f]a witness
to the people,
[g]A leader and commander for the
people.

without the working presence of God in the lives of the people of God, the time of exile. In the fullest sense, every sinner is a "widow" without God, who has the role of protector and provider.

54:11 *foundations with sapphires.* For a more detailed description of the New Jerusalem, see Revelation 21:18–21. It will be a city of stunning beauty and grand proportions.

54:17 *the servants of the LORD.* Throughout the rest of Isaiah, the word "servants" refers to all saints, Jews and Gentiles (56:6–8; 63:17; 65:8–9,13–15; 66:14), the offspring of the Servant (Jesus).

55:4 *witness.* God's fulfillment of the promises to the house of David, climaxing in the resurrection of Christ, serves as a witness to the nations (43:10,12; 44:8). It shows that He has fulfilled His prophecies and promises, and that He is who He says He is: the King of the universe.

54:5 [e] Jer. 3:14 [f] Zech. 14:9 **54:6** [g] Is. 62:4 **54:7** [h] Is. 26:20; 60:10 [i] [Is. 43:5; 56:8] **54:8** [j] Jer. 31:3 **54:9** [k] Gen. 8:21; 9:11 [l] Ezek. 39:29 **54:10** [m] Is. 51:6 [n] Ps. 89:33, 34 **54:11** [o] Rev. 21:18, 19 **54:13** [p] [John 6:45] [q] Ps. 119:165 **54:15** [r] Is. 41:11–16 **54:17** [s] Is. 17:12–14; 29:8 [t] Is. 45:24, 25; 54:14 **55:1** [a] [John 4:14; 7:37] [b] [Rev. 3:18] **55:3** [c] Matt. 11:28 [d] Jer. 32:40 [e] 2 Sam. 7:8 **55:4** [f] [Rev. 1:5] [g] [Dan. 9:25]

5 [h]Surely you shall call a nation you do not know,
[i]And nations *who* do not know you shall run to you,
Because of the LORD your God,
And the Holy One of Israel;
[j]For He has glorified you."

6 [k]Seek the LORD while He may be [l]found,
Call upon Him while He is near.
7 [m]Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man [n]his thoughts;
Let him return to the LORD,
[o]And He will have mercy on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.

8 "For[p] My thoughts *are* not your thoughts,
Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD.
9 "For[q] *as* the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

10 "For [r]as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,
11 [s]So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall [t]prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.

12 "For[u] you shall go out with joy,
And be led out with peace;
The mountains and the hills
Shall [v]break forth into singing before you,
And [w]all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

13 [x]Instead of [y]the thorn shall come up the cypress tree,
And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;
And it shall be to the LORD [z]for a name,
For an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off."

Salvation for the Gentiles

56 Thus says the LORD:
"Keep justice, and do righteousness,
[a]For My salvation *is* about to come,
And My righteousness to be revealed.
2 Blessed *is* the man *who* does this,
And the son of man *who* lays hold on it;
[b]Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath,
And keeps his hand from doing any evil."

3 Do not let [c]the son of the foreigner
Who has joined himself to the LORD
Speak, saying,
"The LORD has utterly separated me from His people";
Nor let the [d]eunuch say,
"Here I am, a dry tree."
4 For thus says the LORD:
"To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths,
And choose what pleases Me,
And hold fast My covenant,
5 Even to them I will give in [e]My house
And within My walls a place [f]and a name
Better than that of sons and daughters;
I will give them* an everlasting name
That shall not be cut off.

6 "Also the sons of the foreigner
Who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him,
And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants—
Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath,
And holds fast My covenant—

* **56:5** Literally *him*

55:6 *while He may be found.* Solomon warned his readers to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, when the evil days have not yet come (Eccl. 12:1). The writer to the Hebrews admonishes his readers, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Ps. 95:7–8; Heb. 4:7). Responding to the call of God is not something to be put off. Hardened hearts become a habit, or evil days may impair our ability to think clearly. If the Lord is calling, respond to Him. We do not know how long we have to live. No one knows whether "this night" his soul may be required (Luke 12:20).

55:9 *higher.* The gulf existing between human and divine nature is expressed here in graphic terms. God functions at the level of pure holiness, and He is motivated by complete love and service to others. The corruption of human nature by sin introduces carnal elements that are totally unknown to the nature of God, and by contrast are base both in character and execution. It is only when we are born again that we can understand the things of the Spirit, the ways of God (John 3:9–21).

56:3 *foreigner.* In speaking of the foreigner who joined himself to the Lord, Isaiah was not speaking of the foreign wives that the returning exiles would have married (Ezra 9:1–4). Those foreign wives were considered a corrupting influence because they had not become followers of the living God. The foreigners that Isaiah was prophesying about would be converted to worship the true Lord (44:5).

56:5 *not be cut off.* This phrase is an idiom for preserving one's name through one's offspring. The phrase links this passage with 55:13.

55:5 [h] Eph. 2:11, 12 [i] Is. 60:5 [j] Is. 60:9 **55:6** [k] [Heb. 3:13] [l] Ps. 32:6 **55:7** [m] Is. 1:16 [n] Zech. 8:17 [o] Jer. 3:12 **55:8** [p] 2 Sam. 7:19 **55:9** [q] Ps. 103:11 **55:10** [r] Deut. 32:2 **55:11** [s] Is. 45:23 [t] Is. 46:9–11 **55:12** [u] Is. 35:10 [v] Ps. 98:8 [w] 1 Chr. 16:33 **55:13** [x] Is. 41:19 [y] Mic. 7:4 [z] Jer. 13:11 **56:1** [a] Matt. 3:2; 4:17 **56:2** [b] Is. 58:13 **56:3** [c] [Eph. 2:12–19] [d] Acts 8:27 **56:5** [e] 1 Tim. 3:15 [f] [1 John 3:1, 2]

7 Even them I will [g]bring to My holy
mountain,
And make them joyful in My [h]house
of prayer.
[i]Their burnt offerings and their
sacrifices
Will be [i]accepted on My altar;
For [k]My house shall be called a house
of prayer [l]for all nations."
8 The Lord GOD, [m]who gathers the
outcasts of Israel, says,
[n]"Yet I will gather to him
Others besides those who are gathered
to him."

Israel's Irresponsible Leaders

9 [o]All you beasts of the field, come to
devour,
All you beasts in the forest.
10 His watchmen *are* [p]blind,
They are all ignorant;
[q]They *are* all dumb dogs,
They cannot bark;
Sleeping, lying down, loving to
slumber.
11 Yes, *they are* [r]greedy dogs
Which [s]never have enough.
And they *are* shepherds
Who cannot understand;
They all look to their own way,
Every one for his own gain,
From his *own* territory.
12 "Come," *one says*, "I will bring
wine,
And we will fill ourselves with
intoxicating [t]drink;
[u]Tomorrow will be [v]as today,
And much more abundant."

Israel's Futile Idolatry

57 The righteous perishes,
And no man takes *it* to heart;
[a]Merciful men *are* taken away,
[b]While no one considers
That the righteous is taken away from
evil.
2 He shall enter into peace;
They shall rest in [c]their beds,
Each one walking *in* his uprightness.
3 "But come here,
[d]You sons of the sorceress,
You offspring of the adulterer and the
harlot!
4 Whom do you ridicule?
Against whom do you make a wide
mouth
And stick out the tongue?
Are you not children of transgression,
Offspring of falsehood,
5 Inflaming yourselves with gods [e]under
every green tree,
[f]Slaying the children in the valleys,
Under the clefts of the rocks?
6 Among the smooth [g]*stones* of the
stream
Is your portion;
They, they, *are* your lot!
Even to them you have poured a drink
offering,
You have offered a grain offering.
Should I receive comfort in [h]these?
7 "On[i] a lofty and high mountain
You have set [j]your bed;
Even there you went up
To offer sacrifice.
8 Also behind the doors and their posts
You have set up your remembrance;
For you have uncovered yourself *to*
those other than Me,
And have gone up to them;
You have enlarged your bed
And made *a covenant* with them;
[k]You have loved their bed,
Where you saw *their* nudity.*
9 [l]You went to the king with ointment,
And increased your perfumes;
You sent your [m]messengers far off,
And *even* descended to Sheol.
10 You are wearied in the length of your
way;
[n]*Yet* you did not say, 'There is no hope.'
You have found the life of your hand;
Therefore you were not grieved.
11 "And [o]of whom have you been afraid,
or feared,
That you have lied
And not remembered Me,
Nor taken *it* to your heart?
Is it not because [p]I have held My peace
from of old
That you do not fear Me?
12 I will declare your righteousness
And your works,
For they will not profit you.

* **57:8** Literally *hand*, a euphemism

56:9 *beasts.* The unclean, ravenous beasts summoned to attack the ungodly community are hostile nations (Jer. 12:8–9; Ezek. 34:5,8).
56:11 *dogs.* The dog was not highly regarded in biblical culture, and to the Jews they were unclean. In Deuteronomy 23:18, a "dog" is discussed in the context of a prostitute.
57:5 *Slaying the children.* Killing the children was associated with the worship of Molech and with demon worship (30:33; 2 Kin. 23:10; Ps. 106:37–38; Jer. 7:31).
57:12 *your righteousness.* This phrase is stated in sarcasm or irony. The people had found a counterfeit life in idolatry and immorality that would only lead to death.

56:7 [g] [Is. 2:2, 3; 60:11] [h] Mark 11:17 [i] [Rom. 12:1] [j] Is. 60:7 [k] Matt. 21:13 [l] [Mal. 1:11] **56:8** [m] Is. 11:12; 27:12; 54:7 [n] [John 10:16] **56:9** [o] Jer. 12:9 **56:10** [p] Matt. 15:14 [q] Phil. 3:2 **56:11** [r] [Mic. 3:5, 11] [s] Ezek. 34:2–10 **56:12** [t] Is. 28:7 [u] Luke 12:19 [v] 2 Pet. 3:4 **57:1** [a] Ps. 12:1 [b] 1 Kin. 14:13 **57:2** [c] 2 Chr. 16:14 **57:3** [d] Matt. 16:4 **57:5** [e] 2 Kin. 16:4 [f] Jer. 7:31 **57:6** [g] Jer. 3:9 [h] Jer. 5:9, 29; 9:9 **57:7** [i] Ezek. 16:16 [j] Ezek. 23:41 **57:8** [k] Ezek. 16:26 **57:9** [l] Hos. 7:11 [m] Ezek. 23:16, 40 **57:10** [n] Jer. 2:25; 18:12 **57:11** [o] Is. 51:12, 13 [p] Ps. 50:21

13 When you cry out,
Let your collection *of idols* deliver you.
But the wind will carry them all away,
A breath will take *them.*
But he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land,
And shall inherit My holy mountain."

Healing for the Backslider

14 And one shall say,
[q]"Heap it up! Heap it up!
Prepare the way,
Take the stumbling block out of the way of My people."

15 For thus says the High and Lofty One
Who inhabits eternity, [r]whose name *is* Holy:
[s]"I dwell in the high and holy *place,*
[t]With him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit,
[u]To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.
16 [v]For I will not contend forever,
Nor will I always be angry;
For the spirit would fail before Me,
And the souls [w]*which* I have made.
17 For the iniquity of [x]his covetousness
I was angry and struck him;
[y]I hid and was angry,
[z]And he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.
18 I have seen his ways, and [a]will heal him;
I will also lead him,
And restore comforts to him
And to [b]his mourners.

19 "I create [c]the fruit of the lips:
Peace, peace [d]to *him who is* far off and to *him who is* near,"
Says the LORD,
"And I will heal him."
20 [e]But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea,
When it cannot rest,
Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21 "*There*[f] *is* no peace,"
Says my God, "for the wicked."

Fasting that Pleases God

58 "Cry aloud, spare not;
Lift up your voice like a trumpet;
[a]Tell My people their transgression,
And the house of Jacob their sins.
2 Yet they seek Me daily,
And delight to know My ways,
As a nation that did righteousness,
And did not forsake the ordinance of their God.
They ask of Me the ordinances of justice;
They take delight in approaching God.
3 'Why[b] have we fasted,' *they say,* 'and You have not seen?
Why have we [c]afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure,
And exploit all your laborers.
4 [d]Indeed you fast for strife and debate,
And to strike with the fist of wickedness.
You will not fast as *you do* this day,
To make your voice heard on high.
5 Is [e]it a fast that I have chosen,
[f]A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush,
And [g]to spread out sackcloth and ashes?
Would you call this a fast,
And an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 "*Is* this not the fast that I have chosen:
To [h]loose the bonds of wickedness,
[i]To undo the heavy burdens,
[j]To let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?
7 *Is it* not [k]to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;
[l]When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from [m]your own flesh?
8 [n]Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,

57:14 ***Heap it up.*** This verse is based on 40:1–4. The phrase "heap it up" resembles "every valley shall be exalted."

57:16 ***will not contend forever.*** God was addressing the human failure to keep His good laws, but humans will always fail. God knew this, so He created a way of salvation, a way to heal the problem of sin (v. 18). He knew that they needed to be radically rescued, for the law was powerless to save them (Rom. 2–8).

58:2 ***delight to know My ways . . . delight in approaching God.*** Unfortunately, one can really enjoy all the religious ritual without really wanting to know God. God can always tell the difference between the heart that is turned toward Him and the heart that is devoted to religious form.

58:6 ***To loose . . . To undo . . . free.*** Love is right at the top of the list in relating to God and to other people (1 John 4:7–21). Once again, the Lord is defining true religion. It is always horizontal (directed toward other people) as well as vertical (directed toward God). If we love God, we will be just and merciful to other people (Mic. 6:8; James 1:26–27).

57:14 [q] Is. 40:3; 62:10 **57:15** [r] Job 6:10 [s] Zech. 2:13 [t] Ps. 34:18; 51:17 [u] Is. 61:1–3 **57:16** [v] [Mic. 7:18] [w] Num. 16:22 **57:17** [x] Jer. 6:13 [y] Is. 8:17; 45:15; 59:2 [z] Is. 9:13 **57:18** [a] Jer. 3:22 [b] Is. 61:2 **57:19** [c] Heb. 13:15 [d] Eph. 2:17 **57:20** [e] Job 15:20 **57:21** [f] Is. 48:22 **58:1** [a] Mic. 3:8 **58:3** [b] Mal. 3:13–18 [c] Lev. 16:29; 23:27 **58:4** [d] 1 Kin. 21:9 **58:5** [e] Zech. 7:5 [f] Lev. 16:29 [g] Esth. 4:3 **58:6** [h] Luke 4:18, 19 [i] Neh. 5:10–12 [j] Jer. 34:9 **58:7** [k] Ezek. 18:7 [l] Job 31:19–22 [m] Neh. 5:5 **58:8** [n] Job 11:17

And your righteousness shall go
before you;
[o]The glory of the LORD shall be your
rear guard.
9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will
answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here
I *am*.'

"If you take away the yoke from your
midst,
The pointing of the finger, and
[p]speaking wickedness,
10 *If* you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the
darkness,
And your darkness shall *be* as the
noonday.
11 The LORD will guide you continually,
And satisfy your soul in drought,
And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose
waters do not fail.
12 Those from among you
[q]Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of
many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer
of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

13 "If [r]you turn away your foot from the
Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy
day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy *day* of the LORD honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your
own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking *your own* words,
14 [s]Then you shall delight yourself in the
LORD;
And I will cause you to [t]ride on the
high hills of the earth,
And feed you with the heritage of
Jacob your father.
[u]The mouth of the LORD has
spoken."

Separated from God

59 Behold, the LORD's hand is not
[a]shortened,
That it cannot save;
Nor His ear heavy,
That it cannot hear.
2 But your iniquities have separated you
from your God;
And your sins have hidden *His* face
from you,
So that He will [b]not hear.
3 For [c]your hands are defiled with
blood,
And your fingers with iniquity;
Your lips have spoken lies,
Your tongue has muttered
perversity.

4 No one calls for justice,
Nor does *any* plead for truth.
They trust in [d]empty words and speak
lies;
[e]They conceive evil and bring forth
iniquity.
5 They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the
spider's web;
He who eats of their eggs dies,
And *from* that which is crushed a
viper breaks out.

6 [f]Their webs will not become
garments,
Nor will they cover themselves with
their works;
Their works *are* works of iniquity,
And the act of violence *is* in their
hands.
7 [g]Their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed
[h]innocent blood;
[i]Their thoughts *are* thoughts of
iniquity;
Wasting and [j]destruction *are* in their
paths.
8 The way of [k]peace they have not
known,
And *there is* no justice in their ways;
[l]They have made themselves crooked
paths;
Whoever takes that way shall not
know peace.

59:2 The Effects of Sin—Sin, regardless of how serious, always has an effect—separation. Sin separates one from God. This separation from God is death. Adam was told that if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would die (Gen. 3:3). Adam ate of the tree anyway and immediately died spiritually—his soul was separated from God—and he then began to die physically. The entrance of sin into the world brought with it death (Rom. 5:12; 6:23). That man is a sinner is proven by the fact that he dies—where there is death, there is sin. Sin's penalty, death, can be remedied by life—union with God. This is achieved by belief in Jesus, who died to pay the penalty of man's sin (Rom. 5:21). For one who believes in Jesus, the penalty of sin is broken. He will die physically but physical death for him is only the doorway into the presence of God.

Sin has an effect upon the believer, for it mars his fellowship with God. Sin in the believer's life is a terrible thing and is not to be tolerated. While it is probable that the believer will sin, it is never necessary for him to do so (1 John 2:1).

59:5 *vipers' eggs.* The viper is a poisonous snake (Acts 28:3–6).

59:7–8 *feet run to evil.* This passage is cited in Romans 3:15–17 to document the universal aspect of sin.

58:8 [o] Ex. 14:19 **58:9** [p] Ps. 12:2 **58:12** [q] Is. 61:4 **58:13** [r] Is. 56:2, 4, 6 **58:14** [s] Job 22:26 [t] Deut. 32:13; 33:29 [u] Is. 1:20; 40:5 **59:1** [a] Num. 11:23 **59:2** [b] Is. 1:15 **59:3** [c] Ezek. 7:23 **59:4** [d] Jer. 7:4 [e] Job 15:35 **59:6** [f] Job 8:14 **59:7** [g] Rom. 3:15 [h] Prov. 6:17 [i] Is. 55:7 [j] Rom. 3:16, 17 **59:8** [k] Is. 57:20, 21 [l] Prov. 2:15

Sin Confessed

9 Therefore justice is far from us,
Nor does righteousness overtake us;
[m]We look for light, but there is darkness!
For brightness, *but* we walk in blackness!
10 [n]We grope for the wall like the blind,
And we grope as if *we had* no eyes;
We stumble at noonday as at twilight;
We are as dead *men* in desolate places.
11 We all growl like bears,
And [o]moan sadly like doves;
We look for justice, but *there is* none;
For salvation, *but* it is far from us.
12 For our [p]transgressions are multiplied before You,
And our sins testify against us;
For our transgressions *are* with us,
And *as for* our iniquities, we know them:
13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD,
And departing from our God,
Speaking oppression and revolt,
Conceiving and uttering [q]from the heart words of falsehood.
14 Justice is turned back,
And righteousness stands afar off;
For truth is fallen in the street,
And equity cannot enter.
15 So truth fails,
And he *who* departs from evil makes himself a [r]prey.

The Redeemer of Zion

Then the LORD saw *it*, and it displeased Him
That *there was* no justice.
16 [s]He saw that *there was* no man,
And [t]wondered that *there was* no intercessor;
[u]Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him;
And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.
17 [v]For He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
And a helmet of salvation on His head;
He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.
18 [w]According to *their* deeds, accordingly He will repay,
Fury to His adversaries,
Recompense to His enemies;
The coastlands He will fully repay.
19 [x]So shall they fear
The name of the LORD from the west,
And His glory from the rising of the sun;
When the enemy comes in [y]like a flood,
The Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him.
20 "The[z] Redeemer will come to Zion,
And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,"
Says the LORD.

21 "As[a] for Me," says the LORD, "this *is* My covenant with them: My Spirit who *is* upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the LORD, "from this time and forevermore."

59:9 *Therefore.* "Therefore" links Israel's repentance with the prophet's reprimand. With the pronoun "us," Isaiah identified himself with his people's sins (Ezek. 9:6–7; Dan. 9:5).

59:16 *no man.* God's salvation does not depend on humans (Ezek. 22:30).

59:17 *righteousness as a breastplate.* This idea of the righteous warrior is repeated in Ephesians 6:13–17. Right standing with God is our protection, as surely as the warrior depends on the heavy body shield over his heart to protect him from the arrows of the enemy.

59:20 *The Redeemer will come.* The Redeemer comes in the person of Jesus Christ.

59:21 *My Spirit.* God promised that His Spirit and His Word would never be lost to His people. The covenant that He made with them affirms that the Word is firm and unshakable. It may not be performed immediately, but the hearers can be assured of its truth. He also promised that He would always be present with His people through the Spirit. This is a promise that continues to be comforting to the people of God, and it must have brought particular comfort to the people who lived in the "silent" years between the preaching of Malachi and the coming of John the Baptist.

59:21 Inspiration of God's Word—The word *inspiration* occurs only once in the New Testament, in 2 Timothy 3:16. Paul says there "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," literally "God-breathed." God takes the initiative in communicating with us. Divine inspiration logically follows divine revelation. In revelation God speaks to man's ear, while by inspiration He guides the pen to ensure that the imparted message is correctly written down. God's intent is to give His people a right understanding of His revelation and a permanent record of His dealings with mankind. The authority of the Bible is from God Himself.

Bible authors understood that their writings were being guided by the Spirit of God, even as they wrote them. Peter said this was true of Old Testament authors (2 Pet. 1:20–21). He then stated his own letters were inspired by God (2 Pet. 3:1–2). Finally, he pointed out this was also true concerning Paul's writings (2 Pet. 3:15).

This means that the Bible is more than just the wise insights of men who desired to follow God. God worked in the thinking of the biblical writers so the message they wrote was also God's message. While the writings certainly display the individual

59:9 [m] Jer. 8:15 **59:10** [n] Job 5:14 **59:11** [o] Ezek. 7:16 **59:12** [p] Is. 24:5; 58:1 **59:13** [q] Matt. 12:34 **59:15** [r] Is. 5:23; 10:2; 29:21; 32:7 **59:16** [s] Ezek. 22:30 [t] Mark 6:6 [u] Ps. 98:1 **59:17** [v] Eph. 6:14, 17 **59:18** [w] Is. 63:6 **59:19** [x] Mal. 1:11 [y] Rev. 12:15 **59:20** [z] Rom. 11:26 **59:21** [a] [Heb. 8:10; 10:16]

The Gentiles Bless Zion

60 Arise, [a]shine;
For your light has come!
And [b]the glory of the LORD is risen
upon you.
2 For behold, the darkness shall cover
the earth,
And deep darkness the people;
But the LORD will arise over you,
And His glory will be seen upon you.
3 The [c]Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your
rising.

4 "Lift[d] up your eyes all around, and see:
They all gather together, [e]they come
to you;
Your sons shall come from afar,
And your daughters shall be nursed at
your side.
5 Then you shall see and become radiant,
And your heart shall swell with joy;
Because [f]the abundance of the sea
shall be turned to you,
The wealth of the Gentiles shall come
to you.
6 The multitude of camels shall cover
your *land,*
The dromedaries of Midian and
[g]Ephah;
All those from [h]Sheba shall come;
They shall bring [i]gold and incense,
And they shall proclaim the praises of
the LORD.
7 All the flocks of [j]Kedar shall be
gathered together to you,
The rams of Nebaioth shall minister
to you;
They shall ascend with [k]acceptance on
My altar,
And [l]I will glorify the house of My
glory.

8 "Who *are* these *who* fly like a cloud,
And like doves to their roosts?
9 [m]Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me;
And the ships of Tarshish *will come*
first,
[n]To bring your sons from afar,
[o]Their silver and their gold with them,
To the name of the LORD your God,
And to the Holy One of Israel,
[p]Because He has glorified you.

10 "The[q] sons of foreigners shall build up
your walls,
[r]And their kings shall minister to you;
For [s]in My wrath I struck you,
[t]But in My favor I have had mercy on
you.
11 Therefore your gates [u]shall be open
continually;
They shall not be shut day or night,
That *men* may bring to you the wealth
of the Gentiles,
And their kings in procession.
12 [v]For the nation and kingdom which will
not serve you shall perish,
And *those* nations shall be utterly
ruined.

13 "The[w] glory of Lebanon shall come to
you,
The cypress, the pine, and the box tree
together,
To beautify the place of My sanctuary;
And I will make [x]the place of My feet
glorious.
14 Also the sons of those who afflicted
you
Shall come [y]bowing to you,
And all those who despised you shall
[z]fall prostrate at the soles of your
feet;
And they shall call you The City of the
LORD,
[a]Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15 "Whereas you have been forsaken and
hated,
So that no one went through *you,*
I will make you an eternal excellence,
A joy of many generations.
16 You shall drink the milk of the
Gentiles,
[b]And milk the breast of kings;
You shall know that [c]I, the LORD, *am*
your Savior
And your Redeemer, the Mighty One
of Jacob.

17 "Instead of bronze I will bring gold,
Instead of iron I will bring silver,
Instead of wood, bronze,
And instead of stones, iron.
I will also make your officers peace,
And your magistrates righteousness.

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characteristics of all of the different authors, there is also an overall divine influence that unifies the Bible as no other book.

60:1 ***Arise, shine.*** This command is directed to Zion (v. 14), which is both the recipient of God's light and the reflector of it. It is difficult to imagine the world without the knowledge of Christ, yet each believer who remembers his life before he was born again can testify to the power of the light of the gospel. It is a great joy to come from the darkness of sin and doubt to the light of forgiveness and knowledge of Jesus Christ. What a joyful command, to "shine" for the Savior.

60:3 ***Gentiles.*** The Gentiles are the other nations.

60:9 ***ships of Tarshish.*** The reference to the ships of Tarshish alludes to the wealth of King Solomon (2:16; 1 Kin. 10:22).

60:12 ***not serve you shall perish.*** The nation and kingdom that does not serve Zion, where Christ now reigns (Acts 2:29–36), shall perish (John 3:18; Heb. 2:3; 9:27; 10:27).

60:1 [a] Eph. 5:14 [b] Mal. 4:2 **60:3** [c] Is. 49:6, 23 **60:4** [d] Is. 49:18 [e] Is. 49:20–22 **60:5** [f] [Rom. 11:25–27] **60:6** [g] Gen. 25:4 [h] Ps. 72:10 [i] Matt. 2:11 **60:7** [j] Gen. 25:13 [k] Is. 56:7 [l] Hag. 2:7, 9 **60:9** [m] Ps. 72:10 [n] [Gal. 4:26] [o] Jer. 3:17 [p] Is. 55:5 **60:10** [q] Zech. 6:15 [r] Rev. 21:24 [s] Is. 57:17 [t] Is. 54:7, 8 **60:11** [u] Rev. 21:25, 26 **60:12** [v] Zech. 14:17 **60:13** [w] Is. 35:2 [x] 1 Chr. 28:2 **60:14** [y] Is. 45:14 [z] Rev. 3:9 [a] [Heb. 12:22] **60:16** [b] Is. 49:23 [c] Is. 43:3

18 Violence shall no longer be heard in
your land,
Neither wasting nor destruction
within your borders;
But you shall call [d]your walls
Salvation,
And your gates Praise.

God the Glory of His People

19 "The [e]sun shall no longer be your light
by day,
Nor for brightness shall the moon give
light to you;
But the LORD will be to you an
everlasting light,
And [f]your God your glory.
20 [g]Your sun shall no longer go down,
Nor shall your moon withdraw itself;
For the LORD will be your everlasting
light,
And the days of your mourning shall
be ended.
21 [h]Also your people *shall* all *be*
righteous;
[i]They shall inherit the land forever,
[j]The branch of My planting,
[k]The work of My hands,
That I may be glorified.
22 [l]A little one shall become a thousand,
And a small one a strong nation.
I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time."

The Good News of Salvation

61 "The [a]Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon
Me,
Because the LORD [b]has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me [c]to heal the
brokenhearted,
To proclaim [d]liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to *those*
who are bound;
2 [e]To proclaim the acceptable year of the
LORD,
And [f]the day of vengeance of our God;
[g]To comfort all who mourn,
3 To console those who mourn in Zion,
[h]To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of
heaviness;
That they may be called trees of
righteousness,
[i]The planting of the LORD, [j]that He may
be glorified."

4 And they shall [k]rebuild the old ruins,
They shall raise up the former
desolations,
And they shall repair the ruined
cities,
The desolations of many generations.
5 [l]Strangers shall stand and feed your
flocks,
And the sons of the foreigner
Shall be your plowmen and your
vinedressers.
6 [m]But you shall be named the priests of
the LORD,
They shall call you the servants of our
God.
[n]You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles,
And in their glory you shall boast.
7 [o]Instead of your shame *you shall have*
double *honor,*
And *instead of* confusion they shall
rejoice in their portion.
Therefore in their land they shall
possess double;
Everlasting joy shall be theirs.

8 "For [p]I, the LORD, love justice;
[q]I hate robbery for burnt offering;
I will direct their work in truth,
[r]And will make with them an
everlasting covenant.
9 Their descendants shall be known
among the Gentiles,
And their offspring among the people.
All who see them shall acknowledge
them,
[s]That they *are* the posterity *whom* the
LORD has blessed."

10 [t]I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For [u]He has clothed me with the
garments of salvation,
He has covered me with the robe of
righteousness,

60:18 ***Salvation . . . Praise.*** Judging from the figurative language in verses 15–22, especially verse 17, God's salvation and Israel's praise will be the city's defense (Zech. 2:4–5).

60:19–20 ***no longer.*** These verses form the basis for the description of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1,23; 22:5).

61:1 ***Me.*** The "Me" featured so prominently here is the same as the Servant in 42:1; 49:1; 50:4; 52:13. The Servant is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. This verse is the passage from Isaiah that Jesus read in the synagogue at the beginning of His ministry (Luke 4:16–21). When He finished reading it, He said, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

61:2 ***day of vengeance.*** The day of God's vengeance is yet to come. This is the "day" that the Book of Revelation is talking about (Rev. 11:14–19).

61:10 Christ's Righteousness—One of the most awesome requirements made upon men and women by God is that they be righteous, that is, conform to His ethical and moral standards (Ps. 15:2; Mic. 6:8). Since God is holy He cannot allow sinners into His presence (Is. 6:3–5). We sinners cannot save ourselves or make ourselves righteous. Only God's intervention can save us and make us righteous. God sent Christ,

60:18 [d] Is. 26:1 **60:19** [e] Rev. 21:23; 22:5 [f] Zech. 2:5 **60:20** [g] Amos 8:9 **60:21** [h] Rev. 21:27 [i] Ps. 37:11 [j] Is. 61:3 [k] [Eph. 2:10] **60:22** [l] Matt. 13:31, 32 **61:1** [a] Luke 4:18, 19 [b] Luke 7:22 [c] Ps. 147:3 [d] Is. 42:7 **61:2** [e] Lev. 25:9 [f] Is. 34:8 [g] Matt. 5:4 **61:3** [h] Ps. 30:11 [i] Is. 60:21 [j] [John 15:8] **61:4** [k] Ezek. 36:33 **61:5** [l] [Eph. 2:12] **61:6** [m] Ex. 19:6 [n] Is. 60:5, 11 **61:7** [o] Zech. 9:12 **61:8** [p] Ps. 11:7 [q] Is. 1:11, 13 [r] Is. 55:3 **61:9** [s] Is. 65:23 **61:10** [t] Hab. 3:18 [u] Ps. 132:9, 16

[v]As a bridegroom decks *himself* with ornaments,
And as a bride adorns *herself* with her jewels.
11 For as the earth brings forth its bud,
As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth,
So the Lord GOD will cause
[w]righteousness and [x]praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Assurance of Zion's Salvation

62 For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace,
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
And her salvation as a lamp *that* burns.
2 [a]The Gentiles shall see your righteousness,
And all [b]kings your glory.
[c]You shall be called by a new name,
Which the mouth of the LORD will name.
3 You shall also be [d]a crown of glory
In the hand of the LORD,
And a royal diadem
In the hand of your God.
4 [e]You shall no longer be termed [f]Forsaken,
Nor shall your land any more be termed [g]Desolate;
But you shall be called Hephzibah,*
and your land Beulah;*
For the LORD delights in you,
And your land shall be married.
5 For *as* a young man marries a virgin,
So shall your sons marry you;
And *as* the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
[h]*So* shall your God rejoice over you.
6 [i]I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;
They shall never hold their peace day or night.
You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent,
7 And give Him no rest till He establishes
And till He makes Jerusalem [j]a praise in the earth.
8 The LORD has sworn by His right hand
And by the arm of His strength:
"Surely I will no longer [k]give your grain
As food for your enemies;
And the sons of the foreigner shall not drink your new wine,
For which you have labored.
9 But those who have gathered it shall eat it,
And praise the LORD;
Those who have brought it together shall drink it [l]in My holy courts."
10 Go through,
Go through the gates!
[m]Prepare the way for the people;
Build up,
Build up the highway!
Take out the stones,
[n]Lift up a banner for the peoples!
11 Indeed the LORD has proclaimed
To the end of the world:
[o]"Say to the daughter of Zion,
'Surely your salvation is coming;
Behold, His [p]reward *is* with Him,
And His work before Him.'"
12 And they shall call them The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
And you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

The LORD in Judgment and Salvation

63 Who *is* this who comes from Edom,
With dyed garments from Bozrah,
This *One who is* glorious in His apparel,
Traveling in the greatness of His strength?—
"I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

* **62:4** Literally *My Delight Is in Her* • Literally *Married*

who never sinned, to die for our sins and thus satisfy His own wrath towards us and our sin. God, at the cross, treated Christ as though He had committed our sins even though He was righteous. On the other hand, when we believe in Christ, He treats us as though we were as righteous as Himself (2 Cor. 5:21). It is as if God deposits in our spiritual account the very worth of Christ, much as though He were a banker adding an inexhaustible deposit to our bank account.
62:2 ***a new name.*** A new name, like new clothing, signified a new status (Gen. 17:5,15; 32:28; Rev. 2:17).
62:4 ***Hephzibah . . . Beulah.*** The name "Hephzibah" means "my delight is in her"—in this case, it is the Lord's delight—and "Beulah" means "married." Both of these names are symbolic, pointing to a time when Israel's relationship with the Lord is restored.
62:6 ***You who make mention of the LORD.*** The "watchmen," or prophets, were intercessors. They prayed that the Lord's promises would be fulfilled.
62:8 ***The LORD has sworn.*** When God made the promise to Abraham (Heb. 6:13), He swore by Himself; so here He again swears in His own name. There is no greater name than the name of the Lord, and He cannot lie—this is the surest promise man can receive.
63:1 ***Edom.*** Edom epitomized Israel's enemies (Ps. 137:7; Lam. 4:21–22; Ezek. 25:12; 35:1–5; Obad.

61:10 [v] Is. 49:18 **61:11** [w] Ps. 72:3; 85:11 [x] Is. 60:18; 62:7 **62:2** [a] Is. 60:3 [b] Ps. 102:15, 16; 138:4, 5; 148:11, 13 [c] Is. 62:4, 12; 65:15 **62:3** [d] Zech. 9:16 **62:4** [e] Hos. 1:10 [f] Is. 49:14; 54:6, 7 [g] Is. 54:1 **62:5** [h] Is. 65:19 **62:6** [i] Ezek. 3:17; 33:7 **62:7** [j] Zeph. 3:19, 20 **62:8** [k] Deut. 28:31, 33 **62:9** [l] Deut. 12:12; 14:23, 26 **62:10** [m] Is. 40:3; 57:14 [n] Is. 11:12 **62:11** [o] Zech. 9:9 [p] [Rev. 22:12]

2 Why [a]*is* Your apparel red,
And Your garments like one who
treads in the winepress?
3 "I have [b]trodden the winepress alone,
And from the peoples no one *was*
with Me.
For I have trodden them in My anger,
And trampled them in My fury;
Their blood is sprinkled upon My
garments,
And I have stained all My robes.
4 For the [c]day of vengeance *is* in My
heart,
And the year of My redeemed has
come.
5 [d]I looked, but [e]*there was* no one to help,
And I wondered
That *there was* no one to uphold;
Therefore My own [f]arm brought
salvation for Me;
And My own fury, it sustained Me.
6 I have trodden down the peoples in My
anger,
Made them drunk in My fury,
And brought down their strength to
the earth."

God's Mercy Remembered

7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of
the LORD
And the praises of the LORD,
According to all that the LORD has
bestowed on us,
And the great goodness toward the
house of Israel,
Which He has bestowed on them
according to His mercies,
According to the multitude of His
lovingkindnesses.
8 For He said, "Surely they *are* My people,
Children *who* will not lie."
So He became their Savior.
9 [g]In all their affliction He was afflicted,
[h]And the Angel of His Presence saved
them;
[i]In His love and in His pity He
redeemed them;
And [j]He bore them and carried them
All the days of old.
10 But they [k]rebelled and [l]grieved His
Holy Spirit;
[m]So He turned Himself against them as
an enemy,
And He fought against them.
11 Then he [n]remembered the days of old,
Moses *and* his people, *saying:*
"Where *is* He who [o]brought them up
out of the sea
With the shepherd of His flock?
[p]Where *is* He who put His Holy Spirit
within them,
12 Who led *them* by the right hand of
Moses,
[q]With His glorious arm,
[r]Dividing the water before them
To make for Himself an everlasting
name,
13 [s]Who led them through the deep,
As a horse in the wilderness,
That they might not stumble?"
14 As a beast goes down into the valley,
And the Spirit of the LORD causes him
to rest,
So You lead Your people,
[t]To make Yourself a glorious name.

A Prayer of Penitence

15 [u]Look down from heaven,
And see [v]from Your habitation, holy
and glorious.
Where *are* Your zeal and Your strength,
The yearning [w]of Your heart and Your
mercies toward me?
Are they restrained?
16 [x]Doubtless You *are* our Father,
Though Abraham [y]was ignorant of us,
And Israel does not acknowledge us.
You, O LORD, *are* our Father;
Our Redeemer from Everlasting *is*
Your name.
17 O LORD, why have You [z]made us stray
from Your ways,
And hardened our heart from Your fear?
Return for Your servants' sake,
The tribes of Your inheritance.
18 [a]Your holy people have possessed *it* but
a little while;
[b]Our adversaries have trodden down
Your sanctuary.
19 We have become *like* those of old, over
whom You never ruled,
Those who were never called by Your
name.

64 Oh, that You would rend the
heavens!
That You would come down!
That the mountains might shake at
Your [a]presence—

13–14). It was famous for its winemaking (v. 3). ***Bozrah.*** Bozrah was the chief town of Edom.

63:3 *I.* The pronoun "I" refers to Christ in Revelation 19:5.

63:11 *put His Holy Spirit within them.* This refers to the presence of the Holy Spirit on Moses and his helpers in the desert (Num. 11:17,25).

63:12 *glorious arm.* This verse refers to God dividing the Red Sea (Ex. 15:6; 14:16,21; Ps. 78:13). Isaiah is reminding his hearers of the mighty acts that God did in the past, as well as the things that He has promised to do in the future. Such perspective is often helpful when one is bearing difficult times in the present.

63:2 [a] [Rev. 19:13, 15] **63:3** [b] Rev. 14:19, 20; 19:15 **63:4** [c] Is. 34:8; 35:4; 61:2 **63:5** [d] Is. 41:28; 59:16 [e] [John 16:32] [f] Ps. 98:1 **63:9** [g] Judg. 10:16 [h] Ex. 14:19 [i] Deut. 7:7 [j] Ex. 19:4 **63:10** [k] Ex. 15:24 [l] Ps. 78:40 [m] Ex. 23:21 **63:11** [n] Ps. 106:44, 45 [o] Ex. 14:30 [p] Num. 11:17, 25, 29 **63:12** [q] Ex. 15:6 [r] Ex. 14:21, 22 **63:13** [s] Ps. 106:9 **63:14** [t] 2 Sam. 7:23 **63:15** [u] Deut. 26:15 [v] Ps. 33:14 [w] Jer. 31:20 **63:16** [x] Deut. 32:6 [y] Job 14:21 **63:17** [z] John 12:40 **63:18** [a] Deut. 7:6 [b] Ps. 74:3–7 **64:1** [a] Mic. 1:3, 4

2 As fire burns brushwood,
As fire causes water to boil—
To make Your name known to Your adversaries,
That the nations may tremble at Your presence!
3 When [b]You did awesome things *for which* we did not look,
You came down,
The mountains shook at Your presence.
4 For since the beginning of the world
[c]*Men* have not heard nor perceived by the ear,
Nor has the eye seen any God besides You,
Who acts for the one who waits for Him.
5 You meet him who rejoices and does righteousness,
Who remembers You in Your ways.
You are indeed angry, for we have sinned—
[d]In these ways we continue;
And we need to be saved.

6 But we are all like an unclean *thing,*
And all [e]our righteousnesses *are* like filthy rags;
We all [f]fade as a leaf,
And our iniquities, like the wind,
Have taken us away.
7 And *there is* no one who calls on Your name,
Who stirs himself up to take hold of You;
For You have hidden Your face from us,
And have consumed us because of our iniquities.

8 But now, O LORD,
You *are* our Father;
We *are* the clay, and You our [g]potter;
And all we *are* the work of Your hand.
9 Do not be furious, O LORD,
Nor remember iniquity forever;
Indeed, please look—we all *are* Your people!
10 Your holy cities are a wilderness,
Zion is a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.
11 Our holy and beautiful temple,
Where our fathers praised You,
Is burned up with fire;
And all [h]our pleasant things are laid waste.
12 [i]Will You restrain Yourself because of these *things,* O LORD?
[j]Will You hold Your peace, and afflict us very severely?

The Righteousness of God's Judgment

65 "I was [a]sought by *those who* did not ask *for Me;*
I was found by *those who* did not seek Me.
I said, 'Here I am, here I am,'
To a nation *that* [b]was not called by My name.
2 [c]I have stretched out My hands all day long to a [d]rebellious people,
Who [e]walk in a way *that is* not good,
According to their own thoughts;
3 A people [f]who provoke Me to anger continually to My face;
[g]Who sacrifice in gardens,
And burn incense on altars of brick;
4 [h]Who sit among the graves,
And spend the night in the tombs;
[i]Who eat swine's flesh,
And the broth of abominable things is *in* their vessels;
5 [j]Who say, 'Keep to yourself,
Do not come near me,
For I am holier than you!'
These *are* smoke in My nostrils,
A fire that burns all the day.

6 "Behold, [k]*it is* written before Me:
[l]I will not keep silence, [m]but will repay—
Even repay into their bosom—
7 Your iniquities and [n]the iniquities of your fathers together,"
Says the LORD,
[o]"Who have burned incense on the mountains
[p]And blasphemed Me on the hills;
Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom."

8 Thus says the LORD:

"As the new wine is found in the cluster,
And *one* says, 'Do not destroy it,
For [q]a blessing *is* in it,'
So will I do for My servants' sake,
That I may not destroy them [r]all.
9 I will bring forth descendants from Jacob,
And from Judah an heir of My mountains;
My [s]elect shall inherit it,
And My servants shall dwell there.
10 [t]Sharon shall be a fold of flocks,
And [u]the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down,
For My people who have [v]sought Me.

64:4 ***Nor has the eye seen.*** Paul cites this verse with some changes in 1 Corinthians 2:9.
64:10 ***wilderness . . . desolation.*** The prophetic picture of devastation of the land is probably referring to the time of the Babylonian invasion.
65:1 ***those who did not ask for Me.*** Paul saw his ministry to the Gentiles as a fulfillment of this promise (Rom. 10:20–21).
65:10 ***Sharon . . . Valley of Achor.*** Sharon, on the

64:3 [b] Ex. 34:10 **64:4** [c] Ps. 31:19 **64:5** [d] Mal. 3:6 **64:6** [e] [Phil. 3:9] [f] Ps. 90:5, 6 **64:8** [g] Is. 29:16; 45:9 **64:11** [h] Ezek. 24:21 **64:12** [i] Is. 42:14 [j] Ps. 83:1 **65:1** [a] Rom. 9:24; 10:20 [b] Is. 63:19 **65:2** [c] Rom. 10:21 [d] Is. 1:2, 23 [e] Is. 42:24 **65:3** [f] Deut. 32:21 [g] Is. 1:29 **65:4** [h] Deut. 18:11 [i] Is. 66:17 **65:5** [j] Matt. 9:11 **65:6** [k] Deut. 32:34 [l] Ps. 50:3 [m] Ps. 79:12 **65:7** [n] Ex. 20:5 [o] Ezek. 18:6 [p] Ezek. 20:27, 28 **65:8** [q] Joel 2:14 [r] Is. 1:9 **65:9** [s] Matt. 24:22 **65:10** [t] Is. 33:9 [u] Josh. 7:24 [v] Is. 55:6

11 "But you *are* those who forsake the LORD,
Who forget [w]My holy mountain,
Who prepare [x]a table for Gad,*
And who furnish a drink offering for Meni.*
12 Therefore I will number you for the sword,
And you shall all bow down to the slaughter;
[y]Because, when I called, you did not answer;
When I spoke, you did not hear,
But did evil before My eyes,
And chose *that* in which I do not delight."

13 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, My servants shall eat,
But you shall be hungry;
Behold, My servants shall drink,
But you shall be thirsty;
Behold, My servants shall rejoice,
But you shall be ashamed;
14 Behold, My servants shall sing for joy of heart,
But you shall cry for sorrow of heart,
And [z]wail for grief of spirit.
15 You shall leave your name [a]as a curse to [b]My chosen;
For the Lord GOD will slay you,
And [c]call His servants by another name;
16 [d]So that he who blesses himself in the earth
Shall bless himself in the God of truth;
And [e]he who swears in the earth
Shall swear by the God of truth;
Because the former troubles are forgotten,
And because they are hidden from My eyes.

The Glorious New Creation

17 "For behold, I create [f]new heavens and a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.
18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
For behold, I create Jerusalem *as* a rejoicing,
And her people a joy.
19 [g]I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
And joy in My people;
The [h]voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her,
Nor the voice of crying.
20 "No more shall an infant from there *live but a few* days,
Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days;
For the child shall die one hundred years old,
[i]But the sinner *being* one hundred years old shall be accursed.
21 [j]They shall build houses and inhabit *them;*
They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
22 They shall not build and another inhabit;
They shall not plant and [k]another eat;
For [l]as the days of a tree, *so shall be* the days of My people,
And [m]My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
23 They shall not labor in vain,
[n]Nor bring forth children for trouble;
For [o]they *shall be* the descendants of the blessed of the LORD,
And their offspring with them.
24 "It shall come to pass
That [p]before they call, I will answer;
And while they are still speaking, I will [q]hear.
25 The [r]wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
The lion shall eat straw like the ox,
[s]And dust *shall be* the serpent's food.
They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,"
Says the LORD.

True Worship and False

66 Thus says the LORD:

[a]"Heaven *is* My throne,
And earth *is* My footstool.
Where *is* the house that you will build Me?
And where *is* the place of My rest?

* **65:11** Literally *Troop* or *Fortune*, a pagan deity • Literally *Number* or *Destiny*, a pagan deity

coastal plain in the west, and the Valley of Achor, near Jericho in the east, represent the whole land.

65:17 ***new heavens and a new earth.*** As God fashioned the existing heavens and earth, so He will fashion a new cosmos that will be ready for His presence and for the enjoyment of His people (Rev. 21:4).

65:20 ***child shall die one hundred years old.*** In the coming kingdom the life spans will be much greater. People will not be affected by disease and aging in the same way as in our present age. This time probably refers to the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:1–6).

65:25 ***wolf . . . lamb.*** This picture is also presented in 11:6–9. It is a picture of regenerated nature that will occur in the new heavens and new earth.

66:1 ***Where is the house.*** No place on earth can accommodate the transcendent God. Even the temple built by Solomon, which was filled with the glory of the Lord (1 Kin. 8:11), did not really contain the Lord. He called it a "a temple for My name" (1 Kin. 8:18).

65:11 [w] Is. 56:7 [x] Ezek. 23:41 **65:12** [y] Prov. 1:24 **65:14** [z] Matt. 8:12 **65:15** [a] Jer. 29:22 [b] Is. 65:9, 22 [c] [Acts 11:26] **65:16** [d] Jer. 4:2 [e] Zeph. 1:5 **65:17** [f] Rev. 21:1 **65:19** [g] Is. 62:4, 5 [h] Rev. 7:17; 21:4 **65:20** [i] Eccl. 8:12, 13 **65:21** [j] Amos 9:14 **65:22** [k] Is. 62:8, 9 [l] Ps. 92:12 [m] Is. 65:9, 15 **65:23** [n] Hos. 9:12 [o] Is. 61:9 **65:24** [p] Is. 58:9 [q] Dan. 9:20–23 **65:25** [r] Is. 11:6–9 [s] Gen. 3:14 **66:1** [a] 1 Kin. 8:27

2 For all those *things* My hand has made,
And all those *things* exist,"
Says the LORD.
[b]"But on this *one* will I look:
[c]On *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit,
And who trembles at My word.

3 "He[d] who kills a bull *is as if* he slays a man;
He who sacrifices a lamb, *as if* he [e]breaks a dog's neck;
He who offers a grain offering, *as if he offers* swine's blood;
He who burns incense, *as if* he blesses an idol.
Just as they have chosen their own ways,
And their soul delights in their abominations,
4 So will I choose their delusions,
And bring their fears on them;
[f]Because, when I called, no one answered,
When I spoke they did not hear;
But they did evil before My eyes,
And chose *that* in which I do not delight."

The LORD Vindicates Zion

5 Hear the word of the LORD,
You who tremble at His word:
"Your brethren who [g]hated you,
Who cast you out for My name's sake, said,
[h]'Let the LORD be glorified,
That [i]we may see your joy.'
But they shall be ashamed."

6 The sound of noise from the city!
A voice from the temple!
The voice of the LORD,
Who fully repays His enemies!

7 "Before she was in labor, she gave birth;
Before her pain came,
She delivered a male child.
8 Who has heard such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?
Or shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion was in labor,
She gave birth to her children.
9 Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?" says the LORD.
"Shall I who cause delivery shut up *the womb?*" says your God.

10 "Rejoice with Jerusalem,
And be glad with her, all you who love her;
Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her;
11 That you may feed and be satisfied
With the consolation of her bosom,
That you may drink deeply and be delighted
With the abundance of her glory."

12For thus says the LORD:

"Behold, [j]I will extend peace to her like a river,
And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream.
Then you shall [k]feed;
On *her* sides shall you be [l]carried,
And be dandled on *her* knees.
13 As one whom his mother comforts,
So I will [m]comfort you;
And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

The Reign and Indignation of God

14 When you see *this,* your heart shall rejoice,
And [n]your bones shall flourish like grass;
The hand of the LORD shall be known to His servants,
And *His* indignation to His enemies.
15 [o]For behold, the LORD will come with fire
And with His chariots, like a whirlwind,
To render His anger with fury,
And His rebuke with flames of fire.
16 For by fire and by [p]His sword
The LORD will judge all flesh;
And the slain of the LORD shall be [q]many.

17 "Those[r] who sanctify themselves and purify themselves,
To go to the gardens
After an *idol* in the midst,
Eating swine's flesh and the abomination and the mouse,
Shall be consumed together," says the LORD.

18"For I *know* their works and their [s]thoughts. It shall be that I will [t]gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory. 19[u]I will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape

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66:3 ***as if he slays a man.*** This may refer to child sacrifice (57:5). ***as if he breaks a dog's neck . . . offers swine's blood.*** The dog and the pig were both unclean animals; this may refer to a pagan practice.

66:6 ***sound of noise from the city . . . voice from the temple . . . enemies.*** Isaiah heard the sound of noise from the city and the temple, the Lord giving His enemies what they deserved. This prophecy may find its fulfillment at the Lord's second coming (66:17; 2 Thess. 1:7–10).

66:16 ***fire . . . sword.*** The Divine Warrior comes with fire and sword (Luke 21:24; Rev. 19:11–15).

66:2 [b] Is. 57:15; 61:1] [c] Ps. 34:18; 51:17 **66:3** [d] Is. 1:10–17; 58:1–7] [e] Deut. 23:18 **66:4** [f] Is. 65:12 **66:5** [g] Is. 60:15 [h] Is. 5:19 [i] Titus 2:13] **66:12** [j] Is. 48:18; 60:5 [k] Is. 60:16 [l] Is. 49:22; 60:4 **66:13** [m] Is. 51:3 **66:14** [n] Ezek. 37:1 **66:15** [o] Is. 9:5 **66:16** [p] Is. 27:1 [q] Is. 34:6 **66:17** [r] Is. 65:3–8 **66:18** [s] Is. 59:7 [t] Jer. 3:17 **66:19** [u] Luke 2:34

I will send to the nations: *to* Tarshish and
Pul* and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal
and Javan, *to* the coastlands afar off who
have not heard My fame nor seen My glory.
[v]And they shall declare My glory among
the Gentiles. **20**Then they shall [w]bring all
your brethren [x]for an offering to the LORD
out of all nations, on horses and in chari-
ots and in litters, on mules and on camels,
to My holy mountain Jerusalem," says the
LORD, "as the children of Israel bring an of-
fering in a clean vessel into the house of the
LORD. **21**And I will also take some of them
for [y]priests *and* Levites," says the LORD.

22 "For as [z]the new heavens and the new
earth
Which I will make shall remain before
Me," says the LORD,
"So shall your descendants and your
name remain.
23 And [a]it shall come to pass
That from one New Moon to
another,
And from one Sabbath to another,
[b]All flesh shall come to worship before
Me," says the LORD.

24 "And they shall go forth and look
Upon the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their [c]worm does not die,
And their fire is not quenched.
They shall be an abhorrence to all
flesh."

* **66:19** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint reads *Put* (compare Jeremiah 46:9).

The word picture promises judgment and punishment.

66:23 ***All flesh shall come to worship before Me.*** In the end, every person will bow to the Lord, whether they were followers of God or not. This idea is repeated in more detail in Romans 14:11, 1 Corinthians 15:24–25, Philippians 2:10, and Revelation 15:4.

66:24 ***And their fire is not quenched.*** This verse is cited by Jesus in Mark 9:44, 46, and 48. The imagery is drawn from the Valley of Hinnom that was Jerusalem's garbage dump, where unclean corpses decomposed and were burned. The final eternal punishment is the lake of fire (Rev. 20:1–15). Although the Book of Isaiah depicts God's coming salvation, it closes with a strong statement of the judgment of the wicked.

66:19 [v] Mal. 1:11 **66:20** [w] Is. 49:22 [x] [Rom. 15:16]
66:21 [y] Ex. 19:6 **66:22** [z] Rev. 21:1 **66:23** [a] Zech. 14:16
[b] Zech. 14:17–21 **66:24** [c] Mark 9:44, 46, 48

THE BOOK OF
JEREMIAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah the priest and lived just over two miles north of Jerusalem. The book clearly states that Jeremiah is its author, and that he dictated all his prophecies to his secretary Baruch. A first copy of the work was destroyed by the king, after which Jeremiah produced a more complete edition (36:32). The only segment of this book not credited to Jeremiah is chapter 52. This supplement is almost identical to 2 Kings 24:18—25:30, and may have been added by Baruch. Daniel alludes to Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy-year captivity (25:11–14; 29:10; Dan. 9:2), and Jeremiah's authorship is also confirmed by Ecclesiasticus, Josephus, and the Talmud.

▶ **TIME:** c. 627–580 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Jer. 7:23–24

▶ **THEME:** In the Book of Jeremiah we get an intimate picture of this prophet's life and thoughts. He was constantly rejected for speaking God's message, often lamenting to God. For this fact he is often called the weeping prophet. His ministry begins in 627 B.C., during the reign of King Josiah, who brought about reform after finding the Book of Deuteronomy in the temple. By that time Judah was a weak kingdom that was subject to the major political forces of the day, which were Egypt and Babylon. While Josiah's reform was certainly a step in the right direction, many of the people didn't follow through on the implications of what the law taught. Jeremiah demonstrated God's perspective on the political upheaval going on throughout Judah in his day.

1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who *were* [a]in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, **2**to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of [b]Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, [c]in the thirteenth year of his reign. **3**It came also in the days of [d]Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, [e]until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, [f]until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive [g]in the fifth month.

The Prophet Is Called

4Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

5 "Before I [h]formed you in the womb [i]I knew you;
Before you were born I [j]sanctified you;
I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

6Then said I:

[k]"Ah, Lord GOD!
Behold, I cannot speak, for I *am* a youth."

7But the LORD said to me:

"Do not say, 'I *am* a youth,'
For you shall go to all to whom I send you,
And [l]whatever I command you, you shall speak.
8 [m]Do not be afraid of their faces,
For [n]I *am* with you to deliver you,"
says the LORD.

1:1 ***Jeremiah.*** The name probably means either "the Lord exalts" or "the Lord establishes."

1:4 ***Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying.*** This was a standard way of introducing a divine oracle at the beginning of a prophetic book. Jeremiah did not speak out of his own imagination. He spoke as God revealed His word and will.

1:5 ***Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.*** Jeremiah was keenly aware that the call of God in his life had been determined by God from before his conception. As God's word became a reality in his life, the prophet understood that God knew him and had called him to proclaim a critical message at a crucial point in the history of the nation. The word "knew" refers to an intimate knowledge that comes from relationship and personal commitment.

1:8 ***I am with you to deliver you.*** Twice in his call (v. 19), God reassured Jeremiah of His presence and protection. In moments of personal crisis, Jeremiah prays these words back to God (20:11).

1:1 [a] Josh. 21:18 **1:2** [b] 2 Kin. 21:24 [c] Jer. 25:3 **1:3** [d] 2 Kin. 23:34 [e] Jer. 39:2 [f] Jer. 52:12 [g] 2 Kin. 25:8 **1:5** [h] Is. 49:1, 5 [i] Ex. 33:12 [j] [Luke 1:15] **1:6** [k] Ex. 4:10; 6:12, 30 **1:7** [l] Num. 22:20, 38 **1:8** [m] Ezek. 2:6; 3:9 [n] Ex. 3:12

9 Then the LORD put forth His hand and [o]touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me:

"Behold, I have [p]put My words in your mouth.
10 [q]See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms,
To [r]root out and to pull down,
To destroy and to throw down,
To build and to plant."

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?"
And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree."
12 Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word."
13 And the word of the LORD came to me the second time, saying, "What do you see?"
And I said, "I see [s]a boiling pot, and it is facing away from the north."
14 Then the LORD said to me:

"Out of the [t]north calamity shall break forth
On all the inhabitants of the land.
15 For behold, I am [u]calling
All the families of the kingdoms of the north," says the LORD;
"They shall come and [v]each one set his throne
At the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem,
Against all its walls all around,
And against all the cities of Judah.
16 I will utter My judgments
Against them concerning all their wickedness,
Because [w]they have forsaken Me,
Burned [x]incense to other gods,
And worshiped the works of their own [y]hands.

17 "Therefore [z]prepare yourself and arise,
And speak to them all that I command you.
[a]Do not be dismayed before their faces,
Lest I dismay you before them.
18 For behold, I have made you this day
[b]A fortified city and an iron pillar,
And bronze walls against the whole land—
Against the kings of Judah,
Against its princes,
Against its priests,
And against the people of the land.
19 They will fight against you,
But they shall not prevail against you.
For I *am* with you," says the LORD, "to deliver you."

God's Case Against Israel

2 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 "Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD:

"I remember you,
The kindness of your [a]youth,
The love of your betrothal,
[b]When you went after Me in the wilderness,
In a land not sown.
3 [c]Israel *was* holiness to the LORD,
[d]The firstfruits of His increase.
[e]All that devour him will offend;
Disaster will [f]come upon them," says the LORD.'"

4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. 5 Thus says the LORD:

[g]"What injustice have your fathers found in Me,
That they have gone far from Me,
[h]Have followed idols,
And have become idolaters?
6 Neither did they say, 'Where *is* the LORD,
Who [i]brought us up out of the land of Egypt,
Who led us through [j]the wilderness,
Through a land of deserts and pits,
Through a land of drought and the shadow of death,
Through a land that no one crossed
And where no one dwelt?'

1:9 ***I have put My words in your mouth.*** This verse gives us an understanding of the dual nature of Scripture. The message is the Lord's; its expression is accomplished through His servants the prophets (Heb. 1:1).

1:10 ***I have this day set you over the nations.*** The nations were instruments in God's purpose of revealing Himself. The Lord would use Babylon to punish Judah, and then He would use the Persians to punish Babylon.

1:11 ***I see a branch of an almond tree.*** God confirmed His call to Jeremiah with two visions. The first vision involved an almond tree, which blossoms when other trees are still dormant. The almond tree served as a harbinger of spring, as though it watched over the beginning of the season. In a similar fashion, God was watching over His word, ready to bring judgment on Israel.

1:13 ***I see a boiling pot, and it is facing away from the north.*** This is the second vision God used to confirm Jeremiah's call. Judgment was coming from the north.

1:17 ***Therefore prepare yourself.*** This means tuck your robe into your belt so you can run, or "gird up your loins" (1 Sam. 2:4).

1:18 ***A fortified city.*** This military language indicates that God would fight for Jeremiah. His defense system could not be battered down or tunneled under by men and armies.

2:1–3 ***The love of your betrothal.*** Chapter 2 is

1:9 [o] Is. 6:7 [p] Is. 51:16 **1:10** [q] 1 Kin. 19:17 [r] [2 Cor. 10:4, 5] **1:13** [s] Ezek. 11:3; 24:3 **1:14** [t] Jer. 6:1 **1:15** [u] Jer. 6:22; 25:9 [v] Jer. 39:3 **1:16** [w] Deut. 28:20 [x] Jer. 7:9 [y] Is. 37:19 **1:17** [z] Job 38:3 [a] Ezek. 2:6 **1:18** [b] Is. 50:7 **2:2** [a] Ezek. 16:8 [b] Deut. 2:7 **2:3** [c] [Ex. 19:5, 6] [d] Rev. 14:4 [e] Jer. 12:14 [f] Is. 41:11 **2:5** [g] Is. 5:4 [h] 2 Kin. 17:15 **2:6** [i] Is. 63:11 [j] Deut. 8:15; 32:10

7 I brought you into [k]a bountiful country,
To eat its fruit and its goodness.
But when you entered, you [l]defiled My land
And made My heritage an abomination.
8 The priests did not say, 'Where *is* the LORD?'
And those who handle the [m]law did not know Me;
The rulers also transgressed against Me;
[n]The prophets prophesied by Baal,
And walked after *things that* do not profit.
9 "Therefore [o]I will yet bring charges against you," says the LORD,
"And against your children's children I will bring charges.
10 For pass beyond the coasts of Cyprus* and see,
Send to Kedar* and consider diligently,
And see if there has been such *a* [p]*thing.*
11 [q]Has a nation changed *its* gods,
Which *are* [r]not gods?
[s]But My people have changed their Glory
For *what* does not profit.
12 Be astonished, O heavens, at this,
And be horribly afraid;
Be very desolate," says the LORD.
13 "For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me, the [t]fountain of living waters,
And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.
14 "*Is* Israel [u]a servant?
Is he a homeborn *slave*?
Why is he plundered?
15 [v]The young lions roared at him, *and* growled;
They made his land waste;
His cities are burned, without inhabitant.
16 Also the people of Noph* and [w]Tahpanhes
Have broken the crown of your head.
17 [x]Have you not brought this on yourself,
In that you have forsaken the LORD your God
When [y]He led you in the way?
18 And now why take [z]the road to Egypt,
To drink the waters of [a]Sihor?
Or why take the road to [b]Assyria,
To drink the waters of the River?*
19 Your own wickedness will [c]correct you,
And your backslidings will rebuke you.
Know therefore and see that *it is* an evil and bitter *thing*
That you have forsaken the LORD your God,
And the fear of Me *is* not in you,"
Says the Lord GOD of hosts.
20 "For of old I have [d]broken your yoke *and* burst your bonds;
And [e]you said, 'I will not transgress,'
When [f]on every high hill and under every green tree
You lay down, [g]playing the harlot.
21 Yet I had [h]planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality.
How then have you turned before Me
Into [i]the degenerate plant of an alien vine?
22 For though you wash yourself with lye, and use much soap,
Yet your iniquity is [j]marked before Me," says the Lord GOD.
23 "How[k] can you say, 'I am not polluted, I have not gone after the Baals'?
See your way in the valley;
Know what you have done:
You are a swift dromedary breaking loose in her ways,
24 A wild donkey used to the wilderness,
That sniffs at the wind in her desire;
In her time of mating, who can turn her away?
All those who seek her will not weary themselves;
In her month they will find her.

*2:10 Hebrew *Kittim*, western lands, especially Cyprus • In the northern Arabian desert, representative of the eastern cultures *2:16 That is, Memphis in ancient Egypt *2:18 That is, the Euphrates

presented in the form of a covenant lawsuit, an indictment brought by God against His people. Jeremiah challenged the people of Judah to remember God.

2:8 *priests . . . rulers . . . prophets.* Those who should have known God most intimately did not know Him at all. The rulers transgressed against God and His covenant. The prophets prophesied in the name of Baal rather than God.

2:13 *broken cisterns.* The people could have chosen a "fountain of living waters." Instead they chose broken cisterns that would have been useless for sustaining life.

2:15 *The young lions.* Assyria laid waste to Israel and Judah during several invasions between 734 and 701 B.C.

2:16 *the people of Noph and Tahpanhes.* Egypt forced Judah into a vassal relationship.

2:19 *backslidings.* Israel had turned in every direction for help except to the true source of safety and security.

2:23–25 *a swift dromedary.* The image is that of a

2:7 [k] Num. 13:27 [l] Num. 35:33 **2:8** [m] Rom. 2:20 [n] Jer. 23:13 **2:9** [o] Mic. 6:2 **2:10** [p] Jer. 18:13 **2:11** [q] Mic. 4:5 [r] Is. 37:19 [s] Rom. 1:23 **2:13** [t] Ps. 36:9 **2:14** [u] [Ex. 4:22] **2:15** [v] Is. 1:7 **2:16** [w] Jer. 43:7–9 **2:17** [x] Jer. 4:18 [y] Deut. 32:10 **2:18** [z] Is. 30:1–3 [a] Josh. 13:3 [b] Hos. 5:13 **2:19** [c] Jer. 4:18 **2:20** [d] Lev. 26:13 [e] Judg. 10:16 [f] Deut. 12:2 [g] Ex. 34:15 **2:21** [h] Ex. 15:17 [i] Is. 5:4 **2:22** [j] Job 14:16, 17 **2:23** [k] Prov. 30:12

25 Withhold your foot from being unshod,
and your throat from thirst.
But you said, [l]'There is no hope.
No! For I have loved [m]aliens, and after
them I will go.'

26 "As the thief is ashamed when he is
found out,
So is the house of Israel ashamed;
They and their kings and their
princes, and their priests and
their [n]prophets,
27 Saying to a tree, 'You *are* my father,'
And to a [o]stone, 'You gave birth to me.'
For they have turned *their* back to Me,
and not *their* face.
But in the time of their [p]trouble
They will say, 'Arise and save us.'
28 But [q]where *are* your gods that you
have made for yourselves?
Let them arise,
If they [r]can save you in the time of
your trouble;
For [s]*according to* the number of your
cities
Are your gods, O Judah.

29 "Why will you plead with Me?
You all have transgressed against Me,"
says the LORD.
30 "In vain I have [t]chastened your children;
They [u]received no correction.
Your sword has [v]devoured your
prophets
Like a destroying lion.

31 "O generation, see the word of the
LORD!
Have I been a wilderness to Israel,
Or a land of darkness?
Why do My people say, 'We are lords;
[w]We will come no more to You'?
32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
Or a bride her attire?
Yet My people [x]have forgotten Me
days without number.

33 "Why do you beautify your way to seek
love?
Therefore you have also taught
The wicked women your ways.
34 Also on your skirts is found
[y]The blood of the lives of the poor
innocents.
I have not found it by secret search,
But plainly on all these things.
35 [z]Yet you say, 'Because I am innocent,
Surely His anger shall turn from me.'
Behold, [a]I will plead My case against
you,
[b]Because you say, 'I have not sinned.'
36 [c]Why do you gad about so much to
change your way?
Also [d]you shall be ashamed of Egypt
[e]as you were ashamed of Assyria.
37 Indeed you will go forth from him
With your hands on [f]your head;
For the LORD has rejected your trusted
allies,
And you will [g]not prosper by them.

Israel Is Shameless

3 "They say, 'If a man divorces his wife,
And she goes from him
And becomes another man's,
[a]May he return to her again?'
Would not that [b]land be greatly
polluted?
But you have [c]played the harlot with
many lovers;
[d]Yet return to Me," says the LORD.

2 "Lift up your eyes to [e]the desolate
heights and see:
Where have you not lain *with men?*
[f]By the road you have sat for them
Like an Arabian in the wilderness;
[g]And you have polluted the land
With your harlotries and your
wickedness.
3 Therefore the [h]showers have been
withheld,
And there has been no latter rain.
You have had a [i]harlot's forehead;
You refuse to be ashamed.
4 Will you not from this time cry to Me,
'My Father, You *are* [j]the guide of [k]my
youth?
5 [l]Will He remain angry forever?
Will He keep it to the end?'

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camel who is in heat, vividly portraying Israel's lust for foreign gods.

2:32 ***Yet My people have forgotten Me.*** In the ancient world, those women who were not slaves normally possessed a variety of rings, bracelets, and ornaments made from gold, silver, or bronze. Many of these were exquisite in appearance and were frequently inlaid with semiprecious stones. Ornaments of this kind were commonly part of the wedding finery of a bride. The nation Israel, however, which was God's bride, had behaved in a completely unnatural fashion by presuming to forget the God to whom the people were so intimately bound by the Sinai covenant. In forgetting their God for so long a time they had actually rejected Him and His claims upon them, a prospect which Jeremiah found almost impossible to believe.

3:1 ***If a man divorces his wife.*** Deuteronomy 24:1–4 forbids a man to remarry his divorced wife if she has remarried and been divorced in the meantime. The implication is that the woman has been defiled by the second marriage. After forsaking God, Israel had taken many other lovers, that is, the nation worshiped many other gods. Yet the Lord in His mercy still extended His loving hand to His unfaithful bride.

3:3 ***showers . . . latter rain.*** There were two types of

2:25 [l] Jer. 18:12 [m] Jer. 3:13 **2:26** [n] Is. 28:7 **2:27** [o] Jer. 3:9 [p] Is. 26:16 **2:28** [q] Judg. 10:14 [r] Is. 45:20 [s] Jer. 11:13 **2:30** [t] Is. 9:13 [u] Jer. 5:3; 7:28 [v] Neh. 9:26 **2:31** [w] Deut. 32:15 **2:32** [x] Ps. 106:21 **2:34** [y] Ps. 106:38 **2:35** [z] Jer. 2:23, 29 [a] Jer. 2:9 [b] [Prov. 28:13] **2:36** [c] Hos. 5:13; 12:1 [d] Is. 30:3 [e] 2 Chr. 28:16 **2:37** [f] 2 Sam. 13:19 [g] Jer. 37:7–10 **3:1** [a] Deut. 24:1–4 [b] Jer. 2:7 [c] Ezek. 16:26 [d] [Zech. 1:3] **3:2** [e] Deut. 12:2 [f] Prov. 23:28 [g] Jer. 2:7 **3:3** [h] Lev. 26:19 [i] Zeph. 3:5 **3:4** [j] Prov. 2:17 [k] Jer. 2:2 **3:5** [l] [Is. 57:16]

Behold, you have spoken and done evil
things,
As you were able."

A Call to Repentance

6 The LORD said also to me in the days
of Josiah the king: "Have you seen what
[m]backsliding Israel has done? She has
[n]gone up on every high mountain and un-
der every green tree, and there played the
harlot. 7 [o]And I said, after she had done all
these *things*, 'Return to Me.' But she did not
return. And her treacherous [p]sister Judah
saw it. 8 Then I saw that [q]for all the causes
for which backsliding Israel had commit-
ted adultery, I had [r]put her away and given
her a certificate of divorce; [s]yet her treach-
erous sister Judah did not fear, but went
and played the harlot also. 9 So it came to
pass, through her casual harlotry, that she
[t]defiled the land and committed adultery
with [u]stones and trees. 10 And yet for all
this her treacherous sister Judah has not
turned to Me [v]with her whole heart, but in
pretense," says the LORD.

11 Then the LORD said to me, [w]"Backslid-
ing Israel has shown herself more right-
eous than treacherous Judah. 12 Go and
proclaim these words toward [x]the north,
and say:

'Return, backsliding Israel,' says the
LORD;
'I will not cause My anger to fall on
you.
For I *am* [y]merciful,' says the LORD;
'I will not remain angry forever.
13 [z]Only acknowledge your iniquity,
That you have transgressed against
the LORD your God,
And have [a]scattered your charms
To [b]alien deities [c]under every green
tree,
And you have not obeyed My voice,'
says the LORD.

14 "Return, O backsliding children," says
the LORD; [d]"for I am married to you. I will
take you, [e]one from a city and two from a
family, and I will bring you to [f]Zion. 15 And
I will give you [g]shepherds according to My
heart, who will [h]feed you with knowledge
and understanding.

16 "Then it shall come to pass, when you
are multiplied and [i]increased in the land in
those days," says the LORD, "that they will
say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of
the LORD.' [j]It shall not come to mind, nor
shall they remember it, nor shall they visit
it, nor shall it be made anymore.

17 "At that time Jerusalem shall be called
The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations
shall be gathered to it, [k]to the name of the
LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they
[l]follow the dictates of their evil hearts.

18 "In those days [m]the house of Judah
shall walk with the house of Israel, and
they shall come together out of the land of
[n]the north to [o]the land that I have given as
an inheritance to your fathers.

19 "But I said:

'How can I put you among the
children
And give you [p]a pleasant land,
A beautiful heritage of the hosts of
nations?'

"And I said:

'You shall call Me, [q]"My Father,"
And not turn away from Me.'
20 Surely, *as* a wife treacherously departs
from her husband,
So [r]have you dealt treacherously with
Me,
O house of Israel," says the LORD.

21 A voice was heard on [s]the desolate
heights,
Weeping *and* supplications of the
children of Israel.
For they have perverted their way;
They have forgotten the LORD their
God.

22 "Return, you backsliding
children,
And I will [t]heal your backslidings."

"Indeed we do come to You,
For You are the LORD our God.

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rain that fell in Israel in the spring from March to early April. These were vital for the fields and crops.

3:6 ***in the days of Josiah the king.*** The reign of Josiah (640–609 B.C.) followed the idolatrous reigns of Manasseh (697–642 B.C.) and Amon (642–640 B.C.).

3:8 ***backsliding Israel had committed adultery.*** Because of Israel's adultery, the Lord presented her with a certificate of divorce based on Deuteronomy 24:1–4. As a consequence, in 722 B.C. Israel was taken captive by Assyria, and Samaria was destroyed. Judah looked on but did not learn from Israel's example.

3:15 ***And I will give you shepherds.*** Throughout the Bible God provides shepherds for His people to watch over them, guide them, care for them, and lead them. From Moses in the Old Testament to Jesus in the New, God provides faithful, devoted leaders after His own heart.

3:16 ***when you are multiplied and increased.*** God ordained that His shepherds would lead Israel through a time of blessing, increase in numbers, and material prosperity.

3:19 ***give you a pleasant land.*** The possession of the land was always dependent on the covenant faithfulness of Israel to their God. The Lord's desire has always been to bless His people.

3:6 [m] Jer. 7:24 [n] Jer. 2:20 **3:7** [o] 2 Kin. 17:13 [p] Ezek. 16:47, 48 **3:8** [q] Ezek. 23:9 [r] 2 Kin. 17:6 [s] Ezek. 23:11 **3:9** [t] Jer. 2:7 [u] Jer. 2:27 **3:10** [v] Jer. 12:2 **3:11** [w] Ezek. 16:51, 52 **3:12** [x] 2 Kin. 17:6 [y] Ps. 86:15 **3:13** [z] Deut. 30:1, 2 [a] Ezek. 16:15 [b] Jer. 2:25 [c] Deut. 12:2 **3:14** [d] Hos. 2:19, 20 [e] Jer. 31:6 [f] [Rom. 11:5] **3:15** [g] Eph. 4:11 [h] Acts 20:28 **3:16** [i] Is. 49:19 [j] Is. 65:17 **3:17** [k] Is. 60:9 [l] Deut. 29:19; Jer. 7:24 **3:18** [m] Is. 11:13 [n] Jer. 31:8 [o] Amos 9:15 **3:19** [p] Ps. 106:24 [q] Is. 63:16 **3:20** [r] Is. 48:8 **3:21** [s] Is. 15:2 **3:22** [t] Hos. 6:1; 14:4

23 [u]Truly, in vain *is salvation hoped for*
from the hills,
And from the multitude of mountains;
[v]Truly, in the LORD our God
Is the salvation of Israel.
24 [w]For shame has devoured
The labor of our fathers from our
youth—
Their flocks and their herds,
Their sons and their daughters.
25 We lie down in our shame,
And our reproach covers us.
[x]For we have sinned against the LORD
our God,
We and our fathers,
From our youth even to this day,
And [y]have not obeyed the voice of the
LORD our God."

4 "If you will return, O Israel," says the
LORD,
[a]"Return to Me;
And if you will put away your
abominations out of My sight,
Then you shall not be moved.
2 [b]And you shall swear, 'The LORD lives,'
[c]In truth, in judgment, and in
righteousness;
[d]The nations shall bless themselves in
Him,
And in Him they shall [e]glory."

3For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem:

[f]"Break up your fallow ground,
And [g]do not sow among thorns.
4 [h]Circumcise yourselves to the LORD,
And take away the foreskins of your
hearts,
You men of Judah and inhabitants of
Jerusalem,
Lest My fury come forth like fire,
And burn so that no one can quench *it*,
Because of the evil of your doings."

An Imminent Invasion

5Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say:

[i]"Blow the trumpet in the land;
Cry, 'Gather together,'
And say, [i]'Assemble yourselves,
And let us go into the fortified cities.'
6 Set up the standard toward Zion.
Take refuge! Do not delay!
For I will bring disaster from the
[k]north,
And great destruction."

7 [l]The lion has come up from his
thicket,
And [m]the destroyer of nations is on
his way.
He has gone forth from his place
[n]To make your land desolate.
Your cities will be laid waste,
Without inhabitant.
8 For this, [o]clothe yourself with
sackcloth,
Lament and wail.
For the fierce anger of the LORD
Has not turned back from us.

9 "And it shall come to pass in that day,"
says the LORD,
"*That* the heart of the king shall
perish,
And the heart of the princes;
The priests shall be astonished,
And the prophets shall wonder."

10 Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD!
[p]Surely You have greatly deceived this
people and Jerusalem,
[q]Saying, 'You shall have peace,'
Whereas the sword reaches to the
heart."

11 At that time it will be said
To this people and to Jerusalem,
[r]"A dry wind of the desolate heights
blows in the wilderness
Toward the daughter of My people—
Not to fan or to cleanse—
12 A wind too strong for these will come
for Me;
Now [s]I will also speak judgment
against them."

3:23 ***from the multitude of mountains.*** The mountains were centers of idol worship and thus were strongholds of falsehood. True salvation or deliverance could be found only in the true God of Israel.

4:2 ***The LORD lives.*** This phrase was regularly used in oaths. When spoken by those faithful to the covenant, it should have been a sign of truth, judgment, and righteousness. Failure to be willing to owe God their faithfulness and worship brought terrible consequences to Israel, the northern kingdom, and then to Judah, and resulted in failure of the nations to be converted as well. Because Israel would not give glory to God, the rest of the world could not.

4:4 ***Circumcise yourselves to the LORD.*** Circumcision was a sign of the covenant relationship between Israel and God (Gen. 17:10–14). The intent of God was always that the outward symbol should be a sign of a reality of total devotion to Him (Deut. 10:12–21).

4:5 ***Blow the trumpet in the land.*** Jeremiah announced the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem with the alarming sound of a trumpet, literally a shofar made of a ram's horn. This was the instrument used to sound the alarm when an enemy attacked a city.

4:7 ***from his thicket.*** Destruction would come as a terrible surprise, like a lion hiding and then pouncing on its prey. The desolation of the land and the deportation of the people would be the result.

4:8 ***clothe yourself with sackcloth.*** This material was a rough-textured fabric that was worn as a sign of mourning or distress (6:21).

3:23 [u] Ps. 121:1, 2 [v] Ps. 3:8 **3:24** [w] Hos. 9:10
3:25 [x] Ezra 9:6, 7 [y] Jer. 22:21 **4:1** [a] Joel 2:12
4:2 [b] Deut. 10:20 [c] Zech. 8:8 [d] [Gen. 22:18] [e] 1 Cor. 1:31
4:3 [f] Hos. 10:12 [g] Matt. 13:7 **4:4** [h] Deut. 10:16; 30:6
4:5 [i] Hos. 8:1 [j] Jer. 8:14 **4:6** [k] Jer. 1:13–15; 6:1, 22; 50:17
4:7 [l] Dan. 7:4 [m] Jer. 25:9 [n] Is. 1:7; 6:11 **4:8** [o] Is. 22:12
4:10 [p] Ezek. 14:9 [q] Jer. 5:12; 14:13 **4:11** [r] Hos. 13:15
4:12 [s] Jer. 1:16

13 "Behold, he shall come up like clouds,
And [t]his chariots like a whirlwind.
[u]His horses are swifter than eagles.
Woe to us, for we are plundered!"

14 O Jerusalem, [v]wash your heart from wickedness,
That you may be saved.
How long shall your evil thoughts lodge within you?

15 For a voice declares [w]from Dan
And proclaims affliction from Mount Ephraim:

16 "Make mention to the nations,
Yes, proclaim against Jerusalem,
That watchers come from a [x]far country
And raise their voice against the cities of Judah.

17 [y]Like keepers of a field they are against her all around,
Because she has been rebellious against Me," says the LORD.

18 "Your[z] ways and your doings
Have procured these *things* for you.
This *is* your wickedness,
Because it is bitter,
Because it reaches to your heart."

Sorrow for the Doomed Nation

19 O my [a]soul, my soul!
I am pained in my very heart!
My heart makes a noise in me;
I cannot hold my peace,
Because you have heard, O my soul,
The sound of the trumpet,
The alarm of war.

20 [b]Destruction upon destruction is cried,
For the whole land is plundered.
Suddenly [c]my tents are plundered,
And my curtains in a moment.

21 How long will I see the standard,
And hear the sound of the trumpet?

22 "For My people *are* foolish,
They have not known Me.
They *are* silly children,
And they have no understanding.
[d]They *are* wise to do evil,
But to do good they have no knowledge."

23 [e]I beheld the earth, and indeed *it was* [f]without form, and void;
And the heavens, they *had* no light.

24 [g]I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled,
And all the hills moved back and forth.

25 I beheld, and indeed *there was* no man,
And [h]all the birds of the heavens had fled.

26 I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land *was* a [i]wilderness,
And all its cities were broken down
At the presence of the LORD,
By His fierce anger.

27 For thus says the LORD:

"The whole land shall be desolate;
[j]Yet I will not make a full end.

28 For this [k]shall the earth mourn,
And [l]the heavens above be black,
Because I have spoken.
I have [m]purposed and [n]will not relent,
Nor will I turn back from it.

29 The whole city shall flee from the noise of the horsemen and bowmen.
They shall go into thickets and climb up on the rocks.
Every city *shall be* forsaken,
And not a man shall dwell in it.

30 "And *when* you *are* plundered,
What will you do?
Though you clothe yourself with crimson,
Though you adorn *yourself* with ornaments of gold,
[o]Though you enlarge your eyes with paint,
In vain you will make yourself fair;
[p]*Your* lovers will despise you;
They will seek your life.

4:13 ***Behold, he shall come up like clouds.*** Judah had become the foe of God, and He would use the nation's international foes to discipline the nation. The imagery of clouds and chariots like a whirlwind portrays the thoroughness and swiftness of God's judgment.

4:15 ***Dan . . . Mount Ephraim.*** Dan was the most northern tribe of Israel. Ephraim was the southernmost region of the northern kingdom of Israel. The message is that just as Israel had been subjugated, Judah was also in danger.

4:19 ***my soul, my soul.*** "Soul" here means *bowels* or *belly,* a reference to the internal organs. In ancient Middle Eastern thought, the internal organs were the seat of emotions and feelings. The phrase describes Jeremiah's anguish over the destruction of Jerusalem.

4:23 ***it was without form, and void.*** This Hebrew phrase is the same one used in Genesis 1:2 to describe the chaos before the ordering of the cosmos. ***no light.*** The prophets spoke of darkness as part of God's judgment on the world. Here the lack of light describes the disastrous effects of sin on creation, particularly on the land of Judah.

4:24 ***they trembled.*** The symbols of stability and of strength would be shaken as by an earthquake. Birds would disappear as Hosea had proclaimed (Hos. 4:3). In Genesis 1, the creation of the birds of the heavens depicts the fulfillment of the creative process. In Jeremiah and Hosea, the removal of the birds symbolizes the reversal of creation.

4:28 ***the heavens above be black.*** The dark skies are associated with God's judgment.

4:13 [t] Is. 5:28 [u] Deut. 28:49 **4:14** [v] James 4:8 **4:15** [w] Jer. 8:16; 50:17 **4:16** [x] Is. 39:3 **4:17** [y] 2 Kin. 25:1, 4 **4:18** [z] Is. 50:1 **4:19** [a] Is. 15:5; 16:11; 21:3; 22:4 **4:20** [b] Ezek. 7:26 [c] Jer. 10:20 **4:22** [d] Rom. 16:19 **4:23** [e] Is. 24:19 [f] Gen. 1:2 **4:24** [g] Ezek. 38:20 **4:25** [h] Zeph. 1:3 **4:26** [i] Jer. 9:10 **4:27** [j] Jer. 5:10, 18; 30:11; 46:28 **4:28** [k] Hos. 4:3 [l] Is. 5:30; 50:3 [m] [Dan. 4:35] [n] [Num. 23:19] **4:30** [o] 2 Kin. 9:30 [p] Jer. 22:20, 22

31 "For I have heard a voice as of a woman
in labor,
The anguish as of her who brings
forth her first child,
The voice of the daughter of Zion
bewailing herself;
She [q]spreads her hands, *saying,*
'Woe *is* me now, for my soul is weary
Because of murderers!'

The Justice of God's Judgment

5 "Run to and fro through the streets of
Jerusalem;
See now and know;
And seek in her open places
[a]If you can find a man,
[b]If there is *anyone* who executes
judgment,
Who seeks the truth,
[c]And I will pardon her.
2 [d]Though they say, '*As* [e]the LORD lives,'
Surely they [f]swear falsely."

3 O LORD, *are* not [g]Your eyes on the
truth?
You have [h]stricken them,
But they have not grieved;
You have consumed them,
But [i]they have refused to receive
correction.
They have made their faces harder
than rock;
They have refused to return.

4 Therefore I said, "Surely these *are* poor.
They are foolish;
For [j]they do not know the way of the
LORD,
The judgment of their God.
5 I will go to the great men and speak to
them,
For [k]they have known the way of the
LORD,
The judgment of their God."
But these have altogether [l]broken the
yoke
And burst the bonds.

6 Therefore [m]a lion from the forest shall
slay them,
[n]A wolf of the deserts shall destroy them;
[o]A leopard will watch over their cities.
Everyone who goes out from there
shall be torn in pieces,
Because their transgressions are many;
Their backslidings have increased.

7 "How shall I pardon you for this?
Your children have forsaken Me
And [p]sworn by *those* [q]*that are* not
gods.
[r]When I had fed them to the full,
Then they committed adultery
And assembled themselves by troops
in the harlots' houses.
8 [s]They were *like* well-fed lusty stallions;
Every one neighed after his neighbor's
wife.
9 Shall I not punish *them* for these
things?" says the LORD.
"And shall I not [t]avenge Myself on such
a nation as this?

10 "Go up on her walls and destroy,
But do not make a [u]complete end.
Take away her branches,
For they *are* not the LORD's.
11 For [v]the house of Israel and the house
of Judah
Have dealt very treacherously with
Me," says the LORD.

12 [w]They have lied about the LORD,
And said, [x]"*It is* not He.
[y]Neither will evil come upon us,
Nor shall we see sword or famine.
13 And the prophets become wind,
For the word *is* not in them.
Thus shall it be done to them."

14 Therefore thus says the LORD God of
hosts:

"Because you speak this word,
[z]Behold, I will make My words in your
mouth fire,
And this people wood,
And it shall devour them.

5:1 ***anyone who executes judgment.*** Similar to Abraham's plea that Sodom be saved on account of the few faithful people among its inhabitants (Gen. 18:16–33), so Jeremiah summoned the people to search the city of Jerusalem for one just and righteous person.

5:3 ***they have refused to receive correction.*** The Hebrew term translated *correction* means "chastisement" or "discipline." Sometimes it means "instruction." In the Prophets, it generally refers to God's attempt to teach His children faithfulness by means of discipline or punishment (7:28). But despite the words of Jeremiah and other prophets, Israel refused "correction" and continued down the path of self-destruction.

5:5 ***broken the yoke.*** Jeremiah paints a picture of Judah as oxen that are wandering aimlessly through the field, guided by their own desires. They are exposed to the elements and the wild animals of the forest and desert.

5:7 ***they committed adultery.*** The prophets generally refer to cultic prostitution as adultery. Such immoral behavior violated covenant law (Ex. 20:14) and set in motion the curses of the covenant.

5:9 ***Shall I not punish them for these things?*** The Hebrew word translated *punish* (9:9), literally meaning "to visit," can be used of the visitation of God in mercy (Ps. 65:9) or in wrath. Here it clearly refers to wrath.

5:13 ***the prophets become wind.*** False prophets like Hananiah (28:11) had foretold a time of peace

4:31 [q] Lam. 1:17 **5:1** [a] Ezek. 22:30 [b] Gen. 18:23–32 [c] Gen. 18:26 **5:2** [d] Titus 1:16 [e] Jer. 4:2 [f] Jer. 7:9 **5:3** [g] [2 Chr. 16:9] [h] Is. 1:5; 9:13 [i] Zeph. 3:2 **5:4** [j] Jer. 8:7 **5:5** [k] Mic. 3:1 [l] Ps. 2:3 **5:6** [m] Jer. 4:7 [n] Zeph. 3:3 [o] Hos. 13:7 **5:7** [p] Zeph. 1:5 [q] Deut. 32:21 [r] Deut. 32:15 **5:8** [s] Ezek. 22:11 **5:9** [t] Jer. 9:9 **5:10** [u] Jer. 4:27 **5:11** [v] Jer. 3:6, 7, 20 **5:12** [w] 2 Chr. 36:16 [x] Jer. 23:17 [y] Jer. 14:13 **5:14** [z] Jer. 1:9; 23:29

15 Behold, I will bring a [a]nation against you [b]from afar,
O house of Israel," says the LORD.
"It *is* a mighty nation,
It *is* an ancient nation,
A nation whose language you do not know,
Nor can you understand what they say.
16 Their quiver *is* like an open tomb;
They *are* all mighty men.
17 And they shall eat up your [c]harvest and your bread,
Which your sons and daughters should eat.
They shall eat up your flocks and your herds;
They shall eat up your vines and your fig trees;
They shall destroy your fortified cities,
In which you trust, with the sword.

18 "Nevertheless in those days," says the LORD, "I [d]will not make a complete end of you. 19 And it will be when you say, [e]'Why does the LORD our God do all these *things* to us?' then you shall answer them, 'Just as you have [f]forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so [g]you shall serve aliens in a land *that is* not yours.'

20 "Declare this in the house of Jacob
And proclaim it in Judah, saying,
21 'Hear this now, O [h]foolish people,
Without understanding,
Who have eyes and see not,
And who have ears and hear not:
22 [i]Do you not fear Me?' says the LORD.
'Will you not tremble at My presence,
Who have placed the sand as the [j]bound of the sea,
By a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass beyond it?
And though its waves toss to and fro,
Yet they cannot prevail;
Though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it.
23 But this people has a defiant and rebellious heart;
They have revolted and departed.
24 They do not say in their heart,
"Let us now fear the LORD our God,
[k]Who gives rain, both the [l]former and the latter, in its season.
[m]He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest."
25 [n]Your iniquities have turned these *things* away,
And your sins have withheld good from you.

26 'For among My people are found wicked *men;*
They [o]lie in wait as one who sets snares;
They set a trap;
They catch men.
27 As a cage is full of birds,
So their houses *are* full of deceit.
Therefore they have become great and grown rich.
28 They have grown [p]fat, they are sleek;
Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked;
They do not plead [q]the cause,
The cause of the fatherless;
[r]Yet they prosper,
And the right of the needy they do not defend.
29 [s]Shall I not punish *them* for these *things*?' says the LORD.
'Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?'

30 "An astonishing and [t]horrible thing
Has been committed in the land:
31 The prophets prophesy [u]falsely,
And the priests rule by their *own* power;
And My people [v]love *to have it* so.
But what will you do in the end?

Impending Destruction from the North

6 "O you children of Benjamin,
Gather yourselves to flee from the midst of Jerusalem!
Blow the trumpet in Tekoa,
And set up a signal-fire in [a]Beth Haccerem;
[b]For disaster appears out of the north,
And great destruction.
2 I have likened the daughter of Zion
To a lovely and delicate woman.

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and deliverance from the domination and destructiveness of their enemies. But their word was like an empty breeze. The very sword they denied would seal their fate.

5:17 *they shall eat up.* The word devour is used four times in this verse to paint an image of the enemy as consuming field, flock, and fortifications.

5:20 *house of Jacob.* Even after the northern kingdom had been destroyed, the prophets still spoke of Israel. There was not a complete destruction of the northern tribes, as is commonly thought.

5:26–28 *wicked men.* Those responsible for the welfare of the whole populace had abused their positions by exploiting the lesser elements of Israelite society. The picture presented is one of birds, or the poor, being ensnared by great men who were building wealth at the expense of orphans and the needy (Deut. 10:18).

5:31 *prophets . . . priests.* The deterioration of the leadership of the land reached the very people who were supposed to be the mainstays of righteousness among the people. Both offices had succumbed to the temptation of abusing their power, rejecting their responsible roles as messengers and servants of God.

5:15 [a] Deut. 28:49 [b] Jer. 4:16 **5:17** [c] Lev. 26:16
5:18 [d] Jer. 30:11 **5:19** [e] Deut. 29:24–29 [f] Jer. 1:16; 2:13
[g] Deut. 28:48 **5:21** [h] Matt. 13:14 **5:22** [i] [Rev. 15:4]
[j] Job 26:10 **5:24** [k] Acts 14:17 [l] Joel 2:23 [m] [Gen. 8:22]
5:25 [n] Jer. 3:3 **5:26** [o] Hab. 1:15 **5:28** [p] Deut. 32:15
[q] Zech. 7:10 [r] Job 12:6 **5:29** [s] Mal. 3:5 **5:30** [t] Hos. 6:10
5:31 [u] Ezek. 13:6 [v] Mic. 2:11 **6:1** [a] Neh. 3:14 [b] Jer. 4:6

3 The [c]shepherds with their flocks shall
come to her.
They shall pitch *their* tents against her
all around.
Each one shall pasture in his own
place."

4 "Prepare[d] war against her;
Arise, and let us go up [e]at noon.
Woe to us, for the day goes away,
For the shadows of the evening are
lengthening.
5 Arise, and let us go by night,
And let us destroy her palaces."

6 For thus has the LORD of hosts said:

"Cut down trees,
And build a mound against Jerusalem.
This *is* the city to be punished.
She *is* full of oppression in her midst.
7 [f]As a fountain wells up with water,
So she wells up with her wickedness.
[g]Violence and plundering are heard in
her.
Before Me continually *are* grief and
wounds.
8 Be instructed, O Jerusalem,
Lest [h]My soul depart from you;
Lest I make you desolate,
A land not inhabited."

9 Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"They shall thoroughly glean as a vine
the remnant of Israel;
As a grape-gatherer, put your hand
back into the branches."

10 To whom shall I speak and give
warning,
That they may hear?
Indeed their [i]ear *is* uncircumcised,
And they cannot give heed.
Behold, [j]the word of the LORD is a
reproach to them;
They have no delight in it.
11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the
LORD.
[k]I am weary of holding *it* in.
"I will pour it out [l]on the children
outside,
And on the assembly of young men
together;
For even the husband shall be taken
with the wife,
The aged with *him who is* full of days.
12 And [m]their houses shall be turned over
to others,
Fields and wives together;
For I will stretch out My hand
Against the inhabitants of the land,"
says the LORD.
13 "Because from the least of them even to
the greatest of them,
Everyone *is* given to [n]covetousness;
And from the prophet even to the
[o]priest,
Everyone deals falsely.
14 They have also [p]healed the hurt of My
people slightly,
[q]Saying, 'Peace, peace!'
When *there is* no peace.
15 Were they [r]ashamed when they had
committed abomination?
No! They were not at all ashamed;
Nor did they know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those
who fall;
At the time I punish them,
They shall be cast down," says the
LORD.

16 Thus says the LORD:

"Stand in the ways and see,
And ask for the [s]old paths, where the
good way *is*,
And walk in it;
Then you will find [t]rest for your souls.
But they said, 'We will not walk *in it*.'
17 Also, I set [u]watchmen over you,
saying,
[v]'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!'
But they said, 'We will not listen.'
18 Therefore hear, you nations,
And know, O congregation, what *is*
among them.

6:4–5 *Prepare war against her.* Prepare can also be translated "make holy." It refers to ritual sanctification performed in preparation for battle. The words are overheard in the camps of the enemies who are about to come against Jerusalem. Sorcerers and diviners were called upon to perform sacrifices to determine the will of the gods and assure a successful outcome in battle.

6:6 *Cut down trees, and build a mound.* A siege mound was a ramp of wood, stone, and sand that sloped toward the wall of a city. Armored siege machines could go up the ramp and attack the city walls.

6:7 *Violence and plundering.* Jerusalem had once been a city that had peace, justice, and righteousness. Under the siege of the Babylonians in 588–586 B.C. conditions were unspeakable (see the Book of Lamentations).

6:11 *I am full of the fury of the LORD.* Jeremiah's own emotions reveal his identification with God's feelings about Judah. The prophet was both angry and weary with the entire nation, both young and old.

6:13 *Everyone is given to covetousness.* The accusation of covetousness suggests monetary gain by means of deception and fraud. Even those called to guide the nation in its covenant relationship had defrauded God and man.

6:15 *Nor did they know how to blush.* The people had lost all sense of what was right before God.

6:16–17 *old paths.* This phrase probably refers to

6:3 [c] 2 Kin. 25:1–4 **6:4** [d] Joel 3:9 [e] Jer. 15:8 **6:7** [f] Is. 57:20 [g] Ps. 55:9 **6:8** [h] Hos. 9:12 **6:10** [i] [Acts 7:51] [j] Jer. 8:9; 20:8 **6:11** [k] Jer. 20:9 [l] Jer. 9:21 **6:12** [m] Deut. 28:30 **6:13** [n] Is. 56:11; Jer. 8:10; 22:17 [o] Jer. 5:31; 23:11 **6:14** [p] Jer. 8:11–15 [q] Jer. 4:10; 23:17 **6:15** [r] Jer. 3:3; 8:12 **6:16** [s] Jer. 18:15 [t] Matt. 11:29 **6:17** [u] Hab. 2:1 [v] Deut. 4:1

19 [w]Hear, O earth!
Behold, I will certainly bring
[x]calamity on this people—
[y]The fruit of their thoughts,
Because they have not heeded My words
Nor My law, but rejected it.
20 [z]For what purpose to Me
Comes frankincense [a]from Sheba,
And [b]sweet cane from a far country?
[c]Your burnt offerings *are* not
acceptable,
Nor your sacrifices sweet to Me."

21 Therefore thus says the LORD:

"Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks
before this people,
And the fathers and the sons together
shall fall on them.
The neighbor and his friend shall
perish."

22 Thus says the LORD:

"Behold, a people comes from the
[d]north country,
And a great nation will be raised from
the farthest parts of the earth.
23 They will lay hold on bow and spear;
They *are* cruel and have no mercy;
Their voice [e]roars like the sea;
And they ride on horses,
As men of war set in array against
you, O daughter of Zion."

24 We have heard the report of it;
Our hands grow feeble.
[f]Anguish has taken hold of us,
Pain as of a woman in labor.
25 Do not go out into the field,
Nor walk by the way.
Because of the sword of the enemy,
Fear *is* on every side.
26 O daughter of my people,
[g]Dress in sackcloth
[h]And roll about in ashes!
[i]Make mourning *as for* an only son,
most bitter lamentation;
For the plunderer will suddenly come
upon us.

27 "I have set you *as* an assayer *and* [j]a
fortress among My people,
That you may know and test their way.
28 [k]They *are* all stubborn rebels, [l]walking
as slanderers.
They are [m]bronze and iron,
They *are* all corrupters;
29 The bellows blow fiercely,
The lead is consumed by the fire;
The smelter refines in vain,
For the wicked are not drawn off.
30 *People* will call them [n]rejected silver,
Because the LORD has rejected them."

Trusting in Lying Words

7 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2[a]"Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, all *you of* Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!'" 3Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: [b]"Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. 4[c]Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD *are* these.'

5"For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly [d]execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, 6*if* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, [e]or walk after other gods to your hurt, 7[f]then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in [g]the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.

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the Sinai covenant and the Book of Deuteronomy, as Jeremiah called the people back to former days of steadfast devotion.

6:20 ***Your burnt offerings are not acceptable.*** There is a common misconception that in the Old Testament, prior to the cross, God was primarily interested in outward and formal religious rites, such as circumcision, Sabbath-day observance, and animal sacrifices. Nothing could be more removed from the truth. In both Testaments, God is basically concerned with the attitudes of the heart (Deut. 10:6).

6:26 ***roll about in ashes.*** This action symbolically expressed sorrow and despair.

6:27 ***I have set you as an assayer.*** Jeremiah would act as the nation's assayer, the one who tests or evaluates quality or purity.

6:29–30 ***The smelter refines in vain.*** Jeremiah assesses Judah as a refiner purifies silver, using lead to remove impurities (9:7). The lead is consumed, so the dross in the silver ore cannot be purged. This results in the refiner discarding the ore because it is so impure that the smelting process is not worth the energy it takes. Similarly God rejects those whose wickedness cannot be refined.

7:2 ***Stand in the gate.*** The parallel in 26:2 suggests the proclamation was made in the outer court of the temple, where Jeremiah would have been guaranteed a large audience.

7:4 ***Do not trust in these lying words.*** Trust conveys the sense of security and confidence that the people had in their holy place. They believed that since God had chosen Jerusalem as His dwelling, had promised that a Davidic king would remain on the throne forever, and had delivered the city from attack in the days of Hezekiah and Isaiah, He would never allow the city or the temple to be destroyed. ***The temple of the LORD.*** The Israelites believed that the building guaranteed their security whether or not they obeyed the provisions of the covenant. This false hope was a lie (3:23; 7:9).

6:19 [w] Is. 1:2 [x] Jer. 19:3, 15 [y] Prov. 1:31 **6:20** [z] Mic. 6:6, 7 [a] Is. 60:6 [b] Is. 43:24 [c] Jer. 7:21–23 **6:22** [d] Jer. 1:15; 10:22; 50:41–43 **6:23** [e] Is. 5:30 **6:24** [f] Jer. 4:31; 13:21; 49:24 **6:26** [g] Jer. 4:8 [h] Mic. 1:10 [i] [Zech. 12:10] **6:27** [j] Jer. 1:18 **6:28** [k] Jer. 5:23 [l] Jer. 9:4 [m] Ezek. 22:18 **6:30** [n] Is. 1:22 **7:2** [a] Jer. 17:19; 26:2 **7:3** [b] Jer. 4:1; 18:11; 26:13 **7:4** [c] Mic. 3:11 **7:5** [d] Jer. 21:12; 22:3 **7:6** [e] Deut. 6:14, 15 **7:7** [f] Deut. 4:40 [g] Jer. 3:18

8 "Behold, you trust in [h]lying words that
cannot profit. 9 [i]Will you steal, murder,
commit adultery, swear falsely, burn in-
cense to Baal, and [j]walk after other gods
whom you do not know, 10 [k]and *then* come
and stand before Me in this house [l]which is
called by My name, and say, 'We are deliv-
ered to do all these abominations'? 11 Has
[m]this house, which is called by My name,
become a [n]den of thieves in your eyes? Be-
hold, I, even I, have seen *it*," says the LORD.
12 "But go now to [o]My place which *was*
in Shiloh, [p]where I set My name at the
first, and see [q]what I did to it because of
the wickedness of My people Israel. 13 And
now, because you have done all these
works," says the LORD, "and I spoke to you,
[r]rising up early and speaking, but you did
not hear, and I [s]called you, but you did not
answer, 14 therefore I will do to the house
which is called by My name, in which you
trust, and to this place which I gave to you
and your fathers, as I have done to [t]Shiloh.
15 And I will cast you out of My sight, [u]as I
have cast out all your brethren—[v]the whole
posterity of Ephraim.
16 "Therefore [w]do not pray for this peo-
ple, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor
make intercession to Me; [x]for I will not hear
you. 17 Do you not see what they do in the
cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusa-
lem? 18 [y]The children gather wood, the fa-
thers kindle the fire, and the women knead
dough, to make cakes for the queen of
heaven; and *they* [z]pour out drink offerings
to other gods, that they may provoke Me
to anger. 19 [a]Do they provoke Me to anger?"
says the LORD. "*Do they* not *provoke* them-
selves, to the shame of their own faces?"
20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
"Behold, My anger and My fury will be
poured out on this place—on man and on
beast, on the trees of the field and on the
fruit of the ground. And it will burn and
not be quenched."
21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God
of Israel: [b]"Add your burnt offerings to your
sacrifices and eat meat. 22 [c]For I did not
speak to your fathers, or command them in
the day that I brought them out of the land
of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or
sacrifices. 23 But this is what I commanded
them, saying, [d]'Obey My voice, and [e]I will
be your God, and you shall be My people.
And walk in all the ways that I have com-
manded you, that it may be well with you.'
24 [f]Yet they did not obey or incline their ear,
but [g]followed the counsels *and* the dictates
of their evil hearts, and [h]went backward
and not forward. 25 Since the day that your
fathers came out of the land of Egypt un-
til this day, I have even [i]sent to you all My
servants the prophets, daily rising up early
and sending *them*. 26 [j]Yet they did not obey
Me or incline their ear, but [k]stiffened their
neck. [l]They did worse than their fathers.
27 "Therefore [m]you shall speak all these
words to them, but they will not obey you.
You shall also call to them, but they will
not answer you.

Judgment on Obscene Religion

28 "So you shall say to them, 'This *is* a
nation that does not obey the voice of the

7:10 ***stand before Me.*** This means "to place (oneself) in submissive service to someone." Entering the temple of God in such a manner, while worshiping other gods, was incomprehensible. Furthermore, for the people to think that they were secure enough to perform perverted abominations was the ultimate hypocrisy.

7:11 ***den of thieves.*** Like thieves hiding in a cave for safety, Judah attempted to hide behind the sanctuary of the temple for protection from the divine hand of judgment. But the Lord had seen the hypocrisy of Israel's ways. Jesus quoted this verse when He cleansed the second temple (Matt. 21:13).

7:16 ***do not pray for this people.*** God's instruction to Jeremiah indicates the extreme depravity of Jerusalem's inhabitants (11:14; 14:11). No manner of intercession was to be made on behalf of Judah. God would not hear Jeremiah's appeals.

7:18 ***the queen of heaven.*** This is a reference to the goddess Ishtar, who was worshiped in open-air cultic centers throughout the eastern Mediterranean region and Mesopotamia. Worship of Ishtar involved the preparation of special cakes that bore the goddess's image, as well as drink offerings (44:19). The family cooperation in the idolatrous worship of Ishtar stood in direct opposition to the covenant demands that a father instruct his children in the ways of the Lord (Deut. 6:4–9).

7:21 ***Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices.*** Because the people had missed the true meaning of the Lord's worship, they could multiply their offerings as much as they liked and it would do them no good. The Lord cared for none of their sacrifices. To Him they were simply meat.

7:23 ***that it may be well with you.*** God required that His people obey His voice. Obedience would bring blessing. When the prophets lashed out against sacrifice, it was not against the sacrificial system as God had established it, but against the corruption of that system as the people practiced it. The same thing is found in the New Testament passages that seemingly speak against the law. Both the New Testament writers and the Hebrew prophets denounce the abuses of divine systems in human hands.

7:26 ***or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck.*** These phrases suggest a cold rebuff to the will and work of God. Jeremiah, like Isaiah before him (Is. 6:9–10), was told that the people would not respond to his message.

7:8 [h] Jer. 5:31; 14:13, 14 **7:9** [i] 1 Kin. 18:21 [j] Ex. 20:3 **7:10** [k] Ezek. 23:39 [l] Jer. 7:11, 14; 32:34; 34:15 **7:11** [m] Is. 56:7 [n] Matt. 21:13 **7:12** [o] Josh. 18:1 [p] Deut. 12:11 [q] 1 Sam. 4:10 **7:13** [r] 2 Chr. 36:15 [s] Prov. 1:24 **7:14** [t] 1 Sam. 4:10, 11 **7:15** [u] 2 Kin. 17:23 [v] Ps. 78:67 **7:16** [w] Ex. 32:10; Jer. 11:14 [x] Jer. 15:1 **7:18** [y] Jer. 44:17 [z] Jer. 19:13 **7:19** [a] Deut. 32:16, 21 **7:21** [b] Jer. 6:20 **7:22** [c] [Hos. 6:6] **7:23** [d] Deut. 6:3 [e] [Ex. 19:5, 6] **7:24** [f] Ps. 81:11 [g] Deut. 29:19 [h] Jer. 32:33 **7:25** [i] 2 Chr. 36:15 **7:26** [j] Jer. 11:8 [k] Neh. 9:17 [l] Jer. 16:12 **7:27** [m] Ezek. 2:7

LORD their God [n]nor receive correction.
[o]Truth has perished and has been cut off
from their mouth. 29[p]Cut off your hair and
cast *it* away, and take up a lamentation on
the desolate heights; for the LORD has re-
jected and forsaken the generation of His
wrath.' 30For the children of Judah have
done evil in My sight," says the LORD.
[q]"They have set their abominations in
the house which is called by My name, to
pollute it. 31And they have built the [r]high
places of Tophet, which *is* in the Valley of
the Son of Hinnom, to [s]burn their sons
and their daughters in the fire, [t]which I
did not command, nor did it come into My
heart.

32"Therefore behold, [u]the days are coming," says the LORD, "when it will no more be called Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; [v]for they will bury in Tophet until there is no room. 33The [w]corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. And no one will frighten *them away.* 34Then I will cause to [x]cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. For [y]the land shall be desolate.

8 "At that time," says the LORD, "they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves. 2They shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked, which they have sought and [a]which they have worshiped. They shall not be gathered [b]nor buried; they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth. 3Then [c]death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of those who remain of this evil family, who remain in all the places where I have driven them," says the LORD of hosts.

The Peril of False Teaching

4"Moreover you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD:

"Will they fall and not rise?
Will one turn away and not return?
5 Why has this people [d]slidden back,
Jerusalem, in a perpetual
backsliding?
[e]They hold fast to deceit,
[f]They refuse to return.
6 [g]I listened and heard,
But they do not speak aright.
[h]No man repented of his wickedness,
Saying, 'What have I done?'
Everyone turned to his own course,
As the horse rushes into the battle.
7 "Even [i]the stork in the heavens
Knows her appointed times;
And the turtledove, the swift, and the
swallow
Observe the time of their coming.
But [j]My people do not know the
judgment of the LORD.
8 "How can you say, 'We *are* wise,
[k]And the law of the LORD *is* with us'?
Look, the false pen of the scribe
certainly works falsehood.
9 [l]The wise men are ashamed,
They are dismayed and taken.
Behold, they have rejected the word of
the LORD;
So [m]what wisdom do they have?
10 Therefore [n]I will give their wives to
others,
And their fields to those who will
inherit *them;*
Because from the least even to the
greatest
Everyone is given to [o]covetousness;
From the prophet even to the priest
Everyone deals falsely.
11 For they have [p]healed the hurt of the
daughter of My people slightly,
Saying, [q]'Peace, peace!'
When *there is* no peace.
12 Were they [r]ashamed when they had
committed abomination?
No! They were not at all ashamed,
Nor did they know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those
who fall;
In the time of their punishment
They shall be cast down," says the
LORD.

7:29 ***Cut off your hair.*** This practice was a way of expressing mourning and grief. The act may also have symbolized that Judah had rejected the covenant relationship just as if they had broken a Nazirite vow, a sign of personal devotion that required the hair not to be cut (Num. 6:1–21).

7:33 ***corpses of this people.*** Unburied corpses left to the elements and animals were regarded as a horrible desecration in the ancient Middle East.

8:1–3 ***the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven.*** The gods and goddesses to whom Jerusalem looked for deliverance would stand over the people's desecrated corpses, which are pictured here as dung. Those who survived the siege and attack as exiles and slaves would prefer death over life.

8:7 ***appointed times.*** Whereas the birds follow their instincts to migrate, the people of Israel refused to follow God's promptings to obey His covenant. Note that God still refers to the people of Judah as "my people" even though they continued to rebel against Him.

7:28 [n] Jer. 5:3 [o] Jer. 9:3 **7:29** [p] Mic. 1:16 **7:30** [q] Dan. 9:27; 11:31 **7:31** [r] 2 Kin. 23:10 [s] Ps. 106:38 [t] Deut. 17:3 **7:32** [u] Jer. 19:6 [v] 2 Kin. 23:10 **7:33** [w] Jer. 9:22; 19:11 **7:34** [x] Is. 24:7, 8 [y] Lev. 26:33 **8:2** [a] 2 Kin. 23:5 [b] Jer. 22:19 **8:3** [c] Rev. 9:6 **8:5** [d] Jer. 7:24 [e] Jer. 9:6 [f] Jer. 5:3 **8:6** [g] Ps. 14:2 [h] Mic. 7:2 **8:7** [i] Song 2:12 [j] Jer. 5:4; 9:3 **8:8** [k] Rom. 2:17 **8:9** [l] Jer. 6:15 [m] Jer. 4:22 **8:10** [n] Deut. 28:30 [o] Is. 56:11; 57:17 **8:11** [p] Jer. 6:14 [q] Ezek. 13:10 **8:12** [r] Jer. 3:3; 6:15

13 "I will surely consume them," says the LORD.
"No grapes *shall be* [s]on the vine,
Nor figs on the [t]fig tree,
And the leaf shall fade;
And *the things* I have given them shall
[u]pass away from them."'"

14 "Why do we sit still?
[v]Assemble yourselves,
And let us enter the fortified cities,
And let us be silent there.
For the LORD our God has put us to silence
And given us [w]water of gall to drink,
Because we have sinned against the LORD.

15 "*We* [x]looked for peace, but no good *came;*
And for a time of health, and there was trouble!
16 The snorting of His horses was heard from [y]Dan.
The whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of His [z]strong ones;
For they have come and devoured the land and all that is in it,
The city and those who dwell in it."

17 "For behold, I will send serpents among you,
Vipers which cannot be [a]charmed,
And they shall bite you," says the LORD.

The Prophet Mourns for the People

18 I would comfort myself in sorrow;
My heart *is* faint in me.
19 Listen! The voice,
The cry of the daughter of my people
From [b]a far country:
"*Is* not the LORD in Zion?
Is not her King in her?"

"Why have they provoked Me to anger
With their carved images—
With foreign idols?"

20 "The harvest is past,
The summer is ended,
And we are not saved!"

21 [c]For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am hurt.
I am [d]mourning;
Astonishment has taken hold of me.
22 *Is there* no [e]balm in Gilead,
Is there no physician there?
Why then is there no recovery
For the health of the daughter of my people?

9 Oh, [a]that my head were waters,
And my eyes a fountain of tears,
That I might weep day and night
For the slain of the daughter of my people!
2 Oh, that I had in the wilderness
A lodging place for travelers;
That I might leave my people,
And go from them!
For [b]they *are* all adulterers,
An assembly of treacherous men.

3 "And *like* their bow [c]they have bent their tongues *for* lies.
They are not valiant for the truth on the earth.
For they proceed from [d]evil to evil,
And they [e]do not know Me," says the LORD.
4 "Everyone[f] take heed to his neighbor,
And do not trust any brother;
For every brother will utterly supplant,
And every neighbor will [g]walk with slanderers.
5 Everyone will [h]deceive his neighbor,
And will not speak the truth;
They have taught their tongue to speak lies;
They weary themselves to commit iniquity.
6 Your dwelling place *is* in the midst of deceit;
Through deceit they refuse to know Me," says the LORD.

7 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts:

"Behold, [i]I will refine them and try them;
[j]For how shall I deal with the daughter of My people?

8:17 ***I will send serpents among you.*** Judgment by means of poisonous snakes is described in Numbers 21:6.

8:20 ***harvest is past.*** This proverb reflects the sense of helplessness in the early fall. The harvest was meager and the oppression persisted. Even Jeremiah was deeply hurt—this translates a Hebrew word derived from the verb meaning "to break," "to shatter"; in other words, the prophet's spirit was broken over the fate of his people.

8:22 ***Is there no balm in Gilead.*** The region of Gilead was known for its balsam ointment (Gen. 37:25). There is no healing, physical or spiritual, for a people intent on rebelling against God.

9:1 ***my eyes a fountain of tears.*** Jeremiah, who is known as the "weeping prophet," identified personally with the suffering of his people. Here he expresses his desire for a reserve of tears that would flow without stopping.

9:3 ***like their bow they have bent their tongues.*** Once falseness takes hold in a community or nation, it seems to pervade every area of life. Such a condition is what Jeremiah describes here. There was falsity in every relation. There was a lack of fidelity and trust.

9:4 ***Everyone take heed to his neighbor.*** The personal affairs of the people were characterized by

8:13 [s] Joel 1:17 [t] Matt. 21:19 [u] Deut. 28:39, 40 **8:14** [v] Jer. 4:5 [w] Jer. 9:15 **8:15** [x] Jer. 14:19 **8:16** [y] Jer. 4:15 [z] Jer. 47:3 **8:17** [a] Ps. 58:4, 5 **8:19** [b] Is. 39:3 **8:21** [c] Jer. 9:1 [d] Joel 2:6 **8:22** [e] Jer. 46:11 **9:1** [a] Is. 22:4 **9:2** [b] Jer. 5:7, 8; 23:10 **9:3** [c] Ps. 64:3 [d] Jer. 4:22; 13:23 [e] 1 Sam. 2:12 **9:4** [f] Mic. 7:5, 6 [g] Jer. 6:28 **9:5** [h] Is. 59:4 **9:7** [i] Is. 1:25 [j] Hos. 11:8

8 Their tongue *is* an arrow shot out;
It speaks [k]deceit;
One speaks [l]peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth,
But in his heart he lies in wait.
9 [m]Shall I not punish them for these *things*?" says the LORD.
"Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?"

10 I will take up a weeping and wailing for the mountains,
And [n]for the dwelling places of the wilderness a lamentation,
Because they are burned up,
So that no one can pass through;
Nor can *men* hear the voice of the cattle.
[o]Both the birds of the heavens and the beasts have fled;
They are gone.

11 "I will make Jerusalem [p]a heap of ruins, [q]a den of jackals.
I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant."

12 [r]Who *is* the wise man who may understand this? And *who is he* to whom the mouth of the LORD has spoken, that he may declare it? Why does the land perish *and* burn up like a wilderness, so that no one can pass through?
13 And the LORD said, "Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have [s]not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, 14 but they have [t]walked according to the dictates of their own hearts and after the Baals, [u]which their fathers taught them," 15 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will [v]feed them, this people, [w]with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. 16 I will [x]scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. [y]And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them."

The People Mourn in Judgment

17 Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"Consider and call for [z]the mourning women,
That they may come;
And send for skillful *wailing* women,
That they may come.
18 Let them make haste
And take up a wailing for us,
That [a]our eyes may run with tears,
And our eyelids gush with water.
19 For a voice of wailing is heard from Zion:
'How we are plundered!
We are greatly ashamed,
Because we have forsaken the land,
Because we have been cast out of [b]our dwellings.'"

20 Yet hear the word of the LORD,
O women,
And let your ear receive the word of His mouth;
Teach your daughters wailing,
And everyone her neighbor a lamentation.
21 For death has come through our windows,
Has entered our palaces,
To kill off [c]the children—*no longer to be* outside!
And the young men—*no longer* on the streets!

22 Speak, "Thus says the LORD:

'Even the carcasses of men shall fall [d]as refuse on the open field,
Like cuttings after the harvester,
And no one shall gather *them*.'"

23 Thus says the LORD:

[e]"Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom,
Let not the mighty *man* glory in his [f]might,
Nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches;
24 But [g]let him who glories glory in this,
That he understands and knows Me,
That I *am* the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.
[h]For in these I delight," says the LORD.

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deceit, slander, and mistrust. Ethical standards had collapsed.

9:8 ***Their tongue is an arrow shot out.*** Jeremiah returns to the imagery of bow and arrow to depict Judah's deceit (v. 3). The picture is of a person speaking peaceably to his neighbor while lying in wait to ambush him.

9:13 ***have not obeyed.*** The word "obey," which comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to hear," implies an active response to the hearing of God's word. Instead of walking according to God's law, the people walked according to the dictates or stubbornness of their own hearts.

9:18 ***Let them make haste.*** There is urgency in summoning the skilled mourners to lead the people in tearful lament over the imminent destruction of Judah.

9:21 ***death has come.*** The Canaanite god of death, Mot, was believed to enter a household through an open window to bring adversity, destruction, and death.

9:24 ***lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.*** True knowledge of God resulting from an intimate relationship with Him will be

9:8 [k] Ps. 12:2 [l] Ps. 55:21 **9:9** [m] Jer. 5:9, 29 **9:10** [n] Hos. 4:3 [o] Jer. 4:25 **9:11** [p] Is. 25:2 [q] Is. 13:22; 34:13 **9:12** [r] Hos. 14:9 **9:13** [s] Jer. 3:25; 7:24 **9:14** [t] Jer. 7:24; 11:8 [u] Gal. 1:14 **9:15** [v] Ps. 80:5 [w] Lam. 3:15 **9:16** [x] Lev. 26:33 [y] Ezek. 5:2 **9:17** [z] 2 Chr. 35:25 **9:18** [a] Jer. 9:1; 14:17 **9:19** [b] Lev. 18:28 **9:21** [c] Jer. 6:11; 18:21 **9:22** [d] Jer. 8:1, 2 **9:23** [e] [Eccl. 9:11] [f] Ps. 33:16–18 **9:24** [g] 1 Cor. 1:31 [h] Mic. 7:18

25 "Behold, the days are coming," says
the LORD, "that [i]I will punish all *who are*
circumcised with the uncircumcised—
26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the people of Am-
mon, Moab, and all *who are* in the [j]farthest
corners, who dwell in the wilderness. For
all *these* nations *are* uncircumcised, and
all the house of Israel *are* [k]uncircumcised
in the heart."

Idols and the True God

10 Hear the word which the LORD speaks
to you, O house of Israel.
2 Thus says the LORD:

[a]"Do not learn the way of the Gentiles;
Do not be dismayed at the signs of
heaven,
For the Gentiles are dismayed at them.
3 For the customs of the peoples *are*
futile;
For [b]*one* cuts a tree from the forest,
The work of the hands of the
workman, with the ax.
4 They decorate it with silver and gold;
They [c]fasten it with nails and hammers
So that it will not topple.
5 They *are* upright, like a palm tree,
And [d]they cannot speak;
They must be [e]carried,
Because they cannot go *by*
themselves.
Do not be afraid of them,
For [f]they cannot do evil,
Nor can they do any good."

6 Inasmuch as *there is* none [g]like You,
O LORD
(You *are* great, and Your name *is* great
in might),
7 [h]Who would not fear You, O King of the
nations?
For this is Your rightful due.
For [i]among all the wise *men* of the
nations,
And in all their kingdoms,
There is none like You.
8 But they are altogether [j]dull-hearted
and foolish;
A wooden idol *is* a worthless doctrine.
9 Silver is beaten into plates;
It is brought from Tarshish,
And [k]gold from Uphaz,
The work of the craftsman
And of the hands of the metalsmith;
Blue and purple *are* their clothing;
They *are* all [l]the work of skillful *men*.
10 But the LORD *is* the true God;
He *is* [m]the living God and the
[n]everlasting King.
At His wrath the earth will tremble,
And the nations will not be able to
endure His indignation.

11 Thus you shall say to them: [o]"The
gods that have not made the heavens and
the earth [p]shall perish from the earth and
from under these heavens."

12 He [q]has made the earth by His power,
He has [r]established the world by His
wisdom,
And [s]has stretched out the heavens at
His discretion.
13 [t]When He utters His voice,
There is a multitude of waters in the
heavens:
[u]"And He causes the vapors to ascend
from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
He brings the wind out of His
treasuries."*
14 [v]Everyone is [w]dull-hearted, without
knowledge;
[x]Every metalsmith is put to shame by
an image;
[y]For his molded image *is* falsehood,
And *there is* no breath in them.
15 They *are* futile, a work of errors;
In the time of their punishment they
shall perish.

* **10:13** Psalm 135:7

demonstrated in a person's character. God demands these attributes of His followers.

10:2 ***the way of the Gentiles.*** The Gentiles worshiped natural phenomena by means of handmade icons and symbolic imagery. ***the signs of heaven.*** These were astral deities (8:1–3) worshiped in the days of Manasseh and reinstituted following the death of Josiah and the collapse of his reforms.

10:6–7 ***there is none like You, O LORD.*** This phrase expresses one of the great teachings of the prophets—the incomparability of God. God is not simply better than other gods; He alone is the living God.

10:9 ***the work of skillful men.*** No matter how skilled the idol makers were, the fabricated icons were lifeless, deteriorating, false gods who were no more powerful or wise than their makers.

10:10 ***the LORD is the true God.*** Jeremiah speaks of Israel's God not only as living, but also as being the true God and the nation's everlasting King. He thus governs His covenant people by principles of truth, and with a power that far surpasses the might of earthly kings. Whereas pagan gods cannot alter the course of nature in the slightest degree, even though their worshipers believed very much to the contrary, the God of Sinai is the Creator of nature. He can punish the wicked by storm, flood, earthquake, or pestilence, and strike terror into the hearts of all those who oppose Him.

10:12 ***He has made the earth.*** Jeremiah emphasizes the creative power of God, drawing on the imagery of Job 38 and Psalm 8. Jeremiah was reminding the people of Judah that their God not only created the universe but also governs its ongoing life.

9:25 [i] [Rom. 2:28, 29] **9:26** [j] Jer. 25:23 [k] [Rom. 2:28] **10:2** [a] [Lev. 18:3; 20:23] **10:3** [b] Is. 40:19; 45:20 **10:4** [c] Is. 41:7 **10:5** [d] Ps. 115:5 [e] Ps. 115:7 [f] Is. 41:23, 24 **10:6** [g] Ex. 15:11 **10:7** [h] Rev. 15:4 [i] Ps. 89:6 **10:8** [j] Hab. 2:18 **10:9** [k] Dan. 10:5 [l] Ps. 115:4 **10:10** [m] 1 Tim. 6:17 [n] Ps. 10:16 **10:11** [o] Ps. 96:5 [p] Zeph. 2:11 **10:12** [q] Jer. 51:15 [r] Ps. 93:1 [s] Job 9:8 **10:13** [t] Job 38:34 [u] Ps. 135:7 **10:14** [v] Jer. 51:17 [w] Prov. 30:2 [x] Is. 42:17; 44:11 [y] Hab. 2:18

16 [z]The Portion of Jacob *is* not like them,
For He *is* the Maker of all *things,*
And [a]Israel *is* the tribe of His
inheritance;
[b]The LORD of hosts *is* His name.

The Coming Captivity of Judah

17 [c]Gather up your wares from the land,
O inhabitant of the fortress!

18 For thus says the LORD:

"Behold, I will [d]throw out at this time
The inhabitants of the land,
And will distress them,
[e]That they may find *it so.*"

19 [f]Woe is me for my hurt!
My wound is severe.
But I say, [g]"Truly this *is* an infirmity,
And [h]I must bear it."
20 [i]My tent is plundered,
And all my cords are broken;
My children have gone from me,
And they *are* [j]no more.
There is no one to pitch my tent
anymore,
Or set up my curtains.

21 For the shepherds have become dull-
hearted,
And have not sought the LORD;
Therefore they shall not prosper,
And all their flocks shall be [k]scattered.
22 Behold, the noise of the report has come,
And a great commotion out of the
[l]north country,
To make the cities of Judah desolate, a
[m]den of jackals.

23 O LORD, I know the [n]way of man *is* not
in himself;
It is not in man who walks to direct his
own steps.
24 O LORD, [o]correct me, but with justice;
Not in Your anger, lest You bring me
to nothing.
25 [p]Pour out Your fury on the Gentiles,
[q]who do not know You,
And on the families who do not call on
Your name;
For they have eaten up Jacob,
[r]Devoured him and consumed him,
And made his dwelling place desolate.

The Broken Covenant

11 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2"Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; 3and say to them, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: [a]"Cursed *is* the man who does not obey the words of this covenant 4which I commanded your fathers in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt, [b]from the iron furnace, saying, [c]"Obey My voice, and do according to all that I command you; so shall you be My people, and I will be your God,' 5that I may establish the [d]oath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them [e]a land flowing with milk and honey,'* as *it is* this day."' "

And I answered and said, "So be it, LORD."

6Then the LORD said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying: 'Hear the words of this covenant [f]and do them. 7For I earnestly exhorted your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, until this day, [g]rising early and exhorting, saying, "Obey My voice." 8[h]Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but [i]everyone followed the dictates of his evil heart; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do, but *which* they have not done.' "

9And the LORD said to me, [j]"A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10They have turned back to [k]the iniquities of their forefathers who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers."

11 Therefore thus says the LORD: "Behold,

* **11:5** Exodus 3:8

10:17 ***Gather up your wares from the land.*** The Assyrian stone reliefs of Shalmaneser III depict captives transporting household goods on their heads as they go into exile in the eastern reaches of the empire. Soon this would be the fate of the people of Judah.

10:19 ***Woe is me.*** Jeremiah personally identified with Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem. The injuries inflicted upon Judah were severe.

11:2 ***Hear the words of this covenant.*** Jeremiah's message from the Lord here is strongly associated with the Book of Deuteronomy. The term "words" is the Hebrew name of the Book of Deuteronomy; it is also used to refer to the terms of the covenant. A covenant is a legal treaty or relationship between individuals, between nations, or—in the case of Israel—between a nation and its God. The covenant specified rights, obligations, and responsibilities of the parties entering into the agreement.

11:4 ***iron furnace.*** This terminology comes directly from Deuteronomy 4:20, which is set in a context of a warning against worshiping idols.

11:5 ***that I may establish the oath.*** The blessing of land, as promised to Abraham, was dependent upon the covenant loyalty of the people.

11:11 ***bring calamity on them.*** Because the heart of the nation was evil, God would bring disaster upon

10:16 [z]Lam. 3:24 [a]Deut. 32:9 [b]Is. 47:4 **10:17** [c]Jer. 6:1 **10:18** [d]1 Sam. 25:29 [e]Ezek. 6:10 **10:19** [f]Jer. 8:21 [g]Ps. 77:10 [h]Mic. 7:9 **10:20** [i]Jer. 4:20 [j]Jer. 31:15 **10:21** [k]Jer. 23:2 **10:22** [l]Jer. 5:15 [m]Jer. 9:11 **10:23** [n]Prov. 16:1; 20:24 **10:24** [o]Jer. 30:11 **10:25** [p]Ps. 79:6, 7 [q]Job 18:21 [r]Jer. 8:16 **11:3** [a]Deut. 27:26 **11:4** [b]Deut. 4:20 [c]Lev. 26:3 **11:5** [d]Ps. 105:9 [e]Ex. 3:8 **11:6** [f][Rom. 2:13] **11:7** [g]Jer. 35:15 **11:8** [h]Jer. 7:26 [i]Jer. 13:10 **11:9** [j]Ezek. 22:25 **11:10** [k]Ezek. 20:18

I will surely bring calamity on them which
they will not be able to escape; and [l]though
they cry out to Me, I will not listen to them.
12 Then the cities of Judah and the inhabi-
tants of Jerusalem will go and [m]cry out to
the gods to whom they offer incense, but
they will not save them at all in the time of
their trouble. 13 For *according to* the num-
ber of your [n]cities were your gods, O Judah;
and *according to* the number of the streets
of Jerusalem you have set up altars to *that*
shameful thing, altars to burn incense to
Baal.
14 "So [o]do not pray for this people, or lift
up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not
hear *them* in the time that they cry out to
Me because of their trouble.

15 "What[p] has My beloved to do in My
house,
Having [q]done lewd deeds with many?
And [r]the holy flesh has passed from
you.
When you do evil, then you [s]rejoice.
16 The LORD called your name,
[t]Green Olive Tree, Lovely *and* of Good
Fruit.
With the noise of a great tumult
He has kindled fire on it,
And its branches are broken.

17 "For the LORD of hosts, [u]who planted
you, has pronounced doom against you
for the evil of the house of Israel and of
the house of Judah, which they have done
against themselves to provoke Me to anger
in offering incense to Baal."

Jeremiah's Life Threatened

18 Now the LORD gave me knowledge
of it, and I know *it;* for You showed me
their doings. 19 But I *was* like a docile
lamb brought to the slaughter; and I did
not know that they had devised schemes
against me, *saying,* "Let us destroy the tree
with its fruit, [v]and let us cut him off from
[w]the land of the living, that his name may
be remembered no more."

20 But, O LORD of hosts,
You who judge righteously,
[x]Testing the mind and the heart,
Let me see Your [y]vengeance on them,
For to You I have revealed my cause.

21 "Therefore thus says the LORD concern-
ing the men of [z]Anathoth who seek your
life, saying, [a]'Do not prophesy in the name
of the LORD, lest you die by our hand'—
22 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts:
'Behold, I will punish them. The young men
shall die by the sword, their sons and their
daughters shall [b]die by famine; 23 and there
shall be no remnant of them, for I will bring
catastrophe on the men of Anathoth, *even*
[c]the year of their punishment.'"

Jeremiah's Question

12 Righteous [a]*are* You, O LORD, when I
plead with You;
Yet let me talk with You about *Your*
judgments.
[b]Why does the way of the wicked
prosper?
Why are those happy who deal so
treacherously?
2 You have planted them, yes, they have
taken root;
They grow, yes, they bear fruit.
[c]You *are* near in their mouth
But far from their mind.
3 But You, O LORD, [d]know me;
You have seen me,
And You have [e]tested my heart toward
You.
Pull them out like sheep for the
slaughter,
And prepare them for [f]the day of
slaughter.
4 How long will [g]the land mourn,
And the herbs of every field wither?
[h]The beasts and birds are consumed,
[i]For the wickedness of those who dwell
there,
Because they said, "He will not see our
final end."

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the people. God's justice is inescapable when sin is intrinsic to one's character. Even if the people were to cry out in distress, God would not listen.

11:17 ***planted.*** This term recalls the theme of Jeremiah 2:21, the idea that God had established Israel as His choicest vine. However, here the context is the impending doom that would result from the evil done by the Lord's people.

11:20 ***Let me see Your vengeance on them.*** Jeremiah appealed for vindication to God as the one true righteous judge. "Heart" refers to the seat of intellect and will. "Vengeance" describes God's fury and anger against sin that demands punishment.

11:21–23 ***the men of Anathoth.*** These men insisted that Jeremiah not prophesy in the name of the Lord. If Jeremiah had yielded to their demand, he would have repudiated his calling, his person, and his God. The threat of death to Jeremiah was answered by punishment of the young men as well as their children. The prediction of death by famine was fulfilled when the city was besieged by the Babylonians in the days of Zedekiah.

12:4 ***How long will the land mourn.*** Jeremiah's question related to God's delay of judgment on the people of the land. "Land mourn . . . herbs of every field wither . . . beasts and birds are consumed" are phrases that are recurring themes in Jeremiah and other prophetic texts (4:28; 40:7; Zeph. 1:3). In spite of past chastisement, the people believed that God would not bring their country to an end.

11:11 [l] Prov. 1:28 **11:12** [m] Deut. 32:37 **11:13** [n] Jer. 2:28 **11:14** [o] Ex. 32:10 **11:15** [p] Ps. 50:16 [q] Ezek. 16:25 [r] [Titus 1:15] [s] Prov. 2:14 **11:16** [t] Ps. 52:8 **11:17** [u] Is. 5:2 **11:19** [v] Ps. 83:4 [w] Ps. 27:13 **11:20** [x] Ps. 7:9 [y] Jer. 15:15 **11:21** [z] Jer. 1:1; 12:5, 6 [a] Mic. 2:6 **11:22** [b] Jer. 9:21 **11:23** [c] Jer. 23:12 **12:1** [a] Ps. 51:4 [b] Mal. 3:15 **12:2** [c] Matt. 15:8 **12:3** [d] Ps. 17:3 [e] Jer. 11:20 [f] James 5:5 **12:4** [g] Hos. 4:3 [h] Jer. 9:10 [i] Ps. 107:34

The LORD Answers Jeremiah

5 "If you have run with the footmen, and
they have wearied you,
Then how can you contend with
horses?
And *if* in the land of peace,
In which you trusted, *they wearied
you,*
Then how will you do in [i]the
floodplain* of the Jordan?
6 For even [k]your brothers, the house of
your father,
Even they have dealt treacherously
with you;
Yes, they have called a multitude after
you.
[l]Do not believe them,
Even though they speak smooth words
to you.

7 "I have forsaken My house, I have left
My heritage;
I have given the dearly beloved of My
soul into the hand of her enemies.
8 My heritage is to Me like a lion in the
forest;
It cries out against Me;
Therefore I have [m]hated it.
9 My heritage *is* to Me *like* a speckled
vulture;
The vultures all around *are* against
her.
Come, assemble all the beasts of the
field,
[n]Bring them to devour!

10 "Many [o]rulers* have destroyed [p]My
vineyard,
They have [q]trodden My portion
underfoot;
They have made My pleasant portion a
desolate wilderness.
11 They have made it [r]desolate;
Desolate, it mourns to Me;
The whole land is made desolate,
Because [s]no one takes *it* to heart.
12 The plunderers have come
On all the desolate heights in the
wilderness,
For the sword of the LORD shall devour
From *one* end of the land to the *other*
end of the land;
No flesh shall have peace.
13 [t]They have sown wheat but reaped
thorns;
They have put themselves to pain *but*
do not profit.
But be ashamed of your harvest
Because of the fierce anger of the
LORD."

14 Thus says the LORD: "Against all My
evil neighbors who [u]touch the inheritance
which I have caused My people Israel to
inherit—behold, I will [v]pluck them out of
their land and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. 15 [w]Then it shall be,
after I have plucked them out, that I will
return and have compassion on them [x]and
bring them back, everyone to his heritage
and everyone to his land. 16 And it shall
be, if they will learn carefully the ways of
My people, [y]to swear by My name, 'As the
LORD lives,' as they taught My people to
swear by Baal, then they shall be [z]established in the midst of My people. 17 But if
they do not [a]obey, I will utterly pluck up
and destroy that nation," says the LORD.

Symbol of the Linen Sash

13 Thus the LORD said to me: "Go and
get yourself a linen sash, and put it
around your waist, but do not put it in water." 2 So I got a sash according to the word
of the LORD, and put *it* around my waist.

* **12:5** Or *thicket* * **12:10** Literally *shepherds* or *pastors*

12:5–6 ***If you have run with the footmen.*** God's response to Jeremiah's question (v. 4) comes in the form of two metaphorical questions. The first metaphor of foot racing was designed to teach Jeremiah that the obstacles he faced in his hometown were meager compared to those he would encounter before the kings of Judah and Babylon (the horses).
land of peace. This second metaphor was designed to remind the prophet of the impending turmoil he would have to endure in proclaiming the message of judgment to an unrepentant leadership. The relatively peaceful setting of Anathoth, with its minor opposition from treacherous family members, served to prepare Jeremiah to struggle against greater antagonists.
12:10–11 ***Many rulers.*** This phrase refers to the foreign kings who had come as agents of God to judge Judah. The repetition of the word "desolate" describes the complete devastation of Judah (Is. 6:11). Because of sin, the land that once saw God's bounteous blessing would experience His devastating judgment.
12:15 ***after I have plucked them out.*** This verse offers a glimmer of hope in the middle of a prophecy of judgment. In the midst of His judgment, God would remember His covenant with Abraham. Eventually He would return and have compassion on His people.
12:16 ***swear by My name.*** Only the everlasting love of God provides an answer to what God will do in a life that turns from an oath to a false god to an oath to serve the Lord. What unfathomable blessing can be ours from a God like this when we pledge our allegiance to Him. He asks our allegiance, and He asks us to truly learn the ways that He has established for His people.
13:1–5 ***linen sash.*** This was an article of clothing that was like a short skirt or kilt worn by men. Jeremiah was not supposed to wash it.

12:5 [i] Josh. 3:15 **12:6** [k] Jer. 9:4, 5 [l] Prov. 26:25 **12:8** [m] Hos. 9:15 **12:9** [n] Lev. 26:22 **12:10** [o] Jer. 6:3; 23:1 [p] Is. 5:1–7 [q] Is. 63:18 **12:11** [r] Jer. 10:22; 22:6 [s] Is. 42:25 **12:13** [t] Hag. 1:6 **12:14** [u] Zech. 2:8 [v] Deut. 30:3 **12:15** [w] Ezek. 28:25 [x] Amos 9:14 **12:16** [y] [Jer. 4:2] [z] [1 Pet. 2:5] **12:17** [a] Is. 60:12

3 And the word of the LORD came to me
the second time, saying, 4 "Take the sash
that you acquired, which *is* around your
waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates,* and
hide it there in a hole in the rock." 5 So I
went and hid it by the Euphrates, as the
LORD commanded me.
6 Now it came to pass after many days
that the LORD said to me, "Arise, go to the
Euphrates, and take from there the sash
which I commanded you to hide there."
7 Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and
I took the sash from the place where I had
hidden it; and there was the sash, ruined.
It was profitable for nothing.
8 Then the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, 9 "Thus says the LORD: 'In this
manner [a]I will ruin the pride of Judah and
the great [b]pride of Jerusalem. 10 This evil
people, who [c]refuse to hear My words, who
[d]follow the dictates of their hearts, and
walk after other gods to serve them and
worship them, shall be just like this sash
which is profitable for nothing. 11 For as the
sash clings to the waist of a man, so I have
caused the whole house of Israel and the
whole house of Judah to cling to Me,' says
the LORD, 'that [e]they may become My peo-
ple, [f]for renown, for praise, and for [g]glory;
but they would [h]not hear.'

Symbol of the Wine Bottles

12 "Therefore you shall speak to them this
word: 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel:
"Every bottle shall be filled with wine."'
"And they will say to you, 'Do we not cer-
tainly know that every bottle will be filled
with wine?'
13 "Then you shall say to them, 'Thus says
the LORD: "Behold, I will fill all the inhab-
itants of this land—even the kings who sit
on David's throne, the priests, the proph-
ets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—
[i]with drunkenness! 14 And [j]I will dash them
one against another, even the fathers and
the sons together," says the LORD. "I will
not pity nor spare nor have mercy, but will
destroy them."'"

Pride Precedes Captivity

15 Hear and give ear:
Do not be proud,
For the LORD has spoken.
16 [k]Give glory to the LORD your God
Before He causes [l]darkness,
And before your feet stumble
On the dark mountains,
And while you are [m]looking for light,
He turns it into [n]the shadow of death
And makes *it* dense darkness.
17 But if you will not hear it,
My soul will [o]weep in secret for *your*
pride;
My eyes will weep bitterly
And run down with tears,
Because the LORD's flock has been
taken captive.

18 Say to [p]the king and to the queen
mother,
"Humble yourselves;
Sit down,
For your rule shall collapse, the crown
of your glory."
19 The cities of the South shall be shut
up,
And no one shall open *them;*
Judah shall be carried away captive,
all of it;
It shall be wholly carried away
captive.

20 Lift up your eyes and see
Those who come from the [q]north.
Where *is* the flock *that* was given to
you,
Your beautiful sheep?
21 What will you say when He punishes
you?
For you have taught them
To be chieftains, to be head over you.
Will not [r]pangs seize you,
Like a woman in labor?
22 And if you say in your heart,
[s]"Why have these things come upon
me?"
For the greatness of your iniquity
[t]Your skirts have been uncovered,
Your heels made bare.
23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin or
the leopard its spots?
Then may you also do good who are
accustomed to do evil.

* **13:4** Hebrew *Perath*

13:6–7 *profitable for nothing.* Because Jeremiah's sash was dirty and then was exposed to the elements, it was ruined and useless.

13:8–11 *refuse to hear My words . . . follow the dictates of their hearts . . . walk after other gods.* As Jeremiah's sash was ruined, so Judah's pride would be reduced to ruin. Pride describes the self-exalting conduct that characterized Israel in its love for idols. This pride is explained in a triplet of verbal phrases.

13:14 *I will dash them one against another.* The wine jars of God's wrath would be smashed and broken together, a picture of a devastated nation.

13:16 *Give glory to the LORD your God.* This means exalt and worship Him. The verse warns of the consequences of failing to glorify God. Four Hebrew synonyms for darkness are found in this verse, deepening the impression of divine displeasure meted out against God's people.

13:20 *Those who come from the north.* This phrase refers to Babylon.

13:23 *Can the Ethiopian change his skin.* The negative rhetorical question confirmed Judah's inability

13:9 [a] Lev. 26:19 [b] Zeph. 3:11 **13:10** [c] Jer. 16:12 [d] Jer. 7:24; 16:12 **13:11** [e] [Ex. 19:5, 6] [f] Jer. 33:9 [g] Is. 43:21 [h] Jer. 7:13, 24, 26 **13:13** [i] Is. 51:17; 63:6 **13:14** [j] Jer. 19:9–11 **13:16** [k] Josh. 7:19 [l] Amos 8:9 [m] Is. 59:9 [n] Ps. 44:19 **13:17** [o] Jer. 9:1; 14:17 **13:18** [p] Jer. 22:26 **13:20** [q] Jer. 10:22; 46:20 **13:21** [r] Jer. 6:24 **13:22** [s] Jer. 16:10 [t] Is. 47:2

24 "Therefore I will [u]scatter them [v]like stubble
That passes away by the wind of the wilderness.
25 [w]This is your lot,
The portion of your measures from Me," says the LORD,
"Because you have forgotten Me
And trusted in [x]falsehood.
26 Therefore [y]I will uncover your skirts over your face,
That your shame may appear.
27 I have seen your adulteries
And your *lustful* [z]neighings,
The lewdness of your harlotry,
Your abominations [a]on the hills in the fields.
Woe to you, O Jerusalem!
Will you still not be made clean?"

Sword, Famine, and Pestilence

14 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning the droughts.

2 "Judah mourns,
And [a]her gates languish;
They [b]mourn for the land,
And [c]the cry of Jerusalem has gone up.
3 Their nobles have sent their lads for water;
They went to the cisterns *and* found no water.
They returned with their vessels empty;
They were [d]ashamed and confounded
[e]And covered their heads.
4 Because the ground is parched,
For there was [f]no rain in the land,
The plowmen were ashamed;
They covered their heads.
5 Yes, the deer also gave birth in the field,
But left because there was no grass.
6 And [g]the wild donkeys stood in the desolate heights;
They sniffed at the wind like jackals;
Their eyes failed because *there was* no grass."
7 O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us,
Do it [h]for Your name's sake;
For our backslidings are many,
We have sinned against You.
8 [i]O the Hope of Israel, his Savior in time of trouble,
Why should You be like a stranger in the land,
And like a traveler *who* turns aside to tarry for a night?
9 Why should You be like a man astonished,
Like a mighty one [j]*who* cannot save?
Yet You, O LORD, [k]*are* in our midst,
And we are called by Your name;
Do not leave us!

10 Thus says the LORD to this people:

[l]"Thus they have loved to wander;
They have not restrained their feet.
Therefore the LORD does not accept them;
[m]He will remember their iniquity now,
And punish their sins."

11 Then the LORD said to me, [n]"Do not pray for this people, for *their* good. 12 [o]When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and [p]when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But [q]I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence."

13 [r]Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets say to them, 'You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured [s]peace in this place.'"

14 And the LORD said to me, [t]"The prophets prophesy lies in My name. [u]I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the [v]deceit of their heart. 15 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send, [w]and who say, 'Sword and famine shall not be in this land'—'By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed! 16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be

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to change its own ways. The nation had reinforced its habit of doing evil (4:22) for so long that it did not know how to do good.

13:26–27 ***your skirts over your face.*** This phrase meant public exposure (v. 22). Since Judah had lustfully sought adulterous relationships with foreign gods and goddesses, God would expose and bring to shame its actions.

14:2 ***mourn.*** This is a general word for grief over the dead. It describes the dark gloom of weeping and wailing.

14:8 ***Hope . . . Savior.*** Jeremiah pleaded with God on the basis of God's name and character. Instead of having an intimate relationship with Judah, God had become like a stranger or a traveler in the land, because the people worshiped other gods.

14:10 ***Thus they have loved to wander.*** "Loved" describes voluntary desire. "Wander" describes a repetitive back and forth movement—in this case, of seeking every possible occasion for sin. Because no one displayed any restraint from sin, God could not violate His holy character and accept the people of Judah.

14:13 ***I will give you assured peace.*** Jeremiah complained to the Lord about false prophets who were proclaiming a message of peace instead of war and pestilence. These pretentious prophets presumed

13:24 [u] Jer. 9:16 [v] Hos. 13:3 **13:25** [w] Job 20:29 [x] Jer. 10:14 **13:26** [y] Lam. 1:8 **13:27** [z] Jer. 5:7, 8 [a] Is. 65:7; Ezek. 6:13 **14:2** [a] Is. 3:26 [b] Jer. 8:21 [c] 1 Sam. 5:12 **14:3** [d] Ps. 40:14 [e] 2 Sam. 15:30 **14:4** [f] Jer. 3:3 **14:6** [g] Jer. 2:24 **14:7** [h] Ps. 25:11 **14:8** [i] Jer. 17:13 **14:9** [j] Is. 59:1 [k] Ex. 29:45 **14:10** [l] Jer. 2:23–25 [m] Hos. 8:13 **14:11** [n] Ex. 32:10 **14:12** [o] Ezek. 8:18 [p] Jer. 6:20 [q] Jer. 9:16 **14:13** [r] Jer. 4:10 [s] Jer. 8:11; 23:17 **14:14** [t] Jer. 27:10 [u] Jer. 29:8, 9 [v] Jer. 23:16 **14:15** [w] Ezek. 14:10

cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; [x]they will have no one to bury them—them nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters—for I will pour their wickedness on them.'

17 "Therefore you shall say this word to them:

[y]'Let my eyes flow with tears night and day,
And let them not cease;
[z]For the virgin daughter of my people
Has been broken with a mighty stroke,
with a very severe blow.
18 If I go out to [a]the field,
Then behold, those slain with the sword!
And if I enter the city,
Then behold, those sick from famine!
Yes, both prophet and [b]priest go about
in a land they do not know.'"

The People Plead for Mercy

19 [c]Have You utterly rejected Judah?
Has Your soul loathed Zion?
Why have You stricken us so that
[d]*there is* no healing for us?
[e]We looked for peace, but *there was* no good;
And for the time of healing, and there was trouble.
20 We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness
And the iniquity of our [f]fathers,
For [g]we have sinned against You.
21 Do not abhor *us,* for Your name's sake;
Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory.
[h]Remember, do not break Your covenant with us.
22 [i]Are there any among [j]the idols of the nations that can cause [k]rain?
Or can the heavens give showers?
[l]*Are* You not He, O LORD our God?
Therefore we will wait for You,
Since You have made all these.

The LORD Will Not Relent

15 Then the LORD said to me, [a]"*Even* if [b]Moses and [c]Samuel stood before Me,
My mind *would* not *be* favorable toward this people. Cast *them* out of My sight, and let them go forth. 2And it shall be, if they say to you, 'Where should we go?' then you shall tell them, 'Thus says the LORD:

[d]"Such as *are* for death, to death;
And such as *are* for the sword, to the sword;
And such as *are* for the famine, to the famine;
And such as *are* for the [e]captivity, to the captivity."'

3 "And I will [f]appoint over them four forms *of destruction*," says the LORD: "the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, [g]the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. 4I will hand them over to [h]trouble, to all kingdoms of the earth, because of [i]Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.

5 "For who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem?
Or who will bemoan you?
Or who will turn aside to ask how you are doing?
6 [j]You have forsaken Me," says the LORD,
"You have [k]gone backward.
Therefore I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you;
[l]I am weary of relenting!
7 And I will winnow them with a winnowing fan in the gates of the land;
I will [m]bereave *them* of children;
I will destroy My people,
Since they [n]do not return from their ways.
8 Their widows will be increased to Me more than the sand of the seas;
I will bring against them,
Against the mother of the young men,
A plunderer at noonday;
I will cause anguish and terror to fall on them [o]suddenly.

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upon God's mercy and promise of deliverance as demonstrated in the days of Hezekiah and Isaiah, when Jerusalem was miraculously rescued from the siege of Sennacherib's army.

14:21–22 ***for Your name's sake.*** The people's plea for God's mercy was based on His character. Entreaties based on divine character and attributes are common in the Psalms. At stake was God's reputation and the blessing that would come to the people, but here the obligations of the people to the Lord are disregarded.

15:2 ***death . . . sword . . . famine . . . captivity.*** These all would be the outcome of God's judgment. He would use foreign armies as instruments of judgment (14:11–12).

15:3–4 ***I will appoint over them four forms.*** The judgment of Judah is described. The imagery of dogs, birds, and beasts devouring human flesh vividly illustrates not only death, but desecration. The basis for this desecration is the defilement of Jerusalem that took place during the reign of Manasseh, when idolatry reigned in the temple courts and children were sacrificed to Molech (7:31).

15:7–8 ***winnow them with a winnowing fan.*** Like wheat chaff that is scattered by the winnowing fork and the wind, the people of Judah would be

14:16 [x] Ps. 79:2, 3 **14:17** [y] Jer. 9:1; 13:17 [z] Jer. 8:21 **14:18** [a] Ezek. 7:15 [b] Jer. 23:11 **14:19** [c] Lam. 5:22 [d] Jer. 15:18 [e] Jer. 8:15 **14:20** [f] Jer. 3:25 [g] Dan. 9:8 **14:21** [h] Ps. 106:45 **14:22** [i] Zech. 10:1 [j] Deut. 32:21 [k] Jer. 5:24 [l] Ps. 135:7 **15:1** [a] Ezek. 14:14 [b] Ex. 32:11–14 [c] 1 Sam. 7:9 **15:2** [d] Zech. 11:9 [e] Jer. 9:16; 16:13 **15:3** [f] Ezek. 14:21 [g] Jer. 7:33 **15:4** [h] Deut. 28:25 [i] 2 Kin. 24:3, 4 **15:6** [j] Jer. 2:13 [k] Jer. 7:24 [l] Jer. 20:16 **15:7** [m] Jer. 18:21 [n] Is. 9:13 **15:8** [o] Is. 29:5

9 "She[p] languishes who has borne seven;
She has breathed her last;
[q]Her sun has gone down
While *it was* yet day;
She has been ashamed and confounded.
And the remnant of them I will deliver
to the sword
Before their enemies," says the LORD.

Jeremiah's Dejection

10 [r]Woe is me, my mother,
That you have borne me,
A man of strife and a man of
contention to the whole earth!
I have neither lent for interest,
Nor have men lent to me for interest.
Every one of them curses me.

11 The LORD said:

"Surely it will be well with your
remnant;
Surely I will cause [s]the enemy to
intercede with you
In the time of adversity and in the time
of affliction.
12 Can anyone break iron,
The northern iron and the bronze?
13 Your wealth and your treasures
I will give as [t]plunder without price,
Because of all your sins,
Throughout your territories.
14 And I will make *you* cross over with*
your enemies
[u]Into a land *which* you do not know;
For a [v]fire is kindled in My anger,
Which shall burn upon you."

15 O LORD, [w]You know;
Remember me and visit me,
And [x]take vengeance for me on my
persecutors.
In Your enduring patience, do not take
me away.
Know that [y]for Your sake I have
suffered rebuke.
16 Your words were found, and I [z]ate
them,
And [a]Your word was to me the joy and
rejoicing of my heart;
For I am called by Your name,
O LORD God of hosts.

17 [b]I did not sit in the assembly of the
mockers,
Nor did I rejoice;
I sat alone because of Your hand,
For You have filled me with indignation.
18 Why is my [c]pain perpetual
And my wound incurable,
Which refuses to be healed?
Will You surely be to me [d]like an
unreliable stream,
As waters *that* fail?

The LORD Reassures Jeremiah

19 Therefore thus says the LORD:

[e]"If you return,
Then I will bring you back;
You shall [f]stand before Me;
If you [g]take out the precious from the
vile,
You shall be as My mouth.
Let them return to you,
But you must not return to them.
20 And I will make you to this people a
fortified bronze [h]wall;
And they will fight against you,
But [i]they shall not prevail against you;
For I *am* with you to save you
And deliver you," says the LORD.
21 "I will deliver you from the hand of the
wicked,
And I will redeem you from the grip of
the terrible."

Jeremiah's Lifestyle and Message

16 The word of the LORD also came to me, saying, 2"You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place." 3For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them and their fathers who begot them in this land: 4"They shall die [a]gruesome deaths; they shall not be [b]lamented nor shall they be [c]buried, *but* they shall be [d]like refuse on the face of the earth. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and their [e]corpses

* **15:14** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum read *cause you to serve* (compare 17:4).

dispersed. The population would be decimated. The further ravaging of the land is revealed in the numerous widows who would be left in the wake of the death of the men of Judah.

15:9 ***who has borne seven.*** The blessing of seven sons was the ultimate hope for ancient mothers and fathers. But the utmost horror was to lose all seven in death, resulting in the loss of an heir.

15:10 ***Every one of them curses me.*** To curse someone in ancient Israel was to invoke condemnation on that person with a prescribed formula.

15:16 ***Your words were found, and I ate them.*** Eating the words of the Lord means to internalize them and allow their meaning to become a reality in one's life.

15:17 ***I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers.*** Jeremiah's isolation was the result of his obedience to the word and calling of God.

15:18 ***As waters that fail.*** This simile is a vivid picture of the arid regions in the Middle East, where water is at a premium.

16:1–2 ***You shall not take a wife.*** In the case of Jeremiah, the prohibition against marriage was both

15:9 [p] 1 Sam. 2:5 [q] Amos 8:9 **15:10** [r] Job 3:1 **15:11** [s] Jer. 40:4, 5 **15:13** [t] Ps. 44:12 **15:14** [u] Jer. 16:13 [v] Deut. 32:22 **15:15** [w] Jer. 12:3 [x] Jer. 20:12 [y] Ps. 69:7–9 **15:16** [z] Ezek. 3:1, 3 [a] [Job 23:12] **15:17** [b] Ps. 26:4, 5 **15:18** [c] Jer. 10:19; 30:15 [d] Job 6:15 **15:19** [e] Zech. 3:7 [f] Jer. 15:1 [g] Ezek. 22:26; 44:23 **15:20** [h] Ezek. 3:9 [i] Jer. 1:8, 19; 20:11; 37:21; 38:13; 39:11, 12 **16:4** [a] Jer. 15:2 [b] Jer. 22:18; 25:33 [c] Jer. 14:16; 19:11 [d] Ps. 83:10 [e] Ps. 79:2

shall be meat for the birds of heaven and
for the beasts of the earth."

5For thus says the LORD: [f]"Do not enter
the house of mourning, nor go to lament or
bemoan them; for I have taken away My
peace from this people," says the LORD,
"lovingkindness and mercies. 6Both the
great and the small shall die in this land.
They shall not be buried; [g]neither shall
men lament for them, [h]cut themselves, nor
[i]make themselves bald for them. 7Nor shall
men break *bread* in mourning for them, to
comfort them for the dead; nor shall *men*
give them the cup of consolation to [j]drink
for their father or their mother. 8Also you
shall not go into the house of feasting to sit
with them, to eat and drink."

9For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God
of Israel: "Behold, [k]I will cause to cease
from this place, before your eyes and in
your days, the voice of mirth and the voice
of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom
and the voice of the bride.

10"And it shall be, when you show this
people all these words, and they say to
you, [l]'Why has the LORD pronounced all
this great disaster against us? Or what *is*
our iniquity? Or what *is* our sin that we
have committed against the LORD our
God?' 11then you shall say to them, [m]'Be-
cause your fathers have forsaken Me,' says
the LORD; 'they have walked after other
gods and have served them and worshiped
them, and have forsaken Me and not kept
My law. 12And you have done [n]worse than
your fathers, for behold, [o]each one follows
the dictates of his own evil heart, so that
no one listens to Me. 13[p]Therefore I will
cast you out of this land [q]into a land that
you do not know, neither you nor your fa-
thers; and there you shall serve other gods
day and night, where I will not show you
favor.'

God Will Restore Israel

14"Therefore behold, the [r]days are com-
ing," says the LORD, "that it shall no more
be said, 'The LORD lives who brought up
the children of Israel from the land of
Egypt,' 15but, 'The LORD lives who brought
up the children of Israel from the land of
the [s]north and from all the lands where
He had driven them.' For [t]I will bring them
back into their land which I gave to their
fathers.

16"Behold, I will send for many [u]fisher-
men," says the LORD, "and they shall fish
them; and afterward I will send for many
hunters, and they shall hunt them from ev-
ery mountain and every hill, and out of the
holes of the rocks. 17For My [v]eyes *are* on all
their ways; they are not hidden from My
face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My
eyes. 18And first I will repay [w]double for
their iniquity and their sin, because [x]they
have defiled My land; they have filled My
inheritance with the carcasses of their de-
testable and abominable idols."

19 O LORD, [y]my strength and my
fortress,
[z]My refuge in the day of affliction,
The Gentiles shall come to You
From the ends of the earth and say,
"Surely our fathers have inherited
lies,
Worthlessness and [a]unprofitable
things."
20 Will a man make gods for himself,
[b]Which *are* not gods?

21 "Therefore behold, I will this once
cause them to know,
I will cause them to know
My hand and My might;
And they shall know that [c]My name *is*
the LORD.

Judah's Sin and Punishment

17 "The sin of Judah *is* [a]written with a
[b]pen of iron;
With the point of a diamond *it is*
[c]engraved
On the tablet of their heart,
And on the horns of your altars,
2 While their children remember
Their altars and their [d]wooden
images*
By the green trees on the high hills.

* **17:2** Hebrew *Asherim*, Canaanite deities

a sign to the nation and a blight against his name among the people. Celibacy was abnormal; large families were indicative of God's blessing upon a household. Jeremiah faced life with God as his sole comfort and support.

16:10 ***Why has the LORD pronounced.*** The trio of questions posed by the people indicates their lack of understanding of God's word. The people of Judah had missed the purpose for which they were chosen, to manifest to the world the nature and character of God by living as the people of God.

16:16 ***many fishermen . . . many hunters.*** These words refer to the Babylonian armies that would scour the land for Judah's rebels. Hunting and fishing imagery as a metaphor for deportation is also found in Ezekiel 12:3 and Amos 4:2.

16:19–20 ***strength . . . fortress . . . refuge.*** Jeremiah knew that his only place of safety was in God. The scope of Jeremiah's hope is universal. The Gentiles, among whom the people of Judah would be exiled, would come to the God of Israel in fulfillment of the promise of Genesis 12:1–3.

16:5 [f] Ezek. 24:17, 22, 23 **16:6** [g] Jer. 22:18 [h] Deut. 14:1 [i] Is. 22:12 **16:7** [j] Prov. 31:6 **16:9** [k] Rev. 18:23 **16:10** [l] Deut. 29:24 **16:11** [m] Jer. 22:9 **16:12** [n] Jer. 7:26 [o] Jer. 3:17; 18:12 **16:13** [p] Deut. 4:26; 28:36, 63 [q] Jer. 15:14 **16:14** [r] Jer. 23:7, 8 **16:15** [s] Jer. 3:18 [t] Jer. 24:6; 30:3; 32:37 **16:16** [u] Amos 4:2 **16:17** [v] Heb. 4:13 **16:18** [w] Jer. 17:18 [x] [Ezek. 43:7] **16:19** [y] Ps. 18:1, 2 [z] Jer. 17:17 [a] Is. 44:10 **16:20** [b] Gal. 4:8 **16:21** [c] Amos 5:8 **17:1** [a] Jer. 2:22 [b] Job 19:24 [c] 2 Cor. 3:3 **17:2** [d] Judg. 3:7

3 O My mountain in the field,
I will give as plunder your wealth, all your treasures,
And your high places of sin within all your borders.
4 And you, even yourself,
Shall let go of your heritage which I gave you;
And I will cause you to serve your enemies
In [e]the land which you do not know;
For [f]you have kindled a fire in My anger *which* shall burn forever."

5 Thus says the LORD:

[g]"Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man
And makes [h]flesh his strength,
Whose heart departs from the LORD.
6 For he shall be [i]like a shrub in the desert,
And [j]shall not see when good comes,
But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness,
[k]*In* a salt land *which is* not inhabited.

7 "Blessed[l] *is* the man who trusts in the LORD,
And whose hope is the LORD.
8 For he shall be [m]like a tree planted by the waters,
Which spreads out its roots by the river,
And will not fear* when heat comes;
But its leaf will be green,
And will not be anxious in the year of drought,
Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

9 "The [n]heart *is* deceitful above all *things*,
And desperately wicked;
Who can know it?
10 I, the LORD, [o]search the heart,
I test the mind,
[p]Even to give every man according to his ways,
According to the fruit of his doings.

11 "*As* a partridge that broods but does not hatch,
So is he who gets riches, but not by right;
It [q]will leave him in the midst of his days,
And at his end he will be [r]a fool."

12 A glorious high throne from the beginning
Is the place of our sanctuary.
13 O LORD, [s]the hope of Israel,
[t]All who forsake You shall be ashamed.

"Those who depart from Me
Shall be [u]written in the earth,
Because they have forsaken the LORD,
The [v]fountain of living waters."

Jeremiah Prays for Deliverance

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed;
Save me, and I shall be saved,
For [w]You *are* my praise.
15 Indeed they say to me,
[x]"Where *is* the word of the LORD?
Let it come now!"
16 As for me, [y]I have not hurried away from *being* a shepherd *who* follows You,
Nor have I desired the woeful day;
You know what came out of my lips;
It was right there before You.
17 Do not be a terror to me;
[z]You *are* my hope in the day of doom.
18 [a]Let them be ashamed who persecute me,
But [b]do not let me be put to shame;
Let them be dismayed,
But do not let me be dismayed.
Bring on them the day of doom,
And [c]destroy them with double destruction!

* **17:8** Qere and Targum read *see*.

17:3 ***your high places of sin.*** Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah were demolished and plundered by the Babylonians. The remaining treasures of the temple of God were carried by Nebuchadnezzar's army to Babylon. Even the idolatrous cultic centers were destroyed (15:13–14).

17:4 ***let go of your heritage.*** This phrase, when used in the context of land, usually refers to letting the land lie fallow during the sabbatical year (Ex. 23:10–11). Judah's captivity would provide rest for the land from the idolatrous activities of its people.

17:5 ***Cursed is the man.*** One cannot trust in both God and humankind.

17:7 ***Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD.*** The basic element in a life of faith is stability. Man depending upon his own strength is unstable. But faith in God brings stability.

17:11 ***As a partridge that broods but does not hatch.*** The teaching of Jeremiah 17:1–10 is supported by a proverb based on the common belief that the partridge hatched eggs other than its own. When the young birds recognized that the partridge was not their mother, they would leave her. Similarly, a man who unjustly gains wealth will be abandoned by the wealth and then be known as a fool.

17:12–13 ***A glorious high throne.*** This phrase refers to the temple in Jerusalem and the ark of the covenant, the symbol of God's presence and sovereignty over the nations.

17:17 ***Do not be a terror to me.*** This refers to physical, emotional, or mental horror.

17:18 ***Let them be ashamed.*** Jeremiah called for his persecutors to be ashamed and dismayed, to be

17:4 [e] Jer. 16:13 [f] Jer. 15:14 **17:5** [g] Is. 30:1, 2; 31:1 [h] Is. 31:3 **17:6** [i] Jer. 48:6 [j] Job 20:17 [k] Deut. 29:23 **17:7** [l] [Is. 30:18] **17:8** [m] [Ps. 1:3] **17:9** [n] [Eccl. 9:3] **17:10** [o] Rev. 2:23 [p] Rom. 2:6 **17:11** [q] Ps. 55:23 [r] Luke 12:20 **17:13** [s] Jer. 14:8 [t] [Is. 1:28] [u] Luke 10:20 [v] Jer. 2:13 **17:14** [w] Deut. 10:21 **17:15** [x] Is. 5:19 **17:16** [y] Jer. 1:4–12 **17:17** [z] Jer. 16:19 **17:18** [a] Ps. 35:4; 70:2 [b] Ps. 25:2 [c] Jer. 11:20

Hallow the Sabbath Day

19 Thus the LORD said to me: "Go and
stand in the gate of the children of the peo-
ple, by which the kings of Judah come in
and by which they go out, and in all the
gates of Jerusalem; 20 and say to them,
[d]'Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of
Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabi-
tants of Jerusalem, who enter by these
gates. 21 Thus says the LORD: [e]"Take heed
to yourselves, and bear no burden on the
Sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates
of Jerusalem; 22 nor carry a burden out of
your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do
any work, but hallow the Sabbath day, as I
[f]commanded your fathers. 23 [g]But they did
not obey nor incline their ear, but made
their neck stiff, that they might not hear
nor receive instruction.
24 "And it shall be, [h]if you heed Me care-
fully," says the LORD, "to bring no bur-
den through the gates of this city on the
[i]Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day,
to do no work in it, 25 [j]then shall enter the
gates of this city kings and princes sitting
on the throne of David, riding in chariots
and on horses, they and their princes, ac-
companied by the men of Judah and the
inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city
shall remain forever. 26 And they shall
come from the cities of Judah and from
[k]the places around Jerusalem, from the
land of Benjamin and from [l]the lowland,
from the mountains and from [m]the South,
bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices,
grain offerings and incense, bringing
[n]sacrifices of praise to the house of the
LORD.
27 "But if you will not heed Me to hallow
the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a
burden when entering the gates of Jerusa-
lem on the Sabbath day, then [o]I will kindle
a fire in its gates, [p]and it shall devour the
palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be
[q]quenched."'"

The Potter and the Clay

18 The word which came to Jeremiah
from the LORD, saying: 2 "Arise
and go down to the potter's house, and
there I will cause you to hear My words."
3 Then I went down to the potter's house,
and there he was, making something at
the wheel. 4 And the vessel that he made
of clay was marred in the hand of the
potter; so he made it again into another
vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to
make.
5 Then the word of the LORD came to me,
saying: 6 "O house of Israel, [a]can I not do
with you as this potter?" says the LORD.
"Look, [b]as the clay *is* in the potter's hand,
so *are* you in My hand, O house of Israel!
7 The instant I speak concerning a nation
and concerning a kingdom, to [c]pluck up,
to pull down, and to destroy *it*, 8 [d]if that
nation against whom I have spoken turns
from its evil, [e]I will relent of the disaster
that I thought to bring upon it. 9 And the in-
stant I speak concerning a nation and con-
cerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*,
10 if it does evil in My sight so that it does
not obey My voice, then I will relent con-
cerning the good with which I said I would
benefit it.
11 "Now therefore, speak to the men of
Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I am
fashioning a disaster and devising a plan
against you. [f]Return now every one from
his evil way, and make your ways and your
doings [g]good."'"

God's Warning Rejected

12 And they said, [h]"That is hopeless! So
we will walk according to our own plans,
and we will every one obey the [i]dictates of
his evil heart."
13 Therefore thus says the LORD:

[j]"Ask now among the Gentiles,
Who has heard such things?
The virgin of Israel has done [k]a very
horrible thing.
14 Will *a man* leave the snow water of
Lebanon,
Which comes from the rock of the
field?
Will the cold flowing waters be
forsaken for strange
waters?

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dishonored and demoralized. The prophet also called upon the Lord to confirm the message of judgment in the day of doom and double destruction.

17:21–22 ***Take heed to yourselves.*** This same phrasing is used in Deuteronomy 4:15 in a warning against idolatry. The sanctity of the Sabbath was a most serious matter. The Sabbath stood as a sign of creation and the covenant relationship between God and Israel.

18:4–6 ***was marred in the hand of the potter.*** The potter's vessel was marred and thus unsuitable for its intended purpose. The potter's remolding of the clay into an acceptable and unblemished work symbolized God's action in reforming Israel. The people had become marred and defiled and had to be reformed into a vessel fit to be identified with the Lord.

18:13–14 ***Who has heard such things.*** Negative rhetorical questions show the absurdity of Israel's rebellion. ***snow water of Lebanon.*** This describes the Mount Hermon watershed that erupts in numerous springs, providing most of the water for the Jordan River. God's blessing was often demonstrated in the provision of water from rocks in arid regions (Ex. 17:6).

17:20 [d] Jer. 19:3, 4 **17:21** [e] Neh. 13:19 **17:22** [f] Ex. 20:8; 31:13 **17:23** [g] Jer. 7:24, 26 **17:24** [h] Jer. 11:4; 26:3 [i] Ex. 16:23–30; 20:8–10 **17:25** [j] Jer. 22:4 **17:26** [k] Jer. 33:13 [l] Zech. 7:7 [m] Judg. 1:9 [n] Ps. 107:22; 116:17 **17:27** [o] Lam. 4:11 [p] 2 Kin. 25:9 [q] Jer. 7:20 **18:6** [a] Rom. 9:20, 21 [b] Is. 64:8 **18:7** [c] Jer. 1:10 **18:8** [d] [Ezek. 18:21; 33:11] [e] Jer. 26:3 **18:11** [f] 2 Kin. 17:13 [g] Jer. 7:3–7 **18:12** [h] Jer. 2:25 [i] Jer. 3:17; 23:17 **18:13** [j] Jer. 2:10, 11 [k] Jer. 5:30

15 "Because My people have forgotten
[l]Me,
They have burned incense to
worthless idols.
And they have caused themselves to
stumble in their ways,
From the [m]ancient paths,
To walk in pathways and not on a
highway,
16 To make their land [n]desolate *and* a
perpetual [o]hissing;
Everyone who passes by it will be
astonished
And shake his head.
17 [p]I will scatter them [q]as with an east
wind before the enemy;
[r]I will show them* the back and not the
face
In the day of their calamity."

Jeremiah Persecuted

18 Then they said, [s]"Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah; [t]for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come and let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words."

19 Give heed to me, O LORD,
And listen to the voice of those who
contend with me!
20 [u]Shall evil be repaid for good?
For they have [v]dug a pit for my life.
Remember that I [w]stood before You
To speak good for them,
To turn away Your wrath from them.
21 Therefore [x]deliver up their children to
the famine,
And pour out their *blood*
By the force of the sword;
Let their wives *become* widows
And [y]bereaved of their children.
Let their men be put to death,
Their young men *be* slain
By the sword in battle.
22 Let a cry be heard from their houses,
When You bring a troop suddenly
upon them;
For they have dug a pit to take me,
And hidden snares for my feet.
23 Yet, LORD, You know all their counsel
Which is against me, to slay *me*.
[z]Provide no atonement for their
iniquity,
Nor blot out their sin from Your
sight;
But let them be overthrown before
You.
Deal *thus* with them
In the time of Your [a]anger.

The Sign of the Broken Flask

19 Thus says the LORD: "Go and get a potter's earthen flask, and *take* some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests. 2 And go out to [a]the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which *is* by the entry of the Potsherd Gate; and proclaim there the words that I will tell you, 3 [b]and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will bring such a catastrophe on this place, that whoever hears of it, his ears will [c]tingle.

4 "Because they [d]have forsaken Me and made this an alien place, because they have burned incense in it to other gods whom neither they, their fathers, nor the kings of Judah have known, and have filled this place with [e]the blood of the innocents 5 [f](they have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings to Baal, [g]which I did not command or speak, nor did it come into My mind), 6 therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that this place shall no more be called Tophet or [h]the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. 7 And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, [i]and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hands of those who seek their lives; their [j]corpses I will give as meat for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. 8 I will make this city [k]desolate and a hissing; everyone who passes by

* **18:17** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *look them in*.

18:15 ***burned incense to worthless idols.*** Foreign deities such as Baal and Asherah were represented by empty and ineffective cultic figurines.

18:17 ***as with an east wind.*** This line refers to the scorching late-spring sirocco wind from the northern Arabian desert.

18:19–20 ***they have dug a pit for my life.*** Jeremiah reminded the Lord how he had interceded for the people and had asked God to turn away His wrath and judgment. But instead of showing their appreciation for Jeremiah's intervention, the people prepared his grave.

19:3 ***Hear the word of the LORD.*** This key word of the Deuteronomic code (Deut. 6:4) calls for a decision regarding the content of the message. ***his ears will tingle.*** This expression is used to refer to a harsh, ringing judgment announcement (1 Sam. 3:11).

19:4–5 ***the blood of the innocents.*** This phrase refers to the murderous act of child sacrifice (7:31). Human sacrifice was known among the Phoenicians, Moabites, and Canaanites. This abominable practice, performed in the name of religious worship, was explicitly forbidden in the covenant (Deut. 12:31).

18:15 [l] Jer. 2:13, 32 [m] Jer. 6:16 **18:16** [n] Jer. 19:8 [o] 1 Kin. 9:8 **18:17** [p] Jer. 13:24 [q] Ps. 48:7 [r] Jer. 2:27 **18:18** [s] Jer. 11:19 [t] Lev. 10:11 **18:20** [u] Ps. 109:4 [v] Jer. 5:26 [w] Jer. 14:7—15:1 **18:21** [x] Ps. 109:9–20 [y] Jer. 15:7, 8 **18:23** [z] Ps. 35:14; 109:14 [a] Jer. 7:20 **19:2** [a] Josh. 15:8 **19:3** [b] Jer. 17:20 [c] 1 Sam. 3:11 **19:4** [d] Is. 65:11 [e] 2 Kin. 21:12 **19:5** [f] Jer. 7:31; 32:35 [g] Lev. 18:21 **19:6** [h] Josh. 15:8 **19:7** [i] Lev. 26:17 [j] Ps. 79:2 **19:8** [k] Jer. 18:16; 49:13; 50:13

it will be astonished and hiss because of all its plagues. 9And I will cause them to eat the [l]flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and everyone shall eat the flesh of his friend in the siege and in the desperation with which their enemies and those who seek their lives shall drive them to despair.”’

10[m]“Then you shall break the flask in the sight of the men who go with you, 11and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: [n]“Even so I will break this people and this city, as *one* breaks a potter’s vessel, which cannot be made whole again; and they shall [o]bury *them* in Tophet till *there is* no place to bury. 12Thus I will do to this place,” says the LORD, “and to its inhabitants, and make this city like Tophet. 13And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled [p]like the place of Tophet, because of all the houses on whose [q]roofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven, and [r]poured out drink offerings to other gods.”’”

14Then Jeremiah came from Tophet, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in [s]the court of the Lord’s house and said to all the people, 15“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on this city and on all her towns all the doom that I have pronounced against it, because [t]they have stiffened their necks that they might not hear My words.’”

The Word of God to Pashhur

20 Now [a]Pashhur the son of [b]Immer, the priest who *was* also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. 2Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high [c]gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the LORD.

3And it happened on the next day that Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, “The LORD has not called your name Pashhur, but Magor-Missabib.* 4For thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes shall see *it*. I will [d]give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon and slay them with the sword. 5Moreover I [e]will deliver all the wealth of this city, all its produce, and all its precious things; all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies, who will plunder them, seize them, and [f]carry them to Babylon. 6And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have [g]prophesied lies.’”

Jeremiah’s Unpopular Ministry

7 O LORD, You induced me, and I was persuaded;
[h]You are stronger than I, and have prevailed.
[i]I am in derision daily;
Everyone mocks me.
8 For when I spoke, I cried out;
[j]I shouted, “Violence and plunder!”
Because the word of the LORD was made to me
A reproach and a derision daily.
9 Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him,
Nor speak anymore in His name.”
But *His word* was in my heart like a [k]burning fire
Shut up in my bones;
I was weary of holding *it* back,
And [l]I could not.

*20:3 Literally *Fear on Every Side*

19:9 ***I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons.*** The gruesome practice of cannibalism appears, recalling the words of Deuteronomy 28:53. After years of siege resulting in severe famine, the people would resort to eating human flesh in order to survive. This prophecy was literally fulfilled in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, and again in A.D. 70 when Titus destroyed Jerusalem.

20:1 ***Pashhur . . . chief governor.*** A person in this position had to be a priest. He had oversight of the temple, the temple guards, entry into the courts, and so on. Jeremiah’s proclamations against the city and the temple were of grave concern to Pashhur because of the threat to the continuation of the cult in which he was involved.

20:2 ***high gate of Benjamin.*** This portal provided access into the temple courtyards from the north, the direction of Benjamin’s territory.

20:3–4 ***Magor-Missabib.*** This means “terror on every side.” As Pashhur had been a terror to Jeremiah, so he would become a terror to himself, his family, and his associates.

20:6 ***Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house.*** Pashhur’s whole family and his close associates, who had opposed Jeremiah, would be deported to Babylon because Pashhur had prophesied lies. Pashhur apparently had announced that Jerusalem would not suffer destruction.

20:7 ***You induced me, and I was persuaded.*** A play on words is intended by using two forms of the same word, which means “to entice.” Jeremiah claimed that the Lord had seduced him and that he had succumbed to the temptation.

20:8 ***A reproach and a derision.*** Jeremiah had faithfully proclaimed the Lord’s word of judgment and

19:9 [l] Lev. 26:29 **19:10** [m] Jer. 51:63, 64 **19:11** [n] Is. 30:14 [o] Jer. 7:32 **19:13** [p] 2 Kin. 23:10 [q] Zeph. 1:5 [r] Jer. 7:18 **19:14** [s] 2 Chr. 20:5 **19:15** [t] Neh. 9:17, 29 **20:1** [a] Ezra 2:37, 38 [b] 1 Chr. 24:14 **20:2** [c] Jer. 37:13 **20:4** [d] Jer. 21:4–10 **20:5** [e] 2 Kin. 20:17 [f] Is. 39:6 **20:6** [g] Jer. 14:13–15 **20:7** [h] Jer. 1:6, 7 [i] Lam. 3:14 **20:8** [j] Jer. 6:7 **20:9** [k] Ps. 39:3 [l] Job 32:18

10 [m]For I heard many mocking:
"Fear on every side!"
"Report," *they say,* "and we will report it!"
[n]All my acquaintances watched for my stumbling, *saying,*
"Perhaps he can be induced;
Then we will prevail against him,
And we will take our revenge on him."
11 But the LORD *is* [o]with me as a mighty, awesome One.
Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not [p]prevail.
They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper.
Their [q]everlasting confusion will never be forgotten.
12 But, O LORD of hosts,
You who [r]test the righteous,
And see the mind and heart,
[s]Let me see Your vengeance on them;
For I have pleaded my cause before You.
13 Sing to the LORD! Praise the LORD!
For [t]He has delivered the life of the poor
From the hand of evildoers.
14 [u]Cursed *be* the day in which I was born!
Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me!
15 Let the man *be* cursed
Who brought news to my father, saying,
"A male child has been born to you!"
Making him very glad.
16 And let that man be like the cities
Which the LORD [v]overthrew, and did not relent;
Let him [w]hear the cry in the morning
And the shouting at noon,
17 [x]Because he did not kill me from the womb,
That my mother might have been my grave,
And her womb always enlarged *with me.*
18 [y]Why did I come forth from the womb
to [z]see labor and sorrow,
That my days should be consumed with shame?

Jerusalem's Doom Is Sealed

21 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD when [a]King Zedekiah sent to him [b]Pashhur the son of Melchiah, and [c]Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, saying, 2[d]"Please inquire of the LORD for us, for Nebuchadnezzar* king of Babylon makes war against us. Perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wonderful works, that *the king* may go away from us."

3Then Jeremiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, 4'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that *are* in your hands, with which you fight against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans* who besiege you outside the walls; and [e]I will assemble them in the midst of this city. 5I [f]Myself will fight against you with an [g]outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger and fury and great wrath. 6I will strike the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; they shall die of a great pestilence. 7And afterward," says the LORD, [h]"I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, his servants and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence and the sword and the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life; and he shall strike them with the edge of the sword. [i]He shall not spare them, or have pity or mercy."'

8"Now you shall say to this people, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, [j]I set before you the way of life and the way of death. 9He who [k]remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who goes out and defects to the Chaldeans who besiege you, he shall [l]live, and his life shall

* **21:2** Hebrew *Nebuchadrezzar,* and so elsewhere
* **21:4** Or *Babylonians*

destruction, but the prophecy had not been fulfilled, thus opening the prophet up to criticism.

20:11 *the LORD is with me.* In order for a prophet to endure the pain and suffering that goes with the job, he needs to be aware of God's presence, power, and approval.

20:12 *who test the righteous.* God tests (6:27; 17:10) and judges the righteous, those who walk uprightly in His ways and truth.

20:14–15 *Cursed be the day.* In ancient Israel, to curse God or one's parents was an offense punishable by death. Jeremiah avoided committing a capital offense by cursing his conception and birth, and hence his call from God.

21:2 *inquire of the LORD.* This phrase means to seek His will.

21:5 *with an outstretched hand.* Because the people of Judah had become God's enemies, God would fight against them. The divine instruments by which Israel had gained freedom from Egypt (Ex. 15:6; Deut. 6:21) and deliverance from their enemies would be used against them.

21:8–9 *the way of life and the way of death.* Death would come to those who attempted to survive the siege of Jerusalem; life was possible through surrender to the Chaldeans (Babylonians).

20:10 [m] Ps. 31:13 [n] Ps. 41:9; 55:13, 14 **20:11** [o] Jer. 1:18, 19 [p] Jer. 15:20; 17:18 [q] Jer. 23:40 **20:12** [r] [Jer. 11:20; 17:10] [s] Ps. 54:7; 59:10 **20:13** [t] Ps. 35:9, 10; 109:30, 31 **20:14** [u] Job 3:3 **20:16** [v] Gen. 19:25 [w] Jer. 18:22 **20:17** [x] Job 3:10, 11 **20:18** [y] Job 3:20 [z] Lam. 3:1 **21:1** [a] 2 Kin. 24:17, 18 [b] Jer. 38:1 [c] 2 Kin. 25:18 **21:2** [d] Jer. 37:3, 7 **21:4** [e] Is. 13:4 **21:5** [f] Is. 63:10 [g] Ex. 6:6 **21:7** [h] Jer. 37:17; 39:5; 52:9 [i] 2 Chr. 36:17 **21:8** [j] Deut. 30:15, 19 **21:9** [k] Jer. 38:2 [l] Jer. 39:18

be as a prize to him. 10For I have [m]set My face against this city for adversity and not for good," says the LORD. [n]"It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall [o]burn it with fire."'

Message to the House of David

11"And concerning the house of the king of Judah, *say,* 'Hear the word of the LORD, 12O house of David! Thus says the LORD:

[p]"Execute judgment [q]in the morning;
And deliver *him who is* plundered
Out of the hand of the oppressor,
Lest My fury go forth like fire
And burn so that no one can quench *it,*
Because of the evil of your doings.

13 "Behold, [r]I *am* against you,
O inhabitant of the valley,
And rock of the plain," says the LORD,
"Who say, [s]'Who shall come down
against us?
Or who shall enter our dwellings?'
14 But I will punish you according to the
[t]fruit of your doings," says the
LORD;
"I will kindle a fire in its forest,
And [u]it shall devour all things around
it."'"

22 Thus says the LORD: "Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and there speak this word, 2and say, [a]'Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, you who sit on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates! 3Thus says the LORD: [b]"Execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do no wrong and do no violence to the stranger, the [c]fatherless, or the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. 4For if you indeed do this thing, [d]then shall enter the gates of this house, riding on horses and in chariots, accompanied by servants and people, kings who sit on the throne of David. 5But if you will not hear these words, [e]I swear by Myself," says the LORD, "that this house shall become a desolation."'"

6For thus says the LORD to the house of the king of Judah:

"You *are* [f]Gilead to Me,
The head of Lebanon;
Yet I surely will make you a
wilderness,
Cities *which* are not inhabited.
7 I will prepare destroyers against you,
Everyone with his weapons;
They shall cut down [g]your choice
cedars
[h]And cast *them* into the fire.

8And many nations will pass by this city; and everyone will say to his neighbor, [i]'Why has the LORD done so to this great city?' 9Then they will answer, [i]'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshiped other gods and served them.'"

10 Weep not for [k]the dead, nor bemoan
him;
Weep bitterly for him [l]who goes
away,
For he shall return no more,
Nor see his native country.

Message to the Sons of Josiah

11For thus says the LORD concerning [m]Shallum* the son of Josiah, king of Judah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father, [n]who went from this place: "He shall not return here anymore, 12but he shall die in the place where they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

* **22:11** Also called *Jehoahaz*

21:10 ***For I have set My face.*** This phrase describes the fixed intention of God, which in this context was against Jerusalem. The result would be adversity rather than good.

21:13 ***come down against us.*** Attacking armies generally approached Jerusalem from the north along an elevated ridge.

22:1 ***Go . . . king of Judah . . . speak this word.*** This is the first of three messages directed at specific kings of Judah. Shallum, the fourth son of Josiah, was placed on the throne by the people of Judah, but he was dethroned after three months by Pharaoh Necho. Shallum was imprisoned and taken captive to Egypt (2 Chr. 36:1–4). Eliakim (Jehoiakim), Shallum's brother, was placed on the throne as an Egyptian vassal. Necho maintained control of Palestine until Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. Shallum died without returning from Egypt, in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

22:2 ***who sit on the throne of David.*** Jeremiah's prophecy was addressed to three groups: the kings who are of David's lineage, the kings' servants, and "your people who enter these gates." The last phrase may refer to the citizens in general or to personnel who regularly entered the palace gates.

22:3 ***Execute judgment and righteousness.*** For all practical purposes these two terms are synonymous. One could not have one without the other.

22:6–7 ***Gilead . . . Lebanon.*** The territories were sources for timber for the royal palaces. These luxurious residences would be reduced to deserted wilderness and set ablaze if the kings disobeyed the covenant.

22:9 ***worshiped other gods.*** The pagan nations would recognize that the destruction of Jerusalem was the result of Judah's violation of its covenant with God. The people of Judah had exchanged their God for alien deities, whom they worshiped and served.

21:10 [m] Amos 9:4 [n] Jer. 38:3 [o] Jer. 34:2, 22; 37:10
21:12 [p] Zech. 7:9 [q] Ps. 101:8 **21:13** [r] [Ezek. 13:8] [s] Jer. 49:4 **21:14** [t] Is. 3:10, 11 [u] 2 Chr. 36:19 **22:2** [a] Jer. 17:20 **22:3** [b] Jer. 21:12 [c] Jer. 7:6 **22:4** [d] Jer. 17:25 **22:5** [e] Heb. 6:13, 17 **22:6** [f] Song 4:1 **22:7** [g] Is. 37:24 [h] Jer. 21:14 **22:8** [i] Deut. 29:24–26 **22:9** [j] 2 Chr. 34:25 **22:10** [k] 2 Kin. 22:20 [l] Jer. 14:17; 22:11 **22:11** [m] 1 Chr. 3:15 [n] 2 Kin. 23:34

13 "Woe[o] to him who builds his house by unrighteousness
And his chambers by injustice,
[p]*Who* uses his neighbor's service without wages
And gives him nothing for his work,
14 Who says, 'I will build myself a wide house with spacious chambers,
And cut out windows for it,
Paneling *it* with cedar
And painting *it* with vermilion.'

15 "Shall you reign because you enclose *yourself* in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink,
And do justice and righteousness?
Then [q]*it was* well with him.
16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
Then *it was* well.
Was not this knowing Me?" says the LORD.
17 "Yet[r] your eyes and your heart *are* for nothing but your covetousness,
For shedding innocent blood,
And practicing oppression and violence."

18 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

[s]"They shall not lament for him,
Saying, [t]'Alas, my brother!' or 'Alas, my sister!'
They shall not lament for him,
Saying, 'Alas, master!' or 'Alas, his glory!'
19 [u]He shall be buried with the burial of a donkey,
Dragged and cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

20 "Go up to Lebanon, and cry out,
And lift up your voice in Bashan;
Cry from Abarim,
For all your lovers are destroyed.
21 I spoke to you in your prosperity,
But you said, 'I will not hear.'
[v]This *has been* your manner from your youth,
That you did not obey My voice.
22 The wind shall eat up all [w]your rulers,
And your lovers shall go into captivity;
Surely then you will be ashamed and humiliated
For all your wickedness.
23 O inhabitant of Lebanon,
Making your nest in the cedars,
How gracious will you be when pangs come upon you,
Like [x]the pain of a woman in labor?

Message to Coniah

24 "*As* I live," says the LORD, [y]"though Coniah* the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, [z]were the signet on My right hand, yet I would pluck you off; 25[a]and I will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand *of those* whose face you fear—the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of the Chaldeans. 26[b]So I will cast you out, and your mother who bore you, into another country where you were not born; and there you shall die. 27But to the land to which they desire to return, there they shall not return.

28 "Is this man Coniah a despised, broken idol—
[c]A vessel in which *is* no pleasure?
Why are they cast out, he and his descendants,
And cast into a land which they do not know?
29 [d]O earth, earth, earth,
Hear the word of the LORD!
30 Thus says the LORD:
'Write this man down as [e]childless,
A man *who* shall not prosper in his days;
For [f]none of his descendants shall prosper,
Sitting on the throne of David,
And ruling anymore in Judah.'"

The Branch of Righteousness

23 "Woe [a]to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the LORD. 2Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. [b]Behold, I will attend to

* **22:24** Also called *Jeconiah* and *Jehoiachin*

22:13 ***uses his neighbor's service without wages.*** The king was supposed to be the guardian of his people, but Jehoiakim enslaved his fellow Israelites to build his self-aggrandizing palaces.

22:18–19 ***He shall be buried with the burial of a donkey.*** A king of such despicable character as Jehoiakim deserved no lament. Instead of proper funeral rites due a king, Jehoiakim would receive an ignoble burial, like an animal, alone and unlamented.

22:22–23 ***The wind shall eat up all your rulers.*** The winds of adversity and invasion would carry off Judah's leaders and allies alike. The nation would be ashamed that it had entered into such futile associations.

22:24–27 ***Coniah.*** This was another name for Jehoiachin. He succeeded his father in 598 B.C. under the threat of siege from Babylon as a result of Jehoiakim's rebellion. Jehoiachin reigned for three months until he and his family were exiled to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kin. 24:6–16). Eventually Jehoiachin was released from prison after the death of Nebuchadnezzar.

22:13 [o] 2 Kin. 23:35 [p] James 5:4 **22:15** [q] Ps. 128:2
22:17 [r] Ezek. 19:6 **22:18** [s] Jer. 16:4, 6 [t] 1 Kin. 13:30
22:19 [u] Jer. 36:30 **22:21** [v] Jer. 3:24, 25; 32:30
22:22 [w] Jer. 23:1 **22:23** [x] Jer. 6:24 **22:24** [y] 2 Kin. 24:6, 8
[z] Hag. 2:23 **22:25** [a] Jer. 34:20 **22:26** [b] 2 Kin. 24:15
22:28 [c] Hos. 8:8 **22:29** [d] Deut. 32:1 **22:30** [e] Matt. 1:12
[f] Jer. 36:30 **23:1** [a] Jer. 10:21 **23:2** [b] Ex. 32:34

you for the evil of your doings," says the LORD. 3"But [c]I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 4I will set up [d]shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the LORD.

5 "Behold, [e]*the* days are coming," says the LORD,
"That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness;
A King shall reign and prosper,
[f]And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.
6 [g]In His days Judah will be saved,
And Israel [h]will dwell safely;
Now [i]this *is* His name by which He will be called:

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

7"Therefore, behold, [j]*the* days are coming," says the LORD, "that they shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,' 8but, 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country [k]and from all the countries where I had driven them.' And they shall dwell in their own [l]land."

False Prophets and Empty Oracles

9 My heart within me is broken
Because of the prophets;
[m]All my bones shake.
I am like a drunken man,
And like a man whom wine has overcome,
Because of the LORD,
And because of His holy words.
10 For [n]the land is full of adulterers;
For [o]because of a curse the land mourns.
[p]The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up.
Their course of life is evil,
And their might *is* not right.
11 "For [q]both prophet and priest are profane;
Yes, [r]in My house I have found their wickedness," says the LORD.
12 "Therefore[s] their way shall be to them
Like slippery *ways;*
In the darkness they shall be driven on
And fall in them;
For I [t]will bring disaster on them,
The year of their punishment," says the LORD.
13 "And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria:
[u]They prophesied by Baal
And [v]caused My people Israel to err.
14 Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem:
[w]They commit adultery and walk in lies;
They also [x]strengthen the hands of evildoers,
So that no one turns back from his wickedness.
All of them are like [y]Sodom to Me,
And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.

15"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets:

'Behold, I will feed them with [z]wormwood,
And make them drink the water of gall;
For from the prophets of Jerusalem
Profaneness has gone out into all the land.'"

16Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you.
They make you worthless;
[a]They speak a vision of their own heart,
Not from the mouth of the LORD.

* **23:6** Hebrew *YHWH Tsidkenu*

23:3 ***I will gather the remnant.*** The kings of Israel had caused the dispersion of the nation; but the Lord would mercifully bring about the restoration of the remnant. This concept was a popular one with many of the prophets (Is. 1:9; 10:20–23). The blessing of restoration and prosperity as a consequence of repentance is outlined in Deuteronomy 30:1–10.

23:5 ***a Branch of righteousness.*** Beginning with Isaiah 4:2 this term is used of the promised Messiah (33:15; Zech. 3:8). This great king will reign with justice and righteousness. This ideal was founded on God's promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16).

23:7–8 ***the days are coming.*** The future restoration of Israel would exceed anything in the past; it would surpass even the first exodus, the deliverance from Egypt.

23:9–10 ***My heart within me is broken.*** Jeremiah's dismay over the false prophets weakened him mentally and physically, so much so that he felt drunken from the inner turmoil.

23:15 ***I will feed them with wormwood.*** This word refers to bitterness and death by poison. According to Deuteronomy 18:20, the consequence of false prophecy was death.

23:16 ***a vision of their own heart.*** Visions were commonly understood to be a means of receiving a message from God (or the gods). The term *vision* used here and in Jeremiah 14:14 is also found in Daniel 1:17 and 8:1; plus it is used in other prophetic books to describe a divine revelation (Is. 1:1; Mic. 3:6).

23:3 [c] Jer. 32:37 **23:4** [d] Jer. 3:15 **23:5** [e] Jer. 33:14; Matt. 1:1, 6; Luke 3:31; [John 1:45; 7:42]; Rev. 22:16 [f] Ps. 72:2 **23:6** [g] Zech. 14:11 [h] Jer. 32:37 [i] [Rom. 3:22; 1 Cor. 1:30] **23:7** [j] Jer. 16:14 **23:8** [k] Is. 43:5, 6 [l] Gen. 12:7 **23:9** [m] Hab. 3:16 **23:10** [n] Jer. 9:2 [o] Hos. 4:2 [p] Jer. 9:10 **23:11** [q] Zeph. 3:4 [r] Jer. 7:30; 32:34 **23:12** [s] [Prov. 4:19] [t] Jer. 11:23 **23:13** [u] Jer. 2:8 [v] Is. 9:16 **23:14** [w] Jer. 29:23 [x] Ezek. 13:22, 23 [y] Is. 1:9, 10 **23:15** [z] Jer. 9:15 **23:16** [a] Jer. 14:14

17 They continually say to those who
despise Me,
'The LORD has said, [b]"You shall have
peace"';
And *to* everyone who [c]walks
according to the dictates of his
own heart, they say,
[d]'No evil shall come upon you.'"

18 For [e]who has stood in the counsel of
the LORD,
And has perceived and heard His
word?
Who has marked His word and heard
it?

19 Behold, a [f]whirlwind of the LORD has
gone forth in fury—
A violent whirlwind!
It will fall violently on the head of the
wicked.

20 The [g]anger of the LORD will not turn
back
Until He has executed and performed
the thoughts of His heart.
[h]In the latter days you will understand
it perfectly.

21 "I[i] have not sent these prophets, yet
they ran.
I have not spoken to them, yet they
prophesied.

22 But if they had stood in My counsel,
And had caused My people to hear My
words,
Then they would have [j]turned them
from their evil way
And from the evil of their doings.

23 "*Am* I a God near at hand," says the
LORD,
"And not a God afar off?

24 Can anyone [k]hide himself in secret
places,
So I shall not see him?" says the LORD;
[l]"Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says
the LORD.

25"I have heard what the prophets have
said who prophesy lies in My name, say-
ing, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!'
26How long will *this* be in the heart of the
prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed *they*
are prophets of the deceit of their own
heart, 27who try to make My people forget
My name by their dreams which everyone
tells his neighbor, [m]as their fathers forgot
My name for Baal.

28 "The prophet who has a dream, let him
tell a dream;
And he who has My word, let him
speak My word faithfully.
What *is* the chaff to the wheat?" says
the LORD.

29 "*Is* not My word like a [n]fire?" says the
LORD,
"And like a hammer *that* breaks the
rock in pieces?

30"Therefore behold, [o]I *am* against the
prophets," says the LORD, "who steal My
words every one from his neighbor. 31Be-
hold, I *am* [p]against the prophets," says the
LORD, "who use their tongues and say, 'He
says.' 32Behold, I *am* against those who
prophesy false dreams," says the LORD,
"and tell them, and cause My people to err
by their [q]lies and by [r]their recklessness.
Yet I did not send them or command them;
therefore they shall not [s]profit this people
at all," says the LORD.

33"So when these people or the prophet
or the priest ask you, saying, 'What is [t]the
oracle of the LORD?' you shall then say to
them, 'What oracle?'* I will even forsake
you," says the LORD. 34"And *as for* the
prophet and the priest and the people who
say, 'The oracle of the LORD!' I will even
punish that man and his house. 35Thus
every one of you shall say to his neigh-
bor, and every one to his brother, 'What
has the LORD answered?' and, 'What has
the LORD spoken?' 36And the oracle of the
LORD you shall mention no more. For every
man's word will be his oracle, for you have
[u]perverted the words of the living God, the
LORD of hosts, our God. 37Thus you shall
say to the prophet, 'What has the LORD
answered you?' and, 'What has the LORD
spoken?' 38But since you say, 'The oracle
of the LORD!' therefore thus says the LORD:
'Because you say this word, "The oracle of
the LORD!" and I have sent to you, saying,
"Do not say, 'The oracle of the LORD!'"

* **23:33** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read '*You are the burden.*'

23:19 ***a whirlwind of the LORD.*** This is a symbol of God's judgment (Is. 29:6).

23:21–22 ***I have not sent these prophets.*** A true prophet must be sent by God with a word from God. A true prophet of God calls people to repentance of sin or evil and to renewed faith.

23:26 ***the deceit of their own heart.*** The character of the false prophets was based on lies and deceit. Their deception was apparent because their goal was to draw the people into idolatry with their fanciful dreams, leading people to forget God and follow Baal (2:8).

23:28–29 ***What is the chaff to the wheat.*** This poetic interlude compares dream and word. A dream is fleeting, like chaff in the wind. God's word has the force of fire and a hammer.

23:38–40 ***The oracle of the LORD.*** False prophets could not speak an oracle. The disgrace that resulted from the false prophets would last for an extended period of time: Its memory would endure forever (20:11).

23:17 [b] Ezek. 13:10 [c] Deut. 29:19; Jer. 3:17 [d] Mic. 3:11
23:18 [e] [1 Cor. 2:16] **23:19** [f] Amos 1:14 **23:20** [g] Jer. 30:24 [h] Gen. 49:1 **23:21** [i] Jer. 14:14; 23:32; 27:15
23:22 [j] Jer. 25:5 **23:24** [k] [Ps. 139:7] [l] [1 Kin. 8:27]
23:27 [m] Judg. 3:7 **23:29** [n] Jer. 5:14 **23:30** [o] Deut. 18:20 **23:31** [p] Ezek. 13:9 **23:32** [q] Lam. 2:14; 3:37
[r] Zeph. 3:4 [s] Jer. 7:8 **23:33** [t] Mal. 1:1 **23:36** [u] Deut. 4:2

39 therefore behold, I, even I, [v]will utterly
forget you and forsake you, and the city
that I gave you and your fathers, and *will*
cast you out of My presence. 40 And I will
bring [w]an everlasting reproach upon you,
and a perpetual [x]shame, which shall not be
forgotten.'"

The Sign of Two Baskets of Figs

24 The [a]LORD showed me, and there
were two baskets of figs set before
the temple of the LORD, after Nebuchad-
nezzar [b]king of Babylon had carried away
captive [c]Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim,
king of Judah, and the princes of Judah
with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jeru-
salem, and had brought them to Babylon.
2 One basket *had* very good figs, like the
figs *that are* first ripe; and the other basket
had very bad figs which could not be eaten,
they were so [d]bad. 3 Then the LORD said to
me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?"

And I said, "Figs, the good figs, very
good; and the bad, very bad, which cannot
be eaten, they are so bad."

4 Again the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, 5 "Thus says the LORD, the God
of Israel: 'Like these good figs, so will I
acknowledge those who are carried away
captive from Judah, whom I have sent out
of this place for *their own* good, into the
land of the Chaldeans. 6 For I will set My
eyes on them for good, and [e]I will bring
them back to this land; [f]I will build them
and not pull *them* down, and I will plant
them and not pluck *them* up. 7 Then I will
give them [g]a heart to know Me, that I *am*
the LORD; and they shall be [h]My people,
and I will be their God, for they shall return
to Me [i]with their whole heart.

8 'And as the bad [j]figs which cannot be
eaten, they are so bad'—surely thus says
the LORD—'so will I give up Zedekiah the
king of Judah, his princes, the [k]residue of
Jerusalem who remain in this land, and
[l]those who dwell in the land of Egypt. 9 I
will deliver them to [m]trouble into all the
kingdoms of the earth, for *their* harm, [n]*to*
be a reproach and a byword, a taunt and
a curse, in all places where I shall drive
them. 10 And I will send the sword, the
famine, and the pestilence among them,
till they are consumed from the land that
I gave to them and their fathers.'"

Seventy Years of Desolation

25 The word that came to Jeremiah con-
cerning all the people of Judah, [a]in
the fourth year of [b]Jehoiakim the son of
Josiah, king of Judah (which *was* the first
year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon),
2 which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all
the people of Judah and to all the inhab-
itants of Jerusalem, saying: 3 [c]"From the
thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon,
king of Judah, even to this day, this *is* the
twenty-third year in which the word of the
LORD has come to me; and I have spoken
to you, rising early and speaking, [d]but you
have not listened. 4 And the LORD has sent
to you all His servants the prophets, [e]ris-
ing early and sending *them*, but you have
not listened nor inclined your ear to hear.
5 They said, [f]'Repent now everyone of his
evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in
the land that the LORD has given to you and
your fathers forever and ever. 6 Do not go
after other gods to serve them and wor-
ship them, and do not provoke Me to anger
with the works of your hands; and I will
not harm you.' 7 Yet you have not listened to
Me," says the LORD, "that you might [g]pro-
voke Me to anger with the works of your
hands to your own hurt.

8 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts:
'Because you have not heard My words,
9 behold, I will send and take [h]all the fam-
ilies of the north,' says the LORD, 'and
Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, [i]My
servant, and will bring them against this
land, against its inhabitants, and against
these nations all around, and will utterly
destroy them, and [j]make them an astonish-
ment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations.
10 Moreover I will take from them the [k]voice
of mirth and the voice of gladness, the
voice of the bridegroom and the voice of
the bride, [l]the sound of the millstones and
the light of the lamp. 11 And this whole land
shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment,
and these nations shall serve the king of
Babylon seventy [m]years.

12 'Then it will come to pass, [n]when sev-
enty years are completed, *that* I will pun-
ish the king of Babylon and that nation, the
land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,'
says the LORD; [o]'and I will make it a perpet-
ual desolation. 13 So I will bring on that land

24:4–7 ***Like these good figs.*** These are identified with the deported exiles, including Jeconiah's royal household, whom God set apart. God would bring back the captives, establish them in the land, and multiply their crops.

25:3 ***I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking.*** This phrase describes Jeremiah's diligence and persistence.

25:9 ***Nebuchadnezzar . . . My servant.*** This expression does not imply that the Babylonian monarch worshiped Israel's God, but simply that he was used by God to fulfill His purposes (as in the case of Cyrus, who is called the Lord's "anointed" in Is. 45:1).

23:39 [v] Hos. 4:6 **23:40** [w] Jer. 20:11 [x] Mic. 3:5–7
24:1 [a] Amos 7:1, 4; 8:1 [b] 2 Kin. 24:12–16 [c] Jer. 22:24–28; 29:2 **24:2** [d] Jer. 29:17 **24:6** [e] Jer. 12:15; 29:10 [f] Jer. 32:41; 33:7; 42:10 **24:7** [g] [Deut. 30:6] [h] Jer. 30:22; 31:33; 32:38 [i] Jer. 29:13 **24:8** [j] Jer. 29:17 [k] Jer. 39:9 [l] Jer. 44:1, 26–30 **24:9** [m] Deut. 28:25, 37 [n] Ps. 44:13, 14 **25:1** [a] Jer. 36:1 [b] 2 Kin. 24:1, 2 **25:3** [c] Jer. 1:2 [d] Jer. 7:13; 11:7, 8, 10 **25:4** [e] Jer. 7:13, 25 **25:5** [f] Jer. 18:11 **25:7** [g] Deut. 32:21 **25:9** [h] Jer. 1:15 [i] Is. 45:1 [j] Jer. 18:16 **25:10** [k] Rev. 18:23 [l] Eccl. 12:4 **25:11** [m] Jer. 29:10 **25:12** [n] Ezra 1:1 [o] Is. 13:20

all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations. 14[p](For many nations [q]and great kings shall [r]be served by them also; [s]and I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the works of their own hands.)'"

Judgment on the Nations

15For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: "Take this [t]wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. 16And [u]they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them."

17Then I took the cup from the LORD's hand, and made all the nations drink, to whom the LORD had sent me: 18Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and its princes, to make them [v]a desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and [w]a curse, as *it is* this day; 19Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his princes, and all his people; 20all the mixed multitude, all the kings of [x]the land of Uz, all the kings of the land of the [y]Philistines (namely, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and [z]the remnant of Ashdod); 21[a]Edom, Moab, and the people of Ammon; 22all the kings of [b]Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastlands which *are* across the [c]sea; 23[d]Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all *who are* in the farthest corners; 24all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the [e]mixed multitude who dwell in the desert; 25all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of [f]Elam, and all the kings of the [g]Medes; 26[h]all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the world which *are* on the face of the earth. Also the king of Sheshach* shall drink after them.

27"Therefore you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: [i]"Drink, [j]be drunk, and vomit! Fall and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you."' 28And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "You shall certainly drink! 29For behold, [k]I begin to bring calamity on the city [l]which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for [m]I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth," says the LORD of hosts.'

30"Therefore prophesy against them all these words, and say to them:

'The LORD will [n]roar from on high,
And utter His voice from [o]His holy habitation;
He will roar mightily against [p]His fold.
He will give [q]a shout, as those who tread *the grapes,*
Against all the inhabitants of the earth.
31 A noise will come to the ends of the earth—
For the LORD has [r]a controversy with the nations;
[s]He will plead His case with all flesh.
He will give those *who are* wicked to the sword,' says the LORD."

32Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"Behold, disaster shall go forth
From nation to nation,
And [t]a great whirlwind shall be raised up
From the farthest parts of the earth.

33[u]And at that day the slain of the LORD shall be from *one* end of the earth even to the *other* end of the earth. They shall not be [v]lamented, [w]or gathered, or buried; they shall become refuse on the ground.

34 "Wail,[x] shepherds, and cry!
Roll about *in the ashes,*
You leaders of the flock!
For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions are fulfilled;
You shall fall like a precious vessel.
35 And the shepherds will have no way to flee,
Nor the leaders of the flock to escape.

* **25:26** A code word for Babylon (compare 51:41)

25:16 ***drink and stagger and go mad.*** This triad sequence depicts the judgment process by which the sword of the Lord subdues those opposed to Him. The state of drunkenness was condemned in the Old Testament: to drink the cup and stagger was to display one's guilt (Num. 5:19–28).

25:18 ***to make them a desolation, an astonishment.*** The list of nations that would be made to drink from the cup of the Lord's judgment begins with Judah and Jerusalem, which would be made a source of derision (19:8).

25:27–28 ***Drink, be drunk, and vomit.*** These terms for progressive inebriation emphasize the extent of judgment that would flow from God's cup of wrath. Those who refused the cup would be forced to drink.

25:30 ***The LORD will roar from on high.*** Generally this phrase refers to God's abode on Mount Zion (Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2).

25:31 ***A noise will come.*** This noise refers to a thunderous judgment resulting from God's "covenant lawsuit" against the nations. Though they had not received the law like Judah and Israel, the Gentiles would be judged because they were "wicked." The word "wicked" refers to the guilt associated with the

25:14 [p] Jer. 50:9; 51:27, 28 [q] Jer. 51:27 [r] Jer. 27:7 [s] Jer. 50:29; 51:6, 24 **25:15** [t] Rev. 14:10 **25:16** [u] Nah. 3:11 **25:18** [v] Jer. 25:9, 11 [w] Jer. 24:9 **25:20** [x] Job 1:1 [y] Jer. 47:1–7 [z] Is. 20:1 **25:21** [a] Jer. 49:7 **25:22** [b] Jer. 47:4 [c] Jer. 49:23 **25:23** [d] Jer. 49:7, 8 **25:24** [e] Ezek. 30:5 **25:25** [f] Jer. 49:34 [g] Jer. 51:11, 28 **25:26** [h] Jer. 50:9 **25:27** [i] Hab. 2:16 [j] Is. 63:6 **25:29** [k] Ezek. 9:6 [l] Dan. 9:18 [m] Ezek. 38:21 **25:30** [n] Amos 1:2 [o] Ps. 11:4 [p] 1 Kin. 9:3 [q] Is. 16:9 **25:31** [r] Mic. 6:2 [s] Is. 66:16 **25:32** [t] Jer. 23:19; 30:23 **25:33** [u] Is. 34:2, 3; 66:16 [v] Jer. 16:4, 6 [w] Ps. 79:3 **25:34** [x] Jer. 4:8; 6:26

36 A voice of the cry of the
shepherds,
And a wailing of the leaders to the
flock *will be heard*.
For the LORD has plundered their
pasture,
37 And the peaceful dwellings are cut
down
Because of the fierce anger of the
LORD.
38 He has left His lair like the lion;
For their land is desolate
Because of the fierceness of the
Oppressor,
And because of His fierce anger."

Jeremiah Saved from Death

26 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD, saying, 2"Thus says the LORD: 'Stand in [a]the court of the LORD's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah, which come to worship *in* the LORD's house, [b]all the words that I command you to speak to them. [c]Do not diminish a word. 3[d]Perhaps everyone will listen and turn from his evil way, that I may [e]relent concerning the calamity which I purpose to bring on them because of the evil of their doings.' 4And you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: [f]"If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, 5to heed the words of My servants the prophets [g]whom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending *them* (but you have not heeded), 6then I will make this house like [h]Shiloh, and will make this city [i]a curse to all the nations of the earth."'"

7So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. 8Now it happened, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak to all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, "You will surely die! 9Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be [j]desolate, without an inhabitant'?" And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10When the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and sat down in the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's *house*. 11And the priests and the prophets spoke to the princes and all the people, saying, "This man deserves to [k]die! For he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."

12Then Jeremiah spoke to all the princes and all the people, saying: "The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city with all the words that you have heard. 13Now therefore, [l]amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; then the LORD will relent concerning the doom that He has pronounced against you. 14As for me, here [m]I am, in your hand; do with me as seems good and proper to you. 15But know for certain that if you put me to death, you will surely bring innocent blood on yourselves, on this city, and on its inhabitants; for truly the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing."

16So the princes and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve to die. For he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God."

17[n]Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: 18[o]"Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts:

[p]"Zion shall be plowed *like* a field,
Jerusalem shall become [q]heaps of
ruins,
And the mountain of the temple*
Like the bare hills of the forest."'*

* **26:18** Literally *house* • Compare Micah 3:12

breach of ethical standards, including violating the poor and needy and abusing the oppressed.

25:37 ***Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.*** Human anger is an emotion. God's anger is an aspect of the righteous administration of His laws—natural, moral, and spiritual.

26:2 ***Do not diminish a word.*** Jeremiah was told to speak unsparingly with unwavering boldness.

26:3 ***Perhaps everyone will listen.*** The introduction to the judgment oracle is expressed in conditional terms. If the people repented of evil, the Lord would relent from the calamity He was threatening to bring on them.

26:6 ***then I will make this house like Shiloh.*** This city was not far from Jerusalem. The people could see the effects of its destruction by the Philistines in 1050 B.C., a destruction that overtook it even though it was the first resting place of the ark of the covenant. Jeremiah uses Shiloh as an illustration of the coming judgment of Jerusalem even though the temple of God had been built there.

26:13 ***obey the voice of the LORD your God.*** Jeremiah gives the Lord's assurance that if we, like Judah, turn to obey Him, our future will be changed from punishment to blessing.

26:15 ***if you put me to death.*** Jeremiah defended himself and pointed to the potential sin of shedding innocent blood. He had already accused the leaders of Jerusalem of child sacrifices in the Hinnom valley (2:34; 19:4).

26:18 ***Micah of Moresheth.*** In the reign of Hezekiah, Micah had announced the impending destruction of

26:2 [a] Jer. 19:14 [b] Matt. 28:20 [c] Acts 20:27 **26:3** [d] Jer. 36:3–7 [e] Jer. 18:8 **26:4** [f] Lev. 26:14, 15 **26:5** [g] Jer. 25:4; 29:19 **26:6** [h] 1 Sam. 4:10, 11 [i] Is. 65:15 **26:9** [j] Jer. 9:11 **26:11** [k] Jer. 38:4 **26:13** [l] Jer. 7:3 **26:14** [m] Jer. 38:5 **26:17** [n] Acts 5:34 **26:18** [o] Mic. 1:1 [p] Mic. 3:12 [q] Jer. 9:11

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? [r]Did he not fear the LORD and [s]seek the LORD's favor? And the LORD [t]relented concerning the doom which He had pronounced against them. [u]But we are doing great evil against ourselves."

20 Now there was also a man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath Jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah. 21 And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Urijah heard *it,* he was afraid and fled, and went to Egypt. 22 Then Jehoiakim the king sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *other* men *who went* with him to Egypt. 23 And they brought Urijah from Egypt and brought him to Jehoiakim the king, who killed him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people.

24 Nevertheless [v]the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

Symbol of the Bonds and Yokes

27 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim* the son of Josiah, [a]king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,* 2 "Thus says the LORD to me: 'Make for yourselves bonds and yokes, [b]and put them on your neck, 3 and send them to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by the hand of the messengers who come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. 4 And command them to say to their masters, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel—thus you shall say to your masters: 5 [c]'I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and [d]have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me. 6 [e]And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, [f]My servant; and [g]the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. 7 [h]So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, [i]until the time of his land comes; [j]and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them. 8 And it shall be, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will punish,' says the LORD, 'with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. 9 Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon." 10 For they prophesy a [k]lie to you, to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out, and you will perish. 11 But the nations that bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let them remain in their own land,' says the LORD, 'and they shall till it and dwell in it.'"'"

12 I also spoke to [l]Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, "Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live! 13 [m]Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD has spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? 14 Therefore [n]do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon,' for they prophesy [o]a lie to you; 15 for I have [p]not sent them," says the LORD, "yet they prophesy a lie in My name, that I may drive you out, and that you may perish, you and the prophets who prophesy to you."

16 Also I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, "Behold, [q]the vessels of the LORD's house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon";

* **27:1** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts, Arabic, and Syriac read *Zedekiah* (compare 27:3, 12; 28:1). • Septuagint omits verse 1.

Jerusalem by the Assyrians (Mic. 3:12). Yet because of the repentance of Hezekiah and the inhabitants, the city was spared from the onslaught of the Assyrian army under Sennacherib (701 B.C.).

26:24 *Ahikam the son of Shaphan.* This man, along with his father, served as a scribe under Josiah when the Book of the Law was found in the temple (2 Kin. 22:8–14). Ahikam's brother Gemariah also opposed Jehoiakim's burning of Jeremiah's scroll (36:25). This faithful family was supportive of Jeremiah and was instrumental in saving his life.

27:2–3 *bonds and yokes.* These are wooden bars or beams that attach to a pair of oxen with leather bands. The symbolic act of wearing the yoke would communicate bondage, restraint, and enslavement.

27:7 *all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son.* Following the death of Nebuchadnezzar in 562 B.C., his heirs and successors retained control of Babylon for only 24 years. Babylon fell without a battle to Cyrus and the Persian armies in 539 B.C., and later to Alexander the Great of Greece.

27:9–10 *do not listen.* The way kings summoned various prophet-diviners to give them direction is

26:19 [r] 2 Chr. 32:26 [s] 2 Kin. 20:1–19 [t] Ex. 32:14 [u] [Acts 5:39] **26:24** [v] 2 Kin. 22:12–14 **27:1** [a] Jer. 27:3, 12, 20; 28:1 **27:2** [b] Jer. 28:10, 12 **27:5** [c] Is. 45:12 [d] Dan. 4:17, 25, 32 **27:6** [e] Jer. 28:14 [f] Jer. 25:9; 43:10 [g] Dan. 2:38 **27:7** [h] 2 Chr. 36:20 [i] [Dan. 5:26] [j] Jer. 25:14 **27:10** [k] Jer. 23:16, 32; 28:15 **27:12** [l] Jer. 28:1; 38:17 **27:13** [m] [Ezek. 18:31] **27:14** [n] Jer. 23:16 [o] Jer. 14:14; 23:21; 29:8, 9 **27:15** [p] Jer. 23:21; 29:9 **27:16** [q] Dan. 1:2

for they prophesy a lie to you. 17Do not
listen to them; serve the king of Babylon,
and live! Why should this city be laid
waste? 18But if they *are* prophets, and if
the word of the LORD is with them, let
them now make intercession to the LORD
of hosts, that the vessels which are left in
the house of the LORD, *in* the house of the
king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, do not
go to Babylon.'

19"For thus says the LORD of hosts [r]concerning the pillars, concerning the Sea,
concerning the carts, and concerning the
remainder of the vessels that remain in
this city, 20which Nebuchadnezzar king
of Babylon did not take, when he carried
away [s]captive Jeconiah the son of Je-
hoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to
Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and
Jerusalem— 21yes, thus says the LORD of
hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the
[t]vessels that remain in the house of the
LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah
and of Jerusalem: 22'They shall be [u]carried
to Babylon, and there they shall be until the
day that I [v]visit them,' says the LORD. 'Then
[w]I will bring them up and restore them to
this place.'"

Hananiah's Falsehood and Doom

28 And [a]it happened in the same year,
at the beginning of the reign of Zede-
kiah king of Judah, in the [b]fourth year
and in the fifth month, *that* Hananiah the
son of [c]Azur the prophet, who *was* from
Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the
LORD in the presence of the priests and of
all the people, saying, 2"Thus speaks the
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: 'I
have broken [d]the yoke of the king of Bab-
ylon. 3[e]Within two full years I will bring
back to this place all the vessels of the
LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king
of Babylon [f]took away from this place and
carried to Babylon. 4And I will bring back
to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim,
king of Judah, with all the captives of Ju-
dah who went to Babylon,' says the LORD,
'for I will break the yoke of the king of Bab-
lon.'"

5Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the
prophet Hananiah in the presence of the
priests and in the presence of all the people
who stood in the house of the LORD, 6and
the prophet Jeremiah said, [g]"Amen! The
LORD do so; the LORD perform your words
which you have prophesied, to bring back
the vessels of the LORD's house and all who
were carried away captive, from Babylon
to this place. 7Nevertheless hear now this
word that I speak in your hearing and in
the hearing of all the people: 8The prophets
who have been before me and before you
of old prophesied against many countries
and great kingdoms—of war and disaster
and pestilence. 9As for [h]the prophet who
prophesies of [i]peace, when the word of the
prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be
known *as* one whom the LORD has truly
sent."

10Then Hananiah the prophet took the
[j]yoke off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and
broke it. 11And Hananiah spoke in the pres-
ence of all the people, saying, "Thus says
the LORD: 'Even so I will break the yoke
of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon [k]from
the neck of all nations within the space of
two full years.'" And the prophet Jeremiah
went his way.

12Now the word of the LORD came to
Jeremiah, after Hananiah the prophet
had broken the yoke from the neck of the
prophet Jeremiah, saying, 13"Go and tell
Hananiah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD:
"You have broken the yokes of wood, but
you have made in their place yokes of iron."
14For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God
of Israel: [l]"I have put a yoke of iron on the
neck of all these nations, that they may
serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon;
and they shall serve him. [m]I have given him
the beasts of the field also."'"

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well known from the Book of Daniel (Dan. 2:2; 5:7). Besides prophets, there were diviners, like Balaam (Num. 22–24), who were prohibited from practicing their craft in Israel (Deut. 18:9–14). The collective effort of these diviners to determine the fate of their nations failed. Like the false prophets of Judah, they heralded a message of rebellion and resistance against Babylon. Only Jeremiah stood for the truth. The Lord would punish Judah through Nebuchadnezzar.

27:21–22 ***concerning the vessels.*** Jeremiah's message from the Lord is presented in detail. The remaining vessels in the temple, as well as in the king's palace, would be carried to Babylon until the Lord restored His people. In the midst of a prophetic message against the false prophets, Jeremiah spoke a message of hope and restoration. Destruction was imminent, but God does not forget His people. He would restore the righteous remnant.

28:1–4 ***Hananiah the son of Azur.*** This prophet believed that God's message for Judah was one of imminent deliverance—within two years—from servitude to the king of Babylon. Hananiah also prophesied the return of the holy vessels taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the temple. Furthermore, Hananiah espoused the popular belief that the kingship of Zedekiah was illegitimate and that God would restore Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) to the throne in Jerusalem.

28:7–9 ***war and disaster and pestilence.*** Hananiah's message of peace and prosperity ran contrary to the long tradition of the genuine Hebrew prophets. Amos, Hosea, Micah, Joel, and Nahum spoke words of judgment and destruction against the great kingdoms like Assyria and Egypt.

27:19 [r] 2 Kin. 25:13–17 **27:20** [s] Jer. 24:1 **27:21** [t] Jer. 20:5 **27:22** [u] 2 Kin. 25:13 [v] 2 Chr. 36:21; Jer. 29:10; 32:5 [w] Ezra 1:7; 7:19 **28:1** [a] Jer. 27:1 [b] Jer. 51:59 [c] Ezek. 11:1 **28:2** [d] Jer. 27:12 **28:3** [e] Jer. 27:16 [f] Dan. 1:2 **28:6** [g] 1 Kin. 1:36 **28:9** [h] Deut. 18:22 [i] Jer. 23:17 **28:10** [j] Jer. 27:2 **28:11** [k] Jer. 27:7 **28:14** [l] Deut. 28:48 [m] Jer. 27:6

15 Then the prophet Jeremiah said to
Hananiah the prophet, "Hear now, Hana-
niah, the LORD has not sent you, but [n]you
make this people trust in a [o]lie. 16 Therefore
thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will cast you
from the face of the earth. This year you
shall [p]die, because you have taught [q]rebel-
lion against the LORD.'"
17 So Hananiah the prophet died the
same year in the seventh month.

Jeremiah's Letter to the Captives

29 Now these *are* the words of the letter
that Jeremiah the prophet sent from
Jerusalem to the remainder of the elders
who were [a]carried away captive—to the
priests, the prophets, and all the people
whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away
captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. 2 (This
happened after [b]Jeconiah the king, the
[c]queen mother, the eunuchs, the princes of
Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and
the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.)
3 *The letter was sent* by the hand of Elasah
the son of [d]Shaphan, and Gemariah the son
of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah
sent to Babylon, to Nebuchadnezzar king
of Babylon, saying,

4 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God
of Israel, to all who were carried away
captive, whom I have caused to be car-
ried away from Jerusalem to Babylon:

5 Build houses and dwell *in them;* plant
gardens and eat their fruit. 6 Take
wives and beget sons and daughters;
and take wives for your sons and give
your daughters to husbands, so that
they may bear sons and daughters—
that you may be increased there, and
not diminished. 7 And seek the peace
of the city where I have caused you to
be carried away captive, [e]and pray to
the LORD for it; for in its peace you will
have peace. 8 For thus says the LORD of
hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your
prophets and your diviners who are
in your midst [f]deceive you, nor listen
to your dreams which you cause to be
dreamed. 9 For they prophesy [g]falsely to
you in My name; I have not sent them,
says the LORD.

10 For thus says the LORD: After [h]seventy
years are completed at Babylon, I will
visit you and perform My good word
toward you, and cause you to [i]return
to this place. 11 For I know the thoughts
that I think toward you, says the LORD,
thoughts of peace and not of evil, to
give you a future and a hope. 12 Then
you will [j]call upon Me and go and pray
to Me, and I will [k]listen to you. 13 And
[l]you will seek Me and find *Me,* when
you search for Me [m]with all your heart.
14 [n]I will be found by you, says the LORD,
and I will bring you back from your
captivity; [o]I will gather you from all the
nations and from all the places where
I have driven you, says the LORD, and I
will bring you to the place from which I
cause you to be carried away captive.

28:15–16 ***you make this people trust in a lie.*** Hananiah had not been sent by God, but he had led the people astray with a lie. As a result, Hananiah would die that very year.

29:2 ***after.*** This parenthetical passage provides background from 2 Kings 24:12–16 concerning the deportation of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) to Babylon in 597 B.C. This method of eliminating leaders and leaving the peasant population to pay taxes to the kingdom was learned from the Assyrians and was designed to reduce the likelihood of rebellion.

29:4 ***to all who were carried away captive.*** Jeremiah reminded the exiled community that ultimately it was God, not Nebuchadnezzar, who had caused them to be taken to Babylon.

29:10 ***After seventy years are completed.*** The concept of seventy years of Babylonian captivity is reiterated from Jeremiah 25:12. The number 70 symbolizes completion and fulfillment of God's sovereign plans for creation and human history. The completion of the years of the kingdom of Babylon would also be the completion of Judah's exile.

29:11 A Future and a Hope—This text comes from a letter from Jeremiah to the exiles from Judah who were living in Babylon (vv. 4–9). The exiles must have had a lot of questions about their situation before they heard from Jeremiah. Had God abandoned them forever? How could they serve God properly while under the domination of the nation of Babylon? When would the exile end? Would they ever see Jerusalem again? What was the plan?

The answer that Jeremiah wrote to them probably wasn't satisfactory for all. They still would have had questions. Many would have wanted more specific answers. They would have wanted to know how long they would be in Babylon. They would have asked if they could do anything to hasten their return. These are not unlike the questions we ask God on a daily basis.

Perhaps the best way to describe the content of Jeremiah's letter is to say that he is pointing to the fact that all the specifics are wrapped up in their relationship with God. The promises are ultimate promises. If we seek Him, we will find Him. God Himself is our hope. Shouldn't knowing this give us all the direction we need? Isn't this what our faith is all about? On the basis of knowing what God has done and what He has promised to do, we will move ahead in trust. We may not see the path clearly, but we know He does lead and He is leading us.

29:14 ***I will be found by you.*** Those who seek God with a whole heart will find Him and experience His renewal. ***I will bring you back.*** God was the captor, and He would restore His people from captivity.

28:15 [n] Ezek. 13:22 [o] Jer. 27:10; 29:9 **28:16** [p] Jer. 20:6 [q] Deut. 13:5 **29:1** [a] Jer. 27:20 **29:2** [b] 2 Kin. 24:12–16 [c] Jer. 13:18 **29:3** [d] 2 Chr. 34:8 **29:7** [e] 1 Tim. 2:2 **29:8** [f] Eph. 5:6 **29:9** [g] Jer. 28:15; 37:19 **29:10** [h] Dan. 9:2 [i] [Jer. 24:6, 7] **29:12** [j] Ps. 50:15 [k] Ps. 145:19 **29:13** [l] Deut. 30:1–3 [m] Jer. 24:7 **29:14** [n] [Is. 55:6, 7] [o] Jer. 23:8; 32:37

15 Because you have said, "The LORD has
raised up prophets for us in Babylon"—
16 [p]therefore thus says the LORD con-
cerning the king who sits on the throne
of David, concerning all the people
who dwell in this city, and concerning
your brethren who have not gone out
with you into captivity— 17 thus says
the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will send
on them the sword, the famine, and the
pestilence, and will make them like
[q]rotten figs that cannot be eaten, they
are so bad. 18 And I will pursue them
with the sword, with famine, and with
pestilence; and I [r]will deliver them to
trouble among all the kingdoms of the
earth—to be [s]a curse, an astonishment,
a hissing, and a reproach among all the
nations where I have driven them, 19 be-
cause they have not heeded My words,
says the LORD, which [t]I sent to them
by My servants the prophets, rising up
early and sending *them;* neither would
you heed, says the LORD. 20 Therefore
hear the word of the LORD, all you of
the captivity, whom I have sent from
Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God
of Israel, concerning Ahab the son
of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of
Maaseiah, who prophesy a [u]lie to you
in My name: Behold, I will deliver them
into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king
of Babylon, and he shall slay them
before your eyes. 22 [v]And because of
them a curse shall be taken up by all
the captivity of Judah who *are* in Bab-
ylon, saying, "The LORD make you like
Zedekiah and Ahab, [w]whom the king of
Babylon roasted in the fire"; 23 because
[x]they have done disgraceful things in
Israel, have committed adultery with
their neighbors' wives, and have spoken
lying words in My name, which I have
not commanded them. Indeed I [y]know,
and *am* a witness, says the LORD.

24 You shall also speak to Shemaiah the
Nehelamite, saying, 25 Thus speaks
the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,
saying: You have sent letters in your
name to all the people who *are* at
Jerusalem, [z]to Zephaniah the son of
Maaseiah the priest, and to all the
priests, saying, 26 "The LORD has made
you priest instead of Jehoiada the
priest, so that there should be [a]officers
in the house of the LORD over every
man *who* is [b]demented and considers
himself a prophet, that you should [c]put
him in prison and in the stocks. 27 Now
therefore, why have you not rebuked
Jeremiah of Anathoth who makes him-
self a prophet to you? 28 For he has sent
to us *in* Babylon, saying, 'This *captivity*
is long; build houses and dwell *in them,*
and plant gardens and eat their fruit.'"

29 Now Zephaniah the priest read this
letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the proph-
et. 30 Then the word of the LORD came to
Jeremiah, saying: 31 Send to all those in
captivity, saying, Thus says the LORD
concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite:
Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you,
[d]and I have not sent him, and he has caused
you to trust in a [e]lie— 32 therefore thus says
the LORD: Behold, I will punish Shemaiah
the Nehelamite and his family; he shall not
have anyone to dwell among this people,
nor shall he see the good that I will do for
My people, says the LORD, [f]because he has
taught rebellion against the LORD.

Restoration of Israel and Judah

30 The word that came to Jeremiah from
the LORD, saying, 2 "Thus speaks the
LORD God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a
book for yourself all the words that I have
spoken to you. 3 For behold, the days are
coming,' says the LORD, 'that [a]I will bring
back from captivity My people Israel and
Judah,' says the LORD. [b]'And I will cause
them to return to the land that I gave to
their fathers, and they shall possess it.'"

4 Now these *are* the words that the LORD
spoke concerning Israel and Judah.

5 "For thus says the LORD:

'We have heard a voice of trembling,
Of fear, and not of peace.
6 Ask now, and see,
Whether a man is ever in labor with
child?
So why do I see every man *with* his
hands on his loins
[c]Like a woman in labor,
And all faces turned pale?

29:21 ***Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah.*** These two were the prophets spoken of in Jeremiah 29:15. They were accused by Jeremiah of a deplorable crime; prophesying the imminent collapse of Babylon and the restoration of the captives to Jerusalem. Such false prophecy urging rebellion against God was a capital offense (Deut. 14:5–10). The prophetic punishment of Ahab and Zedekiah was death by command of Nebuchadnezzar.

30:2 ***Write . . . all the words.*** The oracles of Jeremiah were recorded by the scribe Baruch (ch. 36). "Book" refers to any type of writing medium, from a clay tablet to a parchment scroll. Jeremiah's oracles were recorded on a scroll (36:2).

30:6 ***hands on his loins.*** This phrase symbolizes the agony of God's people who had become like

29:16 [p] Jer. 38:2, 3, 17–23 **29:17** [q] Jer. 24:3, 8–10 **29:18** [r] Deut. 28:25 [s] Jer. 26:6; 42:18 **29:19** [t] Jer. 25:4; 26:5; 35:15 **29:21** [u] Lam. 2:14 **29:22** [v] Is. 65:15 [w] Dan. 3:6, 21 **29:23** [x] Jer. 23:14 [y] [Prov. 5:21] **29:25** [z] Jer. 21:1 **29:26** [a] Jer. 20:1 [b] John 10:20 [c] Jer. 20:1, 2 **29:31** [d] Jer. 28:15 [e] Ezek. 13:8–16, 22, 23 **29:32** [f] Jer. 28:16
30:3 [a] Ezek. 39:25 [b] Jer. 16:15 **30:6** [c] Jer. 4:31; 6:24

7 [d]Alas! For that day *is* great,
[e]So that none *is* like it;
And it *is* the time of Jacob's trouble,
But he shall be saved out of it.

8 'For it shall come to pass in that day,'
Says the LORD of hosts,
'*That* I will break his yoke from your neck,
And will burst your bonds;
Foreigners shall no more enslave them.
9 But they shall serve the LORD their God,
And [f]David their king,
Whom I will [g]raise up for them.

10 'Therefore [h]do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the LORD,
'Nor be dismayed, O Israel;
For behold, I will save you from afar,
And your seed [i]from the land of their captivity.
Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet,
And no one shall make *him* afraid.
11 For I *am* with [j]you,' says the LORD, 'to save you;
[k]Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you,
[l]Yet I will not make a complete end of you.
But I will correct you [m]in justice,
And will not let you go altogether unpunished.'

12 "For thus says the LORD:

[n]'Your affliction *is* incurable,
Your wound *is* severe.
13 *There is* no one to plead your cause,
That you may be bound up;
[o]You have no healing medicines.
14 [p]All your lovers have forgotten you;
They do not seek you;
For I have wounded you with the wound [q]of an enemy,
With the chastisement [r]of a cruel one,
For the multitude of your iniquities,
[s]*Because* your sins have increased.
15 Why [t]do you cry about your affliction?
Your sorrow *is* incurable.
Because of the multitude of your iniquities,
Because your sins have increased,
I have done these things to you.

16 'Therefore all those who devour you [u]shall be devoured;
And all your adversaries, every one of them, shall go into [v]captivity;
Those who plunder you shall become [w]plunder,
And all who prey upon you I will make a [x]prey.
17 [y]For I will restore health to you
And heal you of your wounds,' says the LORD,
'Because they called you an outcast *saying:*
"This *is* Zion;
No one seeks her."'

18 "Thus says the LORD:

'Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob's tents,
And [z]have mercy on his dwelling places;
The city shall be built upon its own mound,
And the palace shall remain according to its own plan.
19 Then [a]out of them shall proceed thanksgiving
And the voice of those who make merry;
[b]I will multiply them, and they shall not diminish;
I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.
20 Their children also shall be [c]as before,
And their congregation shall be established before Me;
And I will punish all who oppress them.
21 Their nobles shall be from among them,

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defenseless pregnant women in the midst of delivery before their enemies (4:31; 6:24).

30:8 ***it shall come to pass in that day.*** The day of the Lord was an ordained time of horror and distress for Israel and Judah, out of which the Lord would save them. Jeremiah expressed the hope of release from the bondage of the yoke of Babylon according to the Lord's timing (25:12) and not that of men (28:11).

30:12 ***Your affliction is incurable.*** God's hand of judgment had brought serious harm to the nation, a mortal wound unless God intervened.

30:13 ***That you may be bound up.*** This refers to the growth of new skin over an open wound.

30:14 ***All your lovers have forgotten you.*** Israel's lovers were the surrounding nations like Assyria, Egypt, Phoenicia, Ammon, and Edom, with whom it had made political and religious alliances. These nations had quickly forgotten Judah; they shrank back or were defeated by Nebuchadnezzar.

30:17 ***For I will restore health to you.*** Restoration and healing of Israel came in two forms: retribution against its enemies and healing of its wounds.

30:18 ***Jacob's tents . . . dwelling places . . . city . . . palace.*** These phrases emphasize God's work in rebuilding the homes and cities of His returning exiles, from the peasant population to the administration.

30:21 ***Their nobles shall be from among them.*** Israel's leaders would no longer be appointed by

30:7 [d] Amos 5:18 [e] Dan. 9:12; 12:1 **30:9** [f] Hos. 3:5 [g] [Luke 1:69] **30:10** [h] Is. 41:13; 43:5; 44:2 [i] Jer. 3:18 **30:11** [j] [Is. 43:2–5] [k] Amos 9:8 [l] Jer. 4:27; 46:27, 28 [m] Ps. 6:1 **30:12** [n] Jer. 15:18 **30:13** [o] Jer. 8:22 **30:14** [p] Lam. 1:2 [q] Job 13:24; 16:9; 19:11 [r] Job 30:21 [s] Jer. 5:6 **30:15** [t] Jer. 15:18 **30:16** [u] Jer. 10:25 [v] Is. 14:2 [w] Ezek. 39:10 [x] Jer. 2:3 **30:17** [y] Jer. 33:6 **30:18** [z] Ps. 102:13 **30:19** [a] Is. 51:11 [b] Zech. 10:8 **30:20** [c] Is. 1:26

[d]And their governor shall come from
their midst;
Then I will [e]cause him to draw near,
And he shall approach Me;
For who *is* this who pledged his heart
to approach Me?' says the LORD.
22 'You shall be [f]My people,
And I will be your God.'"

23 Behold, the [g]whirlwind of the LORD
Goes forth with fury,
A continuing whirlwind;
It will fall violently on the head of the
wicked.
24 The fierce anger of the LORD will not
return until He has done it,
And until He has performed the
intents of His heart.

[h]In the latter days you will consider it.

The Remnant of Israel Saved

31 "At [a]the same time," says the LORD,
[b]"I will be the God of all the families
of Israel, and they shall be My people."
2 Thus says the LORD:

"The people who survived the sword
Found grace in the wilderness—
Israel, when [c]I went to give him rest."

3 The LORD has appeared of old to me,
saying:
"Yes, [d]I have loved you with [e]an
everlasting love;
Therefore with lovingkindness I have
[f]drawn you.
4 Again [g]I will build you, and you shall
be rebuilt,
O virgin of Israel!
You shall again be adorned with your
[h]tambourines,
And shall go forth in the dances of
those who rejoice.
5 [i]You shall yet plant vines on the
mountains of Samaria;
The planters shall plant and eat *them*
as ordinary food.
6 For there shall be a day
When the watchmen will cry on
Mount Ephraim,
[j]'Arise, and let us go up *to* Zion,
To the LORD our God.'"

7 For thus says the LORD:

[k]"Sing with gladness for Jacob,
And shout among the chief of the
nations;
Proclaim, give praise, and say,
'O LORD, save Your people,
The remnant of Israel!'
8 Behold, I will bring them [l]from the
north country,
And [m]gather them from the ends of
the earth,
Among them the blind and the lame,
The woman with child
And the one who labors with child,
together;
A great throng shall return there.
9 [n]They shall come with weeping,
And with supplications I will lead
them.
I will cause them to walk [o]by the rivers
of waters,
In a straight way in which they shall
not stumble;
For I am a Father to Israel,
And Ephraim *is* My [p]firstborn.

10 "Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
And declare *it* in the isles afar off, and
say,
'He who scattered Israel [q]will gather
him,
And keep him as a shepherd *does* his
flock.'
11 For [r]the LORD has redeemed Jacob,
And ransomed him [s]from the hand of
one stronger than he.
12 Therefore they shall come and sing in
[t]the height of Zion,
Streaming to [u]the goodness of the
LORD—
For wheat and new wine and oil,

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foreign kings, and foreign rulers would not preside over Israel's lands.

31:3 ***everlasting love . . . lovingkindness.*** These strong words are in parallel and point toward a love characterized by loyalty, a king of covenant love. Out of His faithfulness to the covenants God established with Abraham and Moses, and out of His great love, God established the nation Israel for His glory and for hers. The Lord would also deliver His people from captivity and reestablish them by His love.

31:4 ***O virgin of Israel.*** Earlier in Jeremiah, this expression was used sadly in depicting the departure of Israel from faith in God (2:32; 14:17). Here the image is reversed. Israel is rebuilt in the manner of her former betrothal (2:2), having become again a virgin bride to God. ***go forth in the dances of those who rejoice.*** A joyful celebration of marriage and festival throughout villages is in view here (v. 13).

31:6 ***watchmen.*** This time the watchman's purpose is not to warn the people about oncoming armies but to call them to come with joy to the holy city.

31:9 ***I am a Father to Israel.*** This text is one of the few cases in the Old Testament where the fatherhood of God is portrayed directly (Deut. 32:6; Is. 63:16). Israel was familiar with the idea of God as Father, but it was not until the teaching of Jesus that the phrase took on the importance that we understand it to have in our lives today.

31:12 ***the goodness of the LORD.*** The blessings of the

30:21 [d] Gen. 49:10 [e] Num. 16:5 **30:22** [f] Ezek. 36:28 **30:23** [g] Jer. 23:19, 20; 25:32 **30:24** [h] Gen. 49:1 **31:1** [a] Jer. 30:24 [b] Jer. 30:22 **31:2** [c] Num. 10:33 **31:3** [d] Mal. 1:2 [e] Rom. 11:28 [f] Hos. 11:4 **31:4** [g] Jer. 33:7 [h] Judg. 11:34 **31:5** [i] Amos 9:14 **31:6** [j] [Mic. 4:2] **31:7** [k] Is. 12:5, 6 **31:8** [l] Jer. 3:12, 18; 23:8 [m] Ezek. 20:34, 41; 34:13 **31:9** [n] [Jer. 50:4] [o] Is. 35:8; 43:19; 49:10, 11 [p] Ex. 4:22 **31:10** [q] Is. 40:11 **31:11** [r] Is. 44:23; 48:20 [s] Is. 49:24 **31:12** [t] Ezek. 17:23 [u] Hos. 3:5

For the young of the flock and the herd;
Their souls shall be like a [v]well-watered garden,
[w]And they shall sorrow no more at all.

13 "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance,
And the young men and the old, together;
For I will turn their mourning to joy,
Will comfort them,
And make them rejoice rather than sorrow.
14 I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance,
And My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the LORD."

Mercy on Ephraim

15 Thus says the LORD:

[x]"A voice was heard in [y]Ramah,
Lamentation *and* bitter [z]weeping,
Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted for her children,
Because [a]they *are* no more."

16 Thus says the LORD:

"Refrain your voice from [b]weeping,
And your eyes from tears;
For your work shall be rewarded, says the LORD,
And they shall come back from the land of the enemy.
17 There is [c]hope in your future, says the LORD,
That your children shall come back to their own border.

18 "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself:
'You have [d]chastised me, and I was chastised,
Like an untrained bull;
[e]Restore me, and I will return,
For You *are* the LORD my God.
19 Surely, [f]after my turning, I repented;
And after I was instructed, I struck myself on the thigh;
I was [g]ashamed, yes, even humiliated,
Because I bore the reproach of my youth.'
20 *Is* Ephraim My dear son?
Is he a pleasant child?
For though I spoke against him,
I earnestly remember him still;
[h]Therefore My heart yearns for him;
[i]I will surely have mercy on him, says the LORD.

21 "Set up signposts,
Make landmarks;
[j]Set your heart toward the highway,
The way in *which* you went.
Turn back, O virgin of Israel,
Turn back to these your cities.
22 How long will you [k]gad about,
O you [l]backsliding daughter?
For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth—
A woman shall encompass a man."

Future Prosperity of Judah

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: [m]'The LORD bless you, O home of justice, *and* [n]mountain of holiness!' 24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and [o]in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks. 25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."

26 After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was [p]sweet to me.

27 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that [q]I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. 28 And it shall come to pass, *that* as I have [r]watched over them [s]to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them [t]to build and to plant, says the LORD. 29 [u]In those days they shall say no more:

'The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children's teeth are set on edge.'

30 [v]But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

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goodness of the Lord are bountiful crops, flocks, and vineyards (Ps. 65).

31:14 ***I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance.*** The theme of joy is summarized in God's intention to fill the priests and the people with abundance. Jeremiah gave the people hope and comfort in facing the poverty and oppression of exile and captivity.

31:19 ***I struck myself on the thigh.*** This indicates an outward demonstration of remorse over sin and change of life (Ezek. 21:12).

31:21 ***signposts . . . landmarks.*** These would point out the way to the people's homeland. More importantly, Israel was instructed to set its heart toward the way that is the path of faith in its God.

31:27 ***I will sow the house of Israel.*** God would plant and multiply the seed of man and animal in the land of Judah.

31:28 ***to build and to plant.*** These are the same terms used in Jeremiah's call (1:10).

31:12 [v] Is. 58:11 [w] Is. 35:10; 65:19 **31:15** [x] Matt. 2:17, 18 [y] Josh. 18:25 [z] Gen. 37:35 [a] Jer. 10:20 **31:16** [b] [Is. 25:8; 30:19] **31:17** [c] Jer. 29:11 **31:18** [d] Ps. 94:12 [e] Lam. 5:21 **31:19** [f] Deut. 30:2 [g] Ezek. 36:31 **31:20** [h] Is. 63:15 [i] [Hos. 14:4] **31:21** [j] Jer. 50:5 **31:22** [k] Jer. 2:18, 23, 36 [l] Jer. 3:6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 22 **31:23** [m] Is. 1:26 [n] [Zech. 8:3] **31:24** [o] Jer. 33:12 **31:26** [p] Prov. 3:24 **31:27** [q] Ezek. 36:9–11 **31:28** [r] Jer. 44:27 [s] Jer. 1:10; 18:7 [t] Jer. 24:6 **31:29** [u] Ezek. 18:2, 3 **31:30** [v] [Gal. 6:5, 7]

A New Covenant

31 "Behold, the [w]days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* [x]I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,* says the LORD. 33 [y]But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: [z]I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; [a]and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for [b]they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For [c]I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

35 Thus says the LORD,
[d]Who gives the sun for a light by day,
The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night,
Who disturbs [e]the sea,
And its waves roar
[f](The LORD of hosts *is* His name):

36 "If [g]those ordinances depart
From before Me, says the LORD,
Then the seed of Israel shall also cease
From being a nation before Me forever."

37 Thus says the LORD:

[h]"If heaven above can be measured,
And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,
I will also [i]cast off all the seed of Israel
For all that they have done, says the LORD.

38 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that the city shall be built for the LORD [j]from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 [k]The surveyor's line shall again extend straight forward over the hill Gareb; then it shall turn toward Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, [l]to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, [m]*shall be* holy to the LORD. It shall not be plucked up or thrown down anymore forever."

Jeremiah Buys a Field

32 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD [a]in the tenth year of

* **31:32** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *and I turned away from them.*

31:31–34 The New Covenant—The new covenant is called "new" in contrast to the covenant with Moses which is called "old" (Jer. 31:32; Heb. 8:6–13) because it actually accomplishes what the Mosaic covenant could only point to, that is, the child of God living in a manner that is consistent with the character of God. Four provisions are made in this covenant: (1) *Regeneration*—God will put His law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts (31:33), (2) *A national restoration*—Yahweh will be their God and the nation will be His people (31:33), (3) *Personal ministry of the Holy Spirit*—they will all be taught individually by God (31:34), and (4) *Full justification*—their sins will be forgiven and completely removed (31:34). The new covenant is made sure by the blood that Jesus shed on Calvary's cross. The blood that guarantees to Israel its new covenant also provides for the forgiveness of sins for the believers who comprise the church. Jesus' payment for sin is more than adequate to pay for the sins of all who will believe in Him.

31:32 *the covenant that I made with their fathers.* The old covenant demanded adherence to stipulations (Ex. 19:1—23:33) which the people were unable to keep. Above all other commandments, the people were commanded to love and serve God and abandon all others (Deut. 6:4–5). This they did not do. From the wilderness period (Ex. 32:1–10; Num. 25:1–9) until the days of Manasseh, the history of Israel was permeated with idolatrous activity, only occasionally broken by periods of true faithfulness to God. The people seemed incapable of acting in sustained obedience to the covenant. ***husband.*** As Hosea was to Gomer, the Lord had been a faithful and devoted husband to Israel.

31:33 *the covenant that I will make.* The new covenant would be initiated by God Himself, assuring its effectiveness. ***after those days.*** This expression looks forward to the time of fulfillment of the new covenant, which found fruition in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

31:34 *No more shall every man teach.* No longer would intermediaries like priests or prophets be needed to show the people how to know the Lord. Knowledge of God is a major theme of Jeremiah (2:8; 4:22; 5:4; 8:7). This knowledge is an intimate relationship with God evidenced by faith, obedience, and devotion.

31:36–37 *If those ordinances depart.* The foundation of the new covenant is as sure as the God who maintains creation. At the peak of Judah's apostasy, shortly before the destruction of the nation by Babylon in divine judgment, the Lord emphatically reaffirmed His covenant relationship with the Jewish people in such strong terms that the promise was unbreakable, even by Him. When we observe the sun, moon, or stars in the sky, we should remember God's promise to the Jewish people, even as God does.

31:31 [w] Heb. 8:8–12; 10:16, 17 **31:32** [x] Deut. 1:31 **31:33** [y] Jer. 32:40 [z] Ps. 40:8 [a] Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 32:38 **31:34** [b] [John 6:45] [c] [Rom. 11:27] **31:35** [d] Gen. 1:14–18 [e] Is. 51:15 [f] Jer. 10:16 **31:36** [g] Ps. 148:6 **31:37** [h] Jer. 33:22 [i] [Rom. 11:2–5, 26, 27] **31:38** [j] Zech. 14:10 **31:39** [k] Zech. 2:1, 2 **31:40** [l] Neh. 3:28 [m] [Joel 3:17] **32:1** [a] Jer. 39:1, 2

Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. 2For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up [b]in the court of the prison, which *was in* the king of Judah's house. 3For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, "Why do you [c]prophesy and say, 'Thus says the LORD: [d]"Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; 4and Zedekiah king of Judah [e]shall not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face,* and see him [f]eye to eye; 5then he shall [g]lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall be [h]until I visit him," says the LORD; [i]"though you fight with the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed"'?"

6And Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 7'Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you, saying, "Buy my field which *is* in Anathoth, for the [j]right of redemption *is* yours to buy *it*."' 8Then Hanamel my uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said to me, 'Please buy my field that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance *is* yours, and the redemption yours; buy *it* for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. 9So I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle who *was* in Anathoth, and [k]weighed *out to* him the money—seventeen shekels of silver. 10And I signed the deed and sealed *it,* took witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales. 11So I took the purchase deed, *both* that which was sealed *according* to the law and custom, and that which was open; 12and I gave the purchase deed to [l]Baruch the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle's *son,* and in the presence of the [m]witnesses who signed the purchase deed, before all the Jews who sat in the court of the prison.

13"Then I charged [n]Baruch before them, saying, 14'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Take these deeds, both this purchase deed which is sealed and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last many days." 15For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Houses and fields and vineyards shall be [o]possessed again in this land."'

Jeremiah Prays for Understanding

16"Now when I had delivered the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying: 17'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, [p]You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. [q]There is nothing too hard for You. 18 *You* show [r]lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, [s]the Mighty God, whose name *is* [t]the LORD of hosts. 19 *You are* [u]great in counsel and mighty in work, for Your [v]eyes *are* open to all the ways of the sons of men, [w]to give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings. 20You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, to this day, and in Israel and among *other* men; and You have made Yourself [x]a name, as it is this day. 21You [y]have brought Your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror; 22You have given them this land, of which You swore to their fathers to give them—[z]"a land flowing with milk and honey."* 23And they came in and took possession of it, but [a]they have not obeyed Your voice or walked in Your law. They have done nothing of all that You commanded them to do; therefore You have caused all this calamity to come upon them.

24'Look, the siege mounds! They have come to the city to take it; and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who fight against it, because of [b]the sword and famine and pestilence. What You have spoken has happened; there You see *it!* 25And You have said to me, O Lord GOD, "Buy the field for money, and take witnesses"!—yet the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.'"

* **32:4** Literally *mouth to mouth* * **32:22** Exodus 3:8

32:6–8 ***which is in Anathoth.*** The Lord instructed Jeremiah to purchase a field in his hometown three miles north of Jerusalem.

32:13–15 ***earthen vessel.*** Examples of storage jars that served as safety-deposit vessels have been excavated in Judah. The Dead Sea Scrolls were also stored in ceramic vessels, aiding their preservation for almost two thousand years. The illustrated message of the purchase was assurance and confirmation that restoration of the land was certain.

32:20–21 ***signs and wonders in the land of Egypt.*** The great historical demonstration of God's loyal love was the exodus of Israel from Egypt. The miracles that accompanied the exodus made God known among the nations such as Moab (Num. 22–24).

32:2 [b] Jer. 33:1; 37:21; 39:14 **32:3** [c] Jer. 26:8, 9 [d] Jer. 21:3–7; 34:2 **32:4** [e] Jer. 34:3; 38:18, 23; 39:5; 52:9 [f] Jer. 39:5 **32:5** [g] Ezek. 12:12, 13 [h] Jer. 27:22 [i] Jer. 21:4; 33:5 **32:7** [j] Ruth 4:4 **32:9** [k] Zech. 11:12 **32:12** [l] Jer. 36:4 [m] Is. 8:2 **32:13** [n] Jer. 36:4 **32:15** [o] [Jer. 31:5, 12, 14] **32:17** [p] 2 Kin. 19:15 [q] Luke 18:27 **32:18** [r] Deut. 5:9, 10 [s] [Is. 9:6] [t] Jer. 10:16 **32:19** [u] Is. 28:29 [v] Prov. 5:21 [w] Jer. 17:10 **32:20** [x] Is. 63:12 **32:21** [y] Ex. 6:6 **32:22** [z] Ex. 3:8, 17 **32:23** [a] [Neh. 9:26] **32:24** [b] Jer. 14:12

God's Assurance of the People's Return

26 Then the word of the LORD came to
Jeremiah, saying, 27 "Behold, I *am*
the LORD, the [c]God of all flesh. Is there any-
thing too hard for Me? 28 Therefore thus
says the LORD: 'Behold, I will give this city
into the hand of the Chaldeans, into the
hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,
and he shall take it. 29 And the Chaldeans
who fight against this city shall come and
[d]set fire to this city and burn it, with the
houses [e]on whose roofs they have offered
incense to Baal and poured out drink offer-
ings to other gods, to provoke Me to anger;
30 because the children of Israel and the
children of Judah [f]have done only evil be-
fore Me from their youth. For the children
of Israel have provoked Me only to anger
with the work of their hands,' says the
LORD. 31 'For this city has been to Me *a prov-*
ocation of My anger and My fury from the
day that they built it, even to this day; [g]so
I will remove it from before My face 32 be-
cause of all the evil of the children of Israel
and the children of Judah, which they have
done to provoke Me to anger—[h]they, their
kings, their princes, their priests, [i]their
prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabi-
tants of Jerusalem. 33 And they have turned
to Me the [j]back, and not the face; though I
taught them, [k]rising up early and teaching
them, yet they have not listened to receive
instruction. 34 But they [l]set their abomina-
tions in the house which is called by My
name, to defile it. 35 And they built the high
places of Baal which *are* in the Valley of
the Son of Hinnom, to [m]cause their sons
and their daughters to pass through *the*
fire to [n]Molech, [o]which I did not command
them, nor did it come into My mind that
they should do this abomination, to cause
Judah to sin.'

36 "Now therefore, thus says the LORD,
the God of Israel, concerning this city of
which you say, 'It shall be delivered into the
hand of the king of Babylon by the sword,
by the famine, and by the pestilence: 37 Be-
hold, I will [p]gather them out of all countries
where I have driven them in My anger, in
My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring
them back to this place, and I will cause
them [q]to dwell safely. 38 They shall be [r]My
people, and I will be their God; 39 then I will
[s]give them one heart and one way, that
they may fear Me forever, for the good of
them and their children after them. 40 And
[t]I will make an everlasting covenant with
them, that I will not turn away from doing
them good; but [u]I will put My fear in their
hearts so that they will not depart from Me.
41 Yes, [v]I will rejoice over them to do them
good, and [w]I will assuredly plant them in
this land, with all My heart and with all
My soul.'

42 "For thus says the LORD: [x]'Just as I
have brought all this great calamity on
this people, so I will bring on them all the
good that I have promised them. 43 And
fields will be bought in this land [y]of which
you say, "*It is* desolate, without man or
beast; it has been given into the hand of
the Chaldeans." 44 Men will buy fields for
money, sign deeds and seal *them,* and take
witnesses, in [z]the land of Benjamin, in the
places around Jerusalem, in the cities of
Judah, in the cities of the mountains, in
the cities of the lowland, and in the cities
of the South; for [a]I will cause their captives
to return,' says the LORD."

Excellence of the Restored Nation

33 Moreover the word of the LORD came
to Jeremiah a second time, while he
was still [a]shut up in the court of the prison,
saying, 2 "Thus says the LORD [b]who made
it, the LORD who formed it to establish it
[c](the LORD *is* His name): 3 [d]'Call to Me, and
I will answer you, and show you great and
mighty things, which you do not know.'

4 "For thus says the LORD, the God of Is-
rael, concerning the houses of this city and
the houses of the kings of Judah, which
have been pulled down *to fortify** against
[e]the siege mounds and the sword: 5 'They
come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *only*
to [f]fill their places* with the dead bodies
of men whom I will slay in My anger and
My fury, all for whose wickedness I have

*33:4 Compare Isaiah 22:10 *33:5 Compare 2 Kings 23:14

32:27 ***the God of all flesh.*** God was Lord over Israel and Judah, and Lord over the nations (27:11), including mighty Babylon (25:15–26).

32:39 ***one heart and one way.*** Because the Lord had written on the heart of the people a new covenant (31:33), no longer would they worship other deities and turn to foreign nations for help. The word "way" is often used in Jeremiah to denote the character of a person's life, whether evil (4:18) or good (7:23).

32:40 ***everlasting covenant.*** This expression is also found in Isaiah 55:3; Ezekiel 16:60; 37:26. In Ezekiel it is equated with a covenant of peace that God will establish with His people. This covenant will be everlasting, unlike the Sinai covenant which had been broken and ignored for so long.

33:1 ***while he was still shut up.*** A chronological tie is made to 32:2 (588 B.C.). Jeremiah had been placed under palace court guard because of what his enemies regarded as seditious speeches, announcing

32:27 [c] [Num. 16:22] **32:29** [d] 2 Chr. 36:19 [e] Jer. 19:13 **32:30** [f] Jer. 2:7; 3:25; 7:22–26 **32:31** [g] 2 Kin. 23:27; 24:3 **32:32** [h] Dan. 9:8 [i] Jer. 23:14 **32:33** [j] Jer. 2:27; 7:24 [k] Jer. 7:13 **32:34** [l] Jer. 7:10–12, 30; 23:11 **32:35** [m] Jer. 7:31; 19:5 [n] Lev. 18:21 [o] Jer. 7:31 **32:37** [p] Deut. 30:3 [q] Jer. 33:16 **32:38** [r] [Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 31:33] **32:39** [s] [Ezek. 11:19] **32:40** [t] Is. 55:3 [u] [Jer. 31:33] **32:41** [v] Deut. 30:9 [w] Amos 9:15 **32:42** [x] Jer. 31:28 **32:43** [y] Jer. 33:10 **32:44** [z] Jer. 17:26 [a] Jer. 33:7, 11 **33:1** [a] Jer. 32:2, 3 **33:2** [b] Is. 37:26 [c] Ex. 15:3 **33:3** [d] Jer. 29:12 **33:4** [e] Is. 22:10 **33:5** [f] 2 Kin. 23:14

hidden My face from this city. 6Behold, [g]I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. 7And [h]I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and will rebuild those places [i]as at the first. 8I will [j]cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me. 9[k]Then it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations of the earth, who shall hear all the good that I do to them; they shall [l]fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide for it.'

10"Thus says the LORD: 'Again there shall be heard in this place—[m]of which you say, "It *is* desolate, without man and without beast"—in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, 11the [n]voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say:

[o]"Praise the LORD of hosts,
For the LORD *is* good,
For His mercy *endures* forever"—

and of those *who will* bring [p]the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first,' says the LORD.

12"Thus says the LORD of hosts: [q]'In this place which is desolate, without man and without beast, and in all its cities, there shall again be a dwelling place of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down. 13[r]In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the lowland, in the cities of the South, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, the flocks shall again [s]pass under the hands of him who counts *them*,' says the LORD.

14[t]'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'that [u]I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah:

15 'In those days and at that time
I will cause to grow up to David
A [v]Branch of righteousness;
He shall execute judgment and
righteousness in the earth.
16 In those days Judah will be saved,
And Jerusalem will dwell safely.
And this *is the name* by which she will
be called:

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'*

17"For thus says the LORD: 'David shall never [w]lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; 18nor shall the [x]priests, the Levites, lack a man to [y]offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.'"

The Permanence of God's Covenant

19And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, 20"Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, 21then [z]My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. 22As [a]the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I [b]multiply the descendants of David My servant and the [c]Levites who minister to Me.'"

23Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, 24"Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the LORD has chosen, He has also cast them off'? Thus they have [d]despised My people, as if they should no more be a nation before them.

25"Thus says the LORD: 'If [e]My covenant *is* not with day and night, *and if* I have not [f]appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, 26[g]then I will [h]cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, *so* that I will not take *any* of his descendants *to be* rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.'"

* **33:16** Compare 23:5, 6

the fall of Jerusalem and giving advice to Zedekiah to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar.

33:8 ***cleanse . . . pardon.*** Forgiveness is described with these two terms. The word "cleanse" describes ritual purification of what is physically or spiritually unclean or defiled, like Israel and Judah (2:23; 7:30). "Pardon" means "to forgive," and in the Old Testament is used only with God as the subject as He forgives man. This fact helps us understand the reaction of the scribes when they heard Jesus forgiving sins (Mark 2:7).

33:13 ***flocks shall again pass under.*** The term "flocks" is used to depict the Israelites as they returned from captivity into the fold of the holy city of Jerusalem.

33:16 ***will dwell safely.*** Following the devastation of the Babylonian onslaught, Jerusalem would exist under divine protection.

33:17 ***David shall never lack.*** The Davidic covenant of divine succession is reiterated (2 Sam. 7:12–16). The Levitical priesthood would likewise be heirs to a

33:6 [g] Jer. 30:17 **33:7** [h] Jer. 30:3; 32:44 [i] Is. 1:26 **33:8** [j] Zech. 13:1 **33:9** [k] Is. 62:7 [l] Is. 60:5 **33:10** [m] Jer. 32:43 **33:11** [n] Rev. 18:23 [o] Is. 12:4 [p] Lev. 7:12 **33:12** [q] Is. 65:10 **33:13** [r] Jer. 17:26; 32:44 [s] Lev. 27:32 **33:14** [t] Jer. 23:5; 31:27, 31 [u] Jer. 29:10; 32:42 **33:15** [v] Jer. 23:5 **33:17** [w] 2 Sam. 7:16 **33:18** [x] Ezek. 44:15 [y] [1 Pet. 2:5, 9] **33:21** [z] 2 Sam. 23:5; Ps. 89:34 **33:22** [a] Gen. 15:5; 22:17 [b] Jer. 30:19 [c] Is. 66:21 **33:24** [d] Esth. 3:6–8 **33:25** [e] Gen. 8:22 [f] Ps. 74:16; 104:19 **33:26** [g] Jer. 31:37 [h] Rom. 11:1, 2

Zedekiah Warned by God

34 The word which came to Jeremiah
from the LORD, [a]when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army, [b]all the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem and all its cities, saying, **2**"Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Go and [c]speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, [d]I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. **3**And [e]you shall not escape from his hand, but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand; your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon, he shall speak with you [f]face to face,* and you shall go to Babylon.'"' **4**Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the LORD concerning you: 'You shall not die by the sword. **5**You shall die in peace; as in [g]the ceremonies of your fathers, the former kings who were before you, [h]so they shall burn *incense* for you and [i]lament for you, *saying*, "Alas, lord!" For I have pronounced the word, says the LORD.'"

6Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, **7**when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and Azekah; for *only* [j]these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah.

Treacherous Treatment of Slaves

8*This is* the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who *were* at Jerusalem to proclaim [k]liberty to them: **9**[l]that every man should set free his male and female slave—a Hebrew man or woman—[m]that no one should keep a Jewish brother in bondage. **10**Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore, they obeyed and let *them* go. **11**But afterward they changed their minds and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection as male and female slaves.

12Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **13**"Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'I made a [n]covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, **14**"At the end of [o]seven years let every man set free his Hebrew brother, who has been sold to him; and when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you." But your fathers did not obey Me nor incline their ear. **15**Then you recently turned and did what was right in My sight—every man proclaiming liberty to his neighbor; and you [p]made a covenant before Me [q]in the house which is called by My name. **16**Then you turned around and [r]profaned My name, and every one of you brought back his male and female slaves, whom you had set at liberty, at their pleasure, and brought them back into subjection, to be your male and female slaves.'

17"Therefore thus says the LORD: 'You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. [s]Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,' says the LORD—[t]'to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to [u]trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth. **18**And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have

* **34:3** Literally *mouth to mouth*

divine succession in overseeing the sacrificial system in the Jerusalem temple. Jesus, as Priest and King, fulfills both offices in the new covenant.

34:3 ***you shall not escape from his hand.*** Though Zedekiah attempted to flee to Jericho, Nebuchadnezzar's forces captured and brought him to Riblah for a face-to-face meeting with Nebuchadnezzar (32:3–4).

34:5 ***You shall die in peace.*** Jeremiah proclaimed the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of its inhabitants by sword, pestilence, and famine. The particular implications for Zedekiah are outlined here. He would not be executed by the sword. According to 2 Kings 25:6–7, his sons were killed before his eyes and then his eyes were put out before being taken to Babylon.

34:8 ***Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people.*** A legal agreement was made between Zedekiah and the people of Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege to release from bondage all Hebrew slaves.

34:12–14 ***Thus says the LORD.*** Jeremiah, a faithful steward of the word of God, began his attack against Judah's leaders by recounting the teaching of the law on the matter of emancipating slaves (Ex. 21:2–6; Deut. 15:12–15). He reminded the people that their forefathers were slaves in Egypt, and that God had freed them from slavery and oppression.

34:16 ***turned around and profaned My name.*** When the princes of Judah emancipated their Hebrew slaves, it demonstrated their covenant faithfulness and devotion to God (v. 10). But when the righteous decision was reversed (v. 11), the name of God was profaned. The name of God sums up and represents His attributes, character, and work. That name had been defiled by the breach of covenant in the same way that the people had defiled the land with their idolatry (16:18).

34:18–19 ***they cut the calf in two.*** The covenant ceremony is outlined. The main ritual of the two-party covenant began with cutting the sacrificial animal

34:1 [a] 2 Kin. 25:1 [b] Jer. 1:15; 25:9 **34:2** [c] 2 Chr. 36:11, 12 [d] Jer. 21:10; 32:3, 28 **34:3** [e] 2 Kin. 25:4, 5 [f] Jer. 32:4; 39:5, 6 **34:5** [g] 2 Chr. 16:14; 21:19 [h] Dan. 2:46 [i] Jer. 22:18 **34:7** [j] 2 Kin. 18:13; 19:8 **34:8** [k] Ex. 21:2 **34:9** [l] Neh. 5:11 [m] Lev. 25:39–46 **34:13** [n] Ex. 24:3, 7, 8 **34:14** [o] Deut. 15:12 **34:15** [p] Neh. 10:29 [q] Jer. 7:10 **34:16** [r] Ex. 20:7 **34:17** [s] [Matt. 7:2] [t] Jer. 32:24, 36 [u] Deut. 28:25, 64

not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when [v]they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it— 19the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf— 20I will [w]give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. Their [x]dead bodies shall be for meat for the birds of the heaven and the beasts of the earth. 21And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army [y]which has gone back from you. 22[z]Behold, I will command,' says the LORD, 'and cause them to return to this city. They will fight against it [a]and take it and burn it with fire; and [b]I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.'"

The Obedient Rechabites

35 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, 2"Go to the house of the [a]Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of [b]the chambers, and give them wine to drink."

3Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, 4and I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which *was* by the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, [c]the keeper of the door. 5Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, "Drink wine."

6But they said, "We will drink no wine, for [d]Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, 'You shall drink [e]no wine, you nor your sons, forever. 7You shall not build a house, sow seed, plant a vineyard, nor have *any of these;* but all your days you shall dwell in tents, [f]that you may live many days in the land where you are sojourners.' 8Thus we have [g]obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, 9nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; nor do we have vineyard, field, or seed. 10But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. 11But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, 'Come, let us [h]go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and for fear of the army of the Syrians.' So we dwell at Jerusalem."

12Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah, saying, 13"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Will you not [i]receive instruction to obey My words?" says the LORD. 14"The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; for to this day they drink none, and obey their father's commandment. [j]But although I have spoken to you, [k]rising early and speaking, you did not obey Me. 15I have also sent to you all My [l]servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them,* saying, [m]'Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will [n]dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.' But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me. 16Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their [o]father, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me."'

17"Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the doom that I have pronounced against them; [p]because I have spoken to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.'"

18And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, 19therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the

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in half, after which the two participants would walk together between the parts (Gen. 15). The divided animal portrayed the potential fate of one who broke the covenant stipulations.

35:2 *the house of the Rechabites.* This clan was a tightly knit group of descendants of the Kenites (Judg. 1:16; 1 Chr. 2:55). They lived as nomads, rejecting all forms of urban and agrarian life. They refused to drink wine or strong drink and would not cultivate vineyards. They also would not plant any other crops. They were invited by Jeremiah into one of the chambers surrounding the courtyard of the temple of God for a symbolic demonstration.

35:13–16 *obey their father's commandment.* The Rechabites held to the teaching of their forefather, while the Israelites continually rebelled against the teaching of God.

34:18 [v]Gen. 15:10, 17 **34:20** [w]Jer. 22:25 [x]Jer. 7:33; 16:4; 19:7 **34:21** [y]Jer. 37:5–11; 39:4–7 **34:22** [z]Jer. 37:8, 10 [a]Jer. 38:3; 39:1, 2, 8; 52:7, 13 [b]Jer. 9:11; 44:2, 6 **35:2** [a]1 Chr. 2:55 [b]1 Kin. 6:5, 8 **35:4** [c]1 Chr. 9:18, 19 **35:6** [d]2 Kin. 10:15, 23 [e]Luke 1:15 **35:7** [f]Ex. 20:12 **35:8** [g][Col. 3:20] **35:11** [h]Jer. 4:5–7; 8:14 **35:13** [i]Jer. 6:10; 17:23; 32:33 **35:14** [j]2 Chr. 36:15 [k]Jer. 7:13; 25:3 **35:15** [l]Jer. 26:4, 5; 29:19 [m]Jer. 18:11; 25:5, 6 [n]Jer. 7:7; 25:5, 6 **35:16** [o][Heb. 12:9] **35:17** [p]Prov. 1:24

God of Israel: "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to [q]stand before Me forever."'"

The Scroll Read in the Temple

36 Now it came to pass in the [a]fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, *that* this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: **2**"Take a [b]scroll of a book and [c]write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against [d]all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of [e]Josiah even to this day. **3**It [f]may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may [g]turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

4Then Jeremiah [h]called Baruch the son of Neriah; and [i]Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah,* all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him. **5**And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, "I *am* confined, I cannot go into the house of the LORD. **6**You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my instruction,* the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house on [j]the day of fasting. And you shall also read them in the hearing of all Judah who come from their cities. **7**It may be that they will present their supplication before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way. For great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD has pronounced against this people." **8**And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

9Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem. **10**Then Baruch read from the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court at the [k]entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house, in the hearing of all the people.

The Scroll Read in the Palace

11When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of the LORD from the book, **12**he then went down to the king's house, into the scribe's chamber; and there all the princes were sitting—[l]Elishama the scribe, Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, [m]Elnathan the son of Achbor, Gemariah the son of Shaphan, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. **13**Then Michaiah declared to them all the words that he had heard when Baruch read the book in the hearing of the people. **14**Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to Baruch, saying, "Take in your hand the scroll from which you have read in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. **15**And they said to him, "Sit down now, and read it in our hearing." So Baruch read *it* in their hearing.

16Now it happened, when they had heard all the words, that they looked in fear from one to another, and said to Baruch, "We will surely tell the king of all these words." **17**And they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us now, how did you write all these words—at his instruction?"*

18So Baruch answered them, "He proclaimed with his mouth all these words to me, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book."

19Then the princes said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah; and let no one know where you are."

The King Destroys Jeremiah's Scroll

20And they went to the king, into the court; but they stored the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the hearing of the king. **21**So the king sent Jehudi to bring the scroll, and he took it from Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the hearing of the king and in the hearing of all the princes who stood beside the king. **22**Now the king was sitting in [n]the

* **36:4** Literally *from Jeremiah's mouth* * **36:6** Literally *from my mouth* * **36:17** Literally *with his mouth*

36:2 ***Take a scroll of a book and write on it.*** The usual material for a scroll was parchment (a kind of leather), though Egyptian papyrus was also available. The contents of the scroll were the oracles dating from the days of Josiah, at the advent of Jeremiah's ministry (626 B.C.).

36:6 ***read from the scroll.*** This scroll was to be read on a day of fasting, a time set aside by official declaration of the king or priests (v. 9) in a period of national crisis.

36:8 ***Baruch . . . did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him.*** As a faithful disciple, Baruch read from the book of God's words in the temple of the Lord. This act closely parallels the reading of the Book of the Law in the temple after it was discovered there under Josiah.

36:20–24 ***cut it with the scribe's knife.*** Jehoiakim showed no signs of fear or lamentation, unlike Josiah when the Book of the Law was read in his hearing (2 Kin. 22:11–13). Instead he cuts the scroll up and throws it into a fire.

35:19 [q] Jer. 15:19 **36:1** [a] Jer. 25:1, 3; 45:1 **36:2** [b] Zech. 5:1 [c] Jer. 30:2 [d] Jer. 25:15 [e] Jer. 25:3 **36:3** [f] Jer. 26:3 [g] Jon. 3:8 **36:4** [h] Jer. 32:12 [i] Jer. 45:1 **36:6** [j] Acts 27:9 **36:10** [k] Jer. 26:10 **36:12** [l] Jer. 41:1 [m] Jer. 26:22 **36:22** [n] Amos 3:15

winter house in the ninth month, with *a fire* burning on the hearth before him. 23And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, *that the king* cut it with the scribe's knife and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth. 24Yet they were [o]not afraid, nor did they [p]tear their garments, the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words. 25Nevertheless Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah implored the king not to burn the scroll; but he would not listen to them. 26And the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's* son, Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but the LORD hid them.

Jeremiah Rewrites the Scroll

27Now after the king had burned the scroll with the words which Baruch had written at the instruction of Jeremiah,* the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying: 28"Take yet another scroll, and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned. 29And you shall say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, 'Thus says the LORD: "You have burned this scroll, saying, [q]'Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and cause man and beast to [r]cease from here?'" 30Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: [s]"He shall have no one to sit on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be [t]cast out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night. 31I will punish him, his family, and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring on them, on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the men of Judah all the doom that I have pronounced against them; but they did not heed."'"

32Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah* all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words.

Zedekiah's Vain Hope

37 Now King [a]Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. 2[b]But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land gave heed to the words of the LORD which He spoke by the prophet Jeremiah.

3And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and [c]Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, [d]"Pray now to the LORD our God for us." 4Now Jeremiah was coming and going among the people, for they had not *yet* put him in prison. 5Then [e]Pharaoh's army came up from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

6Then the word of the LORD came to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, 7"Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Thus you shall say to the king of Judah, [f]who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "Behold, Pharaoh's army which has come up to help you will return to Egypt, to their own land. 8[g]And the Chaldeans shall come back and fight against this city, and take it and burn it with fire."' 9Thus says the LORD: 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely depart from us," for they will not depart. 10[h]For though you had defeated the whole army of the Chaldeans who fight against you, and there remained *only* wounded men among them, they would rise up, every man in his tent, and burn the city with fire.'"

* **36:26** Hebrew *Hammelech* * **36:27** Literally *from Jeremiah's mouth* * **36:32** Literally *from Jeremiah's mouth*

36:29–31 ***to Jehoiakim king of Judah.*** Indictment and judgment against Jehoiakim is pronounced. The indictment was declared because he destroyed the scroll of the Word of the Lord. First, the Davidic lineage would not continue through him. His son would rule for only three months before Nebuchadnezzar deported Jehoiachin to Babylon, where he died. Second, the king's body would be treated disgracefully after his death. As the king had cast the scroll into the fire, so his body would be cast from the royal palace. Third, the royal household would experience the destructive judgment that had been proclaimed in the words of the original scroll.

37:2 ***neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land gave heed.*** It is eminently possible and easy to reject God's message. As Zedekiah and all the people did, so can we deliberately refuse to heed the Lord, even when events have shown the truth of His message.

37:5 ***Pharaoh's army came up from Egypt.*** In late spring or early summer 588 B.C., Pharaoh Hophra led the Egyptian army into southern Palestine. The Babylonian forces withdrew their siege of Jerusalem to confront the Egyptians. Zedekiah hoped the Babylonians would be defeated, but his hopes proved to be in vain.

37:9 ***Do not deceive yourselves.*** To think that the brief respite caused by the Egyptian appearance in the southern coastal plain was proof of imminent deliverance, as the false prophets declared, was an exercise in self-deception and futile imagination.

36:24 [o] [Ps. 36:1] [p] Is. 36:22; 37:1 **36:29** [q] Jer. 32:3 [r] Jer. 25:9–11; 26:9 **36:30** [s] Jer. 22:30 [t] Jer. 22:19 **37:1** [a] 2 Kin. 24:17 **37:2** [b] 2 Chr. 36:12–16 **37:3** [c] Jer. 21:1, 2; 29:25; 52:24 [d] Jer. 42:2 **37:5** [e] Ezek. 17:15 **37:7** [f] Jer. 21:2 **37:8** [g] Jer. 34:22 **37:10** [h] Jer. 21:4, 5

Jeremiah Imprisoned

11 And it happened, when the army of
the Chaldeans left *the siege* of Jerusalem
for fear of Pharaoh's army, 12 that Jere-
miah went out of Jerusalem to go into the
land of Benjamin to claim his property
there among the people. 13 And when he
was in the Gate of Benjamin, a captain
of the guard *was* there whose name *was*
Irijah the son of Shelemiah, the son of
Hananiah; and he seized Jeremiah the
prophet, saying, "You are defecting to the
Chaldeans!"

14 Then Jeremiah said, "False! I am not
defecting to the Chaldeans." But he did not
listen to him.

So Irijah seized Jeremiah and brought
him to the princes. 15 Therefore the princes
were angry with Jeremiah, and they struck
him [i]and put him in prison in the [j]house
of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made
that the prison.

16 When Jeremiah entered [k]the dungeon
and the cells, and Jeremiah had remained
there many days, 17 then Zedekiah the king
sent and took him *out*. The king asked him
secretly in his house, and said, "Is there
any word from the LORD?"

And Jeremiah said, "There is." Then he
said, "You shall be [l]delivered into the hand
of the king of Babylon!"

18 Moreover Jeremiah said to King Zede-
kiah, "What offense have I committed
against you, against your servants, or
against this people, that you have put me
in prison? 19 Where now *are* your prophets
who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king
of Babylon will not come against you or
against this land'? 20 Therefore please hear
now, O my lord the king. Please, let my pe-
tition be accepted before you, and do not
make me return to the house of Jonathan
the scribe, lest I die there."

21 Then Zedekiah the king commanded
that they should commit Jeremiah [m]to the
court of the prison, and that they should
give him daily a piece of bread from the
bakers' street, [n]until all the bread in the
city was gone. Thus Jeremiah remained in
the court of the prison.

Jeremiah in the Dungeon

38 Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan,
Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, [a]Ju-
cal* the son of Shelemiah, and [b]Pashhur
the son of Malchiah [c]heard the words that
Jeremiah had spoken to all the people,
saying, 2 "Thus says the LORD: [d]'He who
remains in this city shall die by the sword,
by famine, and by pestilence; but he who
goes over to the Chaldeans shall live; his
life shall be as a prize to him, and he shall
live.'* 3 Thus says the LORD: [e]'This city shall
surely be [f]given into the hand of the king of
Babylon's army, which shall take it.'"

4 Therefore the princes said to the king,
"Please, [g]let this man be put to death, for
thus he weakens the hands of the men of
war who remain in this city, and the hands
of all the people, by speaking such words to
them. For this man does not seek the wel-
fare of this people, but their harm."

5 Then Zedekiah the king said, "Look, he
is in your hand. For the king can *do* noth-
ing against you." 6 [h]So they took Jeremiah
and cast him into the dungeon of Malchi-
ah the king's* son, which *was* in the court
of the prison, and they let Jeremiah down
with ropes. And in the dungeon *there was*
no water, but mire. So Jeremiah sank in the
mire.

7 [i]Now Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, one
of the eunuchs, who was in the king's
house, heard that they had put Jeremiah
in the dungeon. When the king was sitting
at the Gate of Benjamin, 8 Ebed-Melech
went out of the king's house and spoke to
the king, saying: 9 "My lord the king, these
men have done evil in all that they have
done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they
have cast into the dungeon, and he is like-
ly to die from hunger in the place where
he is. For *there is* [j]no more bread in the
city." 10 Then the king commanded Ebed-
Melech the Ethiopian, saying, "Take from
here thirty men with you, and lift Jeremiah
the prophet out of the dungeon before he
dies." 11 So Ebed-Melech took the men with

* **38:1** Same as *Jehucal* (compare 37:3)
* **38:2** Compare 21:9 * **38:6** Hebrew *Hammelech*

37:14–16 ***I am not defecting to the Chaldeans.*** Jeremiah denied the accusation of defection, but to no avail. Irijah arrested the prophet and arraigned him before the court of princes. Prison space was lacking in Jerusalem due to the crowded conditions of the siege, so a prison had to be devised.

37:17–19 ***then Zedekiah the king sent and took him out.*** Fearing possible exposure and opposition from his courtiers, Zedekiah secretly summoned Jeremiah and asked of him a word from the Lord. He seems to have earnestly desired a word from God but could not come to grips with the reality and respond appropriately. Jeremiah appealed to Zedekiah's sense of justice and decency and asked to be released from prison. Zedekiah consented.

38:2–3 ***He who remains in this city.*** Verse 2 is almost an exact duplicate of 21:9. Jeremiah said the choice was between life under the Babylonians and death among the ruins of Jerusalem. Such a statement was treasonous, as was the statement that Jerusalem must fall.

38:7 ***Ebed-Melech.*** This man took special care to obtain rags for Jeremiah to cushion his armpits, preventing the ropes from cutting his skin. A foreigner, a once despised Cushite (from Egypt), cared more for the prophet of God than did the king and the princes of Jeremiah's own people.

37:15 [i] Jer. 20:2 [j] Jer. 38:26 **37:16** [k] Jer. 38:6
37:17 [l] Jer. 21:7 **37:21** [m] Jer. 32:2; 38:13, 28 [n] Jer. 38:9; 52:6 **38:1** [a] Jer. 37:3 [b] Jer. 21:1 [c] Jer. 21:8 **38:2** [d] Jer. 21:9 **38:3** [e] Jer. 21:10; 32:3 [f] Jer. 34:2 **38:4** [g] Jer. 26:11
38:6 [h] Jer. 37:21 **38:7** [i] Jer. 39:16 **38:9** [j] Jer. 37:21

him and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took from there old clothes and old rags, and let them down by ropes into the dungeon to Jeremiah. 12Then Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Please put these old clothes and rags under your armpits, under the ropes." And Jeremiah did so. 13So they pulled Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the dungeon. And Jeremiah remained [k]in the court of the prison.

Zedekiah's Fears and Jeremiah's Advice

14Then Zedekiah the king sent and had Jeremiah the prophet brought to him at the third entrance of the house of the LORD. And the king said to Jeremiah, "I will [l]ask you something. Hide nothing from me."

15Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I declare *it* to you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give you advice, you will not listen to me."

16So Zedekiah the king swore secretly to Jeremiah, saying, "*As* the LORD lives, [m]who made our very souls, I will not put you to death, nor will I give you into the hand of these men who seek your life."

17Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If you surely [n]surrender [o]to the king of Babylon's princes, then your soul shall live; this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. 18But if you do not surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they shall burn it with fire, and [p]you shall not escape from their hand.'"

19And Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Jews who have [q]defected to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they [r]abuse me."

20But Jeremiah said, "They shall not deliver *you*. Please, obey the voice of the LORD which I speak to you. So it shall be [s]well with you, and your soul shall live. 21But if you refuse to surrender, this *is* the word that the LORD has shown me: 22'Now behold, all the [t]women who are left in the king of Judah's house *shall be* surrendered to the king of Babylon's princes, and those *women* shall say:

"Your close friends have set upon you
And prevailed against you;
Your feet have sunk in the mire,
And they have turned away again."

23'So they shall surrender all your wives and [u]children to the Chaldeans. [v]You shall not escape from their hand, but shall be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon. And you shall cause this city to be burned with fire.'"

24Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Let no one know of these words, and you shall not die. 25But if the princes hear that I have talked with you, and they come to you and say to you, 'Declare to us now what you have said to the king, and also what the king said to you; do not hide *it* from us, and we will not put you to death,' 26then you shall say to them, [w]'I presented my request before the king, that he would not make me return [x]to Jonathan's house to die there.'"

27Then all the princes came to Jeremiah and asked him. And he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they stopped speaking with him, for the conversation had not been heard. 28Now [y]Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken. And he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

The Fall of Jerusalem

39 In the [a]ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2In the [b]eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth *day* of the month, the city was penetrated.

3[c]Then all the princes of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-Sharezer, Samgar-Nebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris,* Nergal-Sarezer, Rabmag,* with the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon.

* **39:3** A title, probably *Chief Officer*; also verse 13 • A title, probably *Troop Commander*; also verse 13

38:17 ***Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah.*** Jeremiah repeated to the king the message recorded in Jeremiah 38:2–3. Surrender would spare the life of the king, and the city's failure to surrender would bring death and destruction.

38:20–23 ***So it shall be well with you.*** Jeremiah tried to settle Zedekiah's fears and to resolve his moral and ethical dilemma by reassuring him that surrender would result in his personal safety. But if the king refused to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar, the word of judgment would fall. Women and children would be handed over to Nebuchadnezzar and Jerusalem would be destroyed.

39:1 ***king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem, and besieged it.*** The Babylonian siege began in December 589 B.C. and ended about 30 months later when the walls of Jerusalem were breached.

39:3–7 ***all the princes of the king of Babylon.*** When Zedekiah saw the Babylonian officers enter the gate on the north side of Jerusalem, he and his men left at night through another gate on the south side of the

38:13 [k] Jer. 37:21 **38:14** [l] Jer. 21:1, 2; 37:17 **38:16** [m] Is. 57:16 **38:17** [n] 2 Kin. 24:12 [o] Jer. 39:3 **38:18** [p] Jer. 32:4; 34:3 **38:19** [q] Jer. 39:9 [r] 1 Sam. 31:4 **38:20** [s] Jer. 40:9 **38:22** [t] Jer. 8:10 **38:23** [u] Jer. 39:6; 41:10 [v] Jer. 39:5 **38:26** [w] Jer. 37:20 [x] Jer. 37:15 **38:28** [y] Jer. 37:21; 39:14 **39:1** [a] 2 Kin. 25:1–12 **39:2** [b] Jer. 1:3 **39:3** [c] Jer. 1:15; 38:17

4[d]So it was, when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, that they fled and went out of the city by night, by way of the king's garden, by the gate between the two walls. And he went out by way of the plain.* 5But the Chaldean army pursued them and [e]overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. And when they had captured him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to [f]Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced judgment on him. 6Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his [g]eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the [h]nobles of Judah. 7Moreover [i]he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon. 8[j]And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with [k]fire, and broke down the [l]walls of Jerusalem. 9[m]Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive to Babylon the remnant of the people who remained in the city and those who [n]defected to him, with the rest of the people who remained. 10But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah the [o]poor people, who had nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

Jeremiah Goes Free

11Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, 12"Take him and look after him, and do him no [p]harm; but do to him just as he says to you." 13So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent Nebushasban, Rabsaris, Nergal-Sharezer, Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's chief officers; 14then they sent *someone* [q]to take Jeremiah from the court of the prison, and committed him [r]to Gedaliah the son of [s]Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should take him home. So he dwelt among the people.

15Meanwhile the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, 16"Go and speak to [t]Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, [u]I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be *performed* in that day before you. 17But I will deliver you in that day," says the LORD, "and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you *are* afraid. 18For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but [v]your life shall be as a prize to you, [w]because you have put your trust in Me," says the LORD.'"

Jeremiah with Gedaliah the Governor

40 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD [a]after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him bound in chains among all who were carried away captive from Jerusalem and Judah, who were carried away captive to Babylon.

2And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah and [b]said to him: "The LORD your God has pronounced this doom on this place. 3Now the LORD has brought *it*, and has done just as He said. [c]Because you *people* have sinned against the LORD, and not obeyed His voice, therefore this thing has come upon you. 4And now look, I free you this day from the chains that *were* on your hand. [d]If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. But if it seems wrong for you to come with me to Babylon, remain here. See, [e]all the land *is* before you; wherever it seems good and convenient for you to go, go there."

5Now while Jeremiah had not yet gone back, *Nebuzaradan said*, "Go back to [f]Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, [g]whom the king of Babylon has made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people. Or go wherever it seems convenient for you to go." So the captain of the guard gave him rations and a gift and let him go. 6[h]Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, to [i]Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land.

* **39:4** Or *the Arabah*, that is, the Jordan Valley

city. They were captured near Jericho and taken to Riblah to meet Nebuchadnezzar.

39:8–10 ***And the Chaldeans burned.*** In addition to the royal palace and homes of the inhabitants, Jeremiah 52:13 includes the "house of the LORD" among the buildings burned in Jerusalem. ***poor people.*** Typically the Babylonians deported the upper classes, such as court officials, merchants, artisans, and craftsmen, and left behind peasants to work the fields.

39:18 ***your life shall be as a prize . . . your trust in Me.*** Ebed-Melech experienced the power and grace of God in the deliverance of his life simply because he exercised faith.

40:2–3 ***the LORD has brought it, and has done just as He said.*** Prophets whose words were deemed verified were generally treated well by peoples of the ancient Middle East.

40:4–5 ***I free you this day from the chains.*** Jeremiah was released from bondage and given three options: (1) to go with Nebuzaradan to Babylon and enjoy special treatment and protection there; (2) to remain in the care of Gedaliah, the district governor at Mizpah; or (3) to live in the land as he chose.

39:4 [d] Jer. 52:7 **39:5** [e] Jer. 21:7; 32:4; 38:18, 23 [f] 2 Kin. 23:33 **39:6** [g] Deut. 28:34 [h] Jer. 34:19–21 **39:7** [i] Ezek. 12:13 **39:8** [j] 2 Kin. 25:9 [k] Jer. 21:10 [l] Neh. 1:3 **39:9** [m] 2 Kin. 25:8, 11, 12, 20 [n] Jer. 38:19 **39:10** [o] Jer. 40:7 **39:12** [p] Jer. 1:18, 19; 15:20, 21 **39:14** [q] Jer. 38:28 [r] Jer. 40:5 [s] Jer. 26:24 **39:16** [t] Jer. 38:7, 12 [u] [Dan. 9:12] **39:18** [v] Jer. 21:9; 45:5 [w] Ps. 37:40 **40:1** [a] Jer. 39:9, 11 **40:2** [b] Jer. 50:7 **40:3** [c] Dan. 9:11 **40:4** [d] Jer. 39:12 [e] Gen. 20:15 **40:5** [f] Jer. 39:14 [g] Jer. 41:10 **40:6** [h] Jer. 39:14 [i] Judg. 20:1

7 [j]And when all the captains of the armies who *were* in the fields, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed to him men, women, children, and [k]the poorest of the land who had not been carried away captive to Babylon, 8 then they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—[l]Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, [m]Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and [n]Jezaniah* the son of a [o]Maachathite, they and their men. 9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, took an oath before them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be [p]well with you. 10 As for me, I will indeed dwell at Mizpah and serve the Chaldeans who come to us. But you, gather wine and summer fruit and oil, put *them* in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken." 11 Likewise, when all the Jews who *were* in Moab, among the Ammonites, in Edom, and who *were* in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, 12 then all the Jews [q]returned out of all places where they had been driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruit in abundance.

13 Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that *were* in the fields came to Gedaliah at Mizpah, 14 and said to him, "Do you certainly know that [r]Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to murder you?" But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them.

15 Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah in Mizpah, saying, "Let me go, please, and I will kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no one will know *it*. Why should he murder you, so that all the Jews who are gathered to you would be scattered, and the [s]remnant in Judah perish?"

16 But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, "You shall not do this thing, for you speak falsely concerning Ishmael."

Insurrection Against Gedaliah

41 Now it came to pass in the seventh month [a]*that* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family and of the officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at [b]Mizpah. And there they ate bread together in Mizpah. 2 Then Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men who were with him, arose and [c]struck Gedaliah the son of [d]Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword, and killed him whom the king of Babylon had made [e]governor over the land. 3 Ishmael also struck down all the Jews who were with him, *that is,* with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans who were found there, the men of war.

4 And it happened, on the second day after he had killed Gedaliah, when as yet no one knew *it,* 5 that certain men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, eighty men [f]with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring *them* to [g]the house of the LORD. 6 Now Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went along; and it happened as he met them that he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam!" 7 So it was, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah [h]killed them *and cast them* into the midst of a pit, he and the men who were with him. 8 But ten men were found among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us, for we have treasures of wheat, barley, oil, and honey in the field." So he desisted and did not kill them among their brethren. 9 Now the pit into which Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, because of Gedaliah, *was* [i]the same one Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with *the* slain. 10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the [j]rest of the people who *were* in Mizpah, [k]the king's daughters and all the people who remained in Mizpah, [l]whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive and departed to go over to [m]the Ammonites.

* **40:8** Spelled *Jaazaniah* in 2 Kings 25:23

40:7–10 *the captains of the armies.* This phrase refers to the surviving Jewish commanders of the armies in the towns throughout Judah who had fled into the rugged hill country. Among the list of escaped leaders was Ishmael, a member of the royal family and a court officer (41:1).

40:11–12 *the Jews.* Those who had escaped the Babylonian onslaught into neighboring states returned home and began working the fields, vineyards, and orchards.

40:13–16 *Johanan.* This man led a group of leaders to Gedaliah to warn him of a plot by Ishmael. He even asked for permission to kill the plotter, Ishmael. Unfortunately, Gedaliah was far too trusting of Ishmael and didn't take the warning seriously enough.

40:7 *j* 2 Kin. 25:23, 24 *k* Jer. 39:10 **40:8** *l* Jer. 41:1–10 *m* Jer. 41:11; 43:2 *n* Jer. 42:1 *o* Deut. 3:14 **40:9** *p* Jer. 27:11; 38:17–20 **40:12** *q* Jer. 43:5 **40:14** *r* Jer. 41:10 **40:15** *s* Jer. 42:2 **41:1** *a* 2 Kin. 25:25 *b* Jer. 40:6, 10 **41:2** *c* 2 Kin. 25:25 *d* Jer. 26:24 *e* Jer. 40:5 **41:5** *f* Deut. 14:1 *g* 1 Sam. 1:7 **41:7** *h* Ps. 55:23 **41:9** *i* 1 Kin. 15:22 **41:10** *j* Jer. 40:11, 12 *k* Jer. 43:6 *l* Jer. 40:7 *m* Jer. 40:14

11But when [n]Johanan the son of Kareah
and all the captains of the forces that
were with him heard of all the evil that
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,
12they took all the men and went to fight
with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah; and
they found him by [o]the great pool that *is*
in Gibeon. 13So it was, when all the people
who *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the
son of Kareah, and all the captains of the
forces who *were* with him, that they were
glad. 14Then all the people whom Ishma-
el had carried away captive from Mizpah
turned around and came back, and went
to Johanan the son of Kareah. 15But Ish-
mael the son of Nethaniah escaped from
Johanan with eight men and went to the
Ammonites.

16Then Johanan the son of Kareah, and
all the captains of the forces that were
with him, took from Mizpah all the [p]rest
of the people whom he had recovered from
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah after he had
murdered Gedaliah the son of Ahikam—
the mighty men of war and the women
and the children and the eunuchs, whom
he had brought back from Gibeon. 17And
they departed and dwelt in the habitation
of [q]Chimham, which is near Bethlehem, as
they went on their way to [r]Egypt, 18because
of the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of
them, because Ishmael the son of Netha-
niah had murdered Gedaliah the son of
Ahikam, [s]whom the king of Babylon had
made governor in the land.

The Flight to Egypt Forbidden

42 Now all the captains of the forces,
[a]Johanan the son of Kareah, Jezani-
ah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the peo-
ple, from the least to the greatest, came
near 2and said to Jeremiah the prophet,
[b]"Please, let our petition be acceptable to
you, and [c]pray for us to the LORD your God,
for all this remnant (since we are left *but*
[d]a few of many, as you can see), 3that the
LORD your God may show us [e]the way in
which we should walk and the thing we
should do."

4Then Jeremiah the prophet said to
them, "I have heard. Indeed, I will pray
to the LORD your God according to your
words, and it shall be, *that* [f]whatever the
LORD answers you, I will declare *it* to you.
I will [g]keep nothing back from you."

5So they said to Jeremiah, [h]"Let the LORD
be a true and faithful witness between us,
if we do not do according to everything
which the LORD your God sends us by you.
6Whether *it is* pleasing or displeasing, we
will [i]obey the voice of the LORD our God
to whom we send you, [j]that it may be well
with us when we obey the voice of the LORD
our God."

7And it happened after ten days that the
word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. 8Then
he called Johanan the son of Kareah, all
the captains of the forces which *were* with
him, and all the people from the least even
to the greatest, 9and said to them, "Thus
says the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom
you sent me to present your petition be-
fore Him: 10'If you will still remain in this
land, then [k]I will build you and not pull *you*
down, and I will plant you and not pluck
you up. For I [l]relent concerning the disas-
ter that I have brought upon you. 11Do not
be afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom
you are afraid; do not be afraid of him,'
says the LORD, [m]'for I *am* with you, to save
you and deliver you from his hand. 12And
[n]I will show you mercy, that he may have
mercy on you and cause you to return to
your own land.'

13"But if [o]you say, 'We will not dwell
in this land,' disobeying the voice of the
LORD your God, 14saying, 'No, but we will
go to the land of [p]Egypt where we shall see
no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet,
nor be hungry for bread, and there we will
dwell'— 15Then hear now the word of the
LORD, O remnant of Judah! Thus says the
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If you
[q]wholly set [r]your faces to enter Egypt, and
go to dwell there, 16then it shall be *that*
the [s]sword which you feared shall over-
take you there in the land of Egypt; the
famine of which you were afraid shall
follow close after you there *in* Egypt; and
there you shall die. 17So shall it be with
all the men who set their faces to go to
Egypt to dwell there. They shall die by
the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.
And [t]none of them shall remain or escape
from the disaster that I will bring upon
them.'

41:11–12 *they took all the men.* After Ishmael assassinated Gedaliah, Johanan gathered forces to fight Ishmael's army at Gibeon. Then he started for Egypt and safety.

42:1–3 *said to Jeremiah.* The people asked Jeremiah to intercede with the Lord on their behalf.

42:4–6 *I will pray.* Jeremiah cautiously agreed to pray to God. He asked the people to agree to abide by the answer he received. The people responded with an oath of obedience, calling upon the Lord as witness.

42:15 *set your faces.* This expression indicates the fixed intentions of the people. The announcement of judgment against the disobedient evacuees echoes Jeremiah's earlier pronouncements against Judah. The very thing they were trying to escape from would meet them in Egypt.

41:11 [n] Jer. 40:7, 8, 13–16 **41:12** [o] 2 Sam. 2:13 **41:16** [p] Jer. 40:11, 12; 43:4–7 **41:17** [q] 2 Sam. 19:37, 38 [r] Jer. 43:7 **41:18** [s] Jer. 40:5 **42:1** [a] Jer. 40:8, 13; 41:11 **42:2** [b] Jer. 15:11 [c] Is. 37:4 [d] Lev. 26:22 **42:3** [e] Ezra 8:21 **42:4** [f] 1 Kin. 22:14 [g] 1 Sam. 3:17, 18 **42:5** [h] Gen. 31:50 **42:6** [i] Ex. 24:7 [j] Jer. 7:23 **42:10** [k] Jer. 24:6; 31:28; 33:7 [l] [Jer. 18:8] **42:11** [m] Rom. 8:31 **42:12** [n] Ps. 106:46 **42:13** [o] Jer. 44:16 **42:14** [p] Jer. 41:17; 43:7 **42:15** [q] Deut. 17:16 [r] Luke 9:51 **42:16** [s] Ezek. 11:8 **42:17** [t] Jer. 44:14, 28

18"For thus says the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel: 'As My anger and My fury
have been [u]poured out on the inhabitants
of Jerusalem, so will My fury be poured
out on you when you enter Egypt. And [v]you
shall be an oath, an astonishment, a curse,
and a reproach; and you shall see this place
no more.'
19"The LORD has said concerning you, O
remnant of Judah, [w]'Do not go to Egypt!'
Know certainly that I have admonished
you this day. 20For you were hypocrites in
your hearts when you sent me to the LORD
your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD
our God, and according to all that the LORD
your God says, so declare to us and we will
do *it*.' 21And I have this day declared *it* to
you, but you have [x]not obeyed the voice of
the LORD your God, or anything which He
has sent you by me. 22Now therefore, know
certainly that you [y]shall die by the sword,
by famine, and by pestilence in the place
where you desire to go to dwell."

Jeremiah Taken to Egypt

43 Now it happened, when Jeremiah
had stopped speaking to all the peo-
ple all the [a]words of the LORD their God,
for which the LORD their God had sent him
to them, all these words, 2[b]that Azariah
the son of Hoshaiah, Johanan the son of
Kareah, and all the proud men spoke, say-
ing to Jeremiah, "You speak falsely! The
LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'Do
not go to Egypt to dwell there.' 3But [c]Baruch
the son of Neriah has set you against us, to
deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans,
that they may put us to death or carry us
away captive to Babylon." 4So Johanan
the son of Kareah, all the captains of the
forces, and all the people would [d]not obey
the voice of the LORD, to remain in the land
of Judah. 5But Johanan the son of Kareah
and all the captains of the forces took [e]all
the remnant of Judah who had returned
to dwell in the land of Judah, from all na-
tions where they had been driven— 6men,
women, children, [f]the king's daughters,
[g]and every person whom Nebuzaradan the
captain of the guard had left with Gedali-
ah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan,
and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the
son of Neriah. 7[h]So they went to the land of
Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the
LORD. And they went as far as [i]Tahpanhes.
8Then the [j]word of the LORD came to
Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, 9"Take
large stones in your hand, and hide them
in the sight of the men of Judah, in the
clay in the brick courtyard which *is* at
the entrance to Pharaoh's house in Tah-
panhes; 10and say to them, 'Thus says the
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold,
I will send and bring Nebuchadnezzar the
king of Babylon, [k]My servant, and will set
his throne above these stones that I have
hidden. And he will spread his royal pa-
vilion over them. 11[l]When he comes, he
shall strike the land of Egypt *and deliver*
to death [m]*those appointed* for death, and
to captivity *those appointed* for captivity,
and to the sword *those appointed* for the
sword. 12I* will kindle a fire in the houses
of [n]the gods of Egypt, and he shall burn
them and carry them away captive. And he
shall array himself with the land of Egypt,
as a shepherd puts on his garment, and
he shall go out from there in peace. 13He
shall also break the *sacred* pillars of Beth
Shemesh* that *are* in the land of Egypt; and
the houses of the gods of the Egyptians he
shall burn with fire."'"

Israelites Will Be Punished in Egypt

44 The word that came to Jeremiah
concerning all the Jews who dwell in
the land of Egypt, who dwell at [a]Migdol, at
[b]Tahpanhes, at [c]Noph,* and in the country
of [d]Pathros, saying, 2"Thus says the LORD
of hosts, the God of Israel: 'You have seen
all the calamity that I have brought on Je-
rusalem and on all the cities of Judah; and
behold, this day they *are* [e]a desolation, and
no one dwells in them, 3because of their
wickedness which they have committed
to provoke Me to anger, in that they went
[f]to burn incense *and* to [g]serve other gods
whom they did not know, they nor you nor
your fathers. 4However [h]I have sent to you
all My servants the prophets, rising early
and sending *them*, saying, "Oh, do not do
this abominable thing that I hate!" 5But
they did not listen or incline their ear to
turn from their wickedness, to burn no in-
cense to other gods. 6So My fury and My
anger were poured out and kindled in the
cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusa-
lem; and they are wasted *and* desolate, as
it is this day.'

* **43:12** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *He*.
* **43:13** Literally *House of the Sun*, ancient On; later called Heliopolis * **44:1** That is, ancient Memphis

43:4–7 *all the people would not obey.* Johanan led the migration to Egypt, against the direction of the Lord through Jeremiah.

43:10 *these stones.* These symbolized the strong foundation of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, the point from which he would spread his canopy.

42:18 [u] Jer. 7:20 [v] Is. 65:15 **42:19** [w] Deut. 17:16 **42:21** [x] Is. 30:1–7 **42:22** [y] Ezek. 6:11 **43:1** [a] Jer. 42:9–18 **43:2** [b] Jer. 42:1 **43:3** [c] Jer. 36:4; 45:1 **43:4** [d] 2 Kin. 25:26 **43:5** [e] Jer. 40:11, 12 **43:6** [f] Jer. 41:10 [g] Jer. 39:10; 40:7 **43:7** [h] Jer. 42:19 [i] Jer. 2:16; 44:1 **43:8** [j] Jer. 44:1–30 **43:10** [k] Jer. 25:9; 27:6 **43:11** [l] Jer. 25:15–19; 44:13; 46:1, 2, 13–26 [m] Jer. 15:2 **43:12** [n] Jer. 46:25 **44:1** [a] Jer. 46:14 [b] Jer. 43:7 [c] Is. 19:13 [d] Ezek. 29:14; 30:14 **44:2** [e] Jer. 4:7; 9:11; 34:22 **44:3** [f] Jer. 19:4 [g] Deut. 13:6; 32:17 **44:4** [h] Jer. 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19

7"Now therefore, thus says the LORD, the
God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Why do
you commit *this* great evil [i]against your-
selves, to cut off from you man and wom-
an, child and infant, out of Judah, leaving
none to remain, 8in that you [j]provoke Me
to wrath with the works of your hands,
burning incense to other gods in the land
of Egypt where you have gone to dwell, that
you may cut yourselves off and be [k]a curse
and a reproach among all the nations of the
earth? 9Have you forgotten the wickedness
of your fathers, the wickedness of the kings
of Judah, the wickedness of their wives,
your own wickedness, and the wickedness
of your wives, which they committed in the
land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusa-
lem? 10They have not been [l]humbled, to this
day, nor have they [m]feared; they have not
walked in My law or in My statutes that I
set before you and your fathers.'

11"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts,
the God of Israel: 'Behold, [n]I will set My
face against you for catastrophe and for
cutting off all Judah. 12And I will take the
remnant of Judah who have set their faces
to go into the land of Egypt to dwell there,
and [o]they shall all be consumed *and* fall
in the land of Egypt. They shall be con-
sumed by the sword *and* by famine. They
shall die, from the least to the greatest, by
the sword and by famine; and [p]they shall
be an oath, an astonishment, a curse and
a reproach! 13[q]For I will punish those who
dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have pun-
ished Jerusalem, by the sword, by famine,
and by pestilence, 14so that none of the
remnant of Judah who have gone into the
land of Egypt to dwell there shall escape
or survive, lest they return to the land of
Judah, to which they [r]desire to return and
dwell. For [s]none shall return except those
who escape.'"

15Then all the men who knew that their
wives had burned incense to other gods,
with all the women who stood by, a great
multitude, and all the people who dwelt in
the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered
Jeremiah, saying: 16"*As for* the word that
you have spoken to us in the name of the
LORD, [t]we will not listen to you! 17But we
will certainly do [u]whatever has gone out
of our own mouth, to burn incense to the
[v]queen of heaven and pour out drink offer-
ings to her, as we have done, we and our
fathers, our kings and our princes, in the
cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusa-
lem. For *then* we had plenty of food, were
well-off, and saw no trouble. 18But since
we stopped burning incense to the queen
of heaven and pouring out drink offerings
to her, we have lacked everything and have
been consumed by the sword and by fam-
ine."

19*The women also said,* [w]"And when we
burned incense to the queen of heaven and
poured out drink offerings to her, did we
make cakes for her, to worship her, and
pour out drink offerings to her without our
husbands' *permission?*"

20Then Jeremiah spoke to all the
people—the men, the women, and all the
people who had given him *that* answer—
saying: 21"The incense that you burned in
the cities of Judah and in the streets of Je-
rusalem, you and your fathers, your kings
and your princes, and the people of the land,
did not the LORD remember them, and did
it *not* come into His mind? 22So the LORD
could no longer bear *it,* because of the evil
of your doings *and* because of the abom-
inations which you committed. Therefore
your land is a desolation, an astonishment,
a curse, and without an inhabitant, [x]as *it*
is this day. 23Because you have burned in-
cense and because you have sinned against
the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice
of the LORD or walked in His law, in His
statutes or in His testimonies, [y]therefore
this calamity has happened to you, as *at*
this day."

24Moreover Jeremiah said to all the peo-
ple and to all the women, "Hear the word
of the LORD, all Judah who *are* in the land
of Egypt! 25Thus says the LORD of hosts,
the God of Israel, saying: 'You and your
wives have spoken with your mouths and
fulfilled with your hands, saying, "We will
surely keep our vows that we have made,
to burn incense to the queen of heaven and
pour out drink offerings to her." You will
surely keep your vows and perform your
vows!' 26Therefore hear the word of the
LORD, all Judah who dwell in the land of
Egypt: 'Behold, [z]I have sworn by My [a]great
name,' says the LORD, 'that [b]My name shall

44:8 *provoke.* This term indicates willful, stubborn rebellion against God, which roused His anger.

44:10 *They have not been humbled.* The present generation of Jews had learned nothing from the past failures of the nation. The people were not broken in heart, only more stubborn.

44:13 *I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt.* The Jews in Egypt would suffer the same judgment as those in Jerusalem. Only a small remnant would survive to tell their story.

44:18 *queen of heaven.* The people reasoned that when they stopped worshiping the queen of heaven in the days of Josiah's reform, their king was killed and their land was overrun and destroyed.

44:24 *and to all the women.* The focus here is on the stubbornness of the women who persisted in their idolatry. Nothing could make them abandon their vows to worship Ishtar.

44:26–27 *by My great name.* The name of God reveals His quality and character in dealing with humankind.

44:7 [i] Num. 16:38 **44:8** [j] Jer. 25:6, 7; 44:3 [k] Jer. 42:18 **44:10** [l] Jer. 6:15; 8:12 [m] [Prov. 28:14] **44:11** [n] Amos 9:4 **44:12** [o] Jer. 42:15–17, 22 [p] Is. 65:15 **44:13** [q] Jer. 43:11 **44:14** [r] Jer. 22:26, 27 [s] Jer. 44:28 **44:16** [t] Jer. 6:16 **44:17** [u] Num. 30:12 [v] Jer. 7:18 **44:19** [w] Jer. 7:18 **44:22** [x] Jer. 25:11, 18, 38 **44:23** [y] Dan. 9:11, 12 **44:26** [z] Heb. 6:13 [a] Jer. 10:6 [b] Ezek. 20:39

no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, "The Lord God lives." 27Behold, I will watch over them for adversity and not for good. And all the men of Judah who *are* in the land of Egypt [c]shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end to them. 28Yet [d]a small number who escape the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah; and all the remnant of Judah, who have gone to the land of Egypt to dwell there, shall know whose words will stand, Mine or theirs. 29And this *shall be* a sign to you,' says the Lord, 'that I will punish you in this place, that you may know that My words will surely [e]stand against you for adversity.'

30"Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, [f]I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek his life, as I gave [g]Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life.'"

Assurance to Baruch

45 The [a]word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to [b]Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the instruction of Jeremiah,* in the [c]fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, 2"Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: 3'You said, "Woe is me now! For the Lord has added grief to my sorrow. I [d]fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest."'

4"Thus you shall say to him, 'Thus says the Lord: "Behold, [e]what I have built I will break down, and what I have planted I will pluck up, that is, this whole land. 5And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek *them;* for behold, [f]I will bring adversity on all flesh," says the Lord. "But I will give your [g]life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go."'"

Judgment on Egypt

46 The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against [a]the nations. 2Against [b]Egypt.

[c]Concerning the army of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, which was by the River Euphrates in Carchemish, and which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon [d]defeated in the [e]fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

3 "Order the buckler and shield,
And draw near to battle!
4 Harness the horses,
And mount up, you horsemen!
Stand forth with *your* helmets,
Polish the spears,
[f]Put on the armor!
5 Why have I seen them dismayed *and* turned back?
Their mighty ones are beaten down;
They have speedily fled,
And did not look back,
For [g]fear *was* all around," says the Lord.
6 "Do not let the swift flee away,
Nor the mighty man escape;
They will [h]stumble and fall
Toward the north, by the River Euphrates.

7 "Who *is* this coming up [i]like a flood,
Whose waters move like the rivers?
8 Egypt rises up like a flood,
And *its* waters move like the rivers;
And he says, 'I will go up *and* cover the earth,
I will destroy the city and its inhabitants.'
9 Come up, O horses, and rage, O chariots!
And let the mighty men come forth:
The Ethiopians and the Libyans who handle the shield,
And the Lydians [j]who handle *and* bend the bow.
10 For this *is* [k]the day of the Lord God of hosts,
A day of vengeance,
That He may avenge Himself on His adversaries.
[l]The sword shall devour;
It shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood;
For the Lord God of hosts [m]has a sacrifice

* **45:1** Literally *from Jeremiah's mouth*

44:28 ***all the remnant of Judah.*** A small remnant would survive and see the fulfillment of God's word as revealed through Jeremiah. Their own hopes of prosperity in Egypt would vanish, and the sign of God's work against them would be the fall of Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt. In 570 B.C., Hophra was overthrown in a military coup by his own general, Amasis. Three years later he was executed in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

45:2–3 ***to you, O Baruch.*** Jeremiah addressed Baruch in light of the scribe's sorrow. Baruch lamented his plight in the same manner that Jeremiah had done (15:10). He also suffered mental anguish and personal rejection from his people due to his association with Jeremiah (36:15–19).

46:1 ***against the nations.*** This verse introduces a collection of oracles. The text moves generally from the west—Egypt—to the east—Elam and Babylon. Scattered throughout the oracles are brief messages of the restoration of Israel and Judah. The main message of these oracles is the sovereignty of God over all the nations of the earth.

46:10–12 ***day of the Lord.*** This time the day is a day of vengeance in which Egypt is punished for the death of Josiah. The imagery of a devouring sword is also found in Jeremiah 2:30. Egypt's demise is

44:27 [c] Ezek. 7:6 **44:28** [d] Is. 10:19; 27:12, 13
44:29 [e] [Ps. 33:11] **44:30** [f] Ezek. 29:3; 30:21 [g] Jer. 39:5 **45:1** [a] Jer. 36:1, 4, 32 [b] Jer. 32:12, 16; 43:3 [c] Jer. 25:1; 36:1; 46:2 **45:3** [d] Ps. 6:6; 69:3 **45:4** [e] Is. 5:5
45:5 [f] Jer. 25:17–26 [g] Jer. 21:9; 38:2; 39:18 **46:1** [a] Jer. 25:15 **46:2** [b] Jer. 25:17–19 [c] 2 Kin. 23:33–35 [d] 2 Chr. 35:20 [e] Jer. 45:1 **46:4** [f] Jer. 51:11, 12 **46:5** [g] Jer. 49:29
46:6 [h] Dan. 11:19 **46:7** [i] Jer. 47:2 **46:9** [j] Is. 66:19
46:10 [k] Joel 1:15 [l] Deut. 32:42 [m] Is. 34:6

In the north country by the River
Euphrates.

11 "Go[n] up to Gilead and take balm,
[o]O virgin, the daughter of Egypt;
In vain you will use many medicines;
[p]You shall not be cured.
12 The nations have heard of your
[q]shame,
And your cry has filled the land;
For the mighty man has stumbled
against the mighty;
They both have fallen together."

Babylonia Will Strike Egypt

13 The word that the LORD spoke to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon would come *and* [r]strike the land of Egypt.

14 "Declare in Egypt, and proclaim in
[s]Migdol;
Proclaim in Noph* and in [t]Tahpanhes;
Say, 'Stand fast and prepare
yourselves,
For the sword devours all around you.'
15 Why are your valiant *men* swept
away?
They did not stand
Because the LORD drove them away.
16 He made many fall;
Yes, [u]one fell upon another.
And they said, 'Arise!
[v]Let us go back to our own people
And to the land of our nativity
From the oppressing sword.'
17 They cried there,
'Pharaoh, king of Egypt, *is but* a noise.
He has passed by the appointed time!'

18 "*As* I live," says the King,
[w]Whose name *is* the LORD of hosts,
"Surely as Tabor *is* among the
mountains
And as Carmel by the sea, *so* he shall
come.
19 O [x]you daughter dwelling in Egypt,
Prepare yourself [y]to go into captivity!
For Noph* shall be waste and desolate,
without inhabitant.

20 "Egypt *is* a very pretty [z]heifer,
But destruction comes, it comes [a]from
the north.
21 Also her mercenaries are in her midst
like fat bulls,
For they also are turned back,
They have fled away together.
They did not stand,
For [b]the day of their calamity had
come upon them,
The time of their punishment.
22 [c]Her noise shall go like a serpent,
For they shall march with an army
And come against her with axes,
Like those who chop wood.

23 "They shall [d]cut down her forest," says
the LORD,
"Though it cannot be searched,
Because they *are* innumerable,
And more numerous than
[e]grasshoppers.
24 The daughter of Egypt shall be
ashamed;
She shall be delivered into the hand
Of [f]the people of the north."

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, says: "Behold, I will bring punishment on Amon* of [g]No,* and Pharaoh and Egypt, [h]with their gods and their kings—Pharaoh and those who [i]trust in him. 26 [j]And I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their lives, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of his servants. [k]Afterward it shall be inhabited as in the days of old," says the LORD.

God Will Preserve Israel

27 "But[l] do not fear, O My servant Jacob,
And do not be dismayed, O Israel!
For behold, I will [m]save you from afar,
And your offspring from the land of
their captivity;
Jacob shall return, have rest and be
at ease;
No one shall make *him* afraid.
28 Do not fear, O Jacob My servant," says
the LORD,
"For I *am* with you;
For I will make a complete end of all
the nations
To which I have driven you,
But I will not make [n]a complete end
of you.
I will rightly [o]correct you,
For I will not leave you wholly
unpunished."

* **46:14** That is, ancient Memphis * **46:19** That is, ancient Memphis * **46:25** A sun god • That is, ancient Thebes

pictured as a sacrificial feast. As there was no healing balm for sinful Judah, so now Egypt was mortally wounded, stumbling to its death.

46:15–17 ***Why are your valiant men swept away?*** The fall of the gods before God in judgment is a prominent theme in the oracles against the nations (v. 25).

46:18 ***King . . . LORD of hosts.*** The term "hosts" can also be translated "armies." God is the true and sovereign King over all the armies of heaven and earth.

46:25–26 ***with their gods and their kings.*** The gods and goddesses of Egypt were punished in the defeat of the people who worshiped them.

46:11 [n] Jer. 8:22 [o] Is. 47:1 [p] Ezek. 30:21 **46:12** [q] Jer. 2:36 **46:13** [r] Is. 19:1 **46:14** [s] Jer. 44:1 [t] Ezek. 30:18 **46:16** [u] Lev. 26:36, 37 [v] Jer. 51:9 **46:18** [w] Jer. 48:15 **46:19** [x] Jer. 48:18 [y] Is. 20:4 **46:20** [z] Hos. 10:11 [a] Jer. 1:14 **46:21** [b] [Ps. 37:13] **46:22** [c] [Is. 29:4] **46:23** [d] Is. 10:34 [e] Judg. 6:5; 7:12 **46:24** [f] Jer. 1:15 **46:25** [g] Ezek. 30:14–16 [h] Jer. 43:12, 13 [i] Is. 30:1–5; 31:1–3 **46:26** [j] Ezek. 32:11 [k] Ezek. 29:8–14 **46:27** [l] Is. 41:13, 14; 43:5; 44:2 [m] Is. 11:11 **46:28** [n] Amos 9:8, 9 [o] Jer. 30:11

Judgment on Philistia

47 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet [a]against the Philistines, [b]before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

2 Thus says the LORD:

"Behold, [c]waters rise [d]out of the north,
And shall be an overflowing flood;
They shall overflow the land and all that is in it,
The city and those who dwell within;
Then the men shall cry,
And all the inhabitants of the land shall wail.
3 At the [e]noise of the stamping hooves of his strong horses,
At the rushing of his chariots,
At the rumbling of his wheels,
The fathers will not look back for *their* children,
Lacking courage,
4 Because of the day that comes to plunder all the [f]Philistines,
To cut off from [g]Tyre and Sidon every helper who remains;
For the LORD shall plunder the Philistines,
[h]The remnant of the country of [i]Caphtor.
5 [j]Baldness has come upon Gaza,
[k]Ashkelon is cut off
With the remnant of their valley.
How long will you cut yourself?
6 "O you [l]sword of the LORD,
How long until you are quiet?
Put yourself up into your scabbard,
Rest and be still!
7 How can it be quiet,
Seeing the LORD has [m]given it a charge
Against Ashkelon and against the seashore?
There He has [n]appointed it."

Judgment on Moab

48 Against [a]Moab.
Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

"Woe to [b]Nebo!
For it is plundered,
[c]Kirjathaim is shamed *and* taken;
The high stronghold* is shamed and dismayed—
2 [d]No more praise of Moab.
In [e]Heshbon they have devised evil against her:
'Come, and let us cut her off as a nation.'
You also shall be cut down,
O [f]Madmen!*
The sword shall pursue you;
3 A voice of crying *shall be* from [g]Horonaim:
'Plundering and great destruction!'
4 "Moab is destroyed;
Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard;*
5 [h]For in the Ascent of Luhith they ascend with continual weeping;
For in the descent of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.
6 "Flee, save your lives!
And be like the [i]juniper* in the wilderness.
7 For because you have trusted in your works and your [j]treasures,
You also shall be taken.
And [k]Chemosh shall go forth into captivity,
His [l]priests and his princes together.
8 And [m]the plunderer shall come against every city;
No one shall escape.
The valley also shall perish,
And the plain shall be destroyed,
As the LORD has spoken.
9 "Give[n] wings to Moab,
That she may flee and get away;
For her cities shall be desolate,
Without any to dwell in them.
10 [o]Cursed *is* he who does the work of the LORD deceitfully,
And cursed *is* he who keeps back his sword from blood.
11 "Moab has been at ease from his* youth;
He [p]has settled on his dregs,
And has not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
Nor has he gone into captivity.
Therefore his taste remained in him,
And his scent has not changed.
12 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD,

* **48:1** Hebrew *Misgab* * **48:2** A city of Moab * **48:4** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Proclaim it in Zoar.* * **48:6** Or *Aroer,* a city of Moab * **48:11** The Hebrew uses masculine and feminine pronouns interchangeably in this chapter.

47:6–7 *sword of the LORD.* This image is used often to portray divine judgment (12:2; 46:10,14,16).
48:6–8 *the juniper.* This tree ekes out its stunted growth in the wilderness, hiding in crevasses of rock. ***captivity.*** Taking a deity captive was a well-known Middle Eastern custom. The national statue of the patron deity was seized, and it was believed that the captured god could no longer protect its people.

47:1 [a] Zeph. 2:4, 5 [b] Amos 1:6 **47:2** [c] Is. 8:7, 8 [d] Jer. 1:14 **47:3** [e] Jer. 8:16 **47:4** [f] Is. 14:29–31 [g] Jer. 25:22 [h] Ezek. 25:16 [i] Gen. 10:14 **47:5** [j] Mic. 1:16 [k] Jer. 25:20 **47:6** [l] Ezek. 21:3–5 **47:7** [m] Ezek. 14:17 [n] Mic. 6:9 **48:1** [a] Is. 15:1—16:14; 25:10 [b] Is. 15:2 [c] Num. 32:37 **48:2** [d] Is. 16:14 [e] Jer. 49:3 [f] Is. 10:31 **48:3** [g] Is. 15:5 **48:5** [h] Is. 15:5 **48:6** [i] Jer. 17:6 **48:7** [j] Jer. 9:23 [k] Jer. 48:13 [l] Jer. 49:3 **48:8** [m] Jer. 6:26 **48:9** [n] Ps. 55:6 **48:10** [o] 1 Sam. 15:3, 9 **48:11** [p] Zeph. 1:12

"That I shall send him wine-workers
Who will tip him over
And empty his vessels
And break the bottles.
13 Moab shall be ashamed of [q]Chemosh,
As the house of Israel [r]was ashamed of
[s]Bethel, their confidence.

14 "How can you say, [t]'We *are* mighty
And strong men for the war'?
15 Moab is plundered and gone up *from*
her cities;
Her chosen young men have [u]gone
down to the slaughter," says [v]the
King,
Whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.

16 "The calamity of Moab *is* near at hand,
And his affliction comes quickly.
17 Bemoan him, all you who are around
him;
And all you who know his name,
Say, [w]'How the strong staff is broken,
The beautiful rod!'

18 "O [x]daughter inhabiting [y]Dibon,
Come down from *your* glory,
And sit in thirst;
For the plunderer of Moab has come
against you,
He has destroyed your strongholds.
19 O inhabitant of [z]Aroer,
[a]Stand by the way and watch;
Ask him who flees
And her who escapes;
Say, 'What has happened?'
20 Moab is shamed, for he is broken down.
[b]Wail and cry!
Tell it in [c]Arnon, that Moab is plundered.

21 "And judgment has come on the plain
country:
On Holon and Jahzah and Mephaath,
22 On Dibon and Nebo and Beth
Diblathaim,
23 On Kirjathaim and Beth Gamul and
Beth Meon,
24 On [d]Kerioth and Bozrah,
On all the cities of the land of Moab,
Far or near.
25 [e]The horn of Moab is cut off,
And his [f]arm is broken," says the LORD.

26 "Make[g] him drunk,
Because he exalted *himself* against the
LORD.
Moab shall wallow in his vomit,
And he shall also be in derision.
27 For [h]was not Israel a derision to you?
[i]Was he found among thieves?
For whenever you speak of him,
You shake *your head in* [j]*scorn.*
28 You who dwell in Moab,
Leave the cities and [k]dwell in the rock,
And be like [l]the dove *which* makes
her nest
In the sides of the cave's mouth.

29 "We have heard the [m]pride of Moab
(He *is* exceedingly proud),
Of his loftiness and arrogance and
[n]pride,
And of the haughtiness of his heart."

30 "I know his wrath," says the LORD,
"But it *is* not right;
[o]His lies have made nothing right.
31 Therefore [p]I will wail for Moab,
And I will cry out for all Moab;
I* will mourn for the men of Kir Heres.
32 [q]O vine of Sibmah! I will weep for you
with the weeping of [r]Jazer.
Your plants have gone over the sea,
They reach to the sea of Jazer.
The plunderer has fallen on your
summer fruit and your vintage.
33 [s]Joy and gladness are taken
From the plentiful field
And from the land of Moab;
I have caused wine to fail from the
winepresses;
No one will tread with joyous
shouting—
Not joyous shouting!

34 "From[t] the cry of Heshbon to [u]Elealeh
and to Jahaz
They have uttered their voice,
[v]From Zoar to Horonaim,
Like a three-year-old heifer;*
For the waters of Nimrim also shall be
desolate.

35 "Moreover," says the LORD,
"I will cause to cease in Moab
[w]The one who offers *sacrifices* in the
high places
And burns incense to his gods.

* **48:31** Following Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *He*. * **48:34** Or *The Third Eglath*, an unknown city (compare Isaiah 15:5)

48:17 ***Bemoan him, all you who are around him.*** A note of sarcasm is communicated. The nations around Moab, like Judah, who was attacked by Moab's mercenaries, were called upon to lament Moab's destruction.

48:18 ***Come down from your glory.*** The haughty Moab was shamed by the destruction of its fortresses.

48:26–29 ***Make him drunk.*** Judgment is portrayed in the form of drunkenness to the point of vomiting, the result of Moab's mockery of Israel (25:15–29).

48:33 ***Joy and gladness are taken.*** The joy once heard echoing from the vineyards and winepresses had vanished before the horrifying sound of horses' hoofbeats and clashing weapons.

48:13 [q] 1 Kin. 11:7 [r] Hos. 10:6 [s] 1 Kin. 12:29; 13:32–34 **48:14** [t] Is. 16:6 **48:15** [u] Jer. 50:27 [v] Jer. 46:18; 51:57 **48:17** [w] Is. 9:4; 14:4, 5 **48:18** [x] Is. 47:1 [y] Is. 15:2 **48:19** [z] Deut. 2:36 [a] 1 Sam. 4:13, 14, 16 **48:20** [b] Is. 16:7 [c] Num. 21:13 **48:24** [d] Amos 2:2 **48:25** [e] Ps. 75:10 [f] Ezek. 30:21 **48:26** [g] Jer. 25:15 **48:27** [h] Zeph. 2:8 [i] Jer. 2:26 [j] Lam. 2:15 **48:28** [k] Ps. 55:6, 7 [l] Song 2:14 **48:29** [m] Is. 16:6 [n] Jer. 49:16 **48:30** [o] Jer. 50:36 **48:31** [p] Is. 15:5; 16:7, 11 **48:32** [q] Is. 16:8, 9 [r] Num. 21:32 **48:33** [s] Joel 1:12 **48:34** [t] Is. 15:4–6 [u] Num. 32:3, 37 [v] Is. 15:5, 6 **48:35** [w] Is. 15:2; 16:12

36 Therefore [x]My heart shall wail like
flutes for Moab,
And like flutes My heart shall wail
For the men of Kir Heres.
Therefore [y]the riches they have
acquired have perished.

37 "For [z]every head *shall be* bald, and
every beard clipped;
On all the hands *shall be* cuts, and [a]on
the loins sackcloth—
38 A general lamentation
On all the [b]housetops of Moab,
And in its streets;
For I have [c]broken Moab like a vessel
in which *is* no pleasure," says the
LORD.
39 "They shall wail:
'How she is broken down!
How Moab has turned her back with
shame!'
So Moab shall be a derision
And a dismay to all those about her."

40 For thus says the LORD:

"Behold, [d]one shall fly like an eagle,
And [e]spread his wings over Moab.
41 Kerioth is taken,
And the strongholds are surprised;
[f]The mighty men's hearts in Moab on
that day shall be
Like the heart of a woman in birth
pangs.
42 And Moab shall be destroyed [g]as a
people,
Because he exalted *himself* against the
LORD.
43 [h]Fear and the pit and the snare *shall be*
upon you,
O inhabitant of Moab," says the LORD.
44 "He who flees from the fear shall fall
into the pit,
And he who gets out of the pit shall be
caught in the [i]snare.
For upon Moab, upon it [j]I will bring
The year of their punishment," says
the LORD.

45 "Those who fled stood under the
shadow of Heshbon
Because of exhaustion.
But [k]a fire shall come out of Heshbon,
A flame from the midst of [l]Sihon,
And [m]shall devour the brow of Moab,
The crown of the head of the sons of
tumult.

46 [n]Woe to you, O Moab!
The people of Chemosh perish;
For your sons have been taken captive,
And your daughters captive.

47 "Yet I will bring back the captives of
Moab
[o]In the latter days," says the LORD.

Thus far *is* the judgment of Moab.

Judgment on Ammon

49 Against the [a]Ammonites.
Thus says the LORD:

"Has Israel no sons?
Has he no heir?
Why *then* does Milcom* inherit [b]Gad,
And his people dwell in its cities?
2 [c]Therefore behold, the days are
coming," says the LORD,
"That I will cause to be heard an alarm
of war
In [d]Rabbah of the Ammonites;
It shall be a desolate mound,
And her villages shall be burned with
fire.
Then Israel shall take possession of
his inheritance," says the LORD.

3 "Wail, O [e]Heshbon, for Ai is plundered!
Cry, you daughters of Rabbah,
[f]Gird yourselves with sackcloth!
Lament and run to and fro by the
walls;
For Milcom shall go into captivity
With his [g]priests and his princes
together.
4 Why [h]do you boast in the valleys,
Your flowing valley, O [i]backsliding
daughter?
Who trusted in her [j]treasures, [k]*saying,*
'Who will come against me?'
5 Behold, I will bring fear upon you,"
Says the Lord GOD of hosts,
"From all those who are around you;
You shall be driven out, everyone
headlong,
And no one will gather those who
wander off.
6 But [l]afterward I will bring back
The captives of the people of Ammon,"
says the LORD.

* **49:1** Hebrew *Malcam*, literally *their king*, a god of the Ammonites; also called *Molech* (compare verse 3)

48:40–44 ***one shall fly like an eagle.*** The imagery is that of Babylon spreading its ravaging armies over Moab like an eagle spreading its wings. ***he exalted himself.*** Moab's chief sin was pride, considering itself greater than the God of Israel. Its pride would be turned to fear and terror, and then the nation would be taken captive.

49:1–2 ***Milcom.*** This was the patron deity of the Ammonites and is pictured here as taking possession of the land formerly belonging to the Gadites, a process that began in the days of the judges.

48:36 [x] Is. 15:5; 16:11 [y] Is. 15:7 **48:37** [z] Is. 15:2, 3 [a] Gen. 37:34 **48:38** [b] Is. 15:3 [c] Jer. 22:28 **48:40** [d] Deut. 28:49 [e] Is. 8:8 **48:41** [f] Is. 13:8; 21:3 **48:42** [g] Ps. 83:4 **48:43** [h] Is. 24:17, 18 **48:44** [i] Is. 24:18 [j] Jer. 11:23 **48:45** [k] Num. 21:28, 29 [l] Ps. 135:11 [m] Num. 24:17 **48:46** [n] Num. 21:29 **48:47** [o] Jer. 49:6, 39 **49:1** [a] Ezek. 21:28–32; 25:1–7 [b] Amos 1:13–15 **49:2** [c] Amos 1:13–15 [d] Ezek. 25:5 **49:3** [e] Jer. 48:2 [f] Is. 32:11 [g] Jer. 48:7 **49:4** [h] Jer. 9:23 [i] Jer. 3:14 [j] Jer. 48:7 [k] Jer. 21:13 **49:6** [l] Jer. 48:47

Judgment on Edom

7 [m]Against Edom.
Thus says the LORD of hosts:

[n]"*Is* wisdom no more in Teman?
[o]Has counsel perished from the prudent?
Has their wisdom [p]vanished?
8 Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of [q]Dedan!
For I will bring the calamity of Esau
upon him,
The time *that* I will punish him.
9 [r]If grape-gatherers came to you,
Would they not leave *some* gleaning
grapes?
If thieves by night,
Would they not destroy until they have
enough?
10 [s]But I have made Esau bare;
I have uncovered his secret places,*
And he shall not be able to hide himself.
His descendants are plundered,
His brethren and his neighbors,
And [t]he *is* no more.
11 Leave your fatherless children,
I will preserve *them* alive;
And let your widows trust in Me."

12 For thus says the LORD: "Behold, [u]those whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunk. And *are* you the one who will altogether go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, but you shall surely drink *of it*. 13 For [v]I have sworn by Myself," says the LORD, "that [w]Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse. And all its cities shall be perpetual wastes."

14 [x]I have heard a message from the LORD,
And an ambassador has been sent to
the nations:
"Gather together, come against her,
And rise up to battle!

15 "For indeed, I will make you small
among nations,
Despised among men.
16 Your fierceness has deceived you,
The [y]pride of your heart,
O you who dwell in the clefts of the rock,
Who hold the height of the hill!
[z]Though you make your [a]nest as high
as the eagle,
[b]I will bring you down from there," says
the LORD.*

17 "Edom also shall be an astonishment;
[c]Everyone who goes by it will be
astonished
And will hiss at all its
plagues.
18 [d]As in the overthrow of Sodom and
Gomorrah
And their neighbors," says the LORD,
"No one shall remain there,
Nor shall a son of man dwell in it.

19 "Behold,[e] he shall come up like a lion
from [f]the floodplain* of the Jordan
Against the dwelling place of the
strong;
But I will suddenly make him run
away from her.
And who *is* a chosen *man that* I may
appoint over her?
For [g]who *is* like Me?
Who will arraign Me?
And [h]who *is* that shepherd
Who will withstand Me?"

20 [i]Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD
that He has taken against Edom,
And His purposes that He has
proposed against the inhabitants
of Teman:
Surely the least of the flock shall draw
them out;
Surely He shall make their dwelling
places desolate with them.
21 [j]The earth shakes at the noise of their
fall;
At the cry its noise is heard at the Red
Sea.
22 Behold, [k]He shall come up and fly like
the eagle,
And spread His wings over Bozrah;
The heart of the mighty men of Edom
in that day shall be
Like the heart of a woman in birth
pangs.

Judgment on Damascus

23 [l]Against Damascus.

[m]"Hamath and Arpad are shamed,
For they have heard bad news.
They are fainthearted;
[n]*There is* trouble on the sea;
It cannot be quiet.
24 Damascus has grown feeble;
She turns to flee,
And fear has seized *her.*
[o]Anguish and sorrows have taken her
like a woman in labor.

* **49:10** Compare Obadiah 5, 6 * **49:16** Compare Obadiah 3, 4 * **49:19** Or *thicket*

49:9–11 ***grape-gatherers.*** This imagery is derived from 6:9, but there was no real remnant left in Edom. The nation had been totally ravaged and stripped bare, with only women and children left alive to work the land.

49:17–19 ***astonishment.*** Like Israel, Judah, Egypt, Moab, and Ammon, Edom would be destroyed and would become an object of derision. Like the lion that emerges from the thickets along the lower Jordan and seizes its prey, God would attack the Edomites through His appointed instrument.

49:7 [m] Ezek. 25:12–14; 35:1–15 [n] Gen. 36:11 [o] Is. 19:11 [p] Jer. 8:9 **49:8** [q] Jer. 25:23 **49:9** [r] Obad. 5, 6 **49:10** [s] Mal. 1:3 [t] Is. 17:14 **49:12** [u] Jer. 25:29 **49:13** [v] Amos 6:8 [w] Is. 34:6; 63:1 **49:14** [x] Obad. 1–4 **49:16** [y] Jer. 48:29 [z] Obad. 3, 4 [a] Job 39:27 [b] Amos 9:2 **49:17** [c] Jer. 18:16; 49:13; 50:13 **49:18** [d] Deut. 29:23 **49:19** [e] Jer. 50:44 [f] Jer. 12:5 [g] Ex. 15:11 [h] Job 41:10 **49:20** [i] Jer. 50:45 **49:21** [j] Jer. 50:46 **49:22** [k] Jer. 48:40, 41 **49:23** [l] Amos 1:3, 5 [m] Jer. 39:5 [n] [Is. 57:20] **49:24** [o] Is. 13:8

25 Why is [p]the city of praise not deserted,
the city of My joy?
26 [q]Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets,
And all the men of war shall be cut off in that day," says the LORD of hosts.
27 "I[r] will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus,
And it shall consume the palaces of Ben-Hadad."*

Judgment on Kedar and Hazor

28 [s]Against Kedar and against the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall strike.
Thus says the LORD:

"Arise, go up to Kedar,
And devastate [t]the men of the East!
29 Their [u]tents and their flocks they shall take away.
They shall take for themselves their curtains,
All their vessels and their camels;
And they shall cry out to them,
[v]'Fear *is* on every side!'

30 "Flee, get far away! Dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of Hazor!" says the LORD.
"For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has taken counsel against you,
And has conceived a plan against you.

31 "Arise, go up to [w]the wealthy nation that dwells securely," says the LORD,
"Which has neither gates nor bars,
[x]Dwelling alone.
32 Their camels shall be for booty,
And the multitude of their cattle for plunder.
I will [y]scatter to all winds those in the farthest corners,
And I will bring their calamity from all its sides," says the LORD.
33 "Hazor [z]shall be a dwelling for jackals,
a desolation forever;
No one shall reside there,
Nor son of man dwell in it."

Judgment on Elam

34 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against [a]Elam, in the [b]beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, 35 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

'Behold, I will break [c]the bow of Elam,
The foremost of their might.
36 Against Elam I will bring the four winds
From the four quarters of heaven,
And scatter them toward all those winds;
There shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not go.
37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies
And before those who seek their life.
[d]I will bring disaster upon them,
My fierce anger,' says the LORD;
'And I will send the sword after them
Until I have consumed them.
38 I will [e]set My throne in Elam,
And will destroy from there the king and the princes,' says the LORD.

39 'But it shall come to pass [f]in the latter days:
I will bring back the captives of Elam,'
says the LORD."

Judgment on Babylon and Babylonia

50 The word that the LORD spoke [a]against Babylon *and* against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.

2 "Declare among the nations,
Proclaim, and set up a standard;
Proclaim—do not conceal *it*—
Say, 'Babylon is [b]taken, [c]Bel is shamed.
Merodach* is broken in pieces;
[d]Her idols are humiliated,
Her images are broken in pieces.'
3 [e]For out of the north [f]a nation comes up against her,
Which shall make her land desolate,
And no one shall dwell therein.
They shall move, they shall depart,
Both man and beast.

*49:27 Compare Amos 1:4 *50:2 A Babylonian god; sometimes spelled *Marduk*

49:30–33 ***Hazor shall be a dwelling for jackals.*** Nebuchadnezzar's destructive army would attack the tent villages of Kedar and Hazor. The oases would be left to the jackals for habitation (9:11; 10:22). The Bedouin peoples would be scattered afar, as if by the hot desert winds.

49:34–36 ***break the bow.*** The Elamites were famous for their skilled archers (Is. 22:6), who became an important part of the Persian army under Cyrus. ***four winds.*** This expression indicates the military might that the Lord musters against His enemies (Ezek. 37:9).

50:2–3 ***Bel is shamed.*** Bel was a title like Baal, meaning "Lord," another name for Babylon's patron deity, Marduk. The oracle begins with a defamation of the gods of Babylon. The term translated "images" means animal droppings. The Hebrew prophets are openly contemptuous of idols and speak of them with ridicule.

49:25 [p] Jer. 33:9 **49:26** [q] Jer. 50:30 **49:27** [r] Amos 1:4 **49:28** [s] Ezek. 27:21 [t] Judg. 6:3 **49:29** [u] Ps. 120:5 [v] Jer. 46:5 **49:31** [w] Ezek. 38:11 [x] Num. 23:9 **49:32** [y] Ezek. 5:10 **49:33** [z] Mal. 1:3 **49:34** [a] Jer. 25:25 [b] 2 Kin. 24:17, 18 **49:35** [c] Is. 22:6 **49:37** [d] Jer. 9:16 **49:38** [e] Jer. 43:10 **49:39** [f] Jer. 48:47 **50:1** [a] Is. 13:1; 47:1 **50:2** [b] Is. 21:9 [c] Is. 46:1 [d] Jer. 43:12, 13 **50:3** [e] Jer. 51:48 [f] Is. 13:17, 18, 20

4 "In those days and in that time," says the LORD,
"The children of Israel shall come,
[g]They and the children of Judah together;
[h]With continual weeping they shall come,
[i]And seek the LORD their God.
5 They shall ask the way to Zion,
With their faces toward it, *saying,*
'Come and let us join ourselves to the LORD
In [j]a perpetual covenant
That will not be forgotten.'
6 "My people have been [k]lost sheep.
Their shepherds have led them [l]astray;
They have turned them away *on* [m]the mountains.
They have gone from mountain to hill;
They have forgotten their resting place.
7 All who found them have [n]devoured them;
And [o]their adversaries said, [p]'We have not offended,
Because they have sinned against the LORD, [q]the habitation of justice,
The LORD, [r]the hope of their fathers.'
8 "Move[s] from the midst of Babylon,
Go out of the land of the Chaldeans;
And be like the rams before the flocks.
9 [t]For behold, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon
An assembly of great nations from the north country,
And they shall array themselves against her;
From there she shall be captured.
Their arrows *shall be* like *those* of an expert warrior;*
[u]None shall return in vain.
10 And Chaldea shall become plunder;
[v]All who plunder her shall be satisfied," says the LORD.
11 "Because[w] you were glad, because you rejoiced,
You destroyers of My heritage,
Because you have grown fat [x]like a heifer threshing grain,
And you bellow like bulls,
12 Your mother shall be deeply ashamed;
She who bore you shall be ashamed.
Behold, the least of the nations *shall be* a [y]wilderness,
A dry land and a desert.
13 Because of the wrath of the LORD
She shall not be inhabited,
[z]But she shall be wholly desolate.
[a]Everyone who goes by Babylon shall be horrified
And hiss at all her plagues.
14 "Put[b] yourselves in array against Babylon all around,
All you who bend the bow;
Shoot at her, spare no arrows,
For she has sinned against the LORD.
15 Shout against her all around;
She has [c]given her hand,
Her foundations have fallen,
[d]Her walls are thrown down;
For [e]it *is* the vengeance of the LORD.
Take vengeance on her.
As she has done, so do to her.
16 Cut off the sower from Babylon,
And him who handles the sickle at harvest time.
For fear of the oppressing sword
[f]Everyone shall turn to his own people,
And everyone shall flee to his own land.
17 "Israel *is* like [g]scattered sheep;
[h]The lions have driven *him* away.
First [i]the king of Assyria devoured him;
Now at last this [j]Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones."
18 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
"Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land,
As I have punished the king of [k]Assyria.
19 [l]But I will bring back Israel to his home,
And he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan;
His soul shall be satisfied on Mount Ephraim and Gilead.
20 In those days and in that time," says the LORD,
[m]"The iniquity of Israel shall be sought, but *there shall be* none;
And the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found;
For I will pardon those [n]whom I preserve.

* **50:9** Following some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Syriac; Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate read *a warrior who makes childless.*

50:11–13 ***You destroyers of My heritage.*** Babylon's plunder would be its punishment for gloating over Judah's demise and the abuse of God's heritage. Babylon would "be a wilderness." Defamation, drought, dehabitation, desolation, and derision were Babylon's destiny (18:16; 19:8; 49:17).

50:4 [g] Hos. 1:11 [h] Ezra 3:12, 13 [i] Hos. 3:5 **50:5** [j] Jer. 31:31 **50:6** [k] Is. 53:6 [l] Jer. 23:1 [m] [Jer. 2:20; 3:6, 23] **50:7** [n] Ps. 79:7 [o] Zech. 11:5 [p] Jer. 2:3 [q] [Ps. 90:1; 91:1] [r] Ps. 22:4 **50:8** [s] Is. 48:20 **50:9** [t] Jer. 15:14; 51:27 [u] 2 Sam. 1:22 **50:10** [v] [Rev. 17:16] **50:11** [w] Is. 47:6 [x] Hos. 10:11 **50:12** [y] Jer. 51:43 **50:13** [z] Jer. 25:12 [a] Jer. 49:17 **50:14** [b] Jer. 51:2 **50:15** [c] Lam. 5:6 [d] Jer. 51:58 [e] Jer. 51:6, 11 **50:16** [f] Is. 13:14 **50:17** [g] 2 Kin. 24:10, 14 [h] Jer. 2:15 [i] 2 Kin. 15:29; 17:6; 18:9–13 [j] 2 Kin. 24:10–14; 25:1–7 **50:18** [k] Ezek. 31:3, 11, 12 **50:19** [l] Is. 65:10 **50:20** [m] [Jer. 31:34] [n] Is. 1:9

21 "Go up against the land of Merathaim,
against it,
And against the inhabitants of [o]Pekod.
Waste and utterly destroy them," says
the LORD,
"And do [p]according to all that I have
commanded you.
22 [q]A sound of battle *is* in the land,
And of great destruction.
23 How [r]the hammer of the whole earth
has been cut apart and broken!
How Babylon has become a desolation
among the nations!
24 I have laid a snare for you;
You have indeed been [s]trapped,
O Babylon,
And you were not aware;
You have been found and also caught,
Because you have [t]contended against
the LORD.
25 The LORD has opened His armory,
And has brought out [u]the weapons of
His indignation;
For this *is* the work of the Lord GOD
of hosts
In the land of the Chaldeans.
26 Come against her from the farthest
border;
Open her storehouses;
Cast her up as heaps of ruins,
And destroy her utterly;
Let nothing of her be left.
27 Slay all her [v]bulls,
Let them go down to the slaughter.
Woe to them!
For their day has come, the time of
[w]their punishment.
28 The voice of those who flee and escape
from the land of Babylon
[x]Declares in Zion the vengeance of the
LORD our God,
The vengeance of His temple.
29 "Call together the archers against
Babylon.
All you who bend the bow, encamp
against it all around;
Let none of them escape.*
[y]Repay her according to her work;
According to all she has done, do to
her;
[z]For she has been proud against the
LORD,
Against the Holy One of Israel.
30 [a]Therefore her young men shall fall in
the streets,
And all her men of war shall be cut off
in that day," says the LORD.
31 "Behold, I *am* against you,
O most haughty one!" says the Lord
GOD of hosts;
"For your day has come,
The time *that* I will punish you.*
32 The most [b]proud shall stumble and
fall,
And no one will raise him up;
[c]I will kindle a fire in his cities,
And it will devour all around him."
33 Thus says the LORD of hosts:
"The children of Israel *were* oppressed,
Along with the children of Judah;
All who took them captive have held
them fast;
They have refused to let them go.
34 [d]Their Redeemer *is* strong;
[e]The LORD of hosts *is* His name.
He will thoroughly plead their [f]case,
That He may give rest to the land,
And disquiet the inhabitants of
Babylon.
35 "A sword *is* against the Chaldeans,"
says the LORD,
"Against the inhabitants of Babylon,
And [g]against her princes and [h]her
wise men.
36 A sword *is* [i]against the soothsayers,
and they will be fools.
A sword *is* against her mighty men,
and they will be dismayed.
37 A sword *is* against their horses,
Against their chariots,
And against all [j]the mixed peoples
who *are* in her midst;
And [k]they will become like women.
A sword *is* against her treasures, and
they will be robbed.
38 [l]A drought* *is* against her waters, and
they will be dried up.
For it *is* the land of carved images,
And they are insane with *their* idols.
39 "Therefore[m] the wild desert beasts shall
dwell *there* with the jackals,
And the ostriches shall dwell in it.
[n]It shall be inhabited no more forever,
Nor shall it be dwelt in from
generation to generation.

* **50:29** Qere, some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Targum add *to her.* * **50:31** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read *The time of your punishment.* * **50:38** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Syriac reads *sword;* Septuagint omits *A drought is.*

50:21–28 *utterly destroy them.* The tables would be turned on Babylon. The Lord God had launched His vengeful weapons upon the city through His anointed servant Cyrus (2 Chr. 36:22–23; Is 45:1).

50:34 *Their Redeemer is strong.* One who secured the freedom of a kinsman, protecting family rights, was called a kinsmen redeemer. Here God, the Redeemer of Israel (Is. 47:4), offers to obtain the legal freedom of His people from captivity.

50:21 [o] Ezek. 23:23 [p] 2 Sam. 16:11 **50:22** [q] Jer. 51:54 **50:23** [r] Jer. 51:20–24 **50:24** [s] Dan. 5:30 [t] [Is. 45:9] **50:25** [u] Is. 13:5 **50:27** [v] Is. 34:7 [w] Jer. 48:44 **50:28** [x] Jer. 51:10 **50:29** [y] Jer. 51:56 [z] [Is. 47:10] **50:30** [a] Jer. 49:26; 51:4 **50:32** [b] Mal. 4:1 [c] Jer. 21:14 **50:34** [d] Rev. 18:8 [e] Is. 47:4 [f] Jer. 51:36; Mic. 7:9 **50:35** [g] Dan. 5:30 [h] Is. 47:13 **50:36** [i] Is. 44:25 **50:37** [j] Jer. 25:20 [k] Jer. 51:30 **50:38** [l] Rev. 16:12 **50:39** [m] Rev. 18:2 [n] Is. 13:20

40 [o]As God overthrew Sodom and
Gomorrah
And their neighbors," says the LORD,
"So no one shall reside there,
Nor son of man [p]dwell in it.

41 "Behold,[q] a people shall come from the
north,
And a great nation and many kings
Shall be raised up from the ends of the
earth.
42 [r]They shall hold the bow and the lance;
[s]They *are* cruel and shall not show
mercy.
[t]Their voice shall roar like the sea;
They shall ride on horses,
Set in array, like a man for the battle,
Against you, O daughter of Babylon.

43 "The king of Babylon has [u]heard the
report about them,
And his hands grow feeble;
Anguish has taken hold of him,
Pangs as of a woman in [v]childbirth.

44 "Behold,[w] he shall come up like a
lion from the floodplain* of the
Jordan
Against the dwelling place of the
strong;
But I will make them suddenly run
away from her.
And who *is* a chosen *man that* I may
appoint over her?
For who *is* like Me?
Who will arraign Me?
And [x]who *is* that shepherd
Who will withstand Me?"

45 Therefore hear [y]the counsel of the
LORD that He has taken against
Babylon,
And His [z]purposes that He has
proposed against the land of the
Chaldeans:
[a]Surely the least of the flock shall draw
them out;
Surely He will make their dwelling
place desolate with them.
46 [b]At the noise of the taking of Babylon
The earth trembles,
And the cry is heard among the
nations.

The Utter Destruction of Babylon

51 Thus says the LORD:

"Behold, I will raise up against
[a]Babylon,
Against those who dwell in Leb
Kamai,*
[b]A destroying wind.
2 And I will send [c]winnowers to
Babylon,
Who shall winnow her and empty her
land.
[d]For in the day of doom
They shall be against her all
around.
3 Against *her* [e]let the archer bend his
bow,
And lift himself up against *her* in his
armor.
Do not spare her young men;
[f]Utterly destroy all her army.
4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of
the Chaldeans,
[g]And *those* thrust through in her
streets.
5 For Israel is [h]not forsaken, nor
Judah,
By his God, the LORD of hosts,
Though their land was filled with sin
against the Holy One of Israel."

6 [i]Flee from the midst of Babylon,
And every one save his life!
Do not be cut off in her iniquity,
For [j]this *is* the time of the LORD's
vengeance;
[k]He shall recompense her.
7 [l]Babylon *was* a golden cup in the
LORD's hand,
That made all the earth drunk.
[m]The nations drank her wine;
Therefore the nations [n]are
deranged.
8 Babylon has suddenly [o]fallen and been
destroyed.
[p]Wail for her!
[q]Take balm for her pain;
Perhaps she may be healed.

9 We would have healed Babylon,
But she is not healed.
Forsake her, and [r]let us go everyone to
his own country;
[s]For her judgment reaches to heaven
and is lifted up to the skies.
10 The LORD has [t]revealed our
righteousness.
Come and let us [u]declare in Zion the
work of the LORD our God.

* **50:44** Or *thicket* * **51:1** A code word for Chaldea (Babylonia); may be translated *The Midst of Those Who Rise Up Against Me*

51:6–10 ***Babylon was a golden cup.*** The imagery of Babylon's cup of fury from 25:15–19 is reversed. Here Babylon's cup is broken by the Lord. ***Take balm.*** As in the case of Judah (8:22), decadent Babylon was beyond healing and had to be abandoned. The destruction of Babylon was the vindication of the justice of God. Jeremiah's prediction (25:12–14) would be realized: Israel would be made righteous through God's work.

50:40 [o] Is. 13:19 [p] Is. 13:20 **50:41** [q] Jer. 6:22; 25:14; 51:27 **50:42** [r] Jer. 6:23 [s] Is. 13:18 [t] Is. 5:30 **50:43** [u] Jer. 51:31 [v] Jer. 6:24 **50:44** [w] Jer. 49:19–21 [x] Job 41:10 **50:45** [y] Jer. 51:10, 11 [z] Jer. 51:29 [a] Jer. 49:19, 20 **50:46** [b] Rev. 18:9 **51:1** [a] Is. 47:1 [b] Jer. 4:11 **51:2** [c] Jer. 15:7 [d] Jer. 50:14 **51:3** [e] Jer. 50:14, 29 [f] Jer. 50:21 **51:4** [g] Jer. 49:26; 50:30, 37 **51:5** [h] [Jer. 33:24–26; 46:28] **51:6** [i] Rev. 18:4 [j] Jer. 50:15 [k] Jer. 25:14 **51:7** [l] Rev. 17:4 [m] Rev. 14:8 [n] Jer. 25:16 **51:8** [o] Is. 21:9 [p] Rev. 18:9, 11, 19 [q] Jer. 46:11 **51:9** [r] Is. 13:14 [s] Rev. 18:5 **51:10** [t] Ps. 37:6 [u] Jer. 50:28

11 [v]Make the arrows bright!
Gather the shields!
[w]The LORD has raised up the spirit of
the kings of the Medes.
[x]For His plan *is* against Babylon to
destroy it,
Because it *is* [y]the vengeance of the
LORD,
The vengeance for His temple.
12 [z]Set up the standard on the walls of
Babylon;
Make the guard strong,
Set up the watchmen,
Prepare the ambushes.
For the LORD has both devised and
done
What He spoke against the inhabitants
of Babylon.
13 [a]O you who dwell by many waters,
Abundant in treasures,
Your end has come,
The measure of your covetousness.
14 [b]The LORD of hosts has sworn by
Himself:
"Surely I will fill you with men, [c]as with
locusts,
And they shall lift [d]up a shout against
you."

15 [e]He has made the earth by His power;
He has established the world by His
wisdom,
And [f]stretched out the heaven by His
understanding.
16 When He utters *His* voice—
There is a multitude of waters in the
heavens:
[g]"He causes the vapors to ascend from
the ends of the earth;
He makes lightnings for the rain;
He brings the wind out of His
treasuries."*

17 [h]Everyone is dull-hearted, without
knowledge;
Every metalsmith is put to shame by
the carved image;
[i]For his molded image *is* falsehood,
And *there is* no breath in them.
18 They *are* futile, a work of errors;
In the time of their punishment they
shall perish.
19 The Portion of Jacob *is* not like them,
For He *is* the Maker of all things;
And *Israel is* the tribe of His
inheritance.
The LORD of hosts *is* His name.

20 "You[j] *are* My battle-ax *and* weapons of
war:
For with you I will break the nation in
pieces;
With you I will destroy kingdoms;
21 With you I will break in pieces the
horse and its rider;
With you I will break in pieces the
chariot and its rider;
22 With you also I will break in pieces
man and woman;
With you I will break in pieces [k]old
and young;
With you I will break in pieces the
young man and the maiden;
23 With you also I will break in pieces the
shepherd and his flock;
With you I will break in pieces the
farmer and his yoke of oxen;
And with you I will break in pieces
governors and rulers.

24 "And[l] I will repay Babylon
And all the inhabitants of Chaldea
For all the evil they have done
In Zion in your sight," says the LORD.

25 "Behold, I *am* against you,
[m]O destroying mountain,
Who destroys all the earth," says the
LORD.
"And I will stretch out My hand against
you,
Roll you down from the rocks,
[n]And make you a burnt mountain.
26 They shall not take from you a stone
for a corner
Nor a stone for a foundation,
[o]But you shall be desolate forever," says
the LORD.

27 [p]Set up a banner in the land,
Blow the trumpet among the nations!
[q]Prepare the nations against her,
Call [r]the kingdoms together against
her:
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz.
Appoint a general against her;
Cause the horses to come up like the
bristling locusts.
28 Prepare against her the nations,
With the kings of the Medes,
Its governors and all its rulers,
All the land of his dominion.
29 And the land will tremble and
sorrow;
For every [s]purpose of the LORD shall
be performed against Babylon,
[t]To make the land of Babylon a
desolation without inhabitant.

* **51:16** Psalm 135:7

51:20–26 ***You are My battle-ax.*** Babylon had been God's implement for judgment against the nations, and Judah in particular.

51:29–32 ***The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting.*** The Nabonidus Chronicle, an ancient text describing the fall of Babylon, reports that "Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle." By the time Cyrus reached Babylon, he had conquered all of Babylonia

51:11 [v] Jer. 46:4, 9 [w] Is. 13:17 [x] Jer. 50:45 [y] Jer. 50:28 **51:12** [z] Nah. 2:1; 3:14 **51:13** [a] Rev. 17:1, 15 **51:14** [b] Jer. 49:13 [c] Nah. 3:15 [d] Jer. 50:15 **51:15** [e] Gen. 1:1, 6 [f] Job 9:8 **51:16** [g] Ps. 135:7 **51:17** [h] Jer. 10:14 [i] Jer. 50:2 **51:20** [j] Is. 10:5, 15 **51:22** [k] 2 Chr. 36:17 **51:24** [l] Jer. 50:15, 29 **51:25** [m] Zech. 4:7 [n] Rev. 8:8 **51:26** [o] Jer. 50:26, 40 **51:27** [p] Is. 13:2 [q] Jer. 25:14 [r] Jer. 50:41, 42 **51:29** [s] Jer. 50:45 [t] Jer. 50:13; 51:26, 43

30 The mighty men of Babylon have
ceased fighting,
They have remained in their strongholds;
Their might has failed,
[u]They became *like* women;
They have burned her dwelling places,
[v]The bars of her *gate* are broken.
31 [w]One runner will run to meet another,
And one messenger to meet another,
To show the king of Babylon that his
city is taken on *all* sides;
32 [x]The passages are blocked,
The reeds they have burned with fire,
And the men of war are terrified.

33 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

"The daughter of Babylon *is* [y]like a
threshing floor
When [z]*it is* time to thresh her;
Yet a little while
[a]And the time of her harvest will come."

34 "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon
Has [b]devoured me, he has crushed me;
He has made me an [c]empty vessel,
He has swallowed me up like a monster;
He has filled his stomach with my
delicacies,
He has spit me out.
35 Let the violence *done* to me and my
flesh *be* upon Babylon,"
The inhabitant of Zion will say;
"And my blood be upon the inhabitants
of Chaldea!"
Jerusalem will say.

36 Therefore thus says the LORD:

"Behold, [d]I will plead your case and
take vengeance for you.
[e]I will dry up her sea and make her
springs dry.
37 [f]Babylon shall become a heap,
A dwelling place for jackals,
[g]An astonishment and a hissing,
Without an inhabitant.
38 They shall roar together like lions,
They shall growl like lions' whelps.
39 In their excitement I will prepare their
feasts;
[h]I will make them drunk,
That they may rejoice,
And sleep a perpetual sleep
And not awake," says the LORD.
40 "I will bring them down
Like lambs to the slaughter,
Like rams with male goats.
41 "Oh, how [i]Sheshach* is taken!
Oh, how [j]the praise of the whole earth
is seized!
How Babylon has become desolate
among the nations!
42 [k]The sea has come up over Babylon;
She is covered with the multitude of
its waves.
43 [l]Her cities are a desolation,
A dry land and a wilderness,
A land where [m]no one dwells,
Through which no son of man passes.
44 I will punish [n]Bel in Babylon,
And I will bring out of his mouth what
he has swallowed;
And the nations shall not stream to
him anymore.
Yes, [o]the wall of Babylon shall fall.

45 "My[p] people, go out of the midst of her!
And let everyone deliver himself from
the fierce anger of the LORD.
46 And lest your heart faint,
And you fear [q]for the rumor that *will
be* heard in the land
(A rumor will come *one* year,
And after that, in *another* year
A rumor *will come*,
And violence in the land,
Ruler against ruler),
47 Therefore behold, the days are coming
That I will bring judgment on the
carved images of Babylon;
Her whole land shall be ashamed,
And all her slain shall fall in her
midst.
48 Then [r]the heavens and the earth and
all that *is* in them
Shall sing joyously over Babylon;
[s]For the plunderers shall come to her
from the north," says the LORD.

49 As Babylon *has caused* the slain of
Israel to fall,
So at Babylon the slain of all the earth
shall fall.
50 [t]You who have escaped the sword,
Get away! Do not stand still!
[u]Remember the LORD afar off,
And let Jerusalem come to your mind.

* **51:41** A code word for Babylon (compare Jeremiah 25:26)

except for the capital city, cutting off roads and supply routes.

51:47–48 ***the days are coming.*** This expression usually introduces a message of divine intervention into history. ***judgment on the carved images of Babylon.*** The city was known for its thousands of images of its numerous gods and goddesses. As the king claimed to conquer nations in the name of his patron deity, so the gods of the defeated would be punished along with their worshipers. The devastation of decadent Babylon would be no cause for mourning among the nations. Instead, the nations would sing joyfully of Babylon's fall.

51:30 [u] Is. 19:16 [v] Lam. 2:9 **51:31** [w] Jer. 50:24 **51:32** [x] Jer. 50:38 **51:33** [y] Is. 21:10 [z] Hab. 3:12 [a] Rev. 14:15 **51:34** [b] Jer. 50:17 [c] Is. 24:1–3 **51:36** [d] Jer. 50:34 [e] Jer. 50:38 **51:37** [f] Is. 13:22 [g] Jer. 25:9, 11 **51:39** [h] Jer. 51:57 **51:41** [i] Jer. 25:26 [j] Is. 13:19 **51:42** [k] Is. 8:7, 8 **51:43** [l] Jer. 50:39, 40 [m] Is. 13:20 **51:44** [n] Jer. 50:2 [o] Jer. 50:15 **51:45** [p] [Rev. 18:4] **51:46** [q] 2 Kin. 19:7 **51:48** [r] Is. 44:23; 48:20; 49:13 [s] Jer. 50:3, 41 **51:50** [t] Jer. 44:28 [u] [Deut. 4:29–31]

51 [v]We are ashamed because we have
heard reproach.
Shame has covered our faces,
For strangers [w]have come into the
sanctuaries of the LORD's house.

52 "Therefore behold, the days are
coming," says the LORD,
"That I will bring judgment on her
carved images,
And throughout all her land the
wounded shall groan.
53 [x]Though Babylon were to mount up to
heaven,
And though she were to fortify the
height of her strength,
Yet from Me plunderers would come to
her," says the LORD.

54 [y]The sound of a cry *comes* from
Babylon,
And great destruction from the land of
the Chaldeans,
55 Because the LORD is plundering
Babylon
And silencing her loud voice,
Though her waves roar like great
waters,
And the noise of their voice is uttered,
56 Because the plunderer comes against
her, against Babylon,
And her mighty men are taken.
Every one of their bows is broken;
[z]For the LORD *is* the God of
recompense,
He will surely repay.

57 "And I will make drunk
Her princes and [a]wise men,
Her governors, her deputies, and her
mighty men.
And they shall sleep a perpetual
sleep
And not awake," says [b]the King,
Whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.

58 Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"The broad walls of Babylon shall be
utterly [c]broken,
And her high gates shall be burned
with fire;
[d]The people will labor in vain,
And the nations, because of the fire;
And they shall be weary."

Jeremiah's Command to Seraiah

59 The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of [e]Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And Seraiah *was* the quartermaster. 60 So Jeremiah [f]wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. 61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, 62 then you shall say, 'O LORD, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that [g]none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.' 63 Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, [h]*that* you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. 64 Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.'"

Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

The Fall of Jerusalem Reviewed

52 Zedekiah *was* [a]twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of [b]Libnah. 2 He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 3 For because of the anger of the LORD *this* happened in Jerusalem and Judah, till He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah [c]rebelled against the king of Babylon.

4 Now it came to pass in the [d]ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and *they* built a siege wall against it all around. 5 So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 6 By the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 7 Then the city *wall* was broken through, and all the men of war fled and went out of the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans *were* near the city all around. And they went by way of the plain.*

8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. 9 [e]So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he pronounced judgment on him. 10 [f]Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. And he killed all the princes of Judah in Riblah. 11 He also [g]put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in bronze fetters, took him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

* **52:7** Or *the Arabah*, that is, the Jordan Valley

51:51 [v] Ps. 44:15; 79:4 [w] Lam. 1:10 **51:53** [x] Amos 9:2 **51:54** [y] Jer. 50:22 **51:56** [z] Jer. 50:29 **51:57** [a] Jer. 50:35 [b] Jer. 46:18; 48:15 **51:58** [c] Jer. 50:15 [d] Hab. 2:13 **51:59** [e] Jer. 32:12 **51:60** [f] Jer. 36:2

51:62 [g] Jer. 50:3, 39 **51:63** [h] Rev. 18:21 **52:1** [a] 2 Kin. 24:18 [b] Josh. 10:29 **52:3** [c] 2 Chr. 36:13 **52:4** [d] Jer. 39:1 **52:9** [e] Jer. 32:4; 39:5 **52:10** [f] Ezek. 12:13 **52:11** [g] Ezek. 12:13

The Temple and City Plundered and Burned

12 [h]Now in the fifth month, on the tenth
day of the month ([i]which *was* the nine-
teenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king
of Babylon), [j]Nebuzaradan, the captain of
the guard, *who* served the king of Babylon,
came to Jerusalem. 13He burned the house
of the LORD and the king's house; all the
houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses
of the great, he burned with fire. 14And all
the army of the Chaldeans who *were* with
the captain of the guard broke down all
the walls of Jerusalem all around. 15[k]Then
Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard car-
ried away captive *some* of the poor people,
the rest of the people who remained in the
city, the defectors who had deserted to the
king of Babylon, and the rest of the crafts-
men. 16But Nebuzaradan the captain of the
guard left *some* of the poor of the land as
vinedressers and farmers.

17 [l]The [m]bronze pillars that *were* in the
house of the LORD, and the carts and the
bronze Sea that *were* in the house of the
LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and
carried all their bronze to Babylon. 18They
also took away [n]the pots, the shovels, the
trimmers, the bowls, the spoons, and all
the bronze utensils with which the *priests*
ministered. 19The basins, the firepans,
the bowls, the pots, the lampstands, the
spoons, and the cups, whatever *was* sol-
id gold and whatever *was* solid silver, the
captain of the guard took away. 20The two
pillars, one Sea, the twelve bronze bulls
which *were* under *it, and* the carts, which
King Solomon had made for the house of
the LORD—[o]the bronze of all these articles
was beyond measure. 21Now *concerning*
the [p]pillars: the height of one pillar *was*
eighteen cubits, a measuring line of twelve
cubits could measure its circumference,
and its thickness *was* four fingers; *it was*
hollow. 22A capital of bronze *was* on it;
and the height of one capital *was* five cu-
bits, with a network and pomegranates
all around the capital, all of bronze. The
second pillar, with pomegranates was the
same. 23There were ninety-six pomegran-
ates on the sides; [q]all the pomegranates, all
around on the network, *were* one hundred.

The People Taken Captive to Babylonia

24 [r]The captain of the guard took Seraiah
the chief priest, [s]Zephaniah the second
priest, and the three doorkeepers. 25He
also took out of the city an officer who
had charge of the men of war, seven men
of the king's close associates who were
found in the city, the principal scribe of
the army who mustered the people of the
land, and sixty men of the people of the
land who were found in the midst of the
city. 26And Nebuzaradan the captain of
the guard took these and brought them to
the king of Babylon at Riblah. 27Then the
king of Babylon struck them and put them
to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath.
Thus Judah was carried away captive from
its own land.

28 [t]These *are* the people whom Nebu-
chadnezzar carried away captive: [u]in the
seventh year, [v]three thousand and twenty-
three Jews; 29[w]in the eighteenth year of
Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive
from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-
two persons; 30in the twenty-third year of
Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the cap-
tain of the guard carried away captive of
the Jews seven hundred and forty-five per-
sons. All the persons *were* four thousand
six hundred.

Jehoiachin Released from Prison

31 [x]Now it came to pass in the thirty-
seventh year of the captivity of Jehoia-
chin king of Judah, in the twelfth month,
on the twenty-fifth *day* of the month, *that*
Evil-Merodach* king of Babylon, in the
first year of his reign, [y]lifted up the head
of Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought
him out of prison. 32And he spoke kindly to
him and gave him a more prominent seat
than those of the kings who *were* with him
in Babylon. 33So Jehoiachin changed from
his prison garments, [z]and he ate bread reg-
ularly before the *king* all the days of his
life. 34And as for his provisions, there was
a regular ration given him by the king of
Babylon, a portion for each day until the
day of his death, all the days of his life.

* **52:31** Or *Awil-Marduk*

52:13–16 ***burned the house of the LORD.*** The entire city of Jerusalem was burned, from the temple to the royal palace to the houses. The city walls were demolished. Leading citizens and some of the poor were deported under Nebuzaradan's command, leaving only a remnant of peasant farmers to work the fields, vineyards, and orchards.

52:31–34 ***Evil-Merodach.*** Nebuchadnezzar's son became king next but reigned for only two years. Jehoiachin was released from prison during his reign and pardoned. He was provided with food and given a seat of honor in Babylon. This restoration was symbolic of the future restoration of Israel and Judah to their homeland.

52:12 [h] 2 Kin. 25:8–21 [i] Jer. 52:29 [j] Jer. 39:9 **52:15** [k] Jer. 39:9 **52:17** [l] Jer. 27:19 [m] 1 Kin. 7:15, 23, 27, 50 **52:18** [n] Ex. 27:3 **52:20** [o] 1 Kin. 7:47 **52:21** [p] 2 Kin. 25:17 **52:23** [q] 1 Kin. 7:20 **52:24** [r] 2 Kin. 25:18 [s] Jer. 21:1; 29:25 **52:28** [t] 2 Kin. 24:2 [u] 2 Kin. 24:12 [v] 2 Kin. 24:14 **52:29** [w] Jer. 39:9 **52:31** [x] 2 Kin. 25:27–30 [y] Gen. 40:13, 20 **52:33** [z] 2 Sam. 9:7, 13

THE BOOK OF
LAMENTATIONS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The universal consensus of early Jewish and Christian tradition attributes this book to Jeremiah. Even though the author is unnamed in the book, the superscription to Lamentations in the Septuagint states: "And it came to pass, after Israel had been carried away captive and Jerusalem had become desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem saying. . . ." The Talmud, as well as many other ancient sources, also supports this position.

▶ **TIME:** c. 586 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Lam. 3:22–23

▶ **THEME:** A lament is a vehicle for working through sorrow. While grief is expressed in words, its resolution is in God and the hope He gives for the future. In a way, the lamentation process is one of coming to grips with all that God wants us to see about our present circumstances. For the people of Judah to lose a country meant not only the loss of the homeland, but the loss of God's presence and power to sustain the people in that land. It is hard for people who have never experienced such loss to understand the depth of grief expressed in this book.

Jerusalem in Affliction

1 How lonely sits the city
That was full of people!
[a]*How* like a widow is she,
Who *was* great among the nations!
The [b]princess among the provinces
Has become a slave!

2 She [c]weeps bitterly in the [d]night,
Her tears *are* on her cheeks;
Among all her lovers
She has none to comfort *her.*
All her friends have dealt
treacherously with her;
They have become her enemies.

3 [e]Judah has gone into captivity,
Under affliction and hard servitude;
[f]She dwells among the nations,
She finds no [g]rest;
All her persecutors overtake her in
dire straits.

4 The roads to Zion mourn
Because no one comes to the set feasts.
All her gates are [h]desolate;
Her priests sigh,
Her virgins are afflicted,
And she *is* in bitterness.

5 Her adversaries [i]have become the
master,
Her enemies prosper;
For the LORD has afflicted her
[j]Because of the multitude of her
transgressions.
Her [k]children have gone into captivity
before the enemy.

6 And from the daughter of Zion
All her splendor has departed.
Her princes have become like deer
That find no pasture,
That flee without strength
Before the pursuer.

7 In the days of her affliction and
roaming,
Jerusalem [l]remembers all her pleasant
things
That she had in the days of old.
When her people fell into the hand of
the enemy,

1:1 ***How.*** This exclamatory word is used frequently in laments and funeral songs. It expresses astonishment, sorrow, and dismay (2:1; 4:1).
1:2 ***Among all her lovers.*** Verse 19 describes Judah's sin of turning away from God and toward the gods of Canaan (Jer. 3:1–6). Also, the sins of Judah often involved the sexual forms of pagan worship that characterized the Canaanite people.
1:4 ***The roads to Zion mourn.*** When the temple was built, Zion was used to describe the hill on which the temple was located. Later, the name came to stand for the whole city. The roads "mourned" because there would no longer be throngs of pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem to worship at the temple.
1:5 ***Her children have gone into captivity.*** God had warned Israel in Leviticus 26:41 that captivity in a foreign land would be the result of continued sinning.
1:7 ***In the days of her affliction and roaming.*** The emphasis is on Jerusalem's utter helplessness as her enemies ridiculed her miseries (v. 21).

1:1 [a] Is. 47:7–9 [b] Ezra 4:20 **1:2** [c] Jer. 13:17 [d] Job 7:3
1:3 [e] Jer. 52:27 [f] Lam. 2:9 [g] Deut. 28:65 **1:4** [h] Is. 27:10
1:5 [i] Deut. 28:43 [j] Dan. 9:7, 16 [k] Jer. 52:28 **1:7** [l] Ps. 137:1

With no one to help her,
The adversaries saw her
And mocked at her downfall.*

8 [m]Jerusalem has sinned gravely,
Therefore she has become vile.*
All who honored her despise her
Because [n]they have seen her
nakedness;
Yes, she sighs and turns away.

9 Her uncleanness *is* in her skirts;
She [o]did not consider her destiny;
Therefore her collapse was awesome;
She had no comforter.
"O LORD, behold my affliction,
For *the* enemy is exalted!"

10 The adversary has spread his hand
Over all her pleasant things;
For she has seen [p]the nations enter her
sanctuary,
Those whom You commanded
[q]Not to enter Your assembly.

11 All her people sigh,
[r]They seek bread;
They have given their valuables for
food to restore life.
"See, O LORD, and consider,
For I am scorned."

12 "*Is it* nothing to you, all you who pass
by?
Behold and see
[s]If there is any sorrow like my sorrow,
Which has been brought on me,
Which the LORD has inflicted
In the day of His fierce anger.

13 "From above He has sent fire into my
bones,
And it overpowered them;
He has [t]spread a net for my feet
And turned me back;
He has made me desolate
And faint all the day.

14 "The[u] yoke of my transgressions was
bound;*
They were woven together by His
hands,
And thrust upon my neck.
He made my strength fail;
The Lord delivered me into the hands
of *those whom* I am not able to
withstand.

15 "The Lord has trampled underfoot all
my mighty *men* in my midst;
He has called an assembly against me
To crush my young men;
[v]The Lord trampled *as* in a winepress
The virgin daughter of Judah.

16 "For these *things* I weep;
My eye, [w]my eye overflows with water;
Because the comforter, who should
restore my life,
Is far from me.
My children are desolate
Because the enemy prevailed."

17 [x]Zion spreads out her hands,
But no one comforts her;
The LORD has commanded concerning
Jacob
That those [y]around him *become* his
adversaries;
Jerusalem has become an unclean
thing among them.

18 "The LORD is [z]righteous,
For I [a]rebelled against His
commandment.
Hear now, all peoples,
And behold my sorrow;
My virgins and my young men
Have gone into captivity.

19 "I called for my lovers,
But they deceived me;
My priests and my elders
Breathed their last in the city,
While they sought food
To restore their life.

20 "See, O LORD, that I *am* in distress;
My [b]soul is troubled;
My heart is overturned within me,
For I have been very rebellious.
[c]Outside the sword bereaves,
At home *it is* like death.

21 "They have heard that I sigh,
But no one comforts me.

* **1:7** Vulgate reads *her Sabbaths.* * **1:8** Septuagint and Vulgate read *moved* or *removed.*
* **1:14** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *watched over.*

1:10 ***the nations enter her sanctuary.*** Since God's people had not preserved the sanctuary of their hearts from pollution, they had no reason to be amazed when their enemies desecrated the earthly sanctuary. As a rule, Gentiles were forbidden to enter the congregation of the Lord.
1:13 ***He has sent fire into my bones.*** Jerusalem's suffering is portrayed, using several metaphors: (1) fire from heaven, (2) a hunter's net spread to trap animals, (3) an animal yoke fastened about the head of a person, and (4) the crushing of grapes in a winepress. The purpose of Jerusalem's suffering was to bring about a turning or repentance.
1:15 ***The virgin daughter of Judah.*** Jerusalem (Judah) was supposed to be the chaste bride of God. Instead, she had become a polluted harlot because her people worshiped gods other than the God with whom they covenanted.
1:16 ***comforter.*** The real comforter of Judah is God. But because of Judah's sin, God would not come to their assistance.
1:21 ***All my enemies.*** Those who previously had been friends of Judah (v. 2) became Judah's enemies. ***Bring on the day.*** Several times the "day" of God's wrath is mentioned in the Book of Lamentations (2:1,21–22).

1:8 [m] [1 Kin. 8:46] [n] Ezek. 16:37 **1:9** [o] Is. 47:7 **1:10** [p] Jer. 51:51 [q] Deut. 23:3 **1:11** [r] Jer. 38:9; 52:6 **1:12** [s] Dan. 9:12 **1:13** [t] Ezek. 12:13; 17:20 **1:14** [u] Deut. 28:48 **1:15** [v] [Rev. 14:19] **1:16** [w] Eccl. 4:1 **1:17** [x] Jer. 4:31 [y] 2 Kin. 24:2–4 **1:18** [z] Dan. 9:7, 14 [a] 1 Sam. 12:14, 15 **1:20** [b] Is. 16:11 [c] Ezek. 7:15

All my enemies have heard of my
trouble;
They are [d]glad that You have done *it*.
Bring on [e]the day You have
announced,
That they may become like me.

22 "Let[f] all their wickedness come before
You,
And do to them as You have done to
me
For all my transgressions;
For my sighs *are* many,
And my heart *is* faint."

God's Anger with Jerusalem

2 How the Lord has covered the
daughter of Zion
With a [a]cloud in His anger!
[b]He cast down from heaven to the
earth
[c]The beauty of Israel,
And did not remember [d]His footstool
In the day of His anger.

2 The Lord has swallowed up and has
[e]not pitied
All the dwelling places of Jacob.
He has thrown down in His wrath
The strongholds of the daughter of
Judah;
He has brought *them* down to the
ground;
[f]He has profaned the kingdom and its
princes.

3 He has cut off in fierce anger
Every horn of Israel;
[g]He has drawn back His right hand
From before the enemy.
[h]He has blazed against Jacob like a
flaming fire
Devouring all around.

4 [i]Standing like an enemy, He has bent
His bow;
With His right hand, like an
adversary,
He has slain [j]all *who were* pleasing to
His eye;
On the tent of the daughter of Zion,
He has poured out His fury like fire.

5 [k]The Lord was like an enemy.
He has swallowed up Israel,
He has swallowed up all her palaces;
[l]He has destroyed her strongholds,
And has increased mourning and
lamentation
In the daughter of Judah.

6 He has done violence [m]to His
tabernacle,
[n]*As if it were* a garden;
He has destroyed His place of
assembly;
The LORD has caused
The appointed feasts and Sabbaths to
be forgotten in Zion.
In His burning indignation He has
[o]spurned the king and the priest.

7 The Lord has spurned His altar,
He has [p]abandoned His sanctuary;
He has given up the walls of her
palaces
Into the hand of the enemy.
[q]They have made a noise in the house
of the LORD
As on the day of a set feast.

8 The LORD has purposed to destroy
The [r]wall of the daughter of Zion.
[s]He has stretched out a line;
He has not withdrawn His hand from
destroying;
Therefore He has caused the rampart
and wall to lament;
They languished together.

9 Her gates have sunk into the ground;
He has destroyed and [t]broken her
bars.
[u]Her king and her princes *are* among
the nations;
[v]The Law *is* no *more*,
And her [w]prophets find no vision from
the LORD.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion
[x]Sit on the ground *and* keep silence;
They [y]throw dust on their heads
And [z]gird themselves with
sackcloth.
The virgins of Jerusalem
Bow their heads to the ground.

The term is used to refer not only to the time of Jerusalem's fall in the past, but also to a future day when God would rectify all of the wrongs that the nations had committed against Israel and God.

2:1 *His anger.* This word is a firm expression of God's displeasure with wickedness and sin. Yet God's anger never shuts us off from His compassion (Ps. 77:9).

2:3 *drawn back His right hand.* Usually the right hand of God is understood as the instrument of help for God's people stretched out against their enemies (Ex. 15:6; Ps. 20:6). Here God's hand is withdrawn from the enemies, leaving the people of God at their mercy.

2:9 *the Law is no more.* These words do not suggest the end of the law, but rather the ceasing of the work of the law in the lives of the people for their blessing (Deut. 6:1–3).

2:10 *They throw dust on their heads.* This custom was a common sign of mourning in Israel and in other countries of the ancient world. ***virgins of Jerusalem.*** Their sadness was increased by the knowledge that this was not a time for marriage and family. Even though their lives had been spared, they had lost their futures.

1:21 [d] Ps. 35:15 [e] [Jer. 46] **1:22** [f] Ps. 109:15; 137:7, 8
2:1 [a] [Lam. 3:44] [b] Matt. 11:23 [c] 2 Sam. 1:19 [d] Ps. 99:5
2:2 [e] Lam. 3:43 [f] Ps. 89:39, 40 **2:3** [g] Ps. 74:11 [h] Ps. 89:46
2:4 [i] Is. 63:10 [j] Ezek. 24:25 **2:5** [k] Jer. 30:14 [l] Jer. 52:13
2:6 [m] Ps. 80:12; 89:40 [n] Is. 1:8 [o] Is. 43:28 **2:7** [p] Ezek. 24:21 [q] Ps. 74:3–8 **2:8** [r] Jer. 52:14 [s] [Is. 34:11] **2:9** [t] Jer. 51:30 [u] Deut. 28:36 [v] 2 Chr. 15:3 [w] Ps. 74:9 **2:10** [x] Is. 3:26 [y] Job 2:12 [z] Is. 15:3

11 [a]My eyes fail with tears,
My heart is troubled;
[b]My bile is poured on the ground
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people,
Because [c]the children and the infants
Faint in the streets of the city.

12 They say to their mothers,
"Where *is* grain and wine?"
As they swoon like the wounded
In the streets of the city,
As their life is poured out
In their mothers' bosom.

13 How shall I [d]console you?
To what shall I liken you,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
What shall I compare with you, that I may comfort you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your ruin *is* spread wide as the sea;
Who can heal you?

14 Your [e]prophets have seen for you
False and deceptive visions;
They have not [f]uncovered your iniquity,
To bring back your captives,
But have envisioned for you false [g]prophecies and delusions.

15 All who pass by [h]clap *their* hands at you;
They hiss [i]and shake their heads
At the daughter of Jerusalem:
"*Is* this the city that is called
[j]'The perfection of beauty,
The joy of the whole earth'?"

16 [k]All your enemies have opened their mouth against you;
They hiss and gnash *their* teeth.
They say, [l]"We have swallowed *her* up!
Surely this *is* the [m]day we have waited for;
We have found *it*, [n]we have seen *it!*"

17 The LORD has done what He [o]purposed;
He has fulfilled His word
Which He commanded in days of old.
He has thrown down and has not pitied,
And He has caused an enemy to [p]rejoice over you;
He has exalted the horn of your adversaries.

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord,
"O wall of the daughter of Zion,
[q]Let tears run down like a river day and night;
Give yourself no relief;
Give your eyes no rest.

19 "Arise, [r]cry out in the night,
At the beginning of the watches;
[s]Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord.
Lift your hands toward Him
For the life of your young children,
Who faint from hunger [t]at the head of every street."

20 "See, O LORD, and consider!
To whom have You done this?
[u]Should the women eat their offspring,
The children they have cuddled?*
Should the priest and prophet be slain
In the sanctuary of the Lord?

21 "Young[v] and old lie
On the ground in the streets;
My virgins and my young men
Have fallen by the [w]sword;
You have slain *them* in the day of Your anger,
You have slaughtered *and* not pitied.

22 "You have invited as to a feast day
[x]The terrors that surround me.
In the day of the LORD's anger
There was no refugee or survivor.
[y]Those whom I have borne and brought up
My enemies have [z]destroyed."

The Prophet's Anguish and Hope

3 I *am* the man *who* has seen affliction
by the rod of His wrath.
2 He has led me and made *me* walk
In darkness and not *in* light.
3 Surely He has turned His hand against me
Time and time again throughout the day.

4 He has aged [a]my flesh and my skin,
And [b]broken my bones.
5 He has besieged me
And surrounded *me* with bitterness and woe.

* **2:20** Vulgate reads *a span long.*

2:15 *shake their heads.* This was a common expression of derision (Ps. 22:7; 109:25; Jer. 19:8). Losing face in the ancient Middle East was a terrible evil.
2:18 *O wall.* The wall of the people's hearts was more impenetrable than the wall of the city of Jerusalem (2:7–8).
2:19 *Arise.* The call is for people to awaken and scream for mercy from the Lord. ***Lift your hands.*** This refers to a posture of prayer (1:17; Ps. 134:2).
2:20 *Should the women eat their offspring.* So desperate were the scenes of starvation in Jerusalem that women actually fought over whose deceased child would be eaten next.

3:4 *He has aged my flesh and my skin.* This imagery suggests the ebbing and wasting away of Jeremiah's life and that of the nation.

2:11 [a] Lam. 3:48 [b] Job 16:13 [c] Lam. 4:4 **2:13** [d] Lam. 1:12 **2:14** [e] Jer. 2:8; 23:25–29; 29:8, 9; 37:19 [f] Is. 58:1 [g] Jer. 23:33–36 **2:15** [h] Ezek. 25:6 [i] Ps. 44:14 [j] [Ps. 48:2; 50:2] **2:16** [k] Job 16:9, 10 [l] Ps. 56:2; 124:3 [m] Lam. 1:21 [n] Ps. 35:21 **2:17** [o] Lev. 26:16 [p] Ps. 38:16 **2:18** [q] Jer. 14:17 **2:19** [r] Ps. 119:147 [s] Ps. 42:4; 62:8 [t] Is. 51:20 **2:20** [u] Lev. 26:29 **2:21** [v] 2 Chr. 36:17 [w] Jer. 18:21 **2:22** [x] Ps. 31:13 [y] Hos. 9:12 [z] Jer. 16:2–4; 44:7 **3:4** [a] Job 16:8 [b] Ps. 51:8

6 [c]He has set me in dark places
Like the dead of long ago.
7 [d]He has hedged me in so that I cannot
get out;
He has made my chain heavy.
8 Even [e]when I cry and shout,
He shuts out my prayer.
9 He has blocked my ways with hewn
stone;
He has made my paths crooked.
10 [f]He *has been* to me a bear lying in wait,
Like a lion in ambush.
11 He has turned aside my ways and
[g]torn me in pieces;
He has made me desolate.
12 He has bent His bow
And [h]set me up as a target for the
arrow.
13 He has caused [i]the arrows of His
quiver
To pierce my loins.*
14 I have become the [j]ridicule of all my
people—
[k]Their taunting song all the day.
15 [l]He has filled me with bitterness,
He has made me drink wormwood.
16 He has also broken my teeth [m]with
gravel,
And covered me with ashes.
17 You have moved my soul far from
peace;
I have forgotten prosperity.
18 [n]And I said, "My strength and my hope
Have perished from the LORD."
19 Remember my affliction and roaming,
[o]The wormwood and the gall.
20 My soul still remembers
And sinks within me.
21 This I recall to my mind,
Therefore I have [p]hope.
22 [q]*Through* the LORD's mercies we are
not consumed,
Because His compassions [r]fail not.
23 *They are* new [s]every morning;
Great *is* Your faithfulness.
24 "The LORD *is* my [t]portion," says my
soul,
"Therefore I [u]hope in Him!"
25 The LORD *is* good to those who [v]wait
for Him,
To the soul *who* seeks Him.
26 *It is* good that *one* should [w]hope [x]and
wait quietly
For the salvation of the LORD.
27 [y]*It is* good for a man to bear
The yoke in his youth.
28 [z]Let him sit alone and keep silent,
Because *God* has laid *it* on him;
29 [a]Let him put his mouth in the dust—
There may yet be hope.
30 [b]Let him give *his* cheek to the one who
strikes him,
And be full of reproach.
31 [c]For the Lord will not cast off forever.
32 Though He causes grief,
Yet He will show compassion
According to the multitude of His
mercies.
33 For [d]He does not afflict willingly,
Nor grieve the children of men.
34 To crush under one's feet
All the prisoners of the earth,
35 To turn aside the justice *due* a man
Before the face of the Most High,
36 Or subvert a man in his cause—
[e]The Lord does not approve.
37 Who *is* he [f]*who* speaks and it comes to
pass,
When the Lord has not commanded *it?*
38 *Is it* not from the mouth of the Most
High
That [g]woe and well-being proceed?
39 [h]Why should a living man complain,
[i]A man for the punishment of his
sins?
40 Let us search out and examine our
ways,
And turn back to the LORD;

* **3:13** Literally *kidneys*

3:9 ***He has blocked my ways with hewn stone.*** A common practice of the Assyrians was to wall up prisoners in extremely confined places and leave them to die.

3:15 ***drink wormwood.*** This was a bitter herb used to flavor some drinks.

3:16 ***He has also broken my teeth with gravel.*** The people had sensed that they were so associated with dust and sackcloth—symbols of mourning—that it was as though they fed on dirt. The dust became gravel which broke the people's teeth.

3:22 ***Because His compassions fail not.*** This verse seems to contradict all that had been written up to this point (2:1–5). Yet the very fact that there was a prophet left to write these words and a remnant left to read them showed that not every person in Jerusalem had been consumed.

3:23 ***Great is Your faithfulness.*** Here is the heart of the Book of Lamentations. The comforting, compassionate character of God dominates the wreckage of every other institution and office. God remains "full of grace and truth" in every situation (Ex. 34:6; John 1:14).

3:29 ***put his mouth in the dust.*** This expression is a figure of speech for conquest. The phrase pictures a captive lying face down with the conqueror's foot on his back.

3:6 [c] [Ps. 88:5, 6; 143:3] **3:7** [d] Hos. 2:6 **3:8** [e] Job 30:20 **3:10** [f] Is. 38:13 **3:11** [g] Hos. 6:1 **3:12** [h] Job 7:20; 16:12 **3:13** [i] Job 6:4 **3:14** [j] Jer. 20:7 [k] Job 30:9 **3:15** [l] Jer. 9:15 **3:16** [m] [Prov. 20:17] **3:18** [n] Ps. 31:22 **3:19** [o] Jer. 9:15 **3:21** [p] Ps. 130:7 **3:22** [q] [Mal. 3:6] [r] Ps. 78:38 **3:23** [s] Is. 33:2 **3:24** [t] Ps. 16:5; 73:26; 119:57 [u] Mic. 7:7 **3:25** [v] Is. 30:18 **3:26** [w] [Rom. 4:16–18] [x] Ps. 37:7 **3:27** [y] Ps. 94:12 **3:28** [z] Jer. 15:17 **3:29** [a] Job 42:6 **3:30** [b] Is. 50:6 **3:31** [c] Ps. 77:7; 94:14 **3:33** [d] [Ezek. 33:11] **3:36** [e] [Hab. 1:13] **3:37** [f] [Ps. 33:9–11] **3:38** [g] Job 2:10 **3:39** [h] Prov. 19:3 [i] Mic. 7:9

41 [j]Let us lift our hearts and hands
To God in heaven.
42 [k]We have transgressed and rebelled;
You have not pardoned.

43 You have covered *Yourself* with anger
And pursued us;
You have slain *and* not pitied.
44 You have covered Yourself with a cloud,
That prayer should not pass through.
45 You have made us an [l]offscouring and refuse
In the midst of the peoples.

46 [m]All our enemies
Have opened their mouths against us.
47 [n]Fear and a snare have come upon us,
[o]Desolation and destruction.
48 [p]My eyes overflow with rivers of water
For the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 [q]My eyes flow and do not cease,
Without interruption,
50 Till the LORD from heaven
[r]Looks down and sees.
51 My eyes bring suffering to my soul
Because of all the daughters of my city.

52 My enemies [s]without cause
Hunted me down like a bird.
53 They silenced* my life [t]in the pit
And [u]threw stones at me.
54 [v]The waters flowed over my head;
[w]I said, "I am cut off!"

55 [x]I called on Your name, O LORD,
From the lowest [y]pit.
56 [z]You have heard my voice:
"Do not hide Your ear
From my sighing, from my cry for help."
57 You [a]drew near on the day I called on You,
And said, [b]"Do not fear!"

58 O Lord, You have [c]pleaded the case for my soul;
[d]You have redeemed my life.
59 O LORD, You have seen *how* I am wronged;
[e]Judge my case.
60 You have seen all their vengeance,
All their [f]schemes against me.

61 You have heard their reproach, O LORD,
All their schemes against me,
62 The lips of my enemies
And their whispering against me all the day.
63 Look at their [g]sitting down and their rising up;
I *am* their taunting song.

64 [h]Repay them, O LORD,
According to the work of their hands.
65 Give them a veiled* heart;
Your curse *be* upon them!
66 In Your anger,
Pursue and destroy them
[i]From under the heavens of the [j]LORD.

The Degradation of Zion

4 How the gold has become dim!
How changed the fine gold!
The stones of the sanctuary are scattered
At the head of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion,
Valuable as fine gold,
How they are regarded [a]as clay pots,
The work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the jackals present their breasts
To nurse their young;
But the daughter of my people *is* cruel,
[b]Like ostriches in the wilderness.

4 The tongue of the infant clings
To the roof of its mouth for thirst;
[c]The young children ask for bread,
But no one breaks *it* for them.

5 Those who ate delicacies
Are desolate in the streets;
Those who were brought up in scarlet
[d]Embrace ash heaps.

6 The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people
Is greater than the punishment of the [e]sin of Sodom,
Which was [f]overthrown in a moment,
With no hand to help her!

* **3:53** Septuagint reads *put to death.*
* **3:65** A Jewish tradition reads *sorrow of.*

3:44 *with a cloud.* So long as sin festered, God's wrath was a cloud or veil through which no prayer could penetrate—including the prayers of the people and the prayers of Jeremiah.

3:52–54 *silenced my life in the pit.* Jeremiah speaks not only of his own experience of being cast into a pit (Jer. 38:4–6), but also of his pain and grief over the wretched condition of his fellow countrymen. The pit is a metaphor for the grave or extreme danger (Ps. 28:1; 40:2).

3:64–66 *Repay them.* The request for divine vindication is an expression of a longing for God's righteousness and the success of His kingdom and His truth.

4:1–2 *stones of the sanctuary are scattered.* The Babylonian army looted the temple and overturned all its huge stones.

4:4 *The tongue of the infant.* The theme of thirsting and starving children is revisited (2:11–13).

3:41 [j] Ps. 86:4 **3:42** [k] Dan. 9:5 **3:45** [l] 1 Cor. 4:13 **3:46** [m] Lam. 2:16 **3:47** [n] Is. 24:17, 18 [o] Is. 51:19 **3:48** [p] Jer. 4:19; 14:17 **3:49** [q] Jer. 14:17 **3:50** [r] Is. 63:15 **3:52** [s] Ps. 35:7, 19 **3:53** [t] Jer. 37:16 [u] Dan. 6:17 **3:54** [v] Ps. 69:2 [w] Is. 38:10 **3:55** [x] Ps. 130:1 [y] Jer. 38:6–13 **3:56** [z] Ps. 3:4 **3:57** [a] James 4:8 [b] Is. 41:10, 14 **3:58** [c] Jer. 51:36 [d] Ps. 71:23 **3:59** [e] Ps. 9:4 **3:60** [f] Jer. 11:19 **3:63** [g] Ps. 139:2 **3:64** [h] Ps. 28:4 **3:66** [i] Deut. 25:19 [j] Ps. 8:3 **4:2** [a] Is. 30:14 **4:3** [b] Job 39:14–17 **4:4** [c] Ps. 22:15 **4:5** [d] Job 24:8 **4:6** [e] Ezek. 16:48 [f] Gen. 19:25

7 Her Nazirites* were brighter than
snow
And whiter than milk;
They were more ruddy in body than
rubies,
Like sapphire in their appearance.

8 *Now* their appearance is blacker than
soot;
They go unrecognized in the streets;
[g]Their skin clings to their bones,
It has become as dry as wood.

9 *Those* slain by the sword are better off
Than *those* who die of hunger;
For these [h]pine away,
Stricken *for lack* of the fruits of the
[i]field.

10 The hands of the [j]compassionate
women
Have cooked their [k]own children;
They became [l]food for them
In the destruction of the daughter of
my people.

11 The LORD has fulfilled His fury,
[m]He has poured out His fierce anger.
[n]He kindled a fire in Zion,
And it has devoured its foundations.

12 The kings of the earth,
And all inhabitants of the world,
Would not have believed
That the adversary and the enemy
Could [o]enter the gates of Jerusalem—

13 [p]Because of the sins of her prophets
And the iniquities of her priests,
[q]Who shed in her midst
The blood of the just.

14 They wandered blind in the streets;
[r]They have defiled themselves with
blood,
[s]So that no one would touch their
garments.

15 They cried out to them,
"Go away, [t]unclean!
Go away, go away,
Do not touch us!"
When they fled and wandered,
Those among the nations said,
"They shall no longer dwell *here*."

16 The face* of the LORD scattered
them;
He no longer regards them.
[u]*The people* do not respect the
priests
Nor show favor to the elders.

17 Still [v]our eyes failed us,
Watching vainly for our help;
In our watching we watched
For a nation *that* could not save *us*.

18 [w]They tracked our steps
So that we could not walk in our
streets.
[x]Our end was near;
Our days were over,
For our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were [y]swifter
Than the eagles of the heavens.
They pursued us on the mountains
And lay in wait for us in the
wilderness.

20 The [z]breath of our nostrils, the
anointed of the LORD,
[a]Was caught in their pits,
Of whom we said, "Under his shadow
We shall live among the nations."

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of
[b]Edom,
You who dwell in the land of Uz!
[c]The cup shall also pass over to you
And you shall become drunk and
make yourself naked.

22 [d]*The punishment of* your iniquity is
accomplished,
O daughter of Zion;
He will no longer send you into
captivity.
[e]He will punish your iniquity,
O daughter of Edom;
He will uncover your sins!

Prayer for Restoration

5 Remember, [a]O LORD, what has come
upon us;
Look, and behold [b]our reproach!
2 [c]Our inheritance has been turned over
to aliens,
And our houses to foreigners.
3 We have become orphans and waifs,
Our mothers *are* like [d]widows.
4 We pay for the water we drink,
And our wood comes at a price.

* **4:7** Or *nobles* * **4:16** Targum reads *anger.*

4:10 ***cooked their own children.*** This verse describes the horrible effects of the long siege that were alluded to in 2:20. This unimaginable horror could only have occurred in the most inhumane conditions of human suffering.

5:2–3 ***Our inheritance.*** The Promised Land had been a gift from the Lord to Abraham. This inheritance was a kind of "down payment" on the future reign of God that would include the restoration of His people to that land. God demonstrated that He owned all nations and that Israel was to be His instrument for blessing all the nations on the earth. Yet in their present condition, the people of Israel seemed to be the most helpless of all peoples.

4:8 [g] Ps. 102:5 **4:9** [h] Lev. 26:39 [i] Jer. 16:4 **4:10** [j] Lam. 2:20 [k] Is. 49:15 [l] Deut. 28:57 **4:11** [m] Jer. 7:20 [n] Deut. 32:22 **4:12** [o] Jer. 21:13 **4:13** [p] Jer. 5:31 [q] Matt. 23:31 **4:14** [r] Jer. 2:34 [s] Num. 19:16 **4:15** [t] Lev. 13:45, 46 **4:16** [u] Lam. 5:12 **4:17** [v] 2 Kin. 24:7 **4:18** [w] 2 Kin. 25:4 [x] Ezek. 7:2, 3, 6 **4:19** [y] Deut. 28:49 **4:20** [z] Gen. 2:7 [a] Jer. 52:9 **4:21** [b] Ps. 83:3–6 [c] Jer. 25:15 **4:22** [d] [Is. 40:2] [e] Ps. 137:7 **5:1** [a] Ps. 89:50 [b] Lam. 2:15 **5:2** [c] Ps. 79:1 **5:3** [d] Jer. 15:8; 18:21

5 [e]*They* pursue at our heels;*
We labor *and* have no rest.
6 [f]We have given our hand [g]*to* the Egyptians
And the [h]Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.
7 [i]Our fathers sinned *and are* no more,
But we bear their iniquities.
8 Servants rule over us;
There is none to deliver *us* from their hand.
9 We get our bread *at the risk* of our lives,
Because of the sword in the wilderness.
10 Our skin is hot as an oven,
Because of the fever of famine.
11 They [j]ravished the women in Zion,
The maidens in the cities of Judah.
12 Princes were hung up by their hands,
And elders were not respected.
13 Young men [k]ground at the millstones;
Boys staggered under *loads of* wood.
14 The elders have ceased *gathering at* the gate,
And the young men from their [l]music.
15 The joy of our heart has ceased;
Our dance has turned into [m]mourning.
16 [n]The crown has fallen *from* our head.
Woe to us, for we have sinned!
17 Because of this our heart is faint;
[o]Because of these *things* our eyes grow dim;
18 Because of Mount Zion which is [p]desolate,
With foxes walking about on it.
19 You, O LORD, [q]remain forever;
[r]Your throne from generation to generation.
20 [s]Why do You forget us forever,
And forsake us for so long a time?
21 [t]Turn us back to You, O LORD, and we will be restored;
Renew our days as of old,
22 Unless You have utterly rejected us,
And are very angry with us!

* **5:5** Literally *necks*

5:10 ***Our skin is hot as an oven.*** Disease would have been rampant during the siege.
5:16 ***The crown has fallen from our head.*** This phrase expresses the loss of Judah's position of honor.
5:17 ***our heart is faint . . . our eyes grow dim.*** The normal zest for life was gone. Death would be better than a horrible existence during the siege of Jerusalem.
5:18 ***foxes walking about on it.*** The idea of wild animals roaming the holy city where the people of God once came in glad worship was the final indignity.
5:19 ***You, O LORD, remain forever.*** God's eternal rule and reign are a hope and support during the bleakest moments of suffering and despair (Ps. 80:1; 103:19).

5:5 [e] Jer. 28:14 **5:6** [f] Gen. 24:2 [g] Hos. 9:3; 12:1 [h] Hos. 5:13 **5:7** [i] Jer. 31:29 **5:11** [j] Zech. 14:2 **5:13** [k] Judg. 16:21 **5:14** [l] Jer. 7:34 **5:15** [m] Amos 8:10 **5:16** [n] Ps. 89:39 **5:17** [o] Ps. 6:7 **5:18** [p] Is. 27:10 **5:19** [q] Ps. 9:7 [r] Ps. 45:6 **5:20** [s] Ps. 13:1; 44:24 **5:21** [t] Jer. 31:18

THE BOOK OF
EZEKIEL

▶ **AUTHOR:** There is strong evidence in favor of Ezekiel's authorship of this book. The first person singular is used throughout the book, indicating that it is the work of one person. This person is actually identified in 1:3 and 24:24 as Ezekiel. The unity and integrity of Ezekiel's prophetic record are supported and the style, language, and thematic development are consistent throughout the book. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest who was called to be a prophet of the Lord. Ezekiel was privileged to receive a number of visions of the power and plan of God, and he was careful and artistic in his written presentation.

▶ **TIME:** c. 592–570 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Ezek. 36:33–35

▶ **THEME:** Ezekiel was an exilic prophet, meaning he prophesied to the exiles in Babylon. He was one of the 10,000 taken there by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C. (2 Kin. 24:14). The book contains a series of prophetic messages, which represents a lifetime of ministry to the exiles in Babylon. Ezekiel sees himself as a watchman or lookout, compelled to warn people of coming danger and of the need for personal responsibility to an awesome, all-seeing, all-knowing God. The last half of the book is more concerned with encouraging the people to hope for God's promise of restoration back to the land of Israel. The restoration of the temple is a key element of chapters 40–48.

Ezekiel's Vision of God

1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year,
in the fourth *month*, on the fifth *day* of
the month, as I *was* among the captives by
[a]the River Chebar, *that* [b]the heavens were
opened and I saw [c]visions* of God. **2**On the
fifth *day* of the month, which *was* in the
fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity,
3the word of the LORD came expressly to
Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the
land of the Chaldeans* by the River Chebar; and [d]the hand of the LORD was upon
him there.

4Then I looked, and behold, [e]a whirlwind was coming [f]out of the north, a great
cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and
brightness *was* all around it and radiating
out of its midst like the color of amber, out
of the midst of the fire. **5**[g]Also from within it *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And [h]this *was* their appearance: they
had [i]the likeness of a man. **6**Each one had
four faces, and each one had four wings.
7Their legs *were* straight, and the soles of
their feet *were* like the soles of calves' feet.
They sparkled [i]like the color of burnished
bronze. **8**[k]The hands of a man *were* under
their wings on their four sides; and each of
the four had faces and wings. **9**Their wings

* **1:1** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Syriac and Targum read *a vision.*
* **1:3** Or *Babylonians*, and so elsewhere in this book

1:1 ***in the thirtieth year.*** This most likely refers to Ezekiel's age. He was preparing to become a priest when the Babylonians attacked Judah in 597 B.C.
I saw visions of God. As with all the true prophets of ancient Israel, the visitation of God was at His initiative, calling certain people to special responsibilities. The word "vision" is derived from the common Hebrew verb meaning "to see," rather than from the specific verb used for prophetic vision as in Isaiah 1.
1:3 ***the word of the LORD.*** Ezekiel uses this introductory phrase 50 times in this book. It always introduces a divine message and sometimes a new section.
Ezekiel. The name comes from the verb meaning "to seize, to hold fast," coupled with the term meaning "God." Thus Ezekiel's name indicates that he was a man whom God had seized.
1:4 ***whirlwind . . . great cloud . . . fire engulfing itself.*** Compare the descriptions of divine appearance in Exodus 19:16–20; Psalm 18:7–15; and Micah 1:2–4.
1:5 ***four living creatures.*** These creatures are related to the cherubim—celestial beings associated with God's holiness and glory, and sometimes poetically with storm winds upon which God travels (Ps. 18:10). There are two basic approaches to understanding them: as a highly symbolic representation of deity, or as highly symbolic representations of angelic

1:1 [a] Ezek. 3:15, 23; 10:15 [b] Rev. 4:1; 19:11 [c] Ezek. 8:3
1:3 [d] Ezek. 3:14, 22 **1:4** [e] Jer. 23:19; 25:32 [f] Jer. 1:14
1:5 [g] Rev. 4:6–8 [h] Ezek. 10:8 [i] Ezek. 10:14 **1:7** [j] Dan. 10:6
1:8 [k] Ezek. 10:8, 21

touched one another. *The creatures* did not turn when they went, but each one went straight [l]forward.

10As for [m]the likeness of their faces, *each* [n]had the face of a man; each of the four had [o]the face of a lion on the right side, [p]each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, [q]and each of the four had the face of an eagle. 11Thus *were* their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two *wings* of each one touched one another, and [r]two covered their bodies. 12And [s]each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went.

13As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, [t]like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. 14And the living creatures ran back and forth, [u]in appearance like a flash of lightning.

15Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, [v]a wheel *was* on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. 16[w]The appearance of the wheels and their workings *was* [x]like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings *was*, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. 17When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. 18As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims *were* [y]full of eyes, all around the four of them. 19[z]When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. 20Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, [a]for the spirit of the living creatures* *was* in the wheels. 21When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures* *was* in the wheels.

22[b]The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures* *was* like the color of an awesome [c]crystal, stretched out [d]over their heads. 23And under the firmament their wings *spread out* straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. 24[e]When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, [f]like the noise of many waters, like [g]the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. 25A voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.

26[h]And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, [i]in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above [j]it. 27Also from the appearance of His waist and upward [k]I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. 28[l]Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. [m]This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

Ezekiel Sent to Rebellious Israel

So when I saw *it*, [n]I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

* **1:20** Literally *living creature;* Septuagint and Vulgate read *spirit of life;* Targum reads *creatures.*
* **1:21** Literally *living creature;* Septuagint and Vulgate read *spirit of life;* Targum reads *creatures.*
* **1:22** Following Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *living creature.*

beings who serve in God's presence. Probably they are angels, since God Himself is not revealed until the end of the section (v. 26).

1:10 *man . . . lion . . . ox . . . eagle.* Composite fantastic figures in these classic combinations have been found in Mesopotamian and Egyptian iconography. The idealized strengths of each figure were thus presumed to reside in these living beings.

1:18 *rims . . . full of eyes.* The wheels had an exquisite beauty and an animate intelligence.

1:19–21 *spirit . . . in the wheels.* The prophet stresses the association of the wheels with the living beings, as well as the beings' ability to travel where they wished. It appears that the wheels represented the flexibility and mobility of the living beings. This is a pictorial representation of God's omnipresence.

1:24 *Almighty.* This is the divine name *Shaddai*, most likely based on a word meaning "mountain," to suggest God's omnipotence and majesty (10:5).

1:26 *throne.* While Isaiah describes the elevation of the Lord's throne (Is. 6:1), Ezekiel focuses on its beauty.

1:27–28 *glory of the LORD.* The "glory" indicates the wonder, majesty, and worthiness of the living God. Amid the wheels, the beings, the colors, and the dazzling light was a figure who appeared like a man (v. 26). Compare the vision of Daniel who saw One "like the Son of Man" (Dan. 7:13). ***I fell on my face.*** The prophet's response was to fall down in worship and submission. All believers should recognize God's great glory and fall down in humble submission before Him (Phil. 2:10–11).

1:9 [l] Ezek. 1:12; 10:20–22 **1:10** [m] Rev. 4:7 [n] Num. 2:10 [o] Num. 2:3 [p] Num. 2:18 [q] Num. 2:25 **1:11** [r] Is. 6:2 **1:12** [s] Ezek. 10:11, 22 **1:13** [t] Rev. 4:5 **1:14** [u] [Matt. 24:27] **1:15** [v] Ezek. 10:9 **1:16** [w] Ezek. 10:9, 10 [x] Dan. 10:6 **1:18** [y] Ezek. 10:12 **1:19** [z] Ezek. 10:16, 17 **1:20** [a] Ezek. 10:17 **1:22** [b] Ezek. 10:1 [c] Rev. 4:6 [d] Ezek. 10:1 **1:24** [e] Ezek. 3:13; 10:5 [f] Rev. 1:15 [g] Job 37:4, 5 **1:26** [h] Ezek. 10:1 [i] Ex. 24:10, 16 [j] Ezek. 8:2 **1:27** [k] Ezek. 8:2 **1:28** [l] Rev. 4:3; 10:1 [m] Ezek. 3:23; 8:4 [n] Dan. 8:17

2 And He said to me, "Son of man, [a]stand on your feet, and I will speak to you."
2 Then [b]the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. 3 And He said to me: "Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has [c]rebelled against Me; [d]they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. 4 [e]For *they are* impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' 5 [f]As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they *are* a [g]rebellious house—yet they [h]will know that a prophet has been among them.

6 "And you, son of man, [i]do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though [j]briers and thorns *are* with you and you dwell among scorpions; [k]do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, [l]though they *are* a rebellious house. 7 [m]You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they *are* rebellious. 8 But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and [n]eat what I give you."

9 Now when I looked, there was [o]a hand stretched out to me; and behold, [p]a scroll of a book *was* in it. 10 Then He spread it before me; and *there was* writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it *were* lamentations and mourning and woe.

3 Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; [a]eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll.

3 And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you." So I [b]ate, and it was in my mouth [c]like honey in sweetness.

4 Then He said to me: "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them. 5 For you *are* not sent to a people of unfamiliar speech and of hard language, *but* to the house of Israel, 6 not to many people of unfamiliar speech and of hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, [d]had I sent you to them, they would have listened to you. 7 But the house of Israel will not listen to you, [e]because they will not listen to Me; [f]for all the house of Israel *are* impudent and hard-hearted. 8 Behold, I have made your face strong against their faces, and your forehead strong against their foreheads. 9 [g]Like adamant stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; [h]do not be afraid of them, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they *are* a rebellious house."

10 Moreover He said to me: "Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears. 11 And go, get to the captives, to the children of your people, and speak to them and tell them, [i]'Thus says the Lord GOD,' whether they hear, or whether they refuse."

12 Then [j]the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: "Blessed *is* the [k]glory of the LORD from His place!" 13 *I* also *heard* the [l]noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, and a great thunderous noise. 14 So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but [m]the hand of the LORD was strong upon me. 15 Then I came to the

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2:1 ***Son of man.*** Ezekiel uses this phrase more than 90 times to refer to himself. It emphasizes his humanity in his God-given role as a spokesman for God. The meaning of the phrase is "human one." In the Old Testament, only Daniel 7:13 and 8:17 also employ this phrase. In the New Testament, "Son of Man" is used frequently by Jesus for Himself. With this phrase Jesus was calling Himself "the Human One"—the long-awaited Messiah who came as God in the flesh (Luke 21:27; John 1:14; 2 John 7).

2:2 ***the Spirit entered me.*** This reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in God's prophet is of great importance. The visions and messages of Ezekiel were revelations from the living God.

2:5 ***they are a rebellious house.*** God told Ezekiel to take His Word to the sons of Israel. These people were to hear what the Lord Himself was to say to them. Listening or not listening, belief or unbelief, would not change what was spoken. Our belief or unbelief has no effect on what God tells us or what the Bible says. His word remains true. By its very nature, it is worthy of belief.

2:6 ***briers . . . thorns . . . scorpions.*** These images vividly portray the nature of the rebellious opponents of Ezekiel's warnings. God told Ezekiel not to allow fear to hinder his message, whether or not the message was wanted (v. 7).

2:10 ***lamentations and mourning and woe.*** The unusual feature of writing on both sides of a scroll indicates the magnitude of the nation's transgressions and its need for words of grief (Zech. 5:3; Rev. 5:1). Although Ezekiel would later bring words of comfort and consolation (chs. 33–48), his first prophecies from God contained only sorrow and sadness.

3:1–3 ***eat this scroll.*** The symbolic act of eating the scroll demonstrated that Ezekiel internalized the message in preparation for speaking to the people.

3:8–9 ***I have made your face strong against their faces.*** There may have been an intentional pun on Ezekiel's name, which means "strongly seized by God" (1:3) or "God strengthens." Double meanings in biblical names are common.

3:14 ***I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit.*** Ezekiel's human perspective caused him to focus on

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2:1 [a] Dan. 10:11 **2:2** [b] Ezek. 3:24 **2:3** [c] Ezek. 5:6; 20:8, 13, 18 [d] Jer. 3:25 **2:4** [e] Ezek. 3:7 **2:5** [f] Ezek. 3:11, 26, 27 [g] Ezek. 3:26 [h] Ezek. 33:33 **2:6** [i] Jer. 1:8, 17 [j] Mic. 7:4 [k] [1 Pet. 3:14] [l] Ezek. 3:9, 26, 27 **2:7** [m] Jer. 1:7, 17 **2:8** [n] Rev. 10:9 **2:9** [o] [Ezek. 8:3] [p] Ezek. 3:1 **3:1** [a] Ezek. 2:8, 9 **3:3** [b] Rev. 10:9 [c] Ps. 19:10; 119:103 **3:6** [d] Matt. 11:21 **3:7** [e] John 15:20, 21 [f] Ezek. 2:4 **3:9** [g] Mic. 3:8 [h] Jer. 1:8, 17 **3:11** [i] Ezek. 2:5, 7 **3:12** [j] Acts 8:39 [k] Ezek. 1:28; 8:4 **3:13** [l] Ezek. 1:24; 10:5 **3:14** [m] 2 Kin. 3:15

captives at Tel Abib, who dwelt by the River Chebar; and [n]I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

Ezekiel Is a Watchman

16Now it [o]came to pass at the end of seven days that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **17**[p]"Son of man, I have made you [q]a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them [r]warning from Me: **18**When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* [s]shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. **19**Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; [t]but you have delivered your soul.

20"Again, when a [u]righteous *man* turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. **21**Nevertheless if you warn the righteous *man* that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."

22[v]Then the hand of the LORD was upon me there, and He said to me, "Arise, go out [w]into the plain, and there I shall talk with you."

23So I arose and went out into the plain, and behold, [x]the glory of the LORD stood there, like the glory which I [y]saw by the River Chebar; [z]and I fell on my face. **24**Then [a]the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and spoke with me and said to me: "Go, shut yourself inside your house. **25**And you, O son of man, surely [b]they will put ropes on you and bind you with them, so that you cannot go out among them. **26**[c]I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be mute and [d]not be one to rebuke them, [e]for they *are* a rebellious house. **27**[f]But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, [g]'Thus says the Lord GOD.' He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they *are* a rebellious house.

The Siege of Jerusalem Portrayed

4 "You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. **2**[a]Lay siege against it, build a [b]siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. **3**Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it *as* an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be [c]besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. [d]This *will be* a sign to the house of Israel.

4"Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. *According* to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. **5**For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; [e]so you shall bear the iniquity of the house

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the distasteful calling of delivering a message that would not be well received. The prophet was angry and appalled. But God was present to help him deal with these feelings and then move him on to live and work among the captives.

3:17 *a watchman.* He stood on the city wall guarding against any external or internal threat. He would sound an alarm upon sighting impending danger (2 Sam. 18:24). God made Ezekiel a spiritual watchman over His people.

3:20 *when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity.* The prophet's responsibility was to warn, if he saw apostasy taking place. If he did not, he became culpable too. Even for the most devoted and the most saintly, righteousness can become something to spurn and iniquity can become something to embrace. God says that repudiation of righteousness leads to death.

3:26 *not be one to rebuke them.* This phrase qualified what was meant by Ezekiel's being mute. The idea may be better stated as "not be a legal mediator." During his "mute" period, Ezekiel would not be allowed to speak as a mediator on behalf of the people before God, their Judge.

3:27 *He who hears, let him hear.* Jesus used this warning often in His teaching (Mark 4:23). The phrasing emphasizes individual responsibility and readiness to accept the divine message.

4:1 *take a clay tablet.* The tablet would have been soft enough to inscribe with a stylus.

4:2 *Lay siege.* The city of Jerusalem would come under siege, meaning that the Babylonians would surround the city and cut off its outside supplies. The purpose was to starve its inhabitants into submission. By his symbolic drawing, Ezekiel may have been commanded to do what other "prophets" of the nations might do. That is, the hired "prophets" of pagan nations might use such a drawing as a device for invoking the gods to bring about the event graphically described. In Ezekiel's case, the drawing was the opposite of what the people wanted. As they sat in captivity, the worst news would have been that the holy city had been destroyed.

4:3 *an iron plate.* This was a plate that Ezekiel possessed as a priest; it was for baking grain for the grain offerings (Lev. 2:5; 6:21). Here its purpose was to represent a wall between Ezekiel and the city.

3:15 [n] Job 2:13 **3:16** [o] Jer. 42:7 **3:17** [p] Ezek. 33:7–9 [q] Jer. 6:17 [r] [Lev. 19:17] **3:18** [s] [John 8:21, 24] **3:19** [t] Acts 18:6; 20:26 **3:20** [u] Ezek. 18:24; 33:18 **3:22** [v] Ezek. 1:3 [w] Ezek. 8:4 **3:23** [x] Ezek. 1:28 [y] Ezek. 1:1 [z] Ezek. 1:28 **3:24** [a] Ezek. 2:2 **3:25** [b] Ezek. 4:8 **3:26** [c] Luke 1:20, 22 [d] Hos. 4:17 [e] Ezek. 2:5–7 **3:27** [f] Ezek. 24:27; 33:22 [g] Ezek. 3:11 **4:2** [a] Jer. 6:6 [b] 2 Kin. 25:1 **4:3** [c] Jer. 39:1, 2 [d] Ezek. 12:6, 11; 24:24, 27 **4:5** [e] Num. 14:34

of Israel. 6And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.

7"Therefore you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem; your arm *shall be* uncovered, and you shall prophesy against it. 8[f]And surely I will restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege.

9"Also take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread of them for yourself. *During* the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it. 10And your food which you eat *shall be* by weight, twenty shekels a day; from time to time you shall eat it. 11You shall also drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin; from time to time you shall drink. 12And you shall eat it *as* barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight."

13Then the LORD said, "So [g]shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, where I will drive them."

14So I said, [h]"Ah, Lord GOD! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten [i]what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has [j]abominable flesh ever come into my mouth."

15Then He said to me, "See, I am giving you cow dung instead of human waste, and you shall prepare your bread over it."

16Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, surely I will cut off the [k]supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall [l]eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall [m]drink water by measure and with dread, 17that they may lack bread and water, and be dismayed with one another, and [n]waste away because of their iniquity.

A Sword Against Jerusalem

5 "And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, [a]and pass *it* over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the *hair.* 2[b]You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of [c]the city, when [d]the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around *it* with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after [e]them. 3[f]You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your *garment.* 4Then take some of them again and [g]throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.

5"Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This *is* Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. 6She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that *are* all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.' 7Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have multiplied *disobedience* more than the nations that *are* all around you, have not walked in My statutes [h]nor kept My judgments, nor even done* according to the judgments of the nations that *are* all around you'— 8therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Indeed I, even I, *am* against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. 9[i]And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. 10Therefore fathers [j]shall eat *their* sons in your midst, and sons shall

* **5:7** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate; many Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *but have done* (compare 11:12).

4:7 ***set your face toward the siege.*** As horrible as it was, the siege ultimately showed God's faithfulness to His covenant established in the days of Moses—that idolatry and disobedience would bring curses, which would include being conquered, captured and removed from the land (Deut. 28:15–68).

4:8 ***restrain you.*** Ezekiel was bound while lying on either side for the entire 430 days, but the activities described in Ezekiel 4:9–17 show that lying down and being tied up occurred only during parts of each day.

4:17 ***waste away because of their iniquity.*** The people had broken their covenant with God, and He had no choice but to bring upon them the promised consequences of their disobedience (Lev. 26:14–29).

5:1 ***a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard.*** Shaving the head was an act showing shame or disgrace in Hebrew culture (7:18). It also represented a type of pagan mourning forbidden by the law (27:31). Shaving the head was a mark of defilement, making a priest like Ezekiel ritually unclean, and so unable to perform his duties in the temple (Lev. 21:5). This message was telling the people that they were about to be humiliated and defiled.

5:2 ***one-third.*** Each citizen of Jerusalem would suffer one of the three fates depicted by each of the three mounds of hair: (1) some would be burned along with the city or would die from plague, famine, or other siege conditions (5:12; 2 Kin. 25:9); (2) some would be murdered by the sword during the attack (5:12; 2 Kin. 25:18–21); and (3) some would be scattered in the wind—referring to the exile (5:12; 2 Kin. 25:11–17).

5:9–17 ***what I have never done.*** The elements in God's judgment on the people for their sins can be enumerated in this way: (1) a judgment that will be worse in extent than ever before; (2) a terrible famine that will lead to cannibalism; (3) pestilence, meaning plagues and diseases associated with famine; (4) violent death by sword or wild beasts; and (5) the scattering and killing of a remnant. These

4:8 [f]Ezek. 3:25 **4:13** [g]Hos. 9:3 **4:14** [h]Acts 10:14 [i]Lev. 17:15; 22:8 [j]Deut. 14:3 **4:16** [k]Is. 3:1 [l]Ezek. 4:10, 11; 12:19 [m]Ezek. 4:11 **4:17** [n]Lev. 26:39 **5:1** [a]Is. 7:20 **5:2** [b]Ezek. 5:12 [c]Ezek. 4:1 [d]Ezek. 4:8, 9 [e]Lev. 26:25 **5:3** [f]Jer. 40:6; 52:16 **5:4** [g]Jer. 41:1, 2; 44:14 **5:7** [h]Jer. 2:10, 11 **5:9** [i][Amos 3:2] **5:10** [j]Jer. 19:9

eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will [k]scatter to all the winds.

11 'Therefore, *as* I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have [l]defiled My sanctuary with all your [m]detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish *you;* [n]My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity. 12 [o]One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and [p]I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after [q]them.

13 'Thus shall My anger [r]be spent, and I will [s]cause My fury to rest upon them, [t]and I will be avenged; [u]and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken *it* in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them. 14 Moreover [v]I will make you a waste and a reproach among the nations that *are* all around you, in the sight of all who pass by.

15 'So it* shall be a [w]reproach, a taunt, a [x]lesson, and an astonishment to the nations that *are* all around you, when I execute judgments among you in anger and in fury and in [y]furious rebukes. I, the LORD, have spoken. 16 When I [z]send against them the terrible arrows of famine which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, I will increase the famine upon you and cut off your [a]supply of bread. 17 So I will send against you famine and [b]wild beasts, and they will bereave you. [c]Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I, the LORD, have spoken.'"

Judgment on Idolatrous Israel

6 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 2 "Son of man, [a]set your face toward the [b]mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, 3 and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains, to the hills, to the ravines, and to the valleys: "Indeed I, *even* I, will bring a sword against you, and [c]I will destroy your high places. 4 Then your altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and [d]I will cast down your slain *men* before your idols. 5 And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones all around your altars. 6 In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. 7 The slain shall fall in your midst, and [e]you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

8 [f]"Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have *some* who escape the sword among the nations, when you are [g]scattered through the countries. 9 Then those of you who escape will [h]remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because [i]I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and [j]by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; [k]they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations. 10 And they shall know that I *am* the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them."

11 'Thus says the Lord GOD: [l]"Pound your fists and stamp your feet, and say, 'Alas, for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! [m]For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. 12 He who is far off shall die by the pestilence, he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged shall die by the famine. [n]Thus will I spend My fury upon them. 13 Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when their slain are among their idols all around their altars, [o]on every high hill, [p]on all the mountaintops, [q]under every green tree, and under every thick oak, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols.

* **5:15** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *you.*

punishments would come as the result of the people's idolatry.

6:2–3 *high places*. These were originally elevated locations for worship of the god Baal and other deities of the Canaanite pantheon. The term "high place" could be used of any location, whether hilltop or valley. Before entering the Promised Land, the Hebrews had been commanded to abolish all the high places where idols were worshiped (Num. 33:52).

***6:4–6 cast down your slain men . . . lay the corpses . . . scatter your bones*.** These phrases refer to God's judgment. Dead people lying unburied and bones scattered around signify the ultimate defilement of the land. God would bring this upon them because they had defiled and desecrated themselves by worshiping in the pagan high places.

6:13 *Then you shall know that I am the LORD*. As in verses 7 and 10, the Lord states the purpose of the coming destruction of His city and many of its people. The use of God's personal name further emphasizes the intent to bring His people back to a personal, intimate relationship with Himself.

6:13 God's Desire for Exclusiveness—God's point throughout the Book of Ezekiel is the same; His relationship with us is exclusive. He doesn't share that primary God-man relationship with anybody else or anything. As a model for exclusiveness, Ezekiel uses the marriage relationship. Exclusiveness is the

5:10 [k] Zech. 2:6; 7:14 **5:11** [l] [Jer. 7:9–11] [m] Ezek. 11:21 [n] Ezek. 7:4, 9; 8:18; 9:10 **5:12** [o] Ezek. 6:12 [p] Jer. 9:16 [q] Jer. 43:10, 11; 44:27 **5:13** [r] Lam. 4:11 [s] Ezek. 21:17 [t] Is. 1:24 [u] Ezek. 36:6; 38:19 **5:14** [v] Lev. 26:31 **5:15** [w] Jer. 24:9 [x] [Is. 26:9] [y] Ezek. 5:8; 25:17 **5:16** [z] Deut. 32:23 [a] Lev. 26:26 **5:17** [b] Lev. 26:22 [c] Ezek. 38:22 **6:2** [a] Ezek. 20:46; 21:2; 25:2 [b] Ezek. 36:1 **6:3** [c] Lev. 26:30 **6:4** [d] Lev. 26:30 **6:7** [e] Ezek. 7:4, 9 **6:8** [f] Jer. 44:28 [g] Ezek. 5:12 **6:9** [h] [Deut. 4:29] [i] Ps. 78:40 [j] Ezek. 20:7, 24 [k] Ezek. 20:43; 36:31 **6:11** [l] Ezek. 21:14 [m] Ezek. 5:12 **6:12** [n] Ezek. 5:13 **6:13** [o] Jer. 2:20; 3:6 [p] Hos. 4:13 [q] Is. 57:5

14 So I will [r]stretch out My hand against
them and make the land desolate, yes,
more desolate than the wilderness toward
[s]Diblah, in all their dwelling places. Then
they shall know that I *am* the LORD.'"'"

Judgment on Israel Is Near

7 Moreover the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, 2 "And you, son of man, thus
says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel:

[a]'An end! The end has come upon the
four corners of the land.
3 Now the end *has come* upon you,
And I will send My anger against you;
I will judge you [b]according to your ways,
And I will repay you for all your
abominations.
4 [c]My eye will not spare you,
Nor will I have pity;
But I will repay your ways,
And your abominations will be in your
midst;
[d]Then you shall know that I *am* the
LORD!'

5 "Thus says the Lord GOD:

'A disaster, a singular [e]disaster;
Behold, it has come!
6 An end has come,
The end has come;
It has dawned for you;
Behold, it has come!
7 [f]Doom has come to you, you who dwell
in the land;
[g]The time has come,
A day of trouble *is* near,
And not of rejoicing in the mountains.
8 Now upon you I will soon [h]pour out
My fury,
And spend My anger upon you;
I will judge you according to your ways,
And I will repay you for all your
abominations.

9 'My eye will not spare,
Nor will I have pity;
I will repay you according to your ways,
And your abominations will be in your
midst.
Then you shall know that I *am* the
LORD who strikes.

10 'Behold, the day!
Behold, it has come!
[i]Doom has gone out;
The rod has blossomed,
Pride has budded.
11 [j]Violence has risen up into a rod of
wickedness;
None of them *shall remain*,
None of their multitude,
None of them;
[k]Nor *shall there be* wailing for them.
12 The time has come,
The day draws near.

'Let not the buyer [l]rejoice,
Nor the seller [m]mourn,
For wrath *is* on their whole
multitude.
13 For the seller shall not return to what
has been sold,
Though he may still be alive;
For the vision concerns the whole
multitude,
And it shall not turn back;
No one will strengthen himself
Who lives in iniquity.

14 'They have blown the trumpet and
made everyone ready,
But no one goes to battle;
For My wrath *is* on all their multitude.
15 [n]The sword *is* outside,
And the pestilence and famine within.
Whoever *is* in the field
Will die by the sword;
And whoever *is* in the city,
Famine and pestilence will devour
him.

16 'Those who [o]survive will escape and be
on the mountains
Like doves of the valleys,
All of them mourning,
Each for his iniquity.
17 Every [p]hand will be feeble,
And every knee will be *as* weak *as*
water.
18 They will also [q]be girded with
sackcloth;
Horror will cover them;
Shame *will be* on every face,
Baldness on all their heads.

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boundary that provides the shape to that relationship. It is the same with our relationship with God. When we violate God's desire for exclusiveness, we ruin our relationship with Him. God designed us for Himself alone. If we have anything less than an exclusive relationship with Him, we become less than what we were created to be.

7:2–3 *the end.* Three uses of this key word stressed that the fulfillment of the prophecy was at hand.

7:10 *the rod has blossomed.* The flowering of the rod indicates that the time to bring judgment was ripe. These words describe one whose time had come, a person marked by arrogance. In this case, it pictures the chosen instrument of God (Num. 17:5) with whom He would discipline Jerusalem and Judah—namely Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and the characteristic representative of the arrogant and evil Babylonians.

7:12 *Let not the buyer rejoice.* The fact of coming judgment was so certain, and its effects would be so lasting and devastating, that transactions of buying and selling would be concluded improperly or not at all.

7:16–19 *Those who survive will escape.* Those left alive would hide in the hills and be characterized by

6:14 [r] Is. 5:25 [s] Num. 33:46 **7:2** [a] Amos 8:2, 10
7:3 [b] [Rom. 2:6] **7:4** [c] Ezek. 5:11 [d] Ezek. 12:20
7:5 [e] 2 Kin. 21:12, 13 **7:7** [f] Ezek. 7:10 [g] Zeph. 1:14, 15
7:8 [h] Ezek. 20:8, 21 **7:10** [i] Ezek. 7:7 **7:11** [j] Jer. 6:7 [k] Jer. 16:5, 6 **7:12** [l] Prov. 20:14 [m] Is. 24:2 **7:15** [n] Jer. 14:18
7:16 [o] Ezek. 6:8; 14:22 **7:17** [p] Is. 13:7 **7:18** [q] Amos 8:10

19 'They will throw their silver into the streets,
And their gold will be like refuse;
Their [r]silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them
In the day of the wrath of the LORD;
They will not satisfy their souls,
Nor fill their stomachs,
Because it became their stumbling block of iniquity.

20 'As for the beauty of his ornaments,
He set it in majesty;
[s]But they made from it
The images of their abominations—
Their detestable things;
Therefore I have made it
Like refuse to them.
21 I will give it as [t]plunder
Into the hands of strangers,
And to the wicked of the earth as spoil;
And they shall defile it.
22 I will turn My face from them,
And they will defile My secret place;
For robbers shall enter it and defile it.

23 'Make a chain,
For [u]the land is filled with crimes of blood,
And the city is full of violence.
24 Therefore I will bring the [v]worst of the Gentiles,
And they will possess their houses;
I will cause the pomp of the strong to cease,
And their holy places shall be [w]defiled.
25 Destruction comes;
They will seek peace, but *there shall be* none.
26 [x]Disaster will come upon disaster,
And rumor will be upon rumor.
[y]Then they will seek a vision from a prophet;
But the law will perish from the priest,
And counsel from the elders.

27 'The king will mourn,
The prince will be clothed with desolation,
And the hands of the common people will tremble.
I will do to them according to their way,
And according to what they deserve I will judge them;
Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD!'"

Abominations in the Temple

8 And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, as I sat in my house with [a]the elders of Judah sitting before me, that [b]the hand of the Lord GOD fell upon me there.
2 [c]Then I looked, and there was a likeness, like the appearance of fire—from the appearance of His waist and downward, fire; and from His waist and upward, like the appearance of brightness, [d]like the color of amber. 3 He [e]stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my hair; and [f]the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and [g]brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the north gate of the inner *court*, [h]where the seat of the image of jealousy *was*, which [i]provokes to jealousy. 4 And behold, the [j]glory of the God of Israel *was* there, like the vision that I [k]saw in the plain.

5 Then He said to me, "Son of man, lift your eyes now toward the north." So I lifted my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, was this image of jealousy in the entrance.

6 Furthermore He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great [l]abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary? Now turn again, you will see greater abominations." 7 So He brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, there was a hole in the wall.
8 Then He said to me, "Son of man, dig into the wall"; and when I dug into the wall, there was a door.

9 And He said to me, "Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there." 10 So I went in and saw, and there—every [m]sort of [n]creeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed all around on the walls.
11 And there stood before them [o]seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and in their midst stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan. Each man had a censer in his hand, and a thick cloud of incense went up.
12 Then He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, [p]'The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.'"

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four things: (1) mourning; displaying their humiliation over sin by wearing sackcloth and shaving their heads (Is. 15:2); (2) weakness; (3) horror; and (4) disgust and disillusionment over wealth.

7:20 *the beauty of his ornaments.* The people had sinned horribly when they crafted idols out of the temple treasures and then worshiped what their hands had made (Rom. 1:25).

8:5–6 *to make Me go far away from My sanctuary.* The people thought that just because the temple stood among them, whatever wrong they might do could not bring ultimate disaster. They thought the temple guaranteed their security. They did not realize that their evil had caused God to leave His temple, which would then no longer be their protection.

8:11 *seventy men.* These men were the nation's leaders (Num. 11:16–25).

7:19 [r] Zeph. 1:18 **7:20** [s] Jer. 7:30 **7:21** [t] 2 Kin. 24:13 **7:23** [u] 2 Kin. 21:16 **7:24** [v] Ezek. 21:31; 28:7 [w] Ezek. 24:21 **7:26** [x] Jer. 4:20 [y] Ps. 74:9 **8:1** [a] Ezek. 14:1; 20:1; 33:31 [b] Ezek. 1:3; 3:22 **8:2** [c] Ezek. 1:26, 27 [d] Ezek. 1:4, 27 **8:3** [e] Dan. 5:5 [f] Ezek. 3:14 [g] Ezek. 11:1, 24; 40:2 [h] Ezek. 5:11 [i] Deut. 32:16, 21 **8:4** [j] Ezek. 3:12; 9:3 [k] Ezek. 1:28; 3:22, 23 **8:6** [l] 2 Kin. 23:4, 5 **8:10** [m] Ex. 20:4 [n] Rom. 1:23 **8:11** [o] Num. 11:16, 25 **8:12** [p] Ezek. 9:9

13And He said to me, "Turn again, *and*
you will see greater abominations that they
are doing." 14So He brought me to the door
of the north gate of the LORD's house; and
to my dismay, women were sitting there
weeping for Tammuz.
15Then He said to me, "Have you seen
this, O son of man? Turn again, you will
see greater abominations than these." 16So
He brought me into the inner court of the
LORD's house; and there, at the door of the
temple of the LORD, [q]between the porch and
the altar, [r]*were* about twenty-five men [s]with
their backs toward the temple of the LORD
and their faces toward the east, and they
were worshiping [t]the sun toward the east.
17And He said to me, "Have you seen
this, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to
the house of Judah to commit the abomi-
nations which they commit here? For they
have [u]filled the land with violence; then
they have returned to provoke Me to anger.
Indeed they put the branch to their nose.
18[v]Therefore I also will act in fury. My
[w]eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and
though they [x]cry in My ears with a loud
voice, I will not hear them."

The Wicked Are Slain

9 Then He called out in my hearing with
a loud voice, saying, "Let those who
have charge over the city draw near, each
with a deadly weapon in his hand." 2And
suddenly six men came from the direction
of the upper gate, which faces north, each
with his battle-ax in his hand. [a]One man
among them *was* clothed with linen and
had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They
went in and stood beside the bronze altar.
3Now [b]the glory of the God of Israel
had gone up from the cherub, where it had
been, to the threshold of the temple.* And
He called to the man clothed with linen,
who *had* the writer's inkhorn at his side;
4and the LORD said to him, "Go through the
midst of the city, through the midst of Je-
rusalem, and put [c]a mark on the foreheads
of the men [d]who sigh and cry over all the
abominations that are done within it."
5To the others He said in my hearing,
"Go after him through the city and [e]kill; [f]do
not let your eye spare, nor have any pity.
6[g]Utterly slay old *and* young men, maidens
and little children and women; but [h]do not
come near anyone on whom *is* the mark;
and [i]begin at My sanctuary." [j]So they be-
gan with the elders who *were* before the
temple. 7Then He said to them, "Defile the
temple, and fill the courts with the slain.
Go out!" And they went out and killed in
the city.
8So it was, that while they were killing
them, I was left *alone;* and I [k]fell on my face
and cried out, and said, [l]"Ah, Lord GOD!
Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel
in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?"
9Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the
house of Israel and Judah *is* exceedingly
great, and [m]the land is full of bloodshed,
and the city full of perversity; for they say,
[n]'The LORD has forsaken the land, and [o]the
LORD does not see!' 10And as for Me also,
My [p]eye will neither spare, nor will I have
pity, *but* [q]I will recompense their deeds on
their own head."
11Just then, the man clothed with linen,
who *had* the inkhorn at his side, reported
back and said, "I have done as You com-
manded me."

The Glory Departs from the Temple

10 And I looked, and there in the [a]firma-
ment that was above the head of the
cherubim, there appeared something like
a sapphire stone, having the appearance of
the likeness of a throne. 2[b]Then He spoke
to the man clothed with linen, and said,
"Go in among the wheels, under the cher-
ub, fill your hands with [c]coals of fire from
among the cherubim, and [d]scatter *them*
over the city." And he went in as I watched.
3Now the cherubim were standing on
the south side of the temple* when the man
went in, and the [e]cloud filled the inner

* **9:3** Literally *house* * **10:3** Literally *house,* also in verses 4 and 18

8:13–14 *Tammuz.* This was a fertility god. The women were crying out to the idol because they had no children or because the crops were failing. In the sixth month, August-September, Tammuz was thought to "die" with the scorched land. Worshipers would wail over his death and cry for his resurgence.

8:17–18 *they put the branch to their nose.* This action is not mentioned elsewhere. In the context it appears to be (1) a ritualistic gesture used in idol worship, or (2) an action indicative of the extensive violence which was occurring in Judah as a result of idolatry.

9:5–6 *Go after him through the city.* The universality of this judgment is shocking to us; but this is in line with divine judgments from the time of the flood in Genesis to the final judgment described in Revelation.

9:6–7 *My sanctuary.* The corrupt spiritual leaders had been practicing idolatry and immorality in the temple itself (8:3–16). Judgment would begin with them because they had led the nation astray.

9:9 *iniquity . . . bloodshed . . . perversity.* These three reasons are given as the offenses that deserve this terrible outpouring of God's wrath. The people and especially rich rulers willfully chose to believe that God did not see or care what injustices went on.

10:3–5 *the cloud filled the inner court.* The cloud

8:16 [q] Joel 2:17 [r] Ezek. 11:1 [s] Jer. 2:27; 32:33 [t] Deut. 4:19 **8:17** [u] Ezek. 9:9 **8:18** [v] Ezek. 5:13; 16:42; 24:13 [w] Ezek. 5:11; 7:4, 9; 9:5, 10 [x] Mic. 3:4 **9:2** [a] Lev. 16:4 **9:3** [b] Ezek. 3:23; 8:4; 10:4, 18; 11:22, 23 **9:4** [c] Rev. 7:2, 3; 9:4; 14:1 [d] Jer. 13:17 **9:5** [e] Ezek. 7:9 [f] Ezek. 5:11 **9:6** [g] 2 Chr. 36:17 [h] Rev. 9:4 [i] Jer. 25:29 [j] Ezek. 8:11, 12, 16 **9:8** [k] Josh. 7:6 [l] Ezek. 11:13 **9:9** [m] 2 Kin. 21:16 [n] Ezek. 8:12 [o] Is. 29:15 **9:10** [p] Ezek. 5:11; 7:4; 8:18 [q] Ezek. 11:21 **10:1** [a] Ezek. 1:22, 26 **10:2** [b] Dan. 10:5 [c] Ezek. 1:13 [d] Rev. 8:5 **10:3** [e] 1 Kin. 8:10, 11

court. 4[f]Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, *and paused* over the threshold of the temple; and [g]the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's [h]glory. 5And the [i]sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard *even* in the outer court, like [j]the voice of Almighty God when He speaks.

6Then it happened, when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, "Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim," that he went in and stood beside the wheels. 7And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that *was* among the cherubim, and took *some of it* and put *it* into the hands of the *man* clothed with linen, who took *it* and went out. 8[k]The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings.

9[l]And when I looked, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by each other cherub; the wheels appeared *to have* the color of a [m]beryl stone. 10*As for* their appearance, all four looked alike—as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. 11[n]When they went, they went toward *any of* their four directions; they did not turn aside when they went, but followed in the direction the head was facing. They did not turn aside when they went. 12And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that the four had, *were* [o]full of eyes all around. 13As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing, "Wheel."

14[p]Each one had four faces: the first face *was* the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. 15And the cherubim were lifted up. This *was* [q]the living creature I saw by the River Chebar. 16[r]When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them. 17[s]When *the cherubim** stood still, *the wheels* stood still, and when *one** was lifted up, *the other** lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature *was* in them.

18Then [t]the glory of the LORD [u]departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. 19And [v]the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels *were* beside them; and they stood at the door of the [w]east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel *was* above them.

20[x]This *is* the living creature I saw under the God of Israel [y]by the River Chebar, and I knew they *were* cherubim. 21[z]Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man *was* under their wings. 22And [a]the likeness of their faces *was* the same *as* the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. [b]They each went straight forward.

Judgment on Wicked Counselors

11 Then [a]the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to [b]the East Gate of the LORD's house, which faces eastward; and there [c]at the door of the gate were twenty-five men, among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people. 2And He said to me: "Son of man, these *are* the men who devise iniquity and give wicked counsel in this city, 3who say, '*The time is* not [d]near to build houses; [e]this *city is* the caldron, and we *are* the meat.' 4Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man!"

5Then [f]the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said to me, "Speak! 'Thus says the LORD: "Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for [g]I know the things that come into your mind. 6[h]You have multiplied your slain in this city, and you have filled its streets with the slain." 7Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: [i]"'Your slain whom you have laid in its midst, they *are* the meat, and this *city is* the caldron; [j]but I shall bring you out of the midst of it. 8You have

* **10:17** Literally *they* • Literally *they* • Literally *they*

represented God's glory (as in 1:4), which was seen moving from the inner court to the threshold of the temple. From there it filled the temple.

10:9–17 ***the first face was the face of a cherub.*** Whereas one of the four faces in 1:10 is an ox, here it is a cherub. These are ancient sculptures with animal bodies and wings but human faces. The difference of the faces between 1:10 and 10:14 should not be called an error; it is possible that the images that Ezekiel saw were changing from time to time.

10:20–22 ***and I knew they were cherubim.*** They sometimes serve as guardians (Gen. 3:24). They are associated with God's throne and presence (the mercy seat on the ark, Ex. 25:18–22; 1 Chr. 13:6). They are also associated with God's chariot-like throne (v. 1; 1:20–26; Ps. 18:10).

11:3 ***build houses.*** These officials were proclaiming that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were as secure behind the city's walls as meat was safe in its cooking pot. There was no impending doom, they said; therefore, new construction projects were encouraged.

10:4 [f]Ezek. 1:28 [g]Ezek. 43:5 [h]Ezek. 11:22, 23 **10:5** [i]Ezek. 1:24 [j][Ps. 29:3] **10:8** [k]Ezek. 1:8; 10:21 **10:9** [l]Ezek. 1:15 [m]Ezek. 1:16 **10:11** [n]Ezek. 1:17 **10:12** [o]Rev. 4:6, 8 **10:14** [p]Ezek. 1:6, 10, 11 **10:15** [q]Ezek. 1:3, 5 **10:16** [r]Ezek. 1:19 **10:17** [s]Ezek. 1:12, 20, 21 **10:18** [t]Ezek. 10:4 [u]Hos. 9:12 **10:19** [v]Ezek. 11:22 [w]Ezek. 11:1 **10:20** [x]Ezek. 1:22 [y]Ezek. 1:1 **10:21** [z]Ezek. 1:6, 8; 10:14; 41:18, 19 **10:22** [a]Ezek. 1:10 [b]Ezek. 1:9, 12 **11:1** [a]Ezek. 3:12, 14 [b]Ezek. 10:19 [c]Ezek. 8:16 **11:3** [d]2 Pet. 3:4 [e]Jer. 1:13 **11:5** [f]Ezek. 2:2; 3:24 [g][Jer. 16:17; 17:10] **11:6** [h]Ezek. 7:23; 22:2–6, 9, 12, 27 **11:7** [i]Mic. 3:2, 3 [j]Ezek. 11:9

[k]feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you," says the Lord GOD. 9"And I will bring you out of its midst, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and [l]execute judgments on you. 10[m]You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at [n]the border of Israel. [o]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD. 11[p]This *city* shall not be your caldron, nor shall you be the meat in its midst. I will judge you at the border of Israel. 12And you shall know that I *am* the LORD; for you have not walked in My statutes nor executed My judgments, but [q]have done according to the customs of the Gentiles which *are* all around you."'"

13Now it happened, while I was prophesying, that [r]Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then [s]I fell on my face and cried with a loud voice, and said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Will You make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?"

God Will Restore Israel

14Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 15"Son of man, your brethren, your relatives, your countrymen, and all the house of Israel in its entirety, *are* those about whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Get far away from the LORD; this land has been given to us as a possession.' 16Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, [t]yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone."' 17Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: [u]"I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel."' 18And they will go there, and they will take away all its [v]detestable things and all its abominations from there. 19Then [w]I will give them one heart, and I will put [x]a new spirit within them,* and take [y]the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, 20[z]that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; [a]and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. 21But *as for those* whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, [b]I will recompense their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.

22So the cherubim [c]lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel *was* high above them. 23And [d]the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood [e]on the mountain, [f]which *is* on the east side of the city.

24Then [g]the Spirit took me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea,* to those in captivity. And the vision that I had seen went up from me. 25So I spoke to those in captivity of all the things the LORD had shown me.

Judah's Captivity Portrayed

12 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 2"Son of man, you dwell in the midst of [a]a rebellious house, which [b]has eyes to see but does not see, and ears to hear but does not hear; [c]for they *are* a rebellious house.

3"Therefore, son of man, prepare your belongings for captivity, and go into captivity by day in their sight. You shall go from your place into captivity to another place in their sight. It may be that they will consider, though they *are* a rebellious

* **11:19** Literally *you* * **11:24** Or *Babylon,* and so elsewhere in this book

11:13 ***Ah, Lord GOD.*** Ezekiel's reaction showed that Pelatiah, one of the corrupt city leaders (v. 1), was struck dead by God as undeniable proof that the prophet's message would come true. Ezekiel himself was awestruck and asked if this meant that God would not after all preserve a remnant.

11:15 ***your countrymen.*** The people in Jerusalem (representative of Judah) regarded the exiles as sinners because they had been deported to Babylon.

11:16 ***I shall be a little sanctuary.*** God explained to Ezekiel that the Hebrews taken captive and spread among foreign lands were actually the remnant whom God was protecting. God Himself would continue as their sanctuary—a word in Hebrew that literally means a "holy place."

11:18–20 ***they will take away all the detestable things.*** When the remnant returned to the land, they would abolish idolatry. At that time God would establish a new covenant with them (Jer. 31:31–34). Then God would pour out His Spirit (36:26–27; Joel 2:28–29) so that His people would become united in purpose and empowered to maintain their righteousness. They would finally and truly become His people (Ex. 6:6–8).

11:23 ***the glory of the LORD went up.*** The Hebrew term for "glory" literally means "weight" or "significance" and refers to the wonder and majesty of the living God.

11:24–25 ***Then the Spirit took me up.*** Ezekiel's visions are not merely dreams; they were inspired by God Himself and thus were prophetic. ***Chaldea.*** This is an alternative term for Babylon.

12:3–7 ***prepare your belongings for captivity.*** Ezekiel's next visual demonstration warned the captives already in Babylon that they should not expect a quick return to Jerusalem. He had already shown that the city would soon fall (chs. 4–5) and those not killed would be led into exile. These exiles should have understood Ezekiel's meaning.

11:8 [k] Jer. 42:16 **11:9** [l] Ezek. 5:8 **11:10** [m] Jer. 39:6; 52:10 [n] 2 Kin. 14:25 [o] Ps. 9:16 **11:11** [p] Ezek. 11:3, 7 **11:12** [q] Deut. 12:30, 31 **11:13** [r] Acts 5:5 [s] Ezek. 9:8 **11:16** [t] Is. 8:14 **11:17** [u] Jer. 3:12, 18; 24:5 **11:18** [v] Ezek. 37:23 **11:19** [w] Jer. 32:39 [x] Ezek. 18:31 [y] Zech. 7:12 **11:20** [z] Ps. 105:45 [a] Jer. 24:7 **11:21** [b] Ezek. 9:10 **11:22** [c] Ezek. 1:19 **11:23** [d] Ezek. 8:4; 9:3 [e] Zech. 14:4 [f] Ezek. 43:2 **11:24** [g] Ezek. 8:3 **12:2** [a] Ezek. 2:3, 6–8 [b] Jer. 5:21 [c] Ezek. 2:5

house. 4By day you shall bring out your belongings in their sight, as though going into captivity; and at evening you shall go in their sight, like those who go into captivity. 5Dig through the wall in their sight, and carry *your belongings* out through it. 6In their sight you shall bear *them* on *your* shoulders *and* carry *them* out at twilight; you shall cover your face, so that you cannot see the ground, [d]for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel."

7So I did as I was commanded. I brought out my belongings by day, as though going into captivity, and at evening I dug through the wall with my hand. I brought *them* out at twilight, *and* I bore *them* on *my* shoulder in their sight.

8And in the morning the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9"Son of man, has not the house of Israel, [e]the rebellious house, said to you, [f]'What are you doing?' 10Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "This [g]burden *concerns* the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are among them."' 11Say, [h]'I *am* a sign to you. As I have done, so shall it be done to them; [i]they shall be carried away into captivity.' 12And [j]the prince who *is* among them shall bear *his belongings* on *his* shoulder at twilight and go out. They shall dig through the wall to carry *them* out through it. He shall cover his face, so that he cannot see the ground with *his* eyes. 13I will also spread My [k]net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. [l]I will bring him to Babylon, *to* the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there. 14[m]I will scatter to every wind all who *are* around him to help him, and all his troops; and [n]I will draw out the sword after them.

15[o]"Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. 16[p]But I will spare a few of their men from the sword, from famine, and from pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the Gentiles wherever they go. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Judgment Not Postponed

17Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 18"Son of man, [q]eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and anxiety. 19And say to the people of the land, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the inhabitants of Jerusalem *and* to the land of Israel: "They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink their water with dread, so that her land may [r]be emptied of all who are in it, [s]because of the violence of all those who dwell in it. 20Then the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall become desolate; and you shall know that I *am* the LORD."'"

21And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 22"Son of man, what *is* this proverb *that* you *people* have about the land of Israel, which says, [t]'The days are prolonged, and every vision fails'? 23Tell them therefore, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I will lay this proverb to rest, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel."' But say to them, [u]'"The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision. 24For [v]no more shall there be any [w]false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. 25For I *am* the LORD. I speak, and [x]the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and [y]perform it," says the Lord GOD.'"

26Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 27[z]"Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision that he sees *is* [a]for many days *from now*, and he prophesies of times far off.' 28[b]Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak [c]will be done," says the Lord GOD.'"

12:11–14 ***they shall be carried away into captivity.*** Speaking in 592 B.C., Ezekiel predicted the deportation of Jerusalem's population to Babylon six years later and prophesied exactly what would happen to their leader Zedekiah. The king would attempt to escape by night, secretly and in disguise; but he would be caught and blinded by the Babylonians, then carried off to Babylon where he would later die.

12:15–16 ***Then they shall know that I am the LORD.*** The defeat of God's people would not indicate the Lord's lack of strength, but the serious consequences of sin against Him. Yet He would demonstrate that His purpose had always been to restore His people to Himself (Heb. 12:1–11). Through the difficult experience, His people would learn that their God was both holy and loving. Sin offended Him, but He still would reach out to restore the sinner.

12:22 ***The days are prolonged, and every vision fails.*** This proverb among the exiles indicates how hardened they were to Ezekiel's prophecies. Although already captive, the people were cynical and apathetic, mistakenly thinking that a delay in judgment meant no judgment, at least in their lifetime (vv. 25,27–28; 2 Pet. 3:3–4).

12:23–25 ***The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision.*** This proverb would replace the old one (v. 22), and false prophets opposing Ezekiel would cease to speak. The exiles would live to see the judgment on Jerusalem fulfilled.

12:6 [d] Ezek. 4:3; 24:24 **12:9** [e] Ezek. 2:5 [f] Ezek. 17:12; 24:19 **12:10** [g] Mal. 1:1 **12:11** [h] Ezek. 12:6 [i] 2 Kin. 25:4, 5, 7 **12:12** [j] Jer. 39:4; 52:7 **12:13** [k] Jer. 52:9 [l] Jer. 52:11 **12:14** [m] Ezek. 5:10 [n] Ezek. 5:2, 12 **12:15** [o] Ezek. 6:7, 14; 12:16, 20 **12:16** [p] Ezek. 6:8–10 **12:18** [q] Ezek. 4:16 **12:19** [r] Zech. 7:14 [s] Ps. 107:34 **12:22** [t] Ezek. 11:3; 12:27 **12:23** [u] Zeph. 1:14 **12:24** [v] Ezek. 13:6 [w] Lam. 2:14 **12:25** [x] [Luke 21:33] [y] [Is. 14:24] **12:27** [z] Ezek. 12:22 [a] Dan. 10:14 **12:28** [b] Ezek. 12:23, 25 [c] Jer. 4:7

Woe to Foolish Prophets

13 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2**"Son of man, prophesy [a]against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to [b]those who prophesy out of their own [c]heart, 'Hear the word of the LORD!'"

3Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! **4**O Israel, your prophets are [d]like foxes in the deserts. **5**You [e]have not gone up into the gaps to build a wall for the house of Israel to stand in battle on the day of the LORD. **6**[f]They have envisioned futility and false divination, saying, 'Thus says the LORD!' But the LORD has [g]not sent them; yet they hope that the word may be confirmed. **7**Have you not seen a futile vision, and have you not spoken false divination? You say, 'The LORD says,' but I have not spoken."

8Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I *am* indeed against you," says the Lord GOD. **9**"My hand will be [h]against the prophets who envision futility and who [i]divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of My people, [j]nor be written in the record of the house of Israel, [k]nor shall they enter into the land of Israel. [l]Then you shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

10"Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, [m]'Peace!' when *there is* no peace—and one builds a wall, and they [n]plaster it with untempered *mortar*— **11**say to those who plaster *it* with untempered *mortar,* that it will fall. [o]There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear *it* down. **12**Surely, when the wall has fallen, will it not be said to you, 'Where *is* the mortar with which you plastered *it*?'"

13Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "I will cause a stormy wind to break forth in My fury; and there shall be a flooding rain in My anger, and great hailstones in fury to consume *it*. **14**So I will break down the wall you have plastered with untempered *mortar,* and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. [p]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

15"Thus will I accomplish My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it with untempered *mortar;* and I will say to you, 'The wall *is* no *more*, nor those who plastered it, **16***that is,* the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and who [q]see visions of peace for her when *there is* no peace,'" says the Lord GOD.

17"Likewise, son of man, [r]set your face against the daughters of your people, [s]who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them, **18**and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe to the *women* who sew *magic* charms on their sleeves* and make veils for the heads of people of every height to hunt souls! Will you [t]hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? **19**And will you profane Me among My people [u]for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies?"

20'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I *am* against your *magic* charms by which you hunt souls there like birds. I will tear them from your arms, and let the souls go, the souls you hunt like birds. **21**I will also tear off your veils and deliver My people out of your hand, and they shall no longer be as prey in your hand. [v]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

* **13:18** Literally *over all the joints of My hands;* Vulgate reads *under every elbow;* Septuagint and Targum read *on all elbows of the hands.*

13:2–4 ***foxes in the deserts.*** The word translated "deserts" conveys the idea of open, desolate places. In the immediate context (v. 5), the foxes are pictured roaming amid the rubble of ruined city walls. The prophets were fools because they confused their own thoughts with God's. They were like foxes among the ruins because they scavenged for themselves while causing, ignoring, and profiting from the human wreckage surrounding them.

13:5 ***the day of the LORD.*** This phrase refers to times when God triumphs (7:19; 30:3). It is particularly used by the prophets to describe those periods in which God is unusually active in the affairs of His people, either for deliverance or for judgment (Joel 2:1; Zeph. 1:7). In that day, God will actively bring about His purposes for the world; He will rescue the righteous and judge evildoers.

13:10–16 ***you shall be consumed in the midst of it.*** The false prophets would experience God's wrath—just as the walls of Jerusalem which were being constructed at that time would be destroyed. Jerusalem would be conquered and captured for the sins of its inhabitants. The preaching of a false peace had prompted people to build for a "certain" future, but only the opposite was certain. The false prophets had deceived the people with false hopes of comfort and prosperity (v. 10). Their deception placed them not only at odds with God's truth, but also with God Himself. Their destruction was certain.

13:17–19 ***set your face against the daughters of your people.*** The Hebrew women who were false prophetesses were confusing their own ideas with God's and casting magic death spells through sorcery or witchcraft (Lev. 19:26).

13:2 [a] Ezek. 22:25–28 [b] Ezek. 13:17 [c] Jer. 14:14; 23:16, 26 **13:4** [d] Song 2:15 **13:5** [e] Ps. 106:23 **13:6** [f] Ezek. 22:28 [g] Jer. 27:8–15 **13:9** [h] Jer. 23:30 [i] Jer. 20:3–6 [j] Ezra 2:59, 62 [k] Jer. 20:3–6 [l] Ezek. 11:10, 12 **13:10** [m] Jer. 6:14; 8:11 [n] Ezek. 22:28 **13:11** [o] Ezek. 38:22 **13:14** [p] Ezek. 13:9, 21, 23; 14:8 **13:16** [q] Jer. 6:14; 8:11; 28:9 **13:17** [r] Ezek. 20:46; 21:2 [s] Ezek. 13:2 **13:18** [t] [2 Pet. 2:14] **13:19** [u] Mic. 3:5 **13:21** [v] Ezek. 13:9

22"Because with [w]lies you have made the
heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not
made sad; and you have [x]strengthened the
hands of the wicked, so that he does not
turn from his wicked way to save his life.
23Therefore [y]you shall no longer envision
futility nor practice divination; for I will de-
liver My people out of your hand, and you
shall know that I *am* the LORD."'"

Idolatry Will Be Punished

14 Now [a]some of the elders of Israel
came to me and sat before me. 2And
the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
3"Son of man, these men have set up their
idols in their hearts, and put before them
[b]that which causes them to stumble into
iniquity. [c]Should I let Myself be inquired
of at all by them?

4"Therefore speak to them, and say to
them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Every-
one of the house of Israel who sets up his
idols in his heart, and puts before him what
causes him to stumble into iniquity, and
then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will
answer him who comes, according to the
multitude of his idols, 5that I may seize the
house of Israel by their heart, because they
are all estranged from Me by their idols."'

6"Therefore say to the house of Israel,
'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Repent, turn
away from your idols, and [d]turn your fac-
es away from all your abominations. 7For
anyone of the house of Israel, or of the
strangers who dwell in Israel, who sepa-
rates himself from Me and sets up his idols
in his heart and puts before him what caus-
es him to stumble into iniquity, then comes
to a prophet to inquire of him concerning
Me, I the LORD will answer him by Myself.
8[e]I will set My face against that man and
make him a [f]sign and a proverb, and I will
cut him off from the midst of My people.
[g]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

9"And if the prophet is induced to speak
anything, I the LORD [h]have induced that
prophet, and I will stretch out My hand
against him and destroy him from among
My people Israel. 10And they shall bear
their iniquity; the punishment of the proph-
et shall be the same as the punishment of
the one who inquired, 11that the house of
Israel may [i]no longer stray from Me, nor be
profaned anymore with all their transgres-
sions, [j]but that they may be My people and
I may be their God," says the Lord GOD.'"

Judgment on Persistent Unfaithfulness

12The word of the LORD came again to
me, saying: 13"Son of man, when a land
sins against Me by persistent unfaithful-
ness, I will stretch out My hand against it;
I will cut off its [k]supply of bread, send fam-
ine on it, and cut off man and beast from it.
14[l]Even *if* these three men, Noah, Daniel,
and Job, were in it, they would deliver *only*
themselves [m]by their righteousness," says
the Lord GOD.

15"If I cause [n]wild beasts to pass through
the land, and they empty it, and make it so
desolate that no man may pass through
because of the beasts, 16*even* [o]*though*
these three men *were* in it, *as* I live," says
the Lord GOD, "they would deliver neither
sons nor daughters; only they would be de-
livered, and the land would be [p]desolate.

17"Or *if* [q]I bring a sword on that land, and
say, 'Sword, go through the land,' and I [r]cut
off man and beast from it, 18even [s]*though*
these three men *were* in it, *as* I live," says
the Lord GOD, "they would deliver neither
sons nor daughters, but only they them-
selves would be delivered.

19"Or *if* I send [t]a pestilence into that
land and [u]pour out My fury on it in blood,
and cut off from it man and beast, 20even
[v]*though* Noah, Daniel, and Job *were* in it,
as I live," says the Lord GOD, "they would
deliver neither son nor daughter; they
would deliver *only* themselves by their
righteousness."

21For thus says the Lord GOD: "How
much more it shall be when [w]I send My
four severe judgments on Jerusalem—the
sword and famine and wild beasts and
pestilence—to cut off man and beast from
it? 22[x]Yet behold, there shall be left in it a
remnant who will be [y]brought out, *both*
sons and daughters; surely they will come
out to you, and [z]you will see their ways and

14:1–3 *some of the elders of Israel.* God revealed to Ezekiel that this group consisted of double-minded men (1 Kin. 18:21; Matt. 6:24; James 1:5–8). Outwardly, they came to seek a word from God through His true prophet Ezekiel, but in their hearts they harbored loyalties to other gods.

14:5 *seize the house of Israel by their heart.* These words announce God's restorative purpose (Prov. 3:12; Rev. 3:19) in allowing sin to run its course.

14:8 *I will cut him off from the midst of My people.* The unrepentant idolater would be separated not only from God, but also from God's people (13:9). This experience would be a strong visual warning and an international example—proverb—of God's absolute honoring of His promise to punish disobedience with cursing (Lev. 20:1–7).

14:9–11 *they shall bear their iniquity.* The relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility is implicit in these verses. God allows false preaching for His own inscrutable purposes,

13:22 [w] Jer. 28:15 [x] Jer. 23:14 **13:23** [y] Mic. 3:5, 6
14:1 [a] Ezek. 8:1; 20:1; 33:31 **14:3** [b] Ezek. 7:19 [c] Ezek. 20:3, 31 **14:6** [d] Is. 2:20; 30:22; 55:6, 7 **14:8** [e] Jer. 44:11 [f] Num. 26:10 [g] Ezek. 6:7; 13:14 **14:9** [h] 2 Thess. 2:11 **14:11** [i] 2 Pet. 2:15 [j] Ezek. 11:20; 37:27 **14:13** [k] Is. 3:1 **14:14** [l] Jer. 15:1 [m] [Prov. 11:4] **14:15** [n] Lev. 26:22 **14:16** [o] Ezek. 14:14, 18, 20 [p] Ezek. 15:8; 33:28, 29 **14:17** [q] Lev. 26:25 [r] Zeph. 1:3 **14:18** [s] Ezek. 14:14 **14:19** [t] 2 Sam. 24:15 [u] Ezek. 7:8 **14:20** [v] Ezek. 14:14 **14:21** [w] Ezek. 5:17; 33:27 **14:22** [x] Ezek. 12:16; 36:20 [y] Ezek. 6:8 [z] Ezek. 20:43

their doings. Then you will be comforted concerning the disaster that I have brought upon Jerusalem, all that I have brought upon it. 23And they will comfort you, when you see their ways and their doings; and you shall know that I have done nothing [a]without cause that I have done in it," says the Lord GOD.

The Outcast Vine

15 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 2"Son of man, how is the wood of the vine *better* than any other wood, the vine branch which is among the trees of the forest? 3Is wood taken from it to make any object? Or can *men* make a peg from it to hang any vessel on? 4Instead, [a]it is thrown into the fire for fuel; the fire devours both ends of it, and its middle is burned. Is it useful for *any* work? 5Indeed, when it was whole, no object could be made from it. How much less will it be useful for *any* work when the fire has devoured it, and it is burned?

6"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; 7and [b]I will set My face against them. [c]They will go out from *one* fire, but *another* fire shall devour them. [d]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I set My face against them. 8Thus I will make the land desolate, because they have persisted in unfaithfulness,' says the Lord GOD."

God's Love for Jerusalem

16 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2"Son of man, [a]cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, 3and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: "Your birth [b]and your nativity *are* from the land of Canaan; [c]your father *was* an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. 4*As for* your nativity, [d]on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water to cleanse *you;* you were not rubbed with salt nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. 5No eye pitied you, to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you; but you were thrown out into the open field, when you yourself were loathed on the day you were born.

6"And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' 7[e]I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. *Your* breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you *were* naked and bare.

8"When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time *was* the time of love; [f]so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I [g]swore an oath to you and entered into a [h]covenant with you, and [i]you became Mine," says the Lord GOD.

9"Then I washed you in water; yes, I thoroughly washed off your blood, and I anointed you with oil. 10I clothed you in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of badger skin; I clothed you with fine linen and covered you with silk. 11I adorned you with ornaments, [j]put bracelets on your wrists, [k]and a chain on your neck. 12And I put a jewel in your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. 13Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing *was of* fine linen,

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but the preacher is held accountable for the content of the message. These were Israelite false prophets who deliberately ignored the truth and mixed it with falsehood.

15:6 ***the vine among the trees of the forest.*** Unlike an olive tree whose wood is also useful, the vine has only one use, to bear grapes.

15:6–8 ***another fire shall devour them.*** God had designed the people of Israel for a particular purpose, to bring glory to His name by living faithfully to His covenant and by bringing the nations to the knowledge of the Lord. Instead, Israel had become like the pagan nations around them.

16:2 ***cause Jerusalem to know her abominations.*** What follows is an animated development of the dreary story, designed to teach errant Jerusalem the real nature of her character in the eyes of God. The word "abominations" describes that which makes one physically ill.

16:3 ***your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.*** These shocking words refer to the cultural and moral origins of Jerusalem. Ancient Canaan was inhabited by Semitic and non-Semitic peoples. The Amorites and Hittites are associated in Scripture with the southern hill country, where Jerusalem is (Num. 13:29). The point is that non-Israelites founded this city. Jebusites controlled it when the Israelites entered the land under Joshua (Josh. 15:8). Israel did not obtain full control of the city until David conquered it (2 Sam. 5:6–7). In other words, Israel was not as pure as it thought it was.

16:4 ***you were not rubbed with salt.*** God reminds Jerusalem that He had rescued them from being like an abandoned newborn child—unwashed, unsanitary, and exposed to the elements to die. God alone has given her glory.

16:6 ***Live.*** Ezekiel warned the Jews remaining in Jerusalem to repent, reminding them that not merely their existence, but their living relation to God, was dependent upon His free grace. God alone is the Author of eternal life, just as He is Creator of all life (John 5:24).

16:7–9 ***Your breasts were formed.*** The city is compared to a young woman, mature and lovely. Yet it was naked and bare until God covered it with a relationship of covenantal love. This began when David moved the ark of the covenant there and

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14:23 [a] Jer. 22:8, 9 **15:4** [a] [John 15:6] **15:7** [b] Ezek. 14:8 [c] Is. 24:18 [d] Ezek. 7:4 **16:2** [a] Ezek. 20:4; 22:2 **16:3** [b] Ezek. 21:30 [c] Ezek. 16:45 **16:4** [d] Hos. 2:3 **16:7** [e] Ex. 1:7 **16:8** [f] Ruth 3:9 [g] Gen. 22:16–18 [h] Ex. 24:6–8 [i] [Ex. 19:5] **16:11** [j] Gen. 24:22, 47 [k] Prov. 1:9

silk, and embroidered cloth. [l]You ate *pastry of* fine flour, honey, and oil. You were exceedingly [m]beautiful, and succeeded to royalty. 14[n]Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it *was* perfect through My splendor which I had bestowed on you," says the Lord GOD.

Jerusalem's Harlotry

15[o]"But you trusted in your own beauty, [p]played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who *would have* it. 16[q]You took some of your garments and adorned multicolored high places for yourself, and played the harlot on them. *Such* things should not happen, nor be. 17You have also taken your beautiful jewelry from My gold and My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images and played the harlot with them. 18You took your embroidered garments and covered them, and you set My oil and My incense before them. 19Also [r]My food which I gave you—the pastry of fine flour, oil, and honey *which* I fed you—you set it before them as sweet incense; and *so* it was," says the Lord GOD.

20[s]"Moreover you took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. *Were* your *acts* of harlotry a small matter, 21that you have slain My children and offered them up to them by causing them to pass through *the* [t]*fire*? 22And in all your abominations and acts of harlotry you did not remember the days of your [u]youth, [v]when you were naked and bare, struggling in your blood.

23"Then it was so, after all your wickedness—'Woe, woe to you!' says the Lord GOD—24*that* [w]you also built for yourself a shrine, and [x]made a high place for yourself in every street. 25You built your high places [y]at the head of every road, and made your beauty to be abhorred. You offered yourself to everyone who passed by, and multiplied your acts of harlotry. 26You also committed harlotry with [z]the Egyptians, your very fleshly neighbors, and increased your acts of harlotry to [a]provoke Me to anger.

27"Behold, therefore, I stretched out My hand against you, diminished your allotment, and gave you up to the will of those who hate you, [b]the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. 28You also played the harlot with the [c]Assyrians, because you were insatiable; indeed you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied. 29Moreover you multiplied your acts of harlotry as far as the land of the trader, [d]Chaldea; and even then you were not satisfied.

30"How degenerate is your heart!" says the Lord GOD, "seeing you do all these *things*, the deeds of a brazen harlot.

Jerusalem's Adultery

31[e]"You erected your shrine at the head of every road, and built your high place in every street. Yet you were not like a harlot, because you scorned [f]payment. 32*You are* an adulterous wife, *who* takes strangers instead of her husband. 33Men make payment to all harlots, but [g]you made your payments to all your lovers, and hired them to come to you from all around for your harlotry. 34You are the opposite of *other* women in your harlotry, because no one solicited you to be a harlot. In that you gave payment but no payment was given you, therefore you are the opposite."

Jerusalem's Lovers Will Abuse Her

35'Now then, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD! 36Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your filthiness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your harlotry with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of [h]the blood of your children which you gave to them, 37surely, therefore, [i]I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved, *and* all those you hated; I will gather them from all around against you and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness. 38And I will judge you as [j]women who break wedlock or [k]shed blood are judged; I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy. 39I will also give you into their hand, and they shall throw down your shrines and break down [l]your high places. [m]They

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God established the covenant with David (2 Sam. 6:1—7:17).

16:15 ***you trusted in your own beauty.*** These words indict God's people for forgetting that their fame and fortune were God's gifts and not their own doing (v. 14). They relied on themselves and their gifts instead of on God. They came to believe that their material wealth and health as a nation absolutely demonstrated God's approval of their spiritual life, even though they were becoming spiritually corrupt.

16:27–29 ***played the harlot.*** Jerusalem's kings had sought political alliances with Assyria (2 Kin. 15:17–20) and Babylon (2 Kin. 20:12–19) instead of relying on their God for security. Probably a part of the treaty-making ceremonies was to worship the other nation's god. For Israel to do this would be a violation of the First Commandment.

16:36 ***your filthiness was poured out.*** Jerusalem was filthy spiritually because the city had soiled itself

16:13 [l]Deut. 32:13, 14 [m]Ps. 48:2 **16:14** [n]Lam. 2:15 **16:15** [o]Mic. 3:11 [p]Is. 1:21; 57:8 **16:16** [q]Ezek. 7:20 **16:19** [r]Hos. 2:8 **16:20** [s]Jer. 7:31 **16:21** [t]Jer. 19:5 **16:22** [u]Jer. 2:2 [v]Ezek. 16:4–6 **16:24** [w]Jer. 11:13 [x]Jer. 2:20; 3:2 **16:25** [y]Prov. 9:14 **16:26** [z]Ezek. 16:26; 20:7, 8 [a]Deut. 31:20 **16:27** [b]Ezek. 16:57 **16:28** [c]Jer. 2:18, 36 **16:29** [d]Ezek. 23:14–17 **16:31** [e]Ezek. 16:24, 39 [f]Is. 52:3 **16:33** [g]Hos. 8:9, 10 **16:36** [h]Jer. 2:34 **16:37** [i]Lam. 1:8 **16:38** [j]Lev. 20:10 [k]Gen. 9:6 **16:39** [l]Ezek. 16:24, 31 [m]Hos. 2:3

shall also strip you of your clothes, take your beautiful jewelry, and leave you naked and bare.

40 [n]"They shall also bring up an assembly against you, [o]and they shall stone you with stones and thrust you through with their swords. 41 They shall [p]burn your houses with fire, and [q]execute judgments on you in the sight of many women; and I will make you [r]cease playing the harlot, and you shall no longer hire lovers. 42 So [s]I will lay to rest My fury toward you, and My jealousy shall depart from you. I will be quiet, and be angry no more. 43 Because [t]you did not remember the days of your youth, but agitated Me* with all these *things*, surely [u]I will also recompense your deeds on y*our own* head," says the Lord GOD. "And you shall not commit lewdness in addition to all your abominations.

More Wicked than Samaria and Sodom

44 "Indeed everyone who quotes proverbs will use *this* proverb against you: 'Like mother, like daughter!' 45 You *are* your mother's daughter, loathing husband and children; and you *are* the [v]sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and children; [w]your mother *was* a Hittite and your father an Amorite.

46 "Your elder sister *is* Samaria, who dwells with her daughters to the north of you; and [x]your younger sister, who dwells to the south of you, *is* Sodom and her daughters. 47 You did not walk in their ways nor act according to their abominations; but, as *if that were* too little, [y]you became more corrupt than they in all your ways.

48 "*As* I live," says the Lord GOD, "neither [z]your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. 49 Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, [a]fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50 And they were haughty and [b]committed abomination before Me; therefore [c]I took them away as I saw *fit*.*

51 "Samaria did not commit [d]half of your sins; but you have multiplied your abominations more than they, and [e]have justified your sisters by all the abominations which you have done. 52 You who judged your sisters, bear your own shame also, because the sins which you committed were more abominable than theirs; they are more righteous than you. Yes, be disgraced also, and bear your own shame, because you justified your sisters.

53 [f]"When I bring back their captives, the captives of Sodom and her daughters, and the captives of Samaria and her daughters, then *I will also bring back* [g]the captives of your captivity among them, 54 that you may bear your own shame and be disgraced by all that you did when [h]you comforted them. 55 When your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters return to their former state, then you and your daughters will return to your former state. 56 For your sister Sodom was not a byword in your mouth in the days of your pride, 57 before your wickedness was uncovered. It was like the time of the [i]reproach of the daughters of Syria* and all *those* around her, and of [j]the daughters of the Philistines, who despise you everywhere. 58 [k]You have paid for your lewdness and your abominations," says the LORD. 59 For thus says the Lord GOD: "I will deal with you as you have done, who [l]despised [m]the oath by breaking the covenant.

An Everlasting Covenant

60 "Nevertheless I will [n]remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish [o]an everlasting covenant with you. 61 Then [p]you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and your

* **16:43** Following Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *were agitated with Me.* * **16:50** Vulgate reads *you saw;* Septuagint reads *he saw;* Targum reads *as was revealed to Me.* * **16:57** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate; many Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *Edom.*

by worshiping foreign idols and practicing infanticide (vv. 20–21; Deut. 12:29–32).

16:41 ***I will make you cease playing the harlot.*** During the captivity, Israel would abandon idolatry and polytheism, as Ezekiel predicted. God's anger over the people's sin would be satisfied.

16:44–47 ***Samaria . . . Sodom.*** Along with Jerusalem, these three are presented as sisters in the religiously and morally corrupt cultures in Canaan. Ezekiel even makes the point that Jerusalem had become more corrupt than the other two.

16:53–59 ***who despised the oath by breaking the covenant.*** The punishment of the exile and captivity was appropriate. The clear promise of the covenant was that blessings and curses were dependent upon Israel's obedience or disobedience (Ex. 24; Lev. 26; Deut. 28–29).

16:60–63 ***Nevertheless I will remember.*** Despite Jerusalem's disobedience to the Mosaic covenant and the resulting punishment, the covenant with Abraham—*My covenant*—would still be honored. Fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham did not depend on the people's faithfulness; God had made

16:40 [n] Ezek. 23:45–47 [o] John 8:5, 7 **16:41** [p] Deut. 13:16 [q] Ezek. 5:8; 23:10, 48 [r] Ezek. 23:27 **16:42** [s] Ezek. 5:13; 21:17 **16:43** [t] Ps. 78:42 [u] Ezek. 9:10; 11:21; 22:31 **16:45** [v] Ezek. 23:2–4 [w] Ezek. 16:3 **16:46** [x] Is. 1:10 **16:47** [y] Ezek. 5:6, 7 **16:48** [z] Matt. 10:15; 11:24 **16:49** [a] Gen. 13:10 **16:50** [b] Gen. 13:13; 18:20; 19:5 [c] Gen. 19:24 **16:51** [d] Ezek. 23:11 [e] Jer. 3:8–11 **16:53** [f] Is. 1:9 [g] Jer. 20:16 **16:54** [h] Ezek. 14:22 **16:57** [i] 2 Kin. 16:5 [j] Ezek. 16:27 **16:58** [k] Ezek. 23:49 **16:59** [l] Ezek. 17:13 [m] Deut. 29:12 **16:60** [n] Ps. 106:45 [o] Is. 55:3 **16:61** [p] Ezek. 20:43; 36:31

younger sisters; for I will give them to you for [q]daughters, [r]but not because of My covenant with you. **62**[s]And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, **63**that you may [t]remember and be ashamed, [u]and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done," says the Lord GOD.'"

The Eagles and the Vine

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2**"Son of man, pose a riddle, and speak a [q]parable to the house of Israel, **3**and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

[b]"A great eagle with large wings and long pinions,
Full of feathers of various colors,
Came to Lebanon
And [c]took from the cedar the highest branch.
4 He cropped off its topmost young twig
And carried it to a land of trade;
He set it in a city of merchants.
5 Then he took some of the seed of the land
And planted it in [d]a fertile field;
He placed *it* by abundant waters
And set it [e]like a willow tree.
6 And it grew and became a spreading vine [f]of low stature;
Its branches turned toward him,
But its roots were under it.
So it became a vine,
Brought forth branches,
And put forth shoots.

7 "But there was another* great eagle with large wings and many feathers;
And behold, [g]this vine bent its roots toward him,
And stretched its branches toward him,
From the garden terrace where it had been planted,
That he might water it.
8 It was planted in good soil by many waters,
To bring forth branches, bear fruit,
And become a majestic vine."'

9"Say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

"Will it thrive?
[h]Will he not pull up its roots,
Cut off its fruit,
And leave it to wither?
All of its spring leaves will wither,
And no great power or many people
Will be needed to pluck it up by its roots.
10 Behold, *it is* planted,
Will it thrive?
[i]Will it not utterly wither when the east wind touches it?
It will wither in the garden terrace where it grew."'"

11Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **12**"Say now to [j]the rebellious house: 'Do you not know what these *things mean*?' Tell *them*, 'Indeed [k]the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its king and princes, and led them with him to Babylon. **13**[l]And he took the king's offspring, made a covenant with him, [m]and put him under oath. He also took away the mighty of the land, **14**that the kingdom might be [n]brought low and not lift itself up, *but* that by keeping his covenant it might stand. **15**But [o]he rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, [p]that they might give him horses and many people. [q]Will he prosper? Will he who does such *things* escape? Can he break a covenant and still be delivered?

* **17:7** Following Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text and Targum read *one*.

the promise and He would keep it (Gen. 15; 17:7–8; Lev. 26:40–45; Ps. 145:13). The everlasting covenant had been made with Abraham before the Hebrew nation even existed. This covenant would be remembered and reestablished with the exiled Judeans. At that time, God's people would be ashamed by the contrast between their faithlessness and God's faithfulness and the fact that they were being exalted over those who were less sinful—Sodom and Samaria. The people of these other sinful nations would also inherit land, but only by God's grace, because no such covenant was made with them.

17:2–10 ***pose a riddle, and speak a parable.*** Both of these words can be used to refer to an allegory. The "parable" primarily refers to a comparison between two things. A "riddle" was sometimes used as a political contest of mental competition between kings, in which the loser would submit to the winner and be killed. The details of the allegory: *great eagle* is the king of Babylon (v. 12); *Lebanon* symbolizes Canaan, of which Jerusalem (v. 12) is the major city; *the highest branch of the cedar* is the king of Jerusalem and Judah (v. 12); *the young twigs* refers to the nobility of Judah; the *city of merchants* is Babylon; *the seed* is a member of the royal family (v. 13); the *fertile field* is the land where this royal offspring would rule (vv. 13–14); *another great eagle* is the king of Egypt (v. 15); and the *vine* is the remnant and ruler left in Judah. This remnant failed to prosper because they made a treaty with the Egyptian Pharaoh. As a result, even the remnant was slain and scattered by Babylon's army (vv. 15–21).

17:11–21 ***Say now to the rebellious house.*** Since Ezekiel had preached earlier about Jerusalem's past abominations (ch. 16), the people were likely

16:61 [q] [Gal. 4:26] [r] Jer. 31:31 **16:62** [s] Hos. 2:19, 20 **16:63** [t] Ezek. 36:31, 32 [u] [Rom. 3:19] **17:2** [q] Ezek. 20:49; 24:3 **17:3** [b] Ezek. 17:12 [c] 2 Kin. 24:12 **17:5** [d] Deut. 8:7–9 [e] Is. 44:4 **17:6** [f] Ezek. 17:14 **17:7** [g] Ezek. 17:15 **17:9** [h] 2 Kin. 25:7 **17:10** [i] Hos. 13:15 **17:12** [j] Ezek. 2:3–5; 12:9 [k] 2 Kin. 24:11–16 **17:13** [l] 2 Kin. 24:17 [m] 2 Chr. 36:13 **17:14** [n] Ezek. 29:14 **17:15** [o] 2 Kin. 24:20 [p] Deut. 17:16 [q] Ezek. 17:9

16 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely [r]in the place *where* the king *dwells* who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke—with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. 17[s]Nor will Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company do anything in the war, [t]when they heap up a siege mound and build a wall to cut off many persons. 18Since he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, and in fact [u]gave his hand and still did all these *things*, he shall not escape.'"

19Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "*As* I live, surely My oath which he despised, and My covenant which he broke, I will recompense on his own head. 20I will [v]spread My net over him, and he shall be taken in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon and [w]try him there for the treason which he committed against Me. 21[x]All his fugitives* with all his troops shall fall by the sword, and those who remain shall be [y]scattered to every wind; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken."

Israel Exalted at Last

22Thus says the Lord GOD: "I will take also *one* of the highest [z]branches of the high cedar and set *it* out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs [a]a tender one, and will [b]plant *it* on a high and prominent mountain. 23[c]On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. [d]Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell. 24And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, [e]have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; [f]I, the LORD, have spoken and have done *it*."

A False Proverb Refuted

18 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, 2"What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying:

'The [a]fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children's teeth are set on edge'?

3"*As* I live," says the Lord GOD, "you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel.

4 "Behold, all souls are [b]Mine;
The soul of the father
As well as the soul of the son is Mine;
[c]The soul who sins shall die.
5 But if a man is just
And does what is lawful and right;
6 [d]If he has not eaten on the mountains,
Nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel,
Nor [e]defiled his neighbor's wife,
Nor approached [f]a woman during her impurity;
7 If he has not [g]oppressed anyone,
But has restored to the debtor his [h]pledge;
Has robbed no one by violence,
But has [i]given his bread to the hungry
And covered the naked with [j]clothing;
8 If he has not exacted [k]usury
Nor taken any increase,
But has withdrawn his hand from iniquity
And [l]executed true judgment between man and man;
9 *If* he has walked in My statutes
And kept My judgments faithfully—
He *is* just;
He shall surely [m]live!"
Says the Lord GOD.

* **17:21** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; many Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac read *choice men*; Targum reads *mighty men*; Septuagint omits *All his fugitives*.

charging God with unfairness in punishing the present population. Ezekiel points out that present and past sins make God's actions just and fair. In this section, the Lord explains His grounds for using Babylon to judge Judah.

17:22 ***I will take also.*** The Hebrew is emphatic: "I Myself will take." In contrast to human kings, God declared that He personally would pick out, plant, and make prominent "a tender one," that is a twig or a sprig. Cedar branches are symbolic of rulers on the Davidic throne (17:3–4,12–13) and elsewhere of a line of David's descendants prophesied to produce the Messiah (2 Sam. 7:16; Is. 11:1–5; Jer. 22:24–30; Zech. 6:9–13; Matt. 1:1–17).

17:23–24 ***made the dry tree flourish.*** What was accomplished in the restoration under Zerubbabel was a fulfillment of this promise. But as is often the case, in biblical prophecy, the greater fulfillment is still to come in the reign of the Savior King.

18:2–3 ***set on edge.*** The Hebrew word that is rendered here is literally "made dull" but can refer to a sour sensation. The main idea of the proverb is that children are affected by their parents' behavioral choices just as eating sour grapes produces a bitter taste. However, the people were interpreting and applying this proverb incorrectly; therefore, God said they should not use it any longer.

18:4 ***The soul who sins shall die.*** In this verse, the physical, earthly consequences of sinful behavior are being addressed (3:16–21; 33:12–20; Deut. 30:15–20).

18:6 ***approached a woman during her impurity.*** In ancient Israel, intimacy during the woman's menstrual period was prohibited. The Old Testament does not explain the reason for this, but it may be tied to the special role of blood for the atoning of sin (Lev. 15:19–33).

17:16 [r] Ezek. 12:13 **17:17** [s] Jer. 37:7 [t] Jer. 52:4
17:18 [u] 1 Chr. 29:24 **17:20** [v] Ezek. 12:13 [w] Ezek. 20:36
17:21 [x] Ezek. 12:14 [y] Ezek. 12:15; 22:15 **17:22** [z] [Zech. 3:8] [a] Is. 53:2 [b] [Ps. 2:6] **17:23** [c] [Is. 2:2, 3] [d] Dan. 4:12 **17:24** [e] Amos 9:11 [f] Ezek. 22:14 **18:2** [a] Lam. 5:7
18:4 [b] Num. 16:22; 27:16 [c] [Rom. 6:23] **18:6** [d] Ezek. 22:9 [e] Lev. 18:20; 20:10 [f] Lev. 18:19; 20:18 **18:7** [g] Ex. 22:21 [h] Deut. 24:12 [i] Deut. 15:7, 11 [j] Is. 58:7 **18:8** [k] Ex. 22:25 [l] Zech. 8:16 **18:9** [m] Amos 5:4

10 "If he begets a son *who is* a robber
Or [n]a shedder of blood,
Who does any of these *things*
11 And does none of those *duties*,
But has eaten on the mountains
Or defiled his neighbor's wife;
12 If he has oppressed the poor and needy,
Robbed by violence,
Not restored the pledge,
Lifted his eyes to the idols,
Or [o]committed abomination;
13 If he has exacted usury
Or taken increase—
Shall he then live?
He shall not live!
If he has done any of these abominations,
He shall surely die;
[p]His blood shall be upon him.

14 "*If,* however, he begets a son
Who sees all the sins which his father has done,
And considers but does not do likewise;
15 [q]*Who* has not eaten on the mountains,
Nor lifted his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel,
Nor defiled his neighbor's wife;
16 Has not oppressed anyone,
Nor withheld a pledge,
Nor robbed by violence,
But has given his bread to the hungry
And covered the naked with clothing;
17 *Who* has withdrawn his hand from the poor*
And not received usury or increase,
But has executed My judgments
And walked in My statutes—
He shall not die for the iniquity of his father;
He shall surely live!

18 "*As for* his father,
Because he cruelly oppressed,
Robbed his brother by violence,
And did what *is* not good among his people,
Behold, [r]he shall die for his iniquity.

Turn and Live

19 "Yet you say, 'Why [s]should the son not bear the guilt of the father?' Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. 20 [t]The soul who sins shall die. [u]The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. [v]The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, [w]and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

21 "But [x]if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 22 [y]None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall [z]live. 23 [a]Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "*and* not that he should turn from his ways and live?

24 "But [b]when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* does, shall he live? [c]All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.

25 "Yet you say, [d]'The way of the Lord is not fair.' Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair? 26 [e]When a righteous *man* turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies. 27 Again, [f]when a wicked *man* turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. 28 Because he [g]considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 29 [h]Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair?

30 [i]"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. [j]"Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. 31 [k]Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a [l]new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? 32 For [m]I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and [n]live!"

* **18:17** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *iniquity* (compare verse 8).

18:19–32 ***Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?*** In this passage, Ezekiel further clarifies his teaching on individual responsibility for sin by answering certain questions that reflect what his audience might be thinking in response to his previous message. God's response to their questions through Ezekiel is, in part, also composed of questions.

18:10 [n] Num. 35:31 **18:12** [o] Ezek. 8:6, 17 **18:13** [p] Lev. 20:9, 11–13, 16, 27 **18:15** [q] Ezek. 18:6 **18:18** [r] Ezek. 3:18 **18:19** [s] Ex. 20:5 **18:20** [t] Ezek. 18:4 [u] Deut. 24:16 [v] Is. 3:10, 11 [w] Rom. 2:6–9 **18:21** [x] Ezek. 18:27; 33:12, 19 **18:22** [y] Ezek. 18:24; 33:16 [z] [Ps. 18:20–24] **18:23** [a] [Ezek. 18:32; 33:11] **18:24** [b] Ezek. 3:20; 18:26; 33:18 [c] [2 Pet. 2:20] **18:25** [d] Ezek. 18:29; 33:17, 20 **18:26** [e] Ezek. 18:24 **18:27** [f] Ezek. 18:21 **18:28** [g] Ezek. 18:14 **18:29** [h] Ezek. 18:25 **18:30** [i] Ezek. 7:3; 33:20 [j] Matt. 3:2 **18:31** [k] Eph. 4:22, 23 [l] Jer. 32:39 **18:32** [m] Lam. 3:33 [n] [Prov. 4:2, 5, 6]

Israel Degraded

19 "Moreover [a]take up a lamentation for
the princes of Israel, [2]and say:

'What *is* your mother? A lioness:
She lay down among the lions;
Among the young lions she nourished
her cubs.
[3] She brought up one of her cubs,
And [b]he became a young lion;
He learned to catch prey,
And he devoured men.
[4] The nations also heard of him;
He was trapped in their pit,
And they brought him with chains to
the land of [c]Egypt.

[5] 'When she saw that she waited, *that*
her hope was lost,
She took [d]another of her cubs *and*
made him a young lion.
[6] [e]He roved among the lions,
And [f]became a young lion;
He learned to catch prey;
He devoured men.
[7] He knew their desolate places,*
And laid waste their cities;
The land with its fullness was desolated
By the noise of his roaring.
[8] [g]Then the nations set against him from
the provinces on every side,
And spread their net over him;
[h]He was trapped in their pit.
[9] [i]They put him in a cage with chains,
And brought him to the king of
Babylon;
They brought him in nets,
That his voice should no longer be
heard on [j]the mountains of Israel.

[10] 'Your mother *was* [k]like a vine in your
bloodline,*
Planted by the waters,
[l]Fruitful and full of branches
Because of many waters.
[11] She had strong branches for scepters
of rulers.
[m]She towered in stature above the thick
branches,
And was seen in her height amid the
dense foliage.
[12] But she was [n]plucked up in fury,
She was cast down to the ground,
And the [o]east wind dried her fruit.
Her strong branches were broken and
withered;
The fire consumed them.
[13] And now she *is* planted in the
wilderness,
In a dry and thirsty land.
[14] [p]Fire has come out from a rod of her
branches
And devoured her fruit,
So that she has no strong branch—
a scepter for ruling.'"

[q]This *is* a lamentation, and has become a lamentation.

The Rebellions of Israel

20 It came to pass in the seventh year,
in the fifth *month*, on the tenth *day*
of the month, *that* [a]certain of the elders
of Israel came to inquire of the LORD, and
sat before me. [2]Then the word of the LORD
came to me, saying, [3]"Son of man, speak
to the elders of Israel, and say to them,
'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Have you come
to inquire of Me? *As* I live," says the Lord
GOD, [b]"I will not be inquired of by you."'
[4]Will you judge them, son of man, will you
judge *them*? Then [c]make known to them
the abominations of their fathers.

[5]"Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:
"On the day when [d]I chose Israel and raised
My hand in an oath to the descendants
of the house of Jacob, and made Myself
[e]known to them in the land of Egypt, I
raised My hand in an oath to them, say-
ing, [f]'I *am* the LORD your God.' [6]On that
day I raised My hand in an oath to them,
[g]to bring them out of the land of Egypt into
a land that I had searched out for them,
[h]'flowing with milk and honey,'* [i]the glory

* **19:7** Septuagint reads *He stood in insolence;* Targum reads *He destroyed its palaces;* Vulgate reads *He learned to make widows.* * **19:10** Literally *blood,* following Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *like a flower on a pomegranate tree;* Targum reads *in your likeness.*
* **20:6** Exodus 3:8

19:2–10 ***lioness . . . vine in your bloodline.*** Most likely both of these terms represented the nation of Israel since each was a "mother" of kings—the "cubs" and the "branches." The vine and lion images are common symbols for Hebrew royalty and nationality (15:1–6; 17:1–10; Gen. 49:9).

19:13 ***In a dry and thirsty land.*** To anyone who loved the covenantal promises focused on God's worship in Jerusalem, any alternative to Jerusalem was akin to living in the desert.

20:2–4 ***I will not be inquired of by you.*** God explains to Ezekiel that the elders of Israel had forfeited any right to inquire of Him due to the abominations of their fathers. All the people are responsible for their own sins, and this does not mean that these Hebrews were paying for sins their ancestors had committed. Instead, the present generation of Hebrews in exile had clearly shown their failure to learn practical lessons from history, and thus had condemned themselves to repeat many mistakes. These leaders came to God with questions, but the questions were foolish and demonstrated the people's sinfulness. God gives a remedial review of their past.

19:1 [a] Ezek. 26:17; 27:2 **19:3** [b] 2 Kin. 23:31, 32 **19:4** [c] 2 Kin. 23:33, 34 **19:5** [d] 2 Kin. 23:34 **19:6** [e] 2 Kin. 24:8, 9 [f] Ezek. 19:3 **19:8** [g] 2 Kin. 24:2, 11 [h] Ezek. 19:4 **19:9** [i] 2 Chr. 36:6 [j] Ezek. 6:2 **19:10** [k] Ezek. 17:6 [l] Deut. 8:7–9 **19:11** [m] Dan. 4:11 **19:12** [n] Jer. 31:27, 28 [o] Hos. 13:5 **19:14** [p] Judg. 9:15 [q] Lam. 2:5 **20:1** [a] Ezek. 8:1, 11, 12; 14:1 **20:3** [b] Ezek. 7:26; 14:3 **20:4** [c] Ezek. 16:2; 22:2 **20:5** [d] Ex. 6:6–8 [e] Deut. 4:34 [f] Ex. 20:2 **20:6** [g] Jer. 32:22 [h] Ex. 3:8 [i] Jer. 11:5; 32:22

of all lands. 7Then I said to them, 'Each of you, [i]throw away [k]the abominations which are before his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with [l]the idols of Egypt. I *am* the LORD your God.' 8But they rebelled against Me and would not obey Me. They did not all cast away the abominations which were before their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I said, 'I will [m]pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.' 9[n]But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles among whom they *were,* in whose sight I had made Myself [o]known to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.

10"Therefore I [p]made them go out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. 11[q]And I gave them My statutes and showed them My judgments, [r]'which, *if* a man does, he shall live by them.'* 12Moreover I also gave them My [s]Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them. 13Yet the house of Israel [t]rebelled against Me in the wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes; they [u]despised My judgments, [v]'which, *if* a man does, he shall live by them';* and they greatly [w]defiled My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them in the [x]wilderness, to consume them. 14[y]But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. 15So [z]I also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them,* [a]'flowing with milk and honey,'* [b]the glory of all lands, 16[c]because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for [d]their heart went after their idols. 17[e]Nevertheless My eye spared them from destruction. I did not make an end of them in the wilderness.

18"But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. 19I *am* the LORD your God: [f]Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; 20[g]hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.'

21"Notwithstanding, [h]the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, and were not careful to observe My judgments, [i]'which, *if* a man does, he shall live by them';* but they profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness. 22Nevertheless I withdrew My hand and acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. 23Also I raised My hand in an oath to those in the wilderness, that [j]I would scatter them among the Gentiles and disperse them throughout the countries, 24[k]because they had not executed My judgments, but had despised My statutes, profaned My Sabbaths, and [l]their eyes were fixed on their fathers' idols.

25"Therefore [m]I also gave them up to statutes *that were* not good, and judgments by which they could not live; 26and I pronounced them unclean because of their ritual gifts, in that they caused all their firstborn to pass [n]through *the fire,* that I might make them desolate and that they [o]might know that I am the LORD."'

27"Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "In this too your fathers have [p]blasphemed Me, by being unfaithful to Me. 28When I brought them into the land *concerning* which I had raised My hand in an oath to give them, and [q]they saw all the high hills and all the thick trees, there they offered their sacrifices and provoked Me with their offerings. There they also sent up their [r]sweet aroma and poured out their drink offerings. 29Then I said to them, 'What *is* this high place to which you go?' So its name is called Bamah* to this day."' 30Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Are you defiling yourselves in the manner of your

* **20:11** Leviticus 18:5 * **20:13** Leviticus 18:5
* **20:15** Exodus 3:8 * **20:21** Leviticus 18:5
* **20:29** Literally *High Place*

20:11 ***if a man does, he shall live by them.*** Following their exodus from slavery in Egypt, God began to sanctify the Israelites by revealing to them a code of law and entering a covenant relationship with them on a Creator-creature basis. This does not teach that eternal salvation can be earned by good works, but that the quality of the believer's physical and spiritual life on earth are related to his or her obedience to the living God.

20:12 ***gave them My Sabbaths.*** This is an important verse for understanding the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15). Sabbath means "rest." That is, the Sabbath was a day to cease all ordinary work or labor, as clearly emphasized in Exodus 20:8–11. The Sabbath was to serve as a sign of God's covenantal relationship with His people, Israel.

20:20 ***hallow My Sabbaths.*** This word means "to treat as holy," "to observe as distinct," and "to consecrate." God commands that His Sabbaths be continually maintained by His people as sacred—distinct and separate from ordinary days.

20:7 [i] Ezek. 18:31 [k] 2 Chr. 15:8 [l] Lev. 18:3 **20:8** [m] Ezek. 7:8 **20:9** [n] Num. 14:13 [o] Josh. 2:10; 9:9, 10 **20:10** [p] Ex. 13:18 **20:11** [q] Neh. 9:13 [r] Lev. 18:5 **20:12** [s] Deut. 5:12 **20:13** [t] Num. 14:22 [u] Prov. 1:25 [v] Lev. 18:5 [w] Ex. 16:27 [x] Num. 14:29 **20:14** [y] Ezek. 20:9, 20 **20:15** [z] Num. 14:28 [a] Ex. 3:8 [b] Ezek. 20:6 **20:16** [c] Ezek. 20:13, 24 [d] Amos 5:25 **20:17** [e] [Ps. 78:38] **20:19** [f] Deut. 5:32 **20:20** [g] Jer. 17:22 **20:21** [h] Num. 25:1 [i] Lev. 18:5 **20:23** [j] Lev. 26:33 **20:24** [k] Ezek. 20:13, 16 [l] Ezek. 6:9 **20:25** [m] Rom. 1:24 **20:26** [n] Jer. 32:35 [o] Ezek. 6:7; 20:12, 20 **20:27** [p] Rom. 2:24 **20:28** [q] Ezek. 6:13 [r] Ezek. 16:19

[s]fathers, and committing harlotry according to their [t]abominations? 31For when you offer [u]your gifts and make your sons pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols, even to this day. So shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? *As* I live," says the Lord GOD, "I will [v]not be inquired of by you. 32[w]What you have in your mind shall never be, when you say, 'We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries, serving wood and stone.'

God Will Restore Israel

33"*As* I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand, [x]with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. 34I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. 35And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there [y]I will plead My case with you face to face. 36[z]Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you," says the Lord GOD.

37"I will make you [a]pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the [b]covenant; 38[c]I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but [d]they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD.

39"As for you, O house of Israel," thus says the Lord GOD: [e]"Go, serve every one of you his idols—and hereafter—if you will not obey Me; [f]but profane My holy name no more with your gifts and your idols. 40For [g]on My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel," says the Lord GOD, "there [h]all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me; there [i]I will accept them, and there I will require your offerings and the firstfruits of your sacrifices, together with all your holy things. 41I will accept you as a [j]sweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles. 42[k]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, [l]when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country *for* which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers. 43And [m]there you shall remember your ways and all your doings with which you were defiled; and [n]you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight because of all the evils that you have committed. 44[o]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have dealt with you [p]for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel," says the Lord GOD.'"

Fire in the Forest

45Furthermore the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 46[q]"Son of man, set your face toward the south; preach against the south and prophesy against the forest land, the South,* 47and say to the forest of the South, 'Hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, [r]I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour [s]every green tree and every dry tree in you; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces [t]from the south to the north shall be scorched by it. 48All flesh shall see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched."'"

49Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! They say of me, 'Does he not speak [u]parables?'"

Babylon, the Sword of God

21 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2[a]"Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, [b]preach against the

* **20:46** Hebrew *Negev*

20:32 ***We will be like the Gentiles.*** Chosen to be a nation separate from sin and secular ways—a special instrument to reveal God's glory—Israel's consistent tendency was to identify with the neighboring ungodly nations and to take on their idolatrous ways (Ex. 19:5).

20:33–36 ***I will bring you out from the peoples.*** The judgment of captivity in Babylon had begun in the deportations of 605 and 597 B.C. and would be continued with Jerusalem's fall in 586 B.C. However, God also promised to restore Judah and to judge her enemies with fury (Deut. 4:34). This refers to the Persian conquest of Babylon in 539 B.C. and to the three returns of the Jews to their land and the rebuilding of their homeland (538–330 B.C.), yet Israel would again be taken captive and made to wander throughout the nations during the Roman occupation.

20:37 ***I will make you pass under the rod.*** This is the way a shepherd counts and controls his sheep (Lev. 27:32; Jer. 33:13).

20:39 ***Go, serve every one of you his idols.*** This is an ironic command; the rest of the verse indicates that God was giving the stubborn people over to what they had decided. God grants each one a destiny consistent with his or her decisions.

20:44 ***you shall know that I am the LORD.*** The promise of this verse is that the Lord will gather the nation of Israel from places where they have been dispersed and that they will repent because of the evil things they have done.

20:46–47 ***the forest of the South.*** This refers to the

20:30 [s] Judg. 2:19 [t] Jer. 7:26; 16:12 **20:31** [u] Ezek. 16:20; 20:26 [v] Ezek. 20:3 **20:32** [w] Ezek. 11:5 **20:33** [x] Jer. 21:5 **20:35** [y] Jer. 2:9, 35; Ezek. 17:20 **20:36** [z] Num. 14:21–23, 28 **20:37** [a] Lev. 27:32 [b] Ps. 89:30–34 **20:38** [c] Ezek. 34:17 [d] Jer. 44:14 **20:39** [e] Amos 4:4 [f] Is. 1:13–15 **20:40** [g] Is. 2:2, 3 [h] Ezek. 37:22 [i] Zech. 8:20–22 **20:41** [j] Phil. 4:18 **20:42** [k] Ezek. 36:23; 38:23 [l] Ezek. 11:17; 34:13; 36:24 **20:43** [m] Ezek. 16:61 [n] Lev. 26:39 **20:44** [o] Ezek. 24:24 [p] Ezek. 36:22 **20:46** [q] Ezek. 21:2 **20:47** [r] Jer. 21:14 [s] Luke 23:31 [t] Ezek. 21:4 **20:49** [u] Ezek. 12:9; 17:2 **21:2** [a] Ezek. 20:46 [b] Amos 7:16

holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel; 3and say to the land of Israel, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I *am* [c]against you, and I will draw My sword out of its sheath and cut off both [d]righteous and wicked from you. 4Because I will cut off both righteous and wicked from you, therefore My sword shall go out of its sheath against all flesh [e]from south *to* north, 5that all flesh may know that I, the LORD, have drawn My sword out of its sheath; it [f]shall not return anymore."' 6[g]Sigh therefore, son of man, with a breaking heart, and sigh with bitterness before their eyes. 7And it shall be when they say to you, 'Why are you sighing?' that you shall answer, 'Because of the news; when it comes, every heart will melt, [h]all hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint, and all knees will be weak *as* water. Behold, it is coming and shall be brought to pass,' says the Lord GOD."

8Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9"Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the LORD!' Say:

[i]'A sword, a sword is sharpened
And also polished!
10 Sharpened to make a dreadful slaughter,
Polished to flash like lightning!
Should we then make mirth?
It despises the scepter of My son,
As it does all wood.
11 And He has given it to be polished,
That it may be handled;
This sword is sharpened, and it is polished
To be given into the hand of [j]the slayer.'

12 "Cry and wail, son of man;
For it will be against My people,
Against all the princes of Israel.
Terrors including the sword will be against My people;
Therefore [k]strike *your* thigh.

13 "Because *it is* [l]a testing,
And what if *the sword* despises even the scepter?
[m]*The scepter* shall be no *more*,"

says the Lord GOD.

14 "You therefore, son of man, prophesy,
And [n]strike *your* hands together.
The third time let the sword do double *damage.*
It *is* the sword *that* slays,
The sword that slays the great *men,*
That enters their [o]private chambers.
15 I have set the point of the sword against all their gates,
That the heart may melt and many may stumble.
Ah! [p]*It is* made bright;
It is grasped for slaughter:

16 "Swords[q] at the ready!
Thrust right!
Set your blade!
Thrust left—
Wherever your edge is ordered!

17 "I also will [r]beat My fists together,
And [s]I will cause My fury to rest;
I, the LORD, have spoken."

18The word of the LORD came to me again, saying: 19"And son of man, appoint for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to go; both of them shall go from the same land. Make a sign; put *it* at the head of the road to the city. 20Appoint a road for the sword to go to [t]Rabbah of the Ammonites, and to Judah, into fortified Jerusalem. 21For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he shakes the arrows, he consults the images, he looks at the liver. 22In his right hand is the divination for Jerusalem: to set up battering rams, to call for a slaughter, to [u]lift the voice with shouting, [v]to set battering rams against the gates, to heap up a *siege* mound, and to build a wall. 23And it will be to them like a false divination in the eyes of those who [w]have sworn oaths with them; but he will bring their iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken.

24"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your doings your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.

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land of Judah—the southern kingdom—which had more trees then than now.

21:6 ***a breaking heart.*** This phrase translates words that literally mean "breaking loins," suggesting great emotional upheaval.

21:12 ***Cry and wail . . . strike your thigh.*** Ezekiel was told to add verbal groans and a physical gesture to his musical message. In that culture, these actions displayed great grief and sorrow (Jer. 31:19).

21:14–17 ***The third time . . . double damage.*** This was a numeric device (Prov. 6:16) used here to emphasize the extent and effectiveness of the sword's employment against Judah.

21:19–20 ***Make a sign.*** Ezekiel was to place a signpost at a fork in the road leading to the capital cities of Ammon and Judah.

21:21 ***shakes the arrows.*** There was a method of casting lots using arrows inscribed with names. They were shaken about in the quiver and then dropped to the ground like throwing dice. ***looks at the liver.*** Sheep livers from sacrificed animals were studied. The shades and shapes of various sections of the organ were the basis for a positive or negative prediction.

21:3 [c] Ezek. 5:8 [d] Job 9:22 **21:4** [e] Ezek. 20:47 **21:5** [f] [Is. 45:23; 55:11] **21:6** [g] Is. 22:4 **21:7** [h] Ezek. 7:17 **21:9** [i] Deut. 32:41 **21:11** [j] Ezek. 21:19 **21:12** [k] Jer. 31:19 **21:13** [l] Job 9:23 [m] Ezek. 21:27 **21:14** [n] Num. 24:10 [o] 1 Kin. 20:30 **21:15** [p] Ezek. 21:10, 28 **21:16** [q] Ezek. 14:17 **21:17** [r] Ezek. 22:13 [s] Ezek. 5:13; 16:42; 24:13 **21:20** [t] Jer. 49:2 **21:22** [u] Jer. 51:14 [v] Ezek. 4:2 **21:23** [w] Ezek. 17:16, 18

25 'Now to you, O [x]profane, wicked prince
of Israel, [y]whose day has come, whose iniquity *shall* end, 26 thus says the Lord GOD:

"Remove the turban, and take off the crown;
Nothing *shall remain* the same.
[z]Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.
27 Overthrown, overthrown,
I will make it overthrown!
[a]It shall be no *longer*,
Until He comes whose right it is,
And I will give it *to* [b]*Him*."'

A Sword Against the Ammonites

28 "And you, son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD [c]concerning the Ammonites and concerning their reproach,' and say:

'A sword, a sword *is* drawn,
Polished for slaughter,
For consuming, for flashing—
29 While they [d]see false visions for you,
While they divine a lie to you,
To bring you on the necks of the wicked, the slain
[e]Whose day has come,
Whose iniquity *shall* end.
30 'Return[f] *it* to its sheath.
[g]I will judge you
In the place where you were created,
[h]In the land of your nativity.
31 I will [i]pour out My indignation on you;
I will [j]blow against you with the fire of My wrath,
And deliver you into the hands of brutal men *who are* skillful to [k]destroy.
32 You shall be fuel for the fire;
Your blood shall be in the midst of the land.
[l]You shall not be remembered,
For I the LORD have spoken.'"

Sins of Jerusalem

22 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 "Now, son of man, [a]will you judge, will you judge [b]the bloody city? Yes, show her all her abominations! 3 Then say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "The city sheds [c]blood in her own midst, that her time may come; and she makes idols within herself to defile herself. 4 You have become guilty by the blood which you have [d]shed, and have defiled yourself with the idols which you have made. You have caused your days to draw near, and have come to *the end of* your years; [e]therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all countries. 5 *Those* near and *those* far from you will mock you as infamous *and* full of tumult.

6 "Look, [f]the princes of Israel: each one has used his power to shed blood in you. 7 In you they have [g]made light of father and mother; in your midst they have [h]oppressed the stranger; in you they have mistreated the fatherless and the widow. 8 You have despised My holy things and [i]profaned My Sabbaths. 9 In you are [j]men who slander to cause bloodshed; [k]in you are those who eat on the mountains; in your midst they commit lewdness. 10 In you men [l]uncover their fathers' nakedness; in you they violate women who are [m]set apart during their impurity. 11 One commits abomination [n]with his neighbor's wife; [o]another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; and another in you violates his sister, his father's [p]daughter. 12 In you [q]they take bribes to shed blood; [r]you take usury and increase; you have made profit from your neighbors by extortion, and [s]have forgotten Me," says the Lord GOD.

13 "Behold, therefore, I [t]beat My fists at the dishonest profit which you have made, and at the bloodshed which has been in your midst. 14 [u]Can your heart endure, or can your hands remain strong, in the days when I shall deal with you? [v]I, the LORD, have spoken, and will do *it*. 15 [w]I will scatter you among the nations, disperse you throughout the countries, and [x]remove your filthiness completely from you. 16 You shall defile yourself in the sight of the nations; then [y]you shall know that I *am* the LORD."'"

21:26–27 *turban . . . crown.* These stand for the priesthood and kingship. Both would be removed from Judah.

21:28 *concerning the Ammonites.* The Ammonites joined other nations east of the Jordan in raiding Judean territory, in return for protection from Nebuchadnezzar. Later, during the reign of Zedekiah, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and others conspired against Babylon, but with false hopes of help from Egypt (Jer. 27:3–11).

22:1–5 *You have caused your days to draw near.* The city was ripe for judgment. When such hypocrisy is exposed and punishment is executed before the world, God's people become lasting objects of ridicule.

22:6–12 *the princes of Israel.* Jerusalem's princes had shed the blood of innocent people (7:27; 11:1; 12:10; 19:1; 21:13). These evil leaders had been (1) taking advantage of parents and the weak; (2) rejecting God and His covenant, leading to ungodliness and inhumanity; (3) murdering the innocent by slandering them; (4) preferring idolatrous religion and its immoral rituals; (5) engaging in sexual immorality with neighbors, family, and relatives; and (6) loving money and using it to get ahead of fellow citizens.

21:25 [x] Jer. 52:2 [y] Ezek. 21:29 **21:26** [z] Luke 1:52
21:27 [a] [Luke 1:32, 33] [b] [Jer. 23:5, 6] **21:28** [c] Ezek. 25:1–7 **21:29** [d] Ezek. 12:24; 13:6–9; 22:28 [e] Job 18:20
21:30 [f] Jer. 47:6, 7 [g] Gen. 15:14 [h] Ezek. 16:3 **21:31** [i] Ezek. 7:8 [j] Ezek. 22:20, 21 [k] Hab. 1:6–10 **21:32** [l] Ezek. 25:10 **22:2** [a] Ezek. 20:4 [b] Nah. 3:1 **22:3** [c] Ezek. 24:6, 7 **22:4** [d] 2 Kin. 21:16 [e] Deut. 28:37 **22:6** [f] Is. 1:23 **22:7** [g] Lev. 20:9 [h] Ex. 22:22 **22:8** [i] Lev. 19:30
22:9 [j] Lev. 19:16 [k] Ezek. 18:6, 11 **22:10** [l] Lev. 18:7, 8 [m] Lev. 18:19; 20:18 **22:11** [n] Ezek. 18:11 [o] Lev. 18:15 [p] Lev. 18:9 **22:12** [q] Ex. 23:8 [r] Ex. 22:25 [s] Ezek. 23:35
22:13 [t] Ezek. 21:17 **22:14** [u] Ezek. 21:7 [v] Ezek. 17:24
22:15 [w] Deut. 4:27 [x] Ezek. 23:27, 48 **22:16** [y] Ps. 9:16

Israel in the Furnace

17 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 18 "Son of man, [z]the house of Israel has
become dross to Me; they *are* all bronze,
tin, iron, and lead, in the midst of a [a]fur-
nace; they have become dross from silver.
19 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Be-
cause you have all become dross, therefore
behold, I will gather you into the midst of
Jerusalem. 20 *As men* gather silver, bronze,
iron, lead, and tin into the midst of a fur-
nace, to blow fire on it, to [b]melt *it;* so I will
gather *you* in My anger and in My fury, and
I will leave *you there* and melt you. 21 Yes,
I will gather you and blow on you with the
fire of My wrath, and you shall be melted in
its midst. 22 As silver is melted in the midst
of a furnace, so shall you be melted in its
midst; then you shall know that I, the LORD,
have [c]poured out My fury on you.'"

Israel's Wicked Leaders

23 And the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, 24 "Son of man, say to her: 'You
are a land that is [d]not cleansed* or rained
on in the day of indignation.' 25 [e]The con-
spiracy of her prophets* in her midst is
like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they
[f]have devoured people; [g]they have taken
treasure and precious things; they have
made many widows in her midst. 26 [h]Her
priests have violated My law and [i]pro-
faned My holy things; they have not [j]dis-
tinguished between the holy and unholy,
nor have they made known *the difference*
between the unclean and the clean; and
they have hidden their eyes from My Sab-
baths, so that I am profaned among them.
27 Her [k]princes in her midst *are* like wolves
tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy
people, and to get dishonest gain. 28 [l]Her
prophets plastered them with untempered
mortar, [m]seeing false visions, and divin-
ing [n]lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the
Lord GOD,' when the LORD had not spoken.
29 The people of the land have used oppres-
sions, committed robbery, and mistreated
the poor and needy; and they wrongfully
[o]oppress the stranger. 30 [p]So I sought for a
man among them who would [q]make a wall,
and [r]stand in the gap before Me on behalf
of the land, that I should not destroy it; but
I found no one. 31 Therefore I have [s]poured
out My indignation on them; I have con-
sumed them with the fire of My wrath; and
I have recompensed [t]their deeds on their
own heads," says the Lord GOD.

Two Harlot Sisters

23 The word of the LORD came again to
me, saying:

2 "Son of man, there were [a]two women,
The daughters of one mother.
3 [b]They committed harlotry in Egypt,
They committed harlotry in [c]their
youth;
Their breasts were there embraced,
Their virgin bosom was there pressed.
4 Their names: Oholah* the elder and
Oholibah* [d]her sister;
[e]They were Mine,
And they bore sons and daughters.
As for their names,
Samaria *is* Oholah, and Jerusalem *is*
Oholibah.

The Older Sister, Samaria

5 "Oholah played the harlot even though
she was Mine;
And she lusted for her lovers, the
neighboring [f]Assyrians,
6 *Who were* clothed in purple,
Captains and rulers,
All of them desirable young men,
Horsemen riding on horses.
7 Thus she committed her harlotry with
them,
All of them choice men of Assyria;
And with all for whom she lusted,
With all their idols, she defiled herself.
8 She has never given up her harlotry
brought [g]from Egypt,
For in her youth they had lain with her,
Pressed her virgin bosom,
And poured out their immorality upon
her.
9 "Therefore I have delivered her
Into the hand of her lovers,
Into the hand of the [h]Assyrians,
For whom she lusted.

* **22:24** Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *showered upon.*
* **22:25** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *princes;* Targum reads *scribes.*
* **23:4** Literally *Her Own Tabernacle* • Literally *My Tabernacle Is in Her*

22:26 ***Her priests.*** Those who were supposed to be leaders were not examples of separation from worldly ways (Ex. 19:6). Some at least were motivated by monetary gain (Mic. 3:11).

22:28 ***plastered them with untempered mortar.*** The false prophets were involved in "whitewashing" the sins of the nation's leaders.

22:30 ***sought for a man among them.*** God could not find a spiritual leader to guide the people in godliness.

23:4 ***Oholah.*** In Hebrew, Oholah means "her own tabernacle" and ***Oholibah*** means "My tabernacle is in her." These seem to refer to God's sanctuaries in each land or, in a distinct usage, to the tent shrines for Canaanite idols as opposed to God's true temple.

23:9–10 ***They uncovered her nakedness.*** This means to be stripped bare and so put to great shame.

22:18 [z] Is. 1:22 [a] Prov. 17:3 **22:20** [b] Is. 1:25 **22:22** [c] Ezek. 20:8, 33 **22:24** [d] Ezek. 24:13 **22:25** [e] Hos. 6:9 [f] Matt. 23:14 [g] Mic. 3:11 **22:26** [h] Mal. 2:8 [i] 1 Sam. 2:29 [j] Lev. 10:10 **22:27** [k] Is. 1:23 **22:28** [l] Ezek. 13:10 [m] Ezek. 13:6, 7 [n] Jer. 23:25–32 **22:29** [o] Ex. 23:9 **22:30** [p] Jer. 5:1 [q] Ezek. 13:5 [r] Ps. 106:23 **22:31** [s] Ezek. 22:22 [t] Ezek. 9:10 **23:2** [a] Ezek. 16:44–46 **23:3** [b] Lev. 17:7 [c] Ezek. 16:22 **23:4** [d] Jer. 3:6, 7 [e] Ezek. 16:8, 20 **23:5** [f] Hos. 5:13; 8:9, 10 **23:8** [g] Ezek. 23:3, 19 **23:9** [h] 2 Kin. 17:3

10 They uncovered her nakedness,
Took away her sons and daughters,
And slew her with the sword;
She became a byword among women,
For they had executed judgment on her.

The Younger Sister, Jerusalem

11 "Now [i]although her sister Oholibah
saw *this,* [j]she became more corrupt in her
lust than she, and in her harlotry more cor-
rupt than her sister's harlotry.

12 "She lusted for the neighboring
[k]Assyrians,
[l]Captains and rulers,
Clothed most gorgeously,
Horsemen riding on horses,
All of them desirable young men.
13 Then I saw that she was defiled;
Both *took* the same way.
14 But she increased her harlotry;
She looked at men portrayed on the
wall,
Images of [m]Chaldeans portrayed in
vermilion,
15 Girded with belts around their waists,
Flowing turbans on their heads,
All of them looking like captains,
In the manner of the Babylonians of
Chaldea,
The land of their nativity.
16 [n]As soon as her eyes saw them,
She lusted for them
And sent [o]messengers to them in
Chaldea.

17 "Then the Babylonians came to her,
into the bed of love,
And they defiled her with their
immorality;
So she was defiled by them, [p]and
alienated herself from them.
18 She revealed her harlotry and
uncovered her nakedness.
Then [q]I [r]alienated Myself from her,
As I had alienated Myself from her
sister.

19 "Yet she multiplied her harlotry
In calling to remembrance the days of
her youth,
[s]When she had played the harlot in the
land of Egypt.
20 For she lusted for her paramours,
Whose flesh *is like* the flesh of
donkeys,
And whose issue *is like* the issue of
horses.
21 Thus you called to remembrance the
lewdness of your youth,
When the [t]Egyptians pressed your
bosom
Because of your youthful breasts.

Judgment on Jerusalem

22 "Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the
Lord GOD:

[u]'Behold, I will stir up your lovers
against you,
From whom you have alienated
yourself,
And I will bring them against you
from every side:
23 The Babylonians,
All the Chaldeans,
[v]Pekod, Shoa, Koa,
[w]All the Assyrians with them,
All of them desirable young men,
Governors and rulers,
Captains and men of renown,
All of them riding on horses.
24 And they shall come against you
With chariots, wagons, and
war-horses,
With a horde of people.
They shall array against you
Buckler, shield, and helmet all around.

'I will delegate judgment to them,
And they shall judge you according to
their judgments.
25 I will set My [x]jealousy against you,
And they shall deal furiously with you;
They shall remove your nose and your
ears,
And your remnant shall fall by the
sword;
They shall take your sons and your
daughters,
And your remnant shall be devoured
by fire.
26 [y]They shall also strip you of your
clothes
And take away your beautiful jewelry.

27 'Thus [z]I will make you cease your
lewdness and your [a]harlotry
Brought from the land of Egypt,
So that you will not lift your eyes to
them,
Nor remember Egypt anymore.'

Ezekiel is reminding his audience of how God already had judged Samaria through Assyrian conquest and captivity in 722 B.C. (2 Kin. 17:5–41).

23:14 ***She looked at men portrayed on the wall.*** These lines tell how Judean envoys to Babylon became enamored of Babylonian rulers and their power through pictures (Jer. 22:14) on their palace and temple walls.

23:17–18 ***she was defiled by them.*** This is an allusion to Judah's turning in disappointment and disgust from relying on Babylon to relying on Egypt (2 Kin. 23:28—24:1). God's alienation from Jerusalem is an allusion to the city's coming defeat by Nebuchadnezzar.

23:24 ***Buckler.*** This was a large rectangular shield.

23:11 [i] Jer. 3:8 [j] Jer. 3:8–11 **23:12** [k] 2 Kin. 16:7, 8 [l] Ezek. 23:6, 23 **23:14** [m] Ezek. 8:10; 16:29 **23:16** [n] 2 Kin. 24:1 [o] Is. 57:9 **23:17** [p] Ezek. 23:22, 28 **23:18** [q] Jer. 6:8 [r] Jer. 12:8 **23:19** [s] Ezek. 23:2 **23:21** [t] Ezek. 16:26 **23:22** [u] Ezek. 16:37–41; 23:28 **23:23** [v] Jer. 50:21 [w] Ezek. 23:12 **23:25** [x] Ex. 34:14 **23:26** [y] Is. 3:18–23 **23:27** [z] Ezek. 16:41; 22:15 [a] Ezek. 23:3, 19

28"For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I
will deliver you into the hand of [b]those you
hate, into the hand *of those* [c]from whom
you alienated yourself. 29[d]They will deal
hatefully with you, take away all you have
worked for, and [e]leave you naked and bare.
The nakedness of your harlotry shall be
uncovered, both your lewdness and your
harlotry. 30I will do these *things* to you be-
cause you have [f]gone as a harlot after the
Gentiles, because you have become defiled
by their idols. 31You have walked in the
way of your sister; therefore I will put her
[g]cup in your hand.'

32"Thus says the Lord GOD:

'You shall drink of your sister's cup,
The deep and wide one;
[h]You shall be laughed to scorn
And held in derision;
It contains much.
33 You will be filled with drunkenness
and sorrow,
The cup of horror and desolation,
The cup of your sister Samaria.
34 You shall [i]drink and drain it,
You shall break its shards,
And tear at your own breasts;
For I have spoken,'
Says the Lord GOD.

35"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

'Because you [j]have forgotten Me and
[k]cast Me behind your back,
Therefore you shall bear the *penalty*
Of your lewdness and your harlotry.'"

Both Sisters Judged

36The LORD also said to me: "Son of man,
will you [l]judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then
[m]declare to them their abominations. 37For
they have committed adultery, and [n]blood
is on their hands. They have committed
adultery with their idols, and even *sacri-
ficed* their sons [o]whom they bore to Me,
passing them through *the fire,* to devour
them. 38Moreover they have done this to
Me: They have [p]defiled My sanctuary on
the same day and [q]profaned My Sabbaths.
39For after they had slain their children for
their idols, on the same day they came into
My sanctuary to profane it; and indeed
[r]thus they have done in the midst of My
house.

40"Furthermore you sent for men to come
from afar, [s]to whom a messenger *was* sent;
and there they came. And you [t]washed
yourself for them, [u]painted your eyes, and
adorned yourself with ornaments. 41You
sat on a stately [v]couch, with a table pre-
pared before it, [w]on which you had set My
incense and My oil. 42The sound of a care-
free multitude *was* with her, and Sabeans
were brought from the wilderness with
men of the common sort, who put brace-
lets on their wrists and beautiful crowns on
their heads. 43Then I said concerning *her
who had grown* old in adulteries, 'Will they
commit harlotry with her now, and she
with them?' 44Yet they went in to her, as
men go in to a woman who plays the harlot;
thus they went in to Oholah and Oholibah,
the lewd women. 45But righteous men will
[x]judge them after the manner of adulter-
esses, and after the manner of women who
shed blood, because they *are* adulteresses,
and [y]blood *is* on their hands.

46"For thus says the Lord GOD: [z]'Bring
up an assembly against them, give them
up to trouble and plunder. 47[a]The assembly
shall stone them with stones and execute
them with their swords; [b]they shall slay
their sons and their daughters, and burn
their houses with fire. 48Thus [c]I will cause
lewdness to cease from the land, [d]that all
women may be taught not to practice your
lewdness. 49They shall repay you for your
lewdness, and you shall [e]pay for your idol-
atrous sins. [f]Then you shall know that I *am*
the Lord GOD.'"

Symbol of the Cooking Pot

24 Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth
month, on the tenth *day* of the month,
the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
2"Son of man, write down the name of the
day, this very day—the king of Babylon
started his siege against Jerusalem [a]this
very day. 3[b]And utter a parable to the re-
bellious house, and say to them, 'Thus says
the Lord GOD:

[c]"Put on a pot, set *it* on,
And also pour water into it.
4 Gather pieces *of meat* in it,
Every good piece,
The thigh and the shoulder.
Fill *it* with choice cuts;
5 Take the choice of the flock.
Also pile *fuel* bones under it,
Make it boil well,
And let the cuts simmer in it."

23:32–34 ***You shall drink of your sister's cup.*** The cup is often symbolic of God's judgment (Ps. 75:7–8; Jer. 25:15–29). The phrase portrays how completely Judah would drink the cup of wrath, breaking what was already broken. ***tear at your own breasts.*** This image gives a picture of the resultant agony and anguish.

24:1–2 ***write down the name of the day.*** This would be a bitter reminder of God's trustworthiness to do what He promised through the prophets.

24:5 ***flock.*** The flock was symbolic of God's chosen

23:28 [b] Ezek. 16:37–41 [c] Ezek. 23:17 **23:29** [d] Deut. 28:48 [e] Ezek. 16:39 **23:30** [f] Ezek. 6:9 **23:31** [g] Jer. 7:14, 15; 25:15 **23:32** [h] Ezek. 22:4, 5 **23:34** [i] Is. 51:17 **23:35** [j] Jer. 3:21 [k] 1 Kin. 14:9 **23:36** [l] Ezek. 20:4; 22:2 [m] Is. 58:1 **23:37** [n] Ezek. 16:38 [o] Ezek. 16:20, 21, 36, 45; 20:26, 31 **23:38** [p] 2 Kin. 21:4, 7 [q] Ezek. 22:8 **23:39** [r] 2 Kin. 21:2–8 **23:40** [s] Is. 57:9 [t] Ruth 3:3 [u] Jer. 4:30 **23:41** [v] Is. 57:7 [w] Prov. 7:17 **23:45** [x] Ezek. 16:38 [y] Ezek. 23:37 **23:46** [z] Ezek. 16:40 **23:47** [a] Ezek. 16:40 [b] Ezek. 24:21 **23:48** [c] Ezek. 22:15 [d] Deut. 13:11 **23:49** [e] Ezek. 23:35 [f] Ezek. 20:38, 42, 44; 25:5
24:2 [a] 2 Kin. 25:1 **24:3** [b] Ezek. 17:12 [c] Jer. 1:13

6 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

“Woe to [d]the bloody city,
To the pot whose scum *is* in it,
And whose scum is not gone from it!
Bring it out piece by piece,
On which no [e]lot has fallen.
7 For her blood is in her midst;
She set it on top of a rock;
[f]She did not pour it on the ground,
To cover it with dust.
8 That it may raise up fury and take vengeance,
[g]I have set her blood on top of a rock,
That it may not be covered.”

9 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

[h]“Woe to the bloody city!
I too will make the pyre great.
10 Heap on the wood,
Kindle the fire;
Cook the meat well,
Mix in the spices,
And let the cuts be burned up.
11 “Then set the pot empty on the coals,
That it may become hot and its bronze may burn,
That [i]its filthiness may be melted in it,
That its scum may be consumed.
12 She has grown weary with lies,
And her great scum has not gone from her.
Let her scum *be* in the fire!
13 In your [j]filthiness *is* lewdness.
Because I have cleansed you, and you were not cleansed,
You will [k]not be cleansed of your filthiness anymore,
[l]Till I have caused My fury to rest upon you.
14 [m]I, the LORD, have spoken *it;*
[n]It shall come to pass, and I will do *it;*
I will not hold back,
[o]Nor will I spare,
Nor will I relent;
According to your ways
And according to your deeds
They* will judge you,”
Says the Lord GOD.’”

The Prophet’s Wife Dies

15 Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 16 “Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall [p]neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. 17 Sigh in silence, [q]make no mourning for the dead; [r]bind your turban on your head, and [s]put your sandals on your feet; [t]do not cover *your* lips, and do not eat man’s bread *of sorrow.*”

18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died; and the next morning I did as I was commanded.

19 And the people said to me, [u]“Will you not tell us what these *things signify* to us, that you behave so?”

20 Then I answered them, “The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 21 ‘Speak to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, [v]I will profane My sanctuary, your arrogant boast, the desire of your eyes, the delight of your soul; [w]and your sons and daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. 22 And you shall do as I have done; [x]you shall not cover *your* lips nor eat man’s bread *of sorrow.* 23 Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; [y]you shall neither mourn nor weep, but [z]you shall pine away in your iniquities and mourn with one another. 24 Thus [a]Ezekiel is a sign to you; according to all that he has done you shall do; [b]and when this comes, [c]you shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.’”

25 ‘And you, son of man—*will it* not *be* in the day when I take from them [d]their stronghold, their joy and their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that on which they set their minds, their sons and their daughters: 26 *that* on that day [e]one who escapes will come to you to let *you* hear *it* with *your* ears? 27 [f]On that day your mouth will be opened to him who has escaped; you shall speak and no longer be mute. Thus you will be a sign to them, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.’”

* **24:14** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *I.*

people (ch. 34). ***bones.*** Bones were sometimes used as fuel for fire.

24:6 ***no lot has fallen.*** God does not play favorites; His judgment would fall equally on all inhabitants of the city, for they all had sinned.

24:16 ***you shall neither mourn nor weep.*** This command of God may be one of the hardest ever given to one of His servants. The picture of Ezekiel’s wife dying and Ezekiel not being allowed to grieve illustrated God’s pain over the death of His wife—Jerusalem—and His inability to mourn because the nation deserved the punishment. Ezekiel was called by God to be a sign to the exiles by demonstrating what they should do in response to the “death” of their desire and delight—their nation and its capital city. What Ezekiel was commanded to accept and do illustrated the degree of personal sacrifice and separation from ordinary life that the prophetic ministry often required. A long period of mourning was normal in the ancient Middle East.

24:21 ***the delight of your soul.*** The entire phrase means something like the “object of your affections.” The Judeans had the wrong kind of pride about the temple. Instead of the temple being a place of worship and the house of God, the Judeans took pride in the building as a sign of their importance.

24:22–24 ***sign.*** When Jerusalem fell, God would

24:6 [d] Ezek. 22:2, 3, 27 [e] Nah. 3:10 **24:7** [f] Lev. 17:13 **24:8** [g] [Matt. 7:2] **24:9** [h] Hab. 2:12 **24:11** [i] Ezek. 22:15 **24:13** [j] Ezek. 23:36–48 [k] Jer. 6:28–30 [l] Ezek. 5:13; 8:18; 16:42 **24:14** [m] [1 Sam. 15:29] [n] Is. 55:11 [o] Ezek. 5:11 **24:16** [p] Jer. 16:5 **24:17** [q] Jer. 16:5 [r] Lev. 10:6; 21:10 [s] 2 Sam. 15:30 [t] Mic. 3:7 **24:19** [u] Ezek. 12:9; 37:18 **24:21** [v] Jer. 7:14 [w] Ezek. 23:25, 47 **24:22** [x] Jer. 16:6, 7 **24:23** [y] Job 27:15 [z] Lev. 26:39 **24:24** [a] Is. 20:3 [b] Jer. 17:15 [c] Ezek. 6:7; 25:5 **24:25** [d] Ezek. 24:21 **24:26** [e] Ezek. 33:21 **24:27** [f] Ezek. 3:26; 33:22

Proclamation Against Ammon

25 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2**"Son of man, [a]set your face [b]against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. **3**Say to the Ammonites, 'Hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD: [c]"Because you said, 'Aha!' against My sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, **4**indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. **5**And I will make [d]Rabbah [e]a stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks. [f]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD."

6'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you [g]clapped *your* hands, stamped your feet, and [h]rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, **7**indeed, therefore, I will [i]stretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Proclamation Against Moab

8'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because [j]Moab and [k]Seir say, 'Look! The house of Judah *is* like all the nations,' **9**therefore, behold, I will clear the territory of Moab of cities, of the cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and [l]Kirjathaim. **10**[m]To the men of the East I will give it as a possession, together with the Ammonites, that the Ammonites [n]may not be remembered among the nations. **11**And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I *am* the LORD."

Proclamation Against Edom

12'Thus says the Lord GOD: [o]"Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them," **13**therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and make it desolate from Teman; Dedan shall fall by the sword. **14**[p]I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance," says the Lord GOD.

Proclamation Against Philistia

15'Thus says the Lord GOD: [q]"Because [r]the Philistines dealt vengefully and took vengeance with a spiteful heart, to destroy because of the old hatred," **16**therefore thus says the Lord GOD: [s]"I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the [t]Cherethites [u]and destroy the remnant of the seacoast. **17**I will [v]execute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; [w]and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I lay My vengeance upon them."'"

Proclamation Against Tyre

26 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2**"Son of man, [a]because Tyre has said against Jerusalem, [b]'Aha! She is broken who *was* the gateway of the peoples; now she is turned over to me; I shall be filled; she is laid waste.'

3"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I *am* against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up. **4**And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and [c]make her like the top of a rock. **5**It shall be *a place for* spreading nets [d]in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,' says the Lord GOD; 'it shall become plunder for the nations. **6**Also her daughter *villages* which *are* in the fields shall be slain by the sword. [e]Then they shall know that I am the LORD.'

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prove Himself as trustworthy and righteous, and Ezekiel as His true prophet (v. 27). ***you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.*** The trials that the Israelites were going through would prompt them to depend on the Lord and know that He is holy.

25:2 ***set your face against the Ammonites.*** This country corresponds roughly to the present-day country of Jordan with its capital Amman.

25:4 ***men of the East.*** This is another title for the Babylonians (21:31). Ancient historical records mention Ammon's subjugation by Nebuchadnezzar five years after the fall of Jerusalem. Arab invaders came to dominate the territory, and Persian control began about 530 B.C.

25:8–12 ***Moab and Seir.*** Moab was south of Ammon and east of the Dead Sea. Seir (Edom) was located south of Moab. They were the descendants of Esau.

25:15 ***Philistines.*** The Philistines were along the Mediterranean coast in southwest Palestine.

25:16 ***Cherethites.*** This term was used here as a substitute term for some or all of the Philistines who had migrated from Crete. Their remote ancestors were Aegeans.

26:2 ***Tyre.*** Tyre was a major seaport and the leading

25:2 [a] Ezek. 35:2 [b] Jer. 49:1 **25:3** [c] Ezek. 26:2 **25:5** [d] Ezek. 21:20 [e] Is. 17:2 [f] Ezek. 24:24 **25:6** [g] Job 27:23 [h] Ezek. 36:5 **25:7** [i] Ezek. 35:3 **25:8** [j] Amos 2:1, 2 [k] Ezek. 35:2, 5 **25:9** [l] Jer. 48:23 **25:10** [m] Ezek. 25:4 [n] Ezek. 21:32 **25:12** [o] Obad. 10–14 **25:14** [p] Is. 11:14 **25:15** [q] Jer. 25:20 [r] 2 Chr. 28:18 **25:16** [s] Zeph. 2:4 [t] 1 Sam. 30:14 [u] Jer. 47:4 **25:17** [v] Ezek. 5:15 [w] Ps. 9:16 **26:2** [a] Jer. 25:22 [b] Ezek. 25:3 **26:4** [c] Ezek. 26:14 **26:5** [d] Ezek. 27:32 **26:6** [e] Ezek. 25:5

7 "For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold,
I will bring against Tyre from the north
[f]Nebuchadnezzar* king of Babylon, [g]king
of kings, with horses, with chariots, and
with horsemen, and an army with many
people. 8 He will slay with the sword your
daughter *villages* in the fields; he will
[h]heap up a siege mound against you, build
a wall against you, and raise a defense
against you. 9 He will direct his battering
rams against your walls, and with his axes
he will break down your towers. 10 Because
of the abundance of his horses, their dust
will cover you; your walls will shake at the
noise of the horsemen, the wagons, and the
chariots, when he enters your gates, as men
enter a city that has been breached. 11 With
the hooves of his [i]horses he will trample all
your streets; he will slay your people by the
sword, and your strong pillars will fall to
the ground. 12 They will plunder your rich-
es and pillage your merchandise; they will
break down your walls and destroy your
pleasant houses; they will lay your stones,
your timber, and your soil in the [j]midst of
the water. 13 [k]I will put an end to the sound
of [l]your songs, and the sound of your harps
shall be heard no more. 14 [m]I will make you
like the top of a rock; you shall be *a place
for* spreading nets, and you shall never be
rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken,' says
the Lord GOD.

15 "Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre: 'Will
the coastlands not [n]shake at the sound of
your fall, when the wounded cry, when
slaughter is made in the midst of you?
16 Then all the [o]princes of the sea will
[p]come down from their thrones, lay aside
their robes, and take off their embroidered
garments; they will clothe themselves with
trembling; [q]they will sit on the ground,
[r]tremble *every* moment, and [s]be astonished
at you. 17 And they will take up a [t]lamenta-
tion for you, and say to you:

"How you have perished,
O one inhabited by seafaring men,
O renowned city,
Who was [u]strong at sea,
She and her inhabitants,
Who caused their terror *to be* on all
her inhabitants!
18 Now [v]the coastlands tremble on the
day of your fall;
Yes, the coastlands by the sea are
troubled at your departure."'

19 "For thus says the Lord GOD: 'When
I make you a desolate city, like cities that
are not inhabited, when I bring the deep
upon you, and great waters cover you,
20 then I will bring you down [w]with those
who descend into the Pit, to the people
of old, and I will make you dwell in the
lowest part of the earth, in places desolate
from antiquity, with those who go down to
the Pit, so that you may never be inhabit-
ed; and I shall establish glory [x]in the land
of the living. 21 [y]I will make you a terror,
and you *shall be* no *more;* [z]though you are
sought for, you will never be found again,'
says the Lord GOD."

Lamentation for Tyre

27 The word of the LORD came again to
me, saying, 2 "Now, son of man, [a]take
up a lamentation for Tyre, 3 and say to Tyre,
[b]'You who are situated at the entrance of
the sea, [c]merchant of the peoples on many
coastlands, thus says the Lord GOD:

"O Tyre, you have said,
[d]'I *am* perfect in beauty.'
4 Your borders *are* in the midst of the
seas.
Your builders have perfected your
beauty.
5 They made all *your* planks of fir trees
from [e]Senir;
They took a cedar from Lebanon to
make you a mast.
6 *Of* [f]oaks from Bashan they made your
oars;
The company of Ashurites have inlaid
your planks
With ivory from [g]the coasts of
Cyprus.*

* **26:7** Hebrew *Nebuchadrezzar,* and so elsewhere in this book * **27:6** Hebrew *Kittim,* western lands, especially Cyprus

city in Phoenicia (present-day Lebanon). ***has said.*** The past tense could refer to an event that had not yet taken place, using a Hebrew idiom which describes a future event so certain that it can be expressed as having already been accomplished (Is. 9:6; 52:13—53:12).

26:7–14 *I will make you like the top of a rock.* This prophecy of Tyre's fate had two steps. First the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to it, and Persia defeated it in about 525 B.C. Then in 322 B.C. Alexander the Great defeated it again when his army built a causeway a half mile long between the shore and the city on its island. He tore down defensive walls to build the causeway.

27:1–25 *take up a lamentation for Tyre.* Prosperity often leads to pride, which results in the abandonment of God (Deut. 18:11–14). Jerusalem and Tyre both claimed to be unique, the former because of her exclusive claim to true religion and the latter because of the exclusive emphasis on material gain. Yet the wealth of Tyre vanished quickly.

27:6 *Bashan.* This was the broad and fertile plateau east of the Sea of Galilee and the upper Jordan.

26:7 [f] Jer. 27:3–6 [g] Dan. 2:37, 47 **26:8** [h] Ezek. 21:22 **26:11** [i] Hab. 1:8 **26:12** [j] Ezek. 27:27, 32 **26:13** [k] Is. 14:11; 24:8 [l] Rev. 18:22 **26:14** [m] Ezek. 26:4, 5 **26:15** [n] Jer. 49:21 **26:16** [o] Is. 23:8 [p] Jon. 3:6 [q] Job 2:13 [r] Ezek. 32:10 [s] Ezek. 27:35 **26:17** [t] Ezek. 27:2–36 [u] Is. 23:4 **26:18** [v] Ezek. 26:15 **26:20** [w] Ezek. 32:18 [x] Ezek. 32:23 **26:21** [y] Ezek. 27:36; 28:19 [z] Ps. 37:10, 36 **27:2** [a] Ezek. 26:17 **27:3** [b] Ezek. 26:17; 28:2 [c] Is. 23:3 [d] Ezek. 28:12 **27:5** [e] Deut. 3:9 **27:6** [f] Is. 2:12, 13 [g] Jer. 2:10

7 Fine embroidered linen from Egypt was
what you spread for your sail;
Blue and purple from the coasts of
Elishah was what covered you.

8 "Inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were
your oarsmen;
Your wise men, O Tyre, were in you;
They became your pilots.
9 Elders of [h]Gebal and its wise men
Were in you to caulk your seams;
All the ships of the sea
And their oarsmen were in you
To market your merchandise.

10 "Those from Persia, Lydia,* and Libya*
Were in your army as men of war;
They hung shield and helmet in you;
They gave splendor to you.
11 Men of Arvad with your army *were* on
your walls *all* around,
And the men of Gammad were in your
towers;
They hung their shields on your walls
all around;
They made [i]your beauty perfect.

12[j]"Tarshish *was* your merchant because of your many luxury goods. They gave you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods. 13[k]Javan, Tubal, and Meshech *were* your traders. They bartered [l]human lives and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. 14Those from the house of [m]Togarmah traded for your wares with horses, steeds, and mules. 15The men of [n]Dedan *were* your traders; many isles *were* the market of your hand. They brought you ivory tusks and ebony as payment. 16Syria *was* your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made. They gave you for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidery, fine linen, corals, and rubies. 17Judah and the land of Israel *were* your traders. They traded for your merchandise wheat of [o]Minnith, millet, honey, oil, and [p]balm. 18Damascus *was* your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made, because of your many luxury items, with the wine of Helbon and with white wool. 19Dan and Javan paid for your wares, traversing back and forth. Wrought iron, cassia, and cane were among your merchandise. 20[q]Dedan *was* your merchant in saddlecloths for riding. 21Arabia and all the princes of [r]Kedar *were* your regular merchants. They traded with you in lambs, rams, and goats. 22The merchants of [s]Sheba and Raamah *were* your merchants. They traded for your wares the choicest spices, all kinds of precious stones, and gold. 23[t]Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants of [u]Sheba, Assyria, *and* Chilmad *were* your merchants. 24These *were* your merchants in choice items—in purple clothes, in embroidered garments, in chests of multicolored apparel, in sturdy woven cords, which were in your marketplace.

25 "The [v]ships of Tarshish were carriers of
your merchandise.
You were filled and very glorious [w]in
the midst of the seas.
26 Your oarsmen brought you into many
waters,
But [x]the east wind broke you in the
midst of the seas.

27 "Your [y]riches, wares, and merchandise,
Your mariners and pilots,
Your caulkers and merchandisers,
All your men of war who *are* in you,
And the entire company which *is* in
your midst,
Will fall into the midst of the seas on
the day of your ruin.
28 The [z]common-land will shake at the
sound of the cry of your pilots.

29 "All [a]who handle the oar,
The mariners,
All the pilots of the sea
Will come down from their ships *and*
stand on the shore.
30 They will make their voice heard
because of you;
They will cry bitterly and [b]cast dust on
their heads;
They [c]will roll about in ashes;

* **27:10** Hebrew *Lud* • Hebrew *Put*

27:8 *Sidon.* Sidon was a Phoenician seaport about 30 miles north of Tyre. The two cities were rivals but Tyre tended to dominate.

27:10–11 *Lydia, and Libya.* Or Lud, in western Asia Minor, and Put, in northern Africa.

27:13 *Javan, Tubal, and Meshech.* Javan is Greece. Tubal and Meshech are thought to have been in eastern Asia Minor or modern Turkey.

27:14 *Togarmah.* This phrase may refer to the people of Armenia in eastern Asia Minor (38:6).

27:15 *Dedan.* This may have been "Redan" or Rhodes, which was a major trading center in the southern Aegean Sea.

27:17 *balm.* Balm was an aromatic resin or other gummy substance that may have had medicinal value (Jer. 8:22).

27:19 *cassia.* Cassia was either a type of cinnamon tree or a plant from which perfume and incense were made. ***cane.*** This refers to an oil-producing reed found in swamps.

27:21 *Kedar.* Kedar was a nomadic tribe in Arabia.

27:22 *Sheba and Raamah.* These places were located near Arabia (Gen. 10:6–7).

27:23 *Canneh, Eden . . . Chilmad.* These three places were probably in Mesopotamia, most likely south of Haran.

27:9 [h] 1 Kin. 5:18 **27:11** [i] Ezek. 27:3 **27:12** [j] Gen. 10:4 **27:13** [k] Gen. 10:2 [l] Rev. 18:13 **27:14** [m] Gen. 10:3 **27:15** [n] Gen. 10:7 **27:17** [o] Judg. 11:33 [p] Jer. 8:22 **27:20** [q] Gen. 25:3 **27:21** [r] Is. 60:7 **27:22** [s] Gen. 10:7 **27:23** [t] 2 Kin. 19:12 [u] Gen. 25:3 **27:25** [v] Is. 2:16 [w] Ezek. 27:4 **27:26** [x] Ps. 48:7 **27:27** [y] [Prov. 11:4] **27:28** [z] Ezek. 26:15 **27:29** [a] Rev. 18:17 **27:30** [b] Rev. 18:19 [c] Jer. 6:26

31 They will [d]shave themselves
completely bald because of you,
Gird themselves with sackcloth,
And weep for you
With bitterness of heart *and* bitter
wailing.
32 In their wailing for you
They will [e]take up a lamentation,
And lament for you:
[f]'What *city is* like Tyre,
Destroyed in the midst of the sea?
33 'When[g] your wares went out by sea,
You satisfied many people;
You enriched the kings of the earth
With your many luxury goods and
your merchandise.
34 But [h]you are broken by the seas in the
depths of the waters;
[i]Your merchandise and the entire
company will fall in your midst.
35 [j]All the inhabitants of the isles will be
astonished at you;
Their kings will be greatly afraid,
And *their* countenance will be troubled.
36 The merchants among the peoples
[k]will hiss at you;
[l]You will become a horror, and *be* no
[m]more forever.'"'"

Proclamation Against the King of Tyre

28 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, 2"Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

"Because your heart *is* [a]lifted up,
And [b]you say, 'I *am* a god,
I sit *in* the seat of gods,
[c]In the midst of the seas,'
[d]Yet you *are* a man, and not a god,
Though you set your heart as the heart
of a god
3 (Behold, [e]you *are* wiser than Daniel!
There is no secret that can be hidden
from you!
4 With your wisdom and your
understanding
You have gained [f]riches for yourself,
And gathered gold and silver into your
treasuries;
5 [g]By your great wisdom in trade you
have increased your riches,
And your heart is lifted up because of
your riches),"

6'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

"Because you have set your heart as the
heart of a god,
7 Behold, therefore, I will bring
[h]strangers against you,
[i]The most terrible of the nations;
And they shall draw their swords
against the beauty of your
wisdom,
And defile your splendor.
8 They shall throw you down into the [j]Pit,
And you shall die the death of the slain
In the midst of the seas.

9 "Will you still [k]say before him who
slays you,
'I *am* a god'?
But you *shall be* a man, and not a god,
In the hand of him who slays you.
10 You shall die the death of [l]the
uncircumcised
By the hand of aliens;
For I have spoken," says the Lord GOD.'"

Lamentation for the King of Tyre

11Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 12"Son of man, [m]take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

[n]"You *were* the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
13 You were in [o]Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone *was* your
covering:
The sardius, topaz, and diamond,
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with
gold.
The workmanship of [p]your timbrels
and pipes
Was prepared for you on the day you
were created.

14 "You *were* the anointed [q]cherub who
covers;
I established you;
You were on [r]the holy mountain of
God;
You walked back and forth in the
midst of fiery stones.

28:2 ***Because your heart is lifted up.*** Ezekiel rebuked the king of Tyre for imagining that by his wisdom he had acquired his riches of silver and gold. He had filled the city with violence because of the abundance and unrighteousness of his trade. God would therefore bring a ruthless nation against him.
28:10 ***the death of the uncircumcised.*** This term denotes a disgraceful death (31:18).
28:12 ***king of Tyre.*** The lamentation is for the king of Tyre because he is exhibiting the character and attitudes of Satan. ***seal of perfection.*** This is more literally "the one sealing a plan." In effect, the king affixed the official seal of his signet ring to the plans that made Tyre one of the leading centers of commerce in that day.

28:14 ***cherub.*** Satan was a created being (v. 13). He does not have the characteristics of God. He belonged to the order of angels called cherubim. ***the***

27:31 [d] Ezek. 29:18 **27:32** [e] Ezek. 26:17 [f] Rev. 18:18 **27:33** [g] Rev. 18:19 **27:34** [h] Ezek. 26:19 [i] Ezek. 27:27 **27:35** [j] Ezek. 26:15, 16 **27:36** [k] Jer. 18:16 [l] Ezek. 26:2 [m] Ps. 37:10, 36 **28:2** [a] Jer. 49:16 [b] Ezek. 28:9 [c] Ezek. 27:3, 4 [d] Is. 31:3 **28:3** [e] Dan. 1:20; 2:20–23, 28; 5:11, 12 **28:4** [f] Zech. 9:1–3 **28:5** [g] Ps. 62:10 **28:7** [h] Ezek. 26:7 [i] Ezek. 7:24; 21:31; 30:11 **28:8** [j] Is. 14:15 **28:9** [k] Ezek. 28:2 **28:10** [l] Ezek. 31:18; 32:19, 21, 25, 27 **28:12** [m] Ezek. 27:2 [n] Ezek. 27:3; 28:3 **28:13** [o] Ezek. 31:8, 9; 36:35 [p] Ezek. 26:13 **28:14** [q] Ex. 25:20 [r] Ezek. 20:40

15 You *were* perfect in your ways from
the day you were created,
Till [s]iniquity was found in you.

16 "By the abundance of your trading
You became filled with violence within,
And you sinned;
Therefore I cast you as a profane thing
Out of the mountain of God;
And I destroyed you, [t]O covering
cherub,
From the midst of the fiery stones.

17 "Your [u]heart was lifted up because of
your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom for the
sake of your splendor;
I cast you to the ground,
I laid you before kings,
That they might gaze at you.

18 "You defiled your sanctuaries
By the multitude of your iniquities,
By the iniquity of your trading;
Therefore I brought fire from your
midst;
It devoured you,
And I turned you to ashes upon the
earth
In the sight of all who saw you.
19 All who knew you among the peoples
are astonished at you;
[v]You have become a horror,
And *shall be* no [w]more forever."'"

Proclamation Against Sidon

20 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 21 "Son of man, [x]set your face [y]toward Sidon, and prophesy against her,
22 and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

[z]"Behold, I *am* against you, O Sidon;
I will be glorified in your midst;
And [a]they shall know that I *am* the
LORD,
When I execute judgments in her and
am [b]hallowed in her.
23 [c]For I will send pestilence upon her,
And blood in her streets;
The wounded shall be judged in her
midst
By the sword against her on every side;
Then they shall know that I *am* the
LORD.

24 "And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or [d]a painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all *who are* around them, who [e]despise them. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD."

Israel's Future Blessing

25 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "When I have [f]gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am [g]hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob.
26 And they will [h]dwell safely there, [i]build houses, and [j]plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God."'"

Proclamation Against Egypt

29 In the tenth year, in the tenth *month*, on the twelfth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
2 "Son of man, [a]set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and [b]against all Egypt. 3 Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

[c]"Behold, I *am* against you,
O Pharaoh king of Egypt,
O great [d]monster who lies in the midst
of his rivers,
[e]Who has said, 'My River* *is* my
own;
I have made *it* for myself.'
4 But [f]I will put hooks in your jaws,
And cause the fish of your rivers to
stick to your scales;
I will bring you up out of the midst of
your rivers,
And all the fish in your rivers will
stick to your scales.

* **29:3** That is, the Nile

holy mountain of God. The focus here seems to be on the king of Tyre's attempt to enter into the council of the gods. So instead of the verse referring to the king's presence in Jerusalem, it could refer more logically to a Phoenician ritual, the celebration of their patron god Melqart's fiery resurrection. This king wanted to imitate Melqart.

28:15 ***perfect.*** Satan was not created evil. ***iniquity.*** The Bible does not say where this iniquity came from, but his sin was pride (1 Tim. 3:6).

28:16–19 ***the abundance of your trading.*** The expression is most easily and appropriately applied to the human king who was the driving force behind the development of Tyre's commercial empire.

28:17 ***because of your beauty.*** This was part of the sin of pride, which made Satan want to be like the Most High (Is. 14:13–14). ***cast you to the ground.*** Jesus said that He saw Satan fall (Luke 10:18).

28:24 ***a pricking brier or a painful thorn.*** These words refer to the nations around Israel who had been enemies and evil influences. When the judgments were executed fully, these nations would no longer be able to harass and oppress Israel.

29:3 ***great monster.*** The Pharaoh is pictured here as a crocodile. Pharaoh's arrogant pride is described by his words about the Nile River, "I have made it for myself."

29:4–5 ***I will put hooks in your jaws.*** Whereas verse 3 explains why Pharaoh would be punished, these

28:15 [s] [Is. 14:12] **28:16** [t] Ezek. 28:14 **28:17** [u] Ezek. 28:2, 5 **28:19** [v] Ezek. 26:21 [w] Ezek. 27:36 **28:21** [x] Ezek. 6:2; 25:2; 29:2 [y] Is. 23:2, 4, 12 **28:22** [z] Ex. 14:4, 17 [a] Ps. 9:16 [b] Ezek. 28:25 **28:23** [c] Ezek. 38:22 **28:24** [d] Josh. 23:13 [e] Ezek. 16:57; 25:6, 7 **28:25** [f] Is. 11:12, 13 [g] Ezek. 28:22 **28:26** [h] Jer. 23:6 [i] Amos 9:13, 14 [j] Jer. 31:5 **29:2** [a] Ezek. 28:21 [b] Is. 19:1 **29:3** [c] Jer. 44:30 [d] Ps. 74:13, 14 [e] Ezek. 28:2 **29:4** [f] Ezek. 38:4

5 I will leave you in the wilderness,
You and all the fish of your rivers;
You shall fall on the open [g]field;
[h]You shall not be picked up or gathered.*
[i]I have given you as food
To the beasts of the field
And to the birds of the heavens.

6 "Then all the inhabitants of Egypt
Shall know that I *am* the LORD,
Because they have been a [j]staff of reed to the house of Israel.
7 [k]When they took hold of you with the hand,
You broke and tore all their shoulders;*
When they leaned on you,
You broke and made all their backs quiver."

8 'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
"Surely I will bring [l]a sword upon you and cut off from you man and beast. 9And the land of Egypt shall become [m]desolate and waste; then they will know that I *am* the LORD, because he said, 'The River *is* mine, and I have made *it*.' 10Indeed, therefore, I *am* against you and against your rivers, [n]and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, [o]from Migdol* *to* Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia. 11[p]Neither foot of man shall pass through it nor foot of beast pass through it, and it shall be uninhabited forty years. 12[q]I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries *that are* desolate; and among the cities *that are* laid waste, her cities shall be desolate forty years; and I will [r]scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries."

13 'Yet, thus says the Lord GOD: "At the [s]end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered. 14I will bring back the captives of Egypt and cause them to return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they shall be a [t]lowly kingdom. 15It shall be the lowliest of kingdoms; it shall never again exalt itself above the nations, for I will diminish them so that they will not rule over the nations anymore. 16No longer shall it be [u]the confidence of the house of Israel, but will remind them of *their* iniquity when they turned to follow them. Then they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD."'"

Babylonia Will Plunder Egypt

17And it came to pass in the twenty-seventh year, in the first *month*, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 18"Son of man, [v]Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to labor strenuously against Tyre; every head *was* made [w]bald, and every shoulder rubbed raw; yet neither he nor his army received wages from Tyre, for the labor which they expended on it. 19Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will give the land of Egypt to [x]Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth, carry off her spoil, and remove her pillage; and that will be the wages for his army. 20I have given him the land of Egypt *for* his labor, because they [y]worked for Me,' says the Lord GOD.

21 'In that day [z]I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to spring forth, and I will [a]open your mouth to speak in their midst. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.'"

Egypt and Her Allies Will Fall

30 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, 2"Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

[a]"Wail, 'Woe to the day!'
3 For [b]the day *is* near,
Even the day of the LORD *is* near;
It will be a day of clouds, the time of the Gentiles.
4 The sword shall come upon Egypt,
And great anguish shall be in Ethiopia,
When the slain fall in Egypt,
And they [c]take away her wealth,
And [d]her foundations are broken down.

* **29:5** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; some Hebrew manuscripts and Targum read *buried*. * **29:7** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *hand*.
* **29:10** Or *tower*

verses explain how the punishment would be accomplished. The imagery pictures a crocodile being caught, carried out of the water onto land, and left as carrion.

29:8 *sword.* Here is another reference to the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar, the predicted human instrument of God's coming wrath (21:1–7, 9–11,19–20).

29:10 *Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia.* This phrase refers to places most likely near the northern and southern boundaries of ancient Egypt, indicating the totality of the land (Judg. 20:1). The desolation would extend to the land south of Egypt—ancient Nubia, which is modern Sudan.

29:14–15 *land of Pathros.* This was southern Egypt. It would thereafter never again dominate other nations.

29:18 *every head was made bald.* The siege of Tyre was protracted, lasting about 13 years.

29:21 *In that day.* This refers to the day when Egypt would fall to Babylon, and a prophecy about the Messiah should not be read into this text.

29:5 [g] Ezek. 32:4–6 [h] Jer. 8:2; 16:4; 25:33 [i] Jer. 7:33; 34:20 **29:6** [j] Is. 36:6 **29:7** [k] Ezek. 17:17 **29:8** [l] Ezek. 14:17; 32:11–13 **29:9** [m] Ezek. 30:7, 8 **29:10** [n] Ezek. 30:12 [o] Ezek. 30:6 **29:11** [p] Ezek. 32:13 **29:12** [q] Ezek. 30:7, 26 [r] Ezek. 30:23, 26 **29:13** [s] Jer. 46:26 **29:14** [t] Ezek. 17:6, 14 **29:16** [u] Is. 30:2, 3; 36:4, 6 **29:18** [v] Jer. 25:9; 27:6 [w] Ezek. 27:31 **29:19** [x] Jer. 43:10–13 **29:20** [y] Jer. 25:9 **29:21** [z] Ps. 92:10; 132:17 [a] Ezek. 24:27 **30:2** [a] Is. 13:6; 15:2 **30:3** [b] Joel 2:1 **30:4** [c] Ezek. 29:19 [d] Jer. 50:15

5 "Ethiopia, Libya,* Lydia,* [e]all the mingled people, Chub, and the men of the lands who are allied, shall fall with them by the sword."

6 Thus says the LORD:

"Those who uphold Egypt shall fall,
And the pride of her power shall come down.
[f]From Migdol *to* Syene
Those within her shall fall by the sword,"
Says the Lord GOD.

7 "They[g] shall be desolate in the midst of the desolate countries,
And her cities shall be in the midst of the cities *that are* laid waste.
8 Then they will know that I *am* the LORD,
When I have set a fire in Egypt
And all her helpers are destroyed.
9 On that day [h]messengers shall go forth from Me in ships
To make the careless Ethiopians afraid,
And great anguish shall come upon them,
As on the day of Egypt;
For indeed it is coming!"

10 Thus says the Lord GOD:

[i]"I will also make a multitude of Egypt to cease
By the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.
11 He and his people with him, [j]the most terrible of the nations,
Shall be brought to destroy the land;
They shall draw their swords against Egypt,
And fill the land with the slain.
12 [k]I will make the rivers dry,
And [l]sell the land into the hand of the wicked;
I will make the land waste, and all that is in it,
By the hand of aliens.
I, the LORD, have spoken."

13 Thus says the Lord GOD:

"I will also [m]destroy the idols,
And cause the images to cease from Noph;*
[n]There shall no longer be princes from the land of Egypt;
[o]I will put fear in the land of Egypt.
14 I will make [p]Pathros desolate,
Set fire to [q]Zoan,
[r]And execute judgments in No.*
15 I will pour My fury on Sin,* the strength of Egypt;
[s]I will cut off the multitude of No,
16 And [t]set a fire in Egypt;
Sin shall have great pain,
No shall be split open,
And Noph *shall be in* distress daily.
17 The young men of Aven* and Pi Beseth shall fall by the sword,
And these *cities* shall go into captivity.
18 [u]At Tehaphnehes* the day shall also be darkened,*
When I break the yokes of Egypt there.
And her arrogant strength shall cease in her;
As for her, a cloud shall cover her,
And her daughters shall go into captivity.
19 Thus I will [v]execute judgments on Egypt,
Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."'"

Proclamation Against Pharaoh

20 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first *month*, on the seventh *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 21 "Son of man, I have [w]broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and see, [x]it has not been bandaged for healing, nor a splint put on to bind it, to make it strong enough to hold a sword. 22 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I *am* [y]against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will [z]break his arms, both the strong one and the one that was broken; and I will make the sword fall out of his hand. 23[a]I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them throughout the countries. 24 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he will groan before him with the groanings

* **30:5** Hebrew *Put* • Hebrew *Lud* * **30:13** That is, ancient Memphis * **30:14** That is, ancient Thebes * **30:15** That is, ancient Pelusium * **30:17** That is, ancient On (Heliopolis) * **30:18** Spelled *Tahpanhes* in Jeremiah 43:7 and elsewhere • Following many Hebrew manuscripts, Bomberg, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *refrained*.

30:5 *Ethiopia.* This is the Hebrew Cush, and refers to the area south of Egypt toward modern Ethiopia.
30:9 *day of Egypt.* This was the day that Egypt and her allies would be conquered. It was part of a larger period of God's judgment on the nations outside Israel by means of Babylon; in fact, Ezekiel describes the Babylonians as "messengers" sent from God Himself.
30:13–19 *Noph.* Ancient Noph, or Memphis, was a significant city in Egypt. It was capital of the Old Kingdom in the third century B.C.
30:21 *I have broken the arm of Pharaoh.* The prophecy refers to Pharaoh Hophra's unsuccessful attempt to relieve the siege of Jerusalem just a few months earlier (29:2,6–7). God used Nebuchadnezzar to defeat the Egyptian army.

30:5 [e] Jer. 25:20, 24 **30:6** [f] Ezek. 29:10 **30:7** [g] Ezek. 29:12 **30:9** [h] Is. 18:1, 2 **30:10** [i] Ezek. 29:19 **30:11** [j] Ezek. 28:7; 31:12 **30:12** [k] Is. 19:5, 6 [l] Is. 19:4 **30:13** [m] Is. 19:1 [n] Zech. 10:11 [o] Is. 19:16 **30:14** [p] Ezek. 29:14 [q] Ps. 78:12, 43 [r] Nah. 3:8–10 **30:15** [s] Jer. 46:25 **30:16** [t] Ezek. 30:8 **30:18** [u] Jer. 2:16 **30:19** [v] [Ps. 9:16] **30:21** [w] Jer. 48:25 [x] Jer. 46:11 **30:22** [y] Jer. 46:25 [z] Ps. 37:17 **30:23** [a] Ezek. 29:12; 30:17, 18, 26

of a mortally wounded *man.* 25Thus I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; [b]they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. 26[c]I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.'"

Egypt Cut Down Like a Great Tree

31 Now it came to pass in the [a]eleventh year, in the third *month,* on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2"Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude:

[b]'Whom are you like in your greatness?
3 [c]Indeed Assyria *was* a cedar in
Lebanon,
With fine branches that shaded the
forest,
And of high stature;
And its top was among the thick
boughs.
4 [d]The waters made it grow;
Underground waters gave it height,
With their rivers running around the
place where it was planted,
And sent out rivulets to all the trees of
the field.
5 'Therefore [e]its height was exalted
above all the trees of the field;
Its boughs were multiplied,
And its branches became long because
of the abundance of water,
As it sent them out.
6 All the [f]birds of the heavens made
their nests in its boughs;
Under its branches all the beasts of the
field brought forth their young;
And in its shadow all great nations
made their home.
7 'Thus it was beautiful in greatness and
in the length of its branches,
Because its roots reached to abundant
waters.
8 The cedars in the [g]garden of God
could not hide it;
The fir trees were not like its boughs,
And the chestnut* trees were not like
its branches;
No tree in the garden of God was like
it in beauty.
9 I made it beautiful with a multitude of
branches,
So that all the trees of Eden envied it,
That *were* in the garden of God.'

10"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have increased in height, and it set its top among the thick boughs, and [h]its heart was lifted up in its height, 11therefore I will deliver it into the hand of the [i]mighty one of the nations, and he shall surely deal with it; I have driven it out for its wickedness. 12And aliens, [j]the most terrible of the nations, have cut it down and left it; its branches have fallen [k]on the mountains and in all the valleys; its boughs lie [l]broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the peoples of the earth have gone from under its shadow and left it.

13 'On [m]its ruin will remain all the birds
of the heavens,
And all the beasts of the field will
come to its branches—

14'So that no trees by the waters may ever again exalt themselves for their height, nor set their tops among the thick boughs, that no tree which drinks water may ever be high enough to reach up to them.

'For [n]they have all been delivered to
death,
[o]To the depths of the earth,
Among the children of men who go
down to the Pit.'

15"Thus says the Lord GOD: 'In the day when it [p]went down to hell, I caused mourning. I covered the deep because of it. I restrained its rivers, and the great waters were held back. I caused Lebanon to mourn for it, and all the trees of the field wilted because of it. 16I made the nations [q]shake at the sound of its fall, when I [r]cast it down to hell together with those who descend into the Pit; and [s]all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, [t]were comforted in the depths of the earth. 17They also went down to hell with it, with those slain by the sword; and *those who were* its *strong* arm [u]dwelt in its shadows among the nations.

18[v]'To which of the trees in Eden will you then be likened in glory and greatness? Yet you shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the depths of the earth; [w]you shall

* **31:8** Hebrew *armon*

31:4 ***The waters made it grow.*** These waters were the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. They were important for agricultural fertility and fostered the development of great cities along trade routes.

31:10–14 ***the hand of the mighty one of the nations.*** The meaning is that Assyria had been cut down by Babylon. The picturesque conclusion to this second message of chapter 31 indicates that all the other nations that observe Assyria's ruin would share its destiny of death.

31:18 ***Pharaoh and all his multitude.*** If Assyria, the

30:25 [b] Ps. 9:16 **30:26** [c] Ezek. 29:12 **31:1** [a] Ezek. 30:20; 32:1 **31:2** [b] Ezek. 31:18 **31:3** [c] Dan. 4:10, 20–23 **31:4** [d] Jer. 51:36 **31:5** [e] Dan. 4:11 **31:6** [f] Dan. 4:12, 21 **31:8** [g] Gen. 2:8, 9; 13:10 **31:10** [h] Dan. 5:20 **31:11** [i] Ezek. 30:10 **31:12** [j] Ezek. 28:7; 30:11; 32:12 [k] Ezek. 32:5; 35:8 [l] Ezek. 30:24, 25 **31:13** [m] Is. 18:6 **31:14** [n] Ps. 82:7 [o] Ezek. 32:18 **31:15** [p] Ezek. 32:22, 23 **31:16** [q] Ezek. 26:15 [r] Is. 14:15 [s] Is. 14:8 [t] Ezek. 32:31 **31:17** [u] Lam. 4:20 **31:18** [v] Ezek. 32:19 [w] Ezek. 28:10; 32:19, 21

lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with *those* slain by the sword. This *is* Pharaoh and all his multitude,' says the Lord GOD."

Lamentation for Pharaoh and Egypt

32 And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the [a]twelfth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2"Son of man, [b]take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him:

[c]'You are like a young lion among the nations,
And [d]you *are* like a monster in the seas,
[e]Bursting forth in your rivers,
Troubling the waters with your feet,
And [f]fouling their rivers.

3'Thus says the Lord GOD:

"I will therefore [g]spread My net over you with a company of many people,
And they will draw you up in My net.
4 Then [h]I will leave you on the land;
I will cast you out on the open fields,
[i]And cause to settle on you all the birds of the heavens.
And with you I will fill the beasts of the whole earth.
5 I will lay your flesh [j]on the mountains,
And fill the valleys with your carcass.
6 "I will also water the land with the flow of your blood,
Even to the mountains;
And the riverbeds will be full of you.
7 When *I* put out your light,
[k]I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
And the moon shall not give her light.
8 All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you,
And bring darkness upon your land,"
Says the Lord GOD.

9'I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known. 10Yes, I will make many peoples astonished at you, and their kings shall be horribly afraid of you when I brandish My sword before them; and [l]they shall tremble *every* moment, every man for his own life, in the day of your fall.

11[m]'For thus says the Lord GOD: "The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. 12By the swords of the mighty warriors, all of them [n]the most terrible of the nations, I will cause your multitude to fall.

[o]"They shall plunder the pomp of Egypt,
And all its multitude shall be destroyed.
13 Also I will destroy all its animals
From beside its great waters;
[p]The foot of man shall muddy them no more,
Nor shall the hooves of animals muddy them.
14 Then I will make their waters clear,
And make their rivers run like oil,"
Says the Lord GOD.

15 "When I make the land of Egypt desolate,
And the country is destitute of all that once filled it,
When I strike all who dwell in it,
[q]Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

16 "This *is* the [r]lamentation
With which they shall lament her;
The daughters of the nations shall lament her;
They shall lament for her, for Egypt,
And for all her multitude,"
Says the Lord GOD.'"

Egypt and Others Consigned to the Pit

17It came to pass also in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth *day* of the month, [s]*that* the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

18 "Son of man, wail over the multitude of Egypt,
And [t]cast them down to the depths of the earth,
Her and the daughters of the famous nations,
With those who go down to the Pit:
19 'Whom [u]do you surpass in beauty?
[v]Go down, be placed with the uncircumcised.'

20 "They shall fall in the midst of *those* slain by the sword;
She is delivered to the sword,
[w]Drawing her and all her multitudes.
21 [x]The strong among the mighty
Shall speak to him out of the midst of hell
With those who help him:
'They have [y]gone down,
They lie with the uncircumcised, slain by the sword.'

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greatest nation, had fallen to the Babylonians, surely a nation less great (Egypt) would also fall.

32:2 ***lion . . . monster.*** These words depict Egypt as proud and powerful.

32:14 ***rivers run like oil.*** This phrase is not used anywhere else. It pictures the time following massive killing when the Nile and its tributaries would experience a "deadly" calm.

32:1 [a] Ezek. 31:1; 33:21 **32:2** [b] Ezek. 27:2 [c] Ezek. 19:2–6 [d] Ezek. 29:3 [e] Jer. 46:7, 8 [f] Ezek. 34:18 **32:3** [g] Ezek. 12:13; 17:20 **32:4** [h] Ezek. 29:5 [i] Is. 18:6; Ezek. 31:13 **32:5** [j] Ezek. 31:12 **32:7** [k] Rev. 6:12, 13; 8:12 **32:10** [l] Ezek. 26:16 **32:11** [m] Jer. 46:26 **32:12** [n] Ezek. 28:7; 30:11; 31:12 [o] Ezek. 29:19 **32:13** [p] Ezek. 29:11 **32:15** [q] Ps. 9:16 **32:16** [r] Ezek. 26:17 **32:17** [s] Ezek. 32:1; 33:21 **32:18** [t] Ezek. 26:20; 31:14 **32:19** [u] Ezek. 31:2, 18 [v] Ezek. 28:10 **32:20** [w] Ps. 28:3 **32:21** [x] Is. 1:31; 14:9, 10 [y] Ezek. 32:19, 25

22 "Assyria[z] *is* there, and all her company,
With their graves all around her,
All of them slain, fallen by the sword.
23 [a]Her graves are set in the recesses of the Pit,
And her company is all around her grave,
All of them slain, fallen by the sword,
Who [b]caused terror in the land of the living.

24 "There *is* [c]Elam and all her multitude,
All around her grave,
All of them slain, fallen by the sword,
Who have [d]gone down uncircumcised to the lower parts of the earth,
[e]Who caused their terror in the land of the living;
Now they bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit.
25 They have set her [f]bed in the midst of the slain,
With all her multitude,
With her graves all around it,
All of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword;
Though their terror was caused
In the land of the living,
Yet they bear their shame
With those who go down to the Pit;
It was put in the midst of the slain.

26 "There *are* [g]Meshech and Tubal and all their multitudes,
With all their graves around it,
All of them [h]uncircumcised, slain by the sword,
Though they caused their terror in the land of the living.
27 [i]They do not lie with the mighty
Who are fallen of the uncircumcised,
Who have gone down to hell with their weapons of war;
They have laid their swords under their heads,
But their iniquities will be on their bones,
Because of the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.
28 Yes, you shall be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised,
And lie with *those* slain by the sword.

29 "There *is* [j]Edom,
Her kings and all her princes,
Who despite their might
Are laid beside *those* slain by the sword;
They shall lie with the uncircumcised,
And with those who go down to the Pit.
30 [k]There *are* the princes of the north,
All of them, and all the [l]Sidonians,
Who have gone down with the slain
In shame at the terror which they caused by their might;
They lie uncircumcised with *those* slain by the sword,
And bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit.

31 "Pharaoh will see them
And be [m]comforted over all his multitude,
Pharaoh and all his army,
Slain by the sword,"
Says the Lord GOD.

32 "For I have caused My terror in the land of the living;
And he shall be placed in the midst of the uncircumcised
With *those* slain by the sword,
Pharaoh and all his multitude,"
Says the Lord GOD.

The Watchman and His Message

33 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2"Son of man, speak to [a]the children of your people, and say to them: [b]'When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their [c]watchman, 3when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people, 4then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does [d]not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, [e]his blood shall be on his *own* head. 5He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life. 6But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes *any* person from among them, [f]he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.'

7[g]"So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and

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32:24 ***There is Elam.*** Elam was east and southeast of Assyria in what is now Iran. The people of Elam were descended from one of the sons of Shem (Gen. 10:22; 1 Chr. 1:17).

32:30 ***princes of the north.*** This is a reference to lands that are north of Israel like Tyre and Sidon.

32:31 ***Pharaoh will see.*** Now the message (vv. 17–32) comes full circle. The point is that Egypt and Pharaoh will die like the other nations at the hand of the living God who judges every nation with justice.

33:2 ***the children of your people.*** This phrase refers to fellow Israelites in exile with Ezekiel, now including the people of Judah deported to Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar's third invasion.

32:22 [z] Ezek. 31:3, 16 **32:23** [a] Is. 14:15 [b] Ezek. 32:24–27, 32 **32:24** [c] Jer. 25:25; 49:34–39 [d] Ezek. 32:21 [e] Ezek. 32:23 **32:25** [f] Ps. 139:8 **32:26** [g] Gen. 10:2 [h] Ezek. 32:19 **32:27** [i] Is. 14:18, 19 **32:29** [j] Ezek. 25:12–14 **32:30** [k] Jer. 1:15; 25:26 [l] Ezek. 28:21–23 **32:31** [m] Ezek. 14:22; 31:16 **33:2** [a] Ezek. 3:11 [b] Ezek. 14:17 [c] 2 Sam. 18:24, 25 **33:4** [d] Zech. 1:4 [e] [Acts 18:6] **33:6** [f] Ezek. 33:8 **33:7** [g] Is. 62:6

warn them for Me. 8When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked *man,* you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. 9Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.

10"Therefore you, O son of man, say to the house of Israel: 'Thus you say, "If our transgressions and our sins *lie* upon us, and we [h]pine away in them, [i]how can we then live?"' 11Say to them: '*As* I live,' says the Lord GOD, [j]'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked [k]turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For [l]why should you die, O house of Israel?'

The Fairness of God's Judgment

12"Therefore you, O son of man, say to the children of your people: 'The [m]righteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; as for the wickedness of the wicked, [n]he shall not fall because of it in the day that he turns from his wickedness; nor shall the righteous be able to live because of *his righteousness* in the day that he sins.' 13When I say to the righteous *that* he shall surely live, [o]but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die. 14Again, [p]when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, 15*if* the wicked [q]restores the pledge, [r]gives back what he has stolen, and walks in [s]the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 16[t]None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

17[u]"Yet the children of your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' But it is their way which is not fair! 18[v]When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die because of it. 19But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is lawful and right, he shall live because of it. 20Yet you say, [w]'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O house of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his own ways."

The Fall of Jerusalem

21And it came to pass in the twelfth year [x]of our captivity, in the tenth *month,* on the fifth *day* of the month, [y]*that* one who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, [z]"The city has been captured!"

22Now [a]the hand of the LORD had been upon me the evening before the man came who had escaped. And He had [b]opened my mouth; so when he came to me in the morning, my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute.

The Cause of Judah's Ruin

23Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 24"Son of man, [c]they who inhabit those [d]ruins in the land of Israel are saying, [e]'Abraham was only one, and he inherited the land. [f]But we *are* many; the land has been given to us as a [g]possession.'

25"Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: [h]"You eat *meat* with blood, you [i]lift up your eyes toward your idols, and [j]shed blood. Should you then possess the [k]land? 26You rely on your sword, you commit abominations, and you [l]defile one another's wives. Should you then possess the land?"'

27"Say thus to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "*As* I live, surely [m]those who *are* in the ruins shall fall by the sword, and the one who *is* in the open field [n]I will give to the beasts to be devoured, and those who *are* in the strongholds and [o]caves shall die of the pestilence. 28[p]For I will make the land most desolate, her [q]arrogant strength shall cease, and [r]the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that no one will pass through. 29Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have made the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed."'

33:12–20 ***I will judge every one of you according to his own ways.*** God presents His rationale in these verses for deciding who would be rewarded with life and who would suffer death; He would save those who repent and turn to Him, but would condemn those who trust in themselves and do evil. After presenting His rationale, God declares that His judgment is just and fair—certainly more just than the practices of the Israelites.

33:25–26 ***Should you then possess the land.*** Ezekiel confronted his people with specific examples of their past and present refusal to obey God's revealed will for their lives (18:6,10; 22:11; Ex. 20:4–5,13; Lev. 7:26–27; 17:10–14; Deut. 12:16,23). Was it not then reasonable that God would punish the present generation by removing them from the land, at least temporarily? The writer of Hebrews, after using the example of Israel's failure to enter the land, admonished the church in a similar way (Heb. 4:1).

33:10 [h] Ezek. 24:23 [i] Is. 49:14 **33:11** [j] [2 Sam. 14:14] [k] [Acts 3:19] [l] Ezek. 18:30, 31 **33:12** [m] Ezek. 3:20; 18:24, 26 [n] [2 Chr. 7:14] **33:13** [o] Ezek. 3:20; 18:24 **33:14** [p] Ezek. 3:18, 19; 18:27 **33:15** [q] Ezek. 18:7 [r] Lev. 6:2, 4, 5 [s] Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21 **33:16** [t] [Is. 1:18; 43:25] **33:17** [u] Ezek. 18:25, 29 **33:18** [v] Ezek. 18:26 **33:20** [w] Ezek. 18:25, 29 **33:21** [x] Ezek. 1:2 [y] Ezek. 24:26 [z] 2 Kin. 25:4 **33:22** [a] Ezek. 1:3; 8:1; 37:1 [b] Ezek. 24:27 **33:24** [c] Ezek. 34:2 [d] Ezek. 36:4 [e] Is. 51:2 [f] [Matt. 3:9] [g] Ezek. 11:15 **33:25** [h] Lev. 3:17; 7:26; 17:10–14; 19:26 [i] Ezek. 18:6 [j] Ezek. 22:6, 9 [k] Deut. 29:28 **33:26** [l] Ezek. 18:6; 22:11 **33:27** [m] Ezek. 33:24 [n] Ezek. 39:4 [o] 1 Sam. 13:6 **33:28** [p] Jer. 44:2, 6, 22 [q] Ezek. 7:24; 24:21 [r] Ezek. 6:2, 3, 6

Hearing and Not Doing

30"As for you, son of man, the children of
your people are talking about you beside
the walls and in the doors of the houses;
and they [s]speak to one another, everyone
saying to his brother, 'Please come and
hear what the word is that comes from the
LORD.' 31So [t]they come to you as people do,
they [u]sit before you *as* My people, and they
[v]hear your words, but they do not do them;
[w]for with their mouth they show much love,
but [x]their hearts pursue their *own* gain.
32Indeed you *are* to them as a very lovely
song of one who has a pleasant voice and
can play well on an instrument; for they
hear your words, but they do [y]not do them.
33[z]And when this comes to pass—surely
it will come—then [a]they will know that a
prophet has been among them."

Irresponsible Shepherds

34 And the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, 2"Son of man, prophesy
against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy
and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD
to the shepherds: [a]"Woe to the shepherds of
Israel who feed themselves! Should not the
shepherds feed the flocks? 3[b]You eat the
fat and clothe yourselves with the wool;
you [c]slaughter the fatlings, *but* you do not
feed the flock. 4[d]The weak you have not
strengthened, nor have you healed those
who were sick, nor bound up the broken,
nor brought back what was driven away,
nor [e]sought what was lost; but with [f]force
and cruelty you have ruled them. 5[g]So
they were [h]scattered because *there was*
no shepherd; [i]and they became food for
all the beasts of the field when they were
scattered. 6My sheep [j]wandered through
all the mountains, and on every high hill;
yes, My flock was scattered over the whole
face of the earth, and no one was seeking
or searching *for them*."

7'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the
word of the LORD: 8"*As* I live," says the
Lord GOD, "surely because My flock be-
came a prey, and My flock [k]became food
for every beast of the field, because *there*
was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds
search for My flock, [l]but the shepherds fed
themselves and did not feed My flock"—
9therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of
the LORD! 10Thus says the Lord GOD: "Be-
hold, I *am* [m]against the shepherds, and [n]I
will require My flock at their hand; I will
cause them to cease feeding the sheep,
and the shepherds shall [o]feed themselves
no more; for I will [p]deliver My flock from
their mouths, that they may no longer be
food for them."

God, the True Shepherd

11'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I
Myself will search for My sheep and seek
them out. 12As a [q]shepherd seeks out his
flock on the day he is among his scattered
sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and de-
liver them from all the places where they
were scattered on [r]a cloudy and dark day.
13And [s]I will bring them out from the peo-
ples and gather them from the countries,
and will bring them to their own land; I will
feed them on the mountains of Israel, in
the valleys and in all the inhabited places
of the country. 14[t]I will feed them in good
pasture, and their fold shall be on the high
mountains of Israel. [u]There they shall lie
down in a good fold and feed in rich pas-
ture on the mountains of Israel. 15I will feed
My flock, and I will make them lie down,"
says the Lord GOD. 16[v]"I will seek what was
lost and bring back what was driven away,
bind up the broken and strengthen what
was sick; but I will destroy [w]the fat and the
strong, and feed them [x]in judgment."

17'And *as for* you, O My flock, thus says
the Lord GOD: [y]"Behold, I shall judge be-
tween sheep and sheep, between rams and
goats. 18*Is it* too little for you to have eaten
up the good pasture, that you must tread
down with your feet the residue of your
pasture—and to have drunk of the clear
waters, that you must foul the residue with
your feet? 19And *as for* My flock, they eat
what you have trampled with your feet, and
they drink what you have fouled with your
feet."

20'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to
them: [z]"Behold, I Myself will judge between

33:30–33 ***they hear your words, but they do not do them.*** This section contrasts the actions and attitudes of the exiles with the life of God's prophet Ezekiel. The exiles had claimed to go to the prophet to receive God's revelation, but their behavior was inconsistent with their stated beliefs. Their true desire was for entertainment, not for divine enlightenment. If the fall of Jerusalem failed to awaken them spiritually, nothing would. Yet it certainly would open their eyes to the divine truth of Ezekiel's preaching. In these verses then, God also comforted and consoled Ezekiel.

34:7–10 ***did not feed My flock.*** The crimes of Israel's leaders come under review before their punishment is pronounced.

34:11–16 ***a cloudy and dark day.*** This was the day Jerusalem fell (30:1–5). It may also speak of the future day of deliverance when God will seek out His sheep. Israel, though guilty and misguided, would eventually be rescued by the divine Good Shepherd and restored to the Promised Land (chs. 33–39).

33:30 [s] Is. 29:13 **33:31** [t] Ezek. 14:1 [u] Ezek. 8:1 [v] Is. 58:2 [w] Ps. 78:36, 37 [x] [Matt. 13:22] **33:32** [y] [Matt. 7:21–28] **33:33** [z] 1 Sam. 3:20 [a] Ezek. 2:5 **34:2** [a] Zech. 11:17 **34:3** [b] Zech. 11:16 [c] Ezek. 33:25, 26 **34:4** [d] Zech. 11:16 [e] Luke 15:4 [f] [1 Pet. 5:3] **34:5** [g] Ezek. 33:21 [h] Matt. 9:36 [i] Is. 56:9 **34:6** [j] 1 Pet. 2:25 **34:8** [k] Ezek. 34:5, 6 [l] Ezek. 34:2, 10 **34:10** [m] Jer. 21:13; 52:24–27 [n] Heb. 13:17 [o] Ezek. 34:2, 8 [p] Ezek. 13:23 **34:12** [q] Jer. 31:10 [r] Ezek. 30:3 **34:13** [s] Jer. 23:3 **34:14** [t] [John 10:9] [u] Jer. 33:12 **34:16** [v] Mic. 4:6 [w] Is. 10:16 [x] Jer. 10:24 **34:17** [y] [Matt. 25:32] **34:20** [z] Ezek. 34:17

the fat and the lean sheep. 21Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, 22therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23I will establish one [a]shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—[b]My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24And [c]I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David [d]a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

25[e]"I will make a covenant of peace with them, and [f]cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they [g]will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. 26I will make them and the places all around [h]My hill [i]a blessing; and I will [j]cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be [k]showers of blessing. 27Then [l]the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have [m]broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who [n]enslaved them. 28And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but [o]they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make *them* afraid. 29I will raise up for them a [p]garden of renown, and they shall [q]no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, [r]nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. 30Thus they shall know that [s]I, the LORD their God, *am* with them, and they, the house of Israel, *are* [t]My people," says the Lord GOD.'

31"You are My [u]flock, the flock of My pasture; you *are* men, *and* I *am* your God," says the Lord GOD.

Judgment on Mount Seir

35 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2"Son of man, set your face against [a]Mount Seir and [b]prophesy against it, 3and say to it, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, O Mount Seir, I *am* against you;
[c]I will stretch out My hand against you,
And make you most desolate;
4 I shall lay your cities waste,
And you shall be desolate.
Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

5[d]"Because you have had an ancient hatred, and have shed *the blood of* the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, [e]when their iniquity *came to an* end, 6therefore, *as* I live," says the Lord GOD, "I will prepare you for [f]blood, and blood shall pursue you; [g]since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. 7Thus I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it the [h]one who leaves and the one who returns. 8And I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those who are slain by the sword shall fall. 9[i]I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; [j]then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

10"Because you have said, 'These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will [k]possess them,' although [l]the LORD was there, 11therefore, *as* I live," says the Lord GOD, "I will do [m]according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. 12[n]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD. I have [o]heard all your [p]blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, 'They are desolate; they are given to us to consume.' 13Thus [q]with your mouth you have boasted against Me and multiplied your [r]words against Me; I have heard *them*."

14'Thus says the Lord GOD: [s]"The whole earth will rejoice when I make you desolate. 15[t]As you rejoiced because the inheritance of the house of Israel was desolate, [u]so I will do to you; you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom—all of it! Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."'

34:23–24 ***I will establish . . . he shall feed.*** The change from the pronoun *I* to *he* in this verse indicates that God would continue operating as the Chief Shepherd through this chosen future ruler from the Davidic line. He is the Messiah—God's only Son and His servant.

34:25–31 ***covenant of peace.*** These exiles were encouraged through these promises (37:26–28; 38:11–13; 39:25–29; Is. 54:10): (1) security from foreign aggressor nations; (2) showers of blessing, meaning productivity and prosperity; and (3) the certainty that the Lord is Israel's God and desires reunion with His people and a lasting relationship built on a new covenant (Jer. 31:31–34; Heb. 8:6).

35:6–9 ***perpetually desolate.*** Having stated why Edom deserved judgment, Ezekiel explained how the nation would be punished. The punishment would include widespread death and unrelieved destruction (Is. 34:6–8; 63:1–6; Jer. 49:7–13).

34:23 [a] [Is. 40:11] [b] Jer. 30:9 **34:24** [c] Ex. 29:45 [d] Ezek. 37:24, 25 **34:25** [e] Ezek. 37:26 [f] Is. 11:6–9 [g] Jer. 23:6 **34:26** [h] Is. 56:7 [i] Zech. 8:13 [j] Lev. 26:4 [k] Ps. 68:9 **34:27** [l] Is. 4:2 [m] Jer. 2:20 [n] Jer. 25:14 **34:28** [o] Jer. 30:10 **34:29** [p] [Is. 11:1] [q] Ezek. 36:29 [r] Ezek. 36:3, 6, 15 **34:30** [s] Ezek. 34:24 [t] Ezek. 14:11; 36:28 **34:31** [u] Ps. 100:3 **35:2** [a] Ezek. 25:12–14 [b] Amos 1:11 **35:3** [c] Ezek. 6:14 **35:5** [d] Ezek. 25:12 [e] Ps. 137:7 **35:6** [f] Is. 63:1–6 [g] Ps. 109:17 **35:7** [h] Judg. 5:6 **35:9** [i] Jer. 49:13 [j] Ezek. 36:11 **35:10** [k] Ps. 83:4–12 [l] [Ps. 48:1–3; 132:13, 14] **35:11** [m] [James 2:13] **35:12** [n] Ps. 9:16 [o] Zeph. 2:8 [p] Is. 52:5 **35:13** [q] [1 Sam. 2:3] [r] Ezek. 36:3 **35:14** [s] Is. 65:13, 14 **35:15** [t] Obad. 12, 15 [u] Lam. 4:21

Blessing on Israel

36 "And you, son of man, prophesy to the [a]mountains of Israel, and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD! **2**Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because [b]the enemy has said of you, 'Aha! [c]The ancient heights [d]have become our possession,'"' **3**therefore prophesy, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because they made *you* desolate and swallowed you up on every side, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations, [e]and you are taken up by the lips of [f]talkers and slandered by the people"— **4**therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains, the hills, the rivers, the valleys, the desolate wastes, and the cities that have been forsaken, which [g]became plunder and [h]mockery to the rest of the nations all around— **5**therefore thus says the Lord GOD: [i]"Surely I have spoken in My burning jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, [j]who gave My land to themselves as a possession, with wholehearted joy *and* spiteful minds, in order to plunder its open country."'

6"Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains, the hills, the rivers, and the valleys, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and My fury, because you have [k]borne the shame of the nations." **7**Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "I have [l]raised My hand in an oath that surely the nations that *are* around you shall [m]bear their own shame. **8**But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. **9**For indeed I *am* for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. **10**I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and [n]the ruins rebuilt. **11**[o]I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do [p]better *for you* than at your beginnings. [q]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD. **12**Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My people Israel; [r]they shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you [s]bereave them *of children*."

13'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because they say to you, [t]'You devour men and bereave your nation *of children*,' **14**therefore you shall devour men no more, nor bereave your nation anymore," says the Lord GOD. **15**[u]"Nor will I let you hear the taunts of the nations anymore, nor bear the reproach of the peoples anymore, nor shall you cause your nation to stumble anymore," says the Lord GOD.'"

The Renewal of Israel

16Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: **17**"Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, [v]they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like [w]the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. **18**Therefore I poured out My fury on them [x]for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols *with which* they had defiled it. **19**So I [y]scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them [z]according to their ways and their deeds. **20**When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they [a]profaned My holy name—when they said of them, 'These *are* the people of the LORD, *and* yet they have gone out of His land.' **21**But I had concern [b]for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

22"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, [c]but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. **23**And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD," says the Lord GOD, "when I am [d]hallowed in you before their eyes. **24**For [e]I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and

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36:1–7 ***The ancient heights.*** This was a term for Israel because the hill country was central to the country's geography. God is glorified and the exiles comforted by the following: (1) exposing the crimes of the enemies of His nation; (2) exonerating His land from false charges; and (3) executing judgment and justice against the foreign nations.

36:12 ***My people Israel.*** Despite all their sinfulness, which the book has taken enormous pains to detail and describe, the nation was still referred to as the people of God. They would finally and forever take possession of their land, symbolized by the mountains and the central hills of Palestine, which are personified as "you" in this verse.

36:19 ***according to their ways and their deeds.*** Israel had been hypocritical and unholy; they had not separated themselves or made themselves distinct from the pagan world around them (v. 18). God had given His people the Promised Land as a place where they could show the world the difference it makes to follow the true God (Deut. 7:1–11). They failed to follow God, so He forced them out of the land. Through either their obedience or their disobedience, God would demonstrate to the watching world His personality, power, and plans.

36:1 [a] Ezek. 6:2, 3 **36:2** [b] Ezek. 25:3; 26:2 [c] Deut. 32:13 [d] Ezek. 35:10 **36:3** [e] Deut. 28:37 [f] Ezek. 35:13 **36:4** [g] Ezek. 34:8, 28 [h] Ps. 79:4 **36:5** [i] Deut. 4:24 [j] Ezek. 35:10, 12 **36:6** [k] Ps. 74:10; 123:3, 4 **36:7** [l] Ezek. 20:5 [m] Jer. 25:9, 15, 29 **36:10** [n] Amos 9:14 **36:11** [o] Jer. 31:27; 33:12 [p] Is. 51:3 [q] Ezek. 35:9; 37:6, 13 **36:12** [r] Obad. 17 [s] Jer. 15:7 **36:13** [t] Num. 13:32 **36:15** [u] Ezek. 34:29 **36:17** [v] Jer. 2:7 [w] Lev. 15:19 **36:18** [x] Ezek. 16:36, 38; 23:37 **36:19** [y] Deut. 28:64 [z] [Rom. 2:6] **36:20** [a] Rom. 2:24 **36:21** [b] Ezek. 20:9, 14 **36:22** [c] Ps. 106:8 **36:23** [d] Ezek. 20:41; 28:22 **36:24** [e] Ezek. 34:13; 37:21

bring you into your own land. 25[f]Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you [g]from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26I will give you a [h]new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27I will put My [i]Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*. 28[j]Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; [k]you shall be My people, and I will be your God. 29I will [l]deliver you from all your uncleannesses. [m]I will call for the grain and multiply it, and [n]bring no famine upon you. 30[o]And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. 31Then [p]you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that *were* not good; and you [q]will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. 32[r]Not for your sake do I do *this*," says the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!"

33'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable *you* to dwell in the cities, [s]and the ruins shall be rebuilt. 34The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. 35So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of [t]Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities *are now* fortified *and* inhabited.' 36Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places *and* planted what was desolate. [u]I, the LORD, have spoken *it*, and I will do *it*."

37'Thus says the Lord GOD: [v]"I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will [w]increase their men like a flock. 38Like a flock *offered as* holy *sacrifices*, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."'"

The Dry Bones Live

37 The [a]hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out [b]in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it *was* full of bones. 2Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and indeed *they were* very dry. 3And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

So I answered, "O Lord GOD, [c]You know."

4Again He said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! 5Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will [d]cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. 6I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. [e]Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD."'"

7So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but *there was* no breath in them.

9Also He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: [f]"Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live."'" 10So I prophesied as He commanded me, [g]and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

36:25 ***sprinkle clean water on you.*** This symbolized cleansing from sin.

36:27 ***I will put My Spirit within you.*** The regenerating and empowering work of the Holy Spirit on individuals would not only restore the people physically to the land, but would restore them spiritually, by giving them a new heart and new spirit to help them follow Him and do His will (11:19–20; 18:31; 37:14; Jer. 31:31–34; Joel 2:28–29; Rom. 7:7—8:11).

36:28–30 ***you shall be My people.*** The purpose of the Mosaic covenant would finally be realized (Deut. 26:16–19; 29:13; 30:8). The Israelites would become a people dedicated to God's ways.

36:31–32 ***Not for your sake do I do this.*** The restoration from the exile would recover God's glorious reputation among the nations and erase the guilt of the Israelites' sin. This is all a product of God's favor on the Israelites—even though they had done nothing to merit such mercy.

37:4 ***Prophesy to these bones.*** Ezekiel's prophecies had often been directed to people as deaf as these old, dry bones.

37:5 ***breath.*** This word is translated as wind or spirit in other places. The breath sent by God into the lifeless bodies symbolizes the Holy Spirit who brings renewal, regeneration, and rebirth (John 3:5–8; 6:44; 7:37–39; Rom. 8:9–11).

37:6 ***you shall live.*** This passage is not about resurrection from physical death, but rebirth from spiritual death brought about by divine power. Psalm 87 is another text that speaks of spiritual rebirth. The point of Jesus' words to Nicodemus in John 3 was that he should have known and understood the concept of a second birth.

37:10 ***an exceedingly great army.*** The dead bones

36:25 [f] Heb. 9:13, 19; 10:22 [g] Jer. 33:8 **36:26** [h] Ezek. 11:19 **36:27** [i] Ezek. 11:19; 37:14 **36:28** [j] Ezek. 28:25; 37:25 [k] Jer. 30:22 **36:29** [l] [Rom. 11:26] [m] Ps. 105:16 [n] Ezek. 34:27, 29 **36:30** [o] Ezek. 34:27 **36:31** [p] Ezek. 16:61, 63 [q] Ezek. 6:9; 20:43 **36:32** [r] Deut. 9:5 **36:33** [s] Ezek. 36:10 **36:35** [t] Joel 2:3 **36:36** [u] Ezek. 17:24; 22:14; 37:14 **36:37** [v] Ezek. 14:3; 20:3, 31 [w] Ezek. 36:10 **37:1** [a] Ezek. 1:3 [b] Ezek. 3:14; 8:3; 11:24 **37:3** [c] [1 Sam. 2:6] **37:5** [d] Ps. 104:29, 30 **37:6** [e] Joel 2:27; 3:17 **37:9** [f] [Ps. 104:30] **37:10** [g] Rev. 11:11

11 Then He said to me, "Son of man, these
bones are the [h]whole house of Israel. They
indeed say, [i]'Our bones are dry, our hope is
lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' 12 There-
fore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says
the Lord GOD: "Behold, [j]O My people, I will
open your graves and cause you to come up
from your graves, and [k]bring you into the
land of Israel. 13 Then you shall know that
I *am* the LORD, when I have opened your
graves, O My people, and brought you up
from your graves. 14 I [l]will put My Spirit in
you, and you shall live, and I will place you
in your own land. Then you shall know that
I, the LORD, have spoken *it* and performed
it," says the LORD.'"

One Kingdom, One King

15 Again the word of the LORD came
to me, saying, 16 "As for you, son of man,
[m]take a stick for yourself and write on it:
'For Judah and for [n]the children of Israel,
his companions.' Then take another stick
and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of
Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel, his
companions.' 17 Then [o]join them one to an-
other for yourself into one stick, and they
will become one in your hand.

18 "And when the children of your people
speak to you, saying, [p]'Will you not show
us what you *mean* by these?'— 19 [q]say to
them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I
will take [r]the stick of Joseph, which *is* in
the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Is-
rael, his companions; and I will join them
with it, with the stick of Judah, and make
them one stick, and they will be one in
My hand."' 20 And the sticks on which you
write will be in your hand [s]before their
eyes.

21 "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord
GOD: "Surely [t]I will take the children of
Israel from among the nations, wherever
they have gone, and will gather them from
every side and bring them into their own
land; 22 and [u]I will make them one nation
in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and
[v]one king shall be king over them all; they
shall no longer be two nations, nor shall
they ever be divided into two kingdoms
again. 23 [w]They shall not defile themselves
anymore with their idols, nor with their
detestable things, nor with any of their
transgressions; but [x]I will deliver them
from all their dwelling places in which
they have sinned, and will cleanse them.
Then they shall be My people, and I will
be their God.

24 [y]"David My servant *shall be* king over
them, and [z]they shall all have one shepherd;
[a]they shall also walk in My judgments and
observe My statutes, and do them. 25 [b]Then
they shall dwell in the land that I have
given to Jacob My servant, where your
fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there,
they, their children, and their children's
children, [c]forever; and [d]My servant David
shall be their prince forever. 26 Moreover I
will make [e]a covenant of peace with them,
and it shall be an everlasting covenant with
them; I will establish them and [f]multiply
them, and I will set My [g]sanctuary in their
midst forevermore. 27 [h]My tabernacle also
shall be with them; indeed I will be [i]their
God, and they shall be My people. 28 [j]The
nations also will know that I, the LORD,
[k]sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in
their midst forevermore."'"

Gog and Allies Attack Israel

38 Now the word of the LORD came to
me, saying, 2 [a]"Son of man, [b]set your
face against [c]Gog, of the land of [d]Magog,
the prince of Rosh,* [e]Meshech, and Tubal,
and prophesy against him, 3 and say, 'Thus
says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I *am* against
you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech,

* **38:2** Targum, Vulgate, and Aquila read *chief prince of* (also verse 3).

in the valley (vv. 1–2) must have looked like the aftermath of a horrible military defeat in which there were no survivors even to bury the dead.

37:11–14 *these bones.* The bones symbolize the whole house of Israel. This identification picks up on imagery already used: (1) those identified as dry or spiritually dead; (2) those identified as despondent and dejected, with no apparent hope of being "resurrected" as the people of the living God; and (3) those described as disassembled and dispersed before being rejoined and rebuilt. The major thrust of this passage is the coming spiritual rebirth of God's chosen people through the agency of His Spirit.

37:24–25 *David my servant.* This title refers to the Messiah and King who would come from David's line to save Israel (2 Sam. 7:8–16).

37:26–28 *My sanctuary in their midst.* The sanctuary or holy place of the living God is His dwelling place among His people (Zeph. 3:15–18). ***My tabernacle.*** This is a synonym for sanctuary. Both can be used of God's dwelling in the midst of His people in the wilderness. Here they point to the future dwelling of the living God in the midst of His people forevermore.

38:2 *Son of man.* This is a title for Ezekiel emphasizing his humanity, even though his message was from God. The proper names in this prophecy do not have to be specifically identified for an understanding of the main message.

38:3 *Gog.* This leader or king only appears in Scripture here and in Revelation 20:8. Several ideas about

37:11 [h] Ezek. 36:10 [i] Ps. 141:7 **37:12** [j] Is. 26:19; 66:14 [k] Ezek. 36:24 **37:14** [l] Ezek. 36:27 **37:16** [m] Num. 17:2, 3 [n] 2 Chr. 11:12, 13, 16; 15:9; 30:11, 18 **37:17** [o] Hos. 1:11 **37:18** [p] Ezek. 12:9; 24:19 **37:19** [q] Zech. 10:6 [r] Ezek. 37:16, 17 **37:20** [s] Ezek. 12:3 **37:21** [t] Ezek. 36:24 **37:22** [u] Jer. 3:18 [v] Ezek. 34:23 **37:23** [w] Ezek. 36:25 [x] Ezek. 36:28, 29 **37:24** [y] Is. 40:11; [Luke 1:32]; 1 Pet. 2:25 [z] [John 10:16] [a] Ezek. 36:27 **37:25** [b] Ezek. 36:28; Rev. 21:3; 22:3 [c] Is. 60:21 [d] John 12:34 **37:26** [e] Is. 55:3 [f] Ezek. 36:10 [g] [2 Cor. 6:16] **37:27** [h] [John 1:14] [i] Ezek. 11:20 **37:28** [j] Ezek. 36:23 [k] Ezek. 20:12 **38:2** [a] Ezek. 39:1 [b] Ezek. 35:2, 3 [c] Rev. 20:8 [d] Gen. 10:2 [e] Ezek. 32:26

and Tubal. 4[f]I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and [g]lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, [h]all splendidly clothed, a great company *with* bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. 5Persia, Ethiopia,* and Libya* are with them, all of them *with* shield and helmet; 6[i]Gomer and all its troops; the house of [j]Togarmah *from* the far north and all its troops—many people *are* with you.

7[k]"Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. 8[l]After many days [m]you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword [n]*and* gathered from many people on [o]the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them [p]dwell safely. 9You will ascend, coming [q]like a storm, covering the [r]land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you."

10'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On that day it shall come to pass *that* thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: 11You will say, 'I will go up against a land of [s]unwalled villages; I will [t]go to a peaceful people, [u]who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates'— 12to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places *that are again* inhabited, [v]and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. 13[w]Sheba, [x]Dedan, the merchants [y]of Tarshish, and all [z]their young lions will say to you, 'Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?'"'

14"Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: [a]"On that day when My people Israel [b]dwell safely, will you not know *it?* 15[c]Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. 16You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may [d]know Me, when I am [e]hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes." 17Thus says the Lord GOD: "Are *you* he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?

Judgment on Gog

18"And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," says the Lord GOD, "*that* My fury will show in My face. 19For [f]in My jealousy [g]*and* in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: [h]'Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, 20so that [i]the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who *are* on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. [j]The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.' 21I will [k]call for [l]a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains," says the Lord GOD. [m]"Every man's sword will be against his brother. 22And I will [n]bring him to judgment with [o]pestilence and bloodshed; [p]I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who *are* with him, flooding rain, [q]great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. 23Thus I will magnify Myself and [r]sanctify Myself, [s]and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD."'

Gog's Armies Destroyed

39 "And [a]you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I *am* against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh,* Meshech, and Tubal; 2and I will [b]turn you around and lead you on, [c]bringing you up from

* **38:5** Hebrew *Cush* • Hebrew *Put* * **39:1** Targum, Vulgate and Aquila read *chief prince of.*

his identity have been suggested but none are completely convincing.

38:8 ***After many days . . . In the latter years.*** The first phrase usually denotes an indefinite time period, sometimes extending into the distant future or the end times (Dan. 8:26). The second phrase frequently points to messianic times or to the times when Israel is regathered. From Ezekiel's viewpoint, he was predicting a time in the very distant future—the end times. Unless the passage refers to spiritual warfare, the invasion of Israel and the subsequent time of confident and carefree peace are still future events.

dwell safely. This phrase indicates that the Israel of this passage is secure; the nation is not safe from attack, but it is safe from defeat.

38:18–23 ***My fury will show in My face.*** These verses speak of God defending His nation against Gog and his army with supernatural and earthshaking methods. Unusually strong language concerning the wrath of God is found in these verses.

38:4 [f] 2 Kin. 19:28 [g] Is. 43:17 [h] Ezek. 23:12 **38:6** [i] Gen. 10:2 [j] Ezek. 27:14 **38:7** [k] Is. 8:9, 10 **38:8** [l] Is. 24:22 [m] Is. 29:6 [n] Ezek. 34:13 [o] Ezek. 36:1, 4 [p] Ezek. 34:25; 39:26 **38:9** [q] Is. 28:2 [r] Jer. 4:13 **38:11** [s] Zech. 2:4 [t] Jer. 49:31 [u] Ezek. 38:8 **38:12** [v] Ezek. 38:8 **38:13** [w] Ezek. 27:22 [x] Ezek. 27:15, 20 [y] Ezek. 27:12 [z] Ezek. 19:3, 5 **38:14** [a] Is. 4:1 [b] Ezek. 38:8, 11 **38:15** [c] Ezek. 39:2 **38:16** [d] Ezek. 35:11 [e] Ezek. 28:22 **38:19** [f] Ezek. 36:5, 6 [g] Ps. 89:46 [h] Rev. 16:18 **38:20** [i] Hos. 4:3 [j] Jer. 4:24 **38:21** [k] Ps. 105:16 [l] Ezek. 14:17 [m] 1 Sam. 14:20 **38:22** [n] Is. 66:16 [o] Ezek. 5:17 [p] Ps. 11:6 [q] Rev. 16:21 **38:23** [r] Ezek. 36:23 [s] Ezek. 37:28; 38:16 **39:1** [a] Ezek. 38:2, 3 **39:2** [b] Ezek. 38:8 [c] Ezek. 38:15

the far north, and bring you against the mountains of Israel. 3Then I will knock the bow out of your left hand, and cause the arrows to fall out of your right hand. 4[d]You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who *are* with you; [e]I will give you to birds of prey of every sort and *to* the beasts of the field to be devoured. 5You shall fall on the open field; for I have spoken," says the Lord GOD. 6[f]"And I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in security in [g]the coastlands. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD. 7[h]So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not *let them* [i]profane My holy name anymore. [j]Then the nations shall know that *I am* the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. 8[k]Surely it is coming, and it shall be done," says the Lord GOD. "This *is* the day [l]of which I have spoken.

9"Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows, the javelins and spears; and they will make fires with them for seven years. 10They will not take wood from the field nor cut down *any* from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons; [m]and they will plunder those who plundered them, and pillage those who pillaged them," says the Lord GOD.

The Burial of Gog

11"It will come to pass in that day *that* I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea; and it will obstruct travelers, because there they will bury Gog and all his multitude. Therefore they will call *it* the Valley of Hamon Gog.* 12For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, [n]in order to cleanse the land. 13Indeed all the people of the land will be burying, and they will gain [o]renown for it on the day that [p]I am glorified," says the Lord GOD. 14"They will set apart men regularly employed, with the help of a search party,* to pass through the land and bury those bodies remaining on the ground, in order [q]to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will make a search. 15The search party will pass through the land; and *when anyone* sees a man's bone, he shall set up a marker by it, till the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon Gog. 16*The* name of *the* city *will* also *be* Hamonah. Thus they shall [r]cleanse the land."'

A Triumphant Festival

17"And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, [s]'Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field:

[t]"Assemble yourselves and come;
Gather together from all sides to My
[u]sacrificial meal
Which I am sacrificing for you,
A great sacrificial meal [v]on the
mountains of Israel,
That you may eat flesh and drink blood.
18 [w]You shall eat the flesh of the mighty,
Drink the blood of the princes of the
earth,
Of rams and lambs,
Of goats and bulls,
All of them [x]fatlings of Bashan.
19 You shall eat fat till you are full,
And drink blood till you are drunk,
At My sacrificial meal
Which I am sacrificing for you.
20 [y]You shall be filled at My table
With horses and riders,
[z]With mighty men
And with all the men of war," says the
Lord GOD.

Israel Restored to the Land

21[a]"I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and [b]My hand which I have laid on them. 22[c]So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day forward. 23[d]The Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore [e]I hid My face from them. I [f]gave

* **39:11** Literally *The Multitude of Gog*
* **39:14** Literally *those who pass through*

39:6 ***I will send fire.*** Often fire from the Lord has the form of lightning bolts (1 Kin. 18:38).

39:12 ***cleanse the land.*** The law of Moses prescribed the sacrifice of a heifer to cleanse the land if a murdered person was found in a region (Deut. 21:1–9).

39:17–20 ***Speak to every sort of bird.*** A poem or song is addressed to the scavenging birds and beasts who come to the multitude of dead bodies (vv. 14–16). Whether figurative or not, the passage powerfully pictures God's sovereign control over the complete conquest of Israel's future and most ferocious enemies (Rev. 19:11–21). The meal would be a divinely prepared sacrifice served at God's table.

39:21–22 ***My glory among the nations.*** The universal knowledge of the living God of Israel will be based finally on the outcome of the battle described in chapters 38 and 39. Ezekiel followed the great theme of biblical theology begun in Genesis 12:3 that the ultimate purpose of God in His choice of Abraham and Sarah was to make His blessings known to all the families of the earth. God will demonstrate His glory both among the nations and among His chosen people Israel.

39:4 [d] Ezek. 38:4, 21 [e] Ezek. 33:27 **39:6** [f] Amos 1:4, 7, 10 [g] Ps. 72:10 **39:7** [h] Ezek. 39:25 [i] Lev. 18:21 [j] Ezek. 38:16 **39:8** [k] Rev. 16:17; 21:6 [l] Ezek. 38:17 **39:10** [m] Is. 14:2; 33:1 **39:12** [n] Deut. 21:23 **39:13** [o] Zeph. 3:19, 20 [p] Ezek. 28:22 **39:14** [q] Ezek. 39:12 **39:16** [r] Ezek. 39:12 **39:17** [s] Rev. 19:17, 18 [t] Is. 18:6 [u] Zeph. 1:7 [v] Ezek. 39:4 **39:18** [w] Rev. 19:18 [x] Deut. 32:14 **39:20** [y] Ps. 76:5, 6 [z] Rev. 19:18 **39:21** [a] Ezek. 36:23; 38:23 [b] Ex. 7:4 **39:22** [c] Ex. 39:7, 28 **39:23** [d] Ezek. 36:18–20, 23 [e] Is. 1:15; 59:2 [f] Lev. 26:25

them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. 24[g]According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them."'

25"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: [h]'Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the [i]whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name— 26[j]after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they [k]dwelt safely in their *own* land and no one made *them* afraid. 27[l]When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I [m]am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, 28[n]then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. 29[o]And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have [p]poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD."

A New City, a New Temple

40 In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth *day* of the month, in the fourteenth year after [q]the city was captured, on the very same day [b]the hand of the LORD was upon me; and He took me there. 2[c]In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and [d]set me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south *was* something like the structure of a city. 3He took me there, and behold, *there was* a man whose appearance *was* [e]like the appearance of bronze. [f]He had a line of flax [g]and a measuring rod in his hand, and he stood in the gateway.

4And the man said to me, [h]"Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you; for you *were* brought here so that I might show *them* to you. [i]Declare to the house of Israel everything you see." 5Now there was [j]a wall all around the outside of the temple.* In the man's hand was a measuring rod six cubits *long, each being a* cubit and a handbreadth; and he measured the width of the wall structure, one rod; and the height, one rod.

The Eastern Gateway of the Temple

6Then he went to the gateway which faced [k]east; and he went up its stairs and measured the threshold of the gateway, *which was* one rod wide, and the other threshold *was* one rod wide. 7Each gate chamber *was* one rod long and one rod wide; between the gate chambers *was a space of* five cubits; and the threshold of the gateway by the vestibule of the inside gate *was* one rod. 8He also measured the vestibule of the inside gate, one rod. 9Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, eight cubits; and the gateposts, two cubits. The vestibule of the gate *was* on the inside. 10In the eastern gateway *were* three gate chambers on one side and three on the other; the three *were* all the same size; also the gateposts were of the same size on this side and that side.

11He measured the width of the entrance to the gateway, ten cubits; *and* the length of the gate, thirteen cubits. 12*There was* a space in front of the gate chambers, one cubit *on this side* and one cubit on that side; the gate chambers *were* six cubits on this side and six cubits on that side. 13Then he measured the gateway from the roof of *one* gate chamber to the roof of the other; the width *was* twenty-five cubits, as door faces door. 14He measured the gateposts, sixty cubits high, and the court all around the gateway *extended* to the gatepost. 15*From* the front of the entrance gate to the front of the vestibule of the inner gate *was* fifty cubits. 16*There were* [l]beveled window *frames* in the gate chambers and in their intervening archways on the inside of the gateway all around, and likewise in the vestibules. *There were* windows all around on the inside. And on each gatepost *were* [m]palm trees.

* **40:5** Literally *house*, and so elsewhere in this book

40:1 ***In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity.*** The actual date would have been about 573 B.C. This final vision of the temple in the book is one of God returning to dwell in the midst of His people who are now restored in their homeland. These are difficult chapters to interpret because of how easy it is to get bogged down in the architectural details. The writing is apocalyptic in style and expresses in symbolic manner how God would restore Israel in the future.

40:3–5 ***a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand.*** This man with a measuring rod is a kind of angelic architect who serves as both a guide and an interpreter for Ezekiel. ***Declare to the house of Israel everything you see.*** The details of the temple would have been of great importance and enormous interest to the exiles because the temple was the focal point of all of their worship.

40:7 ***cubits . . . rod.*** A cubit was about 18 inches long. A measuring rod was six cubits or nine feet in length.

40:16 ***palm trees.*** These were common decorations that were also found in Solomon's temple (1 Kin. 6:29–35).

39:24 [g] Ezek. 36:19 **39:25** [h] Ezek. 34:13; 36:24 [i] Hos. 1:11 **39:26** [j] Dan. 9:16 [k] Lev. 26:5, 6 **39:27** [l] Ezek. 28:25, 26 [m] Ezek. 36:23, 24; 38:16 **39:28** [n] Ezek. 34:30 **39:29** [o] Is. 54:8, 9 [p] [Joel 2:28] **40:1** [q] Ezek. 33:21 [b] Ezek. 1:3; 3:14, 22; 37:1 **40:2** [c] Ezek. 1:1; 3:14; 8:3; 37:1 [d] Rev. 21:10 **40:3** [e] Dan. 10:6 [f] Ezek. 47:3 [g] Rev. 11:1; 21:15 **40:4** [h] Ezek. 44:5 [i] Ezek. 43:10 **40:5** [j] Ezek. 42:20 **40:6** [k] Ezek. 43:1 **40:16** [l] 1 Kin. 6:4 [m] 1 Kin. 6:29, 32, 35

The Outer Court

17 Then he brought me into [n]the outer
court; and *there were* [o]chambers and a
pavement made all around the court; [p]thir-
ty chambers faced the pavement. 18 The
pavement was by the side of the gateways,
corresponding to the length of the gate-
ways; *this was* the lower pavement. 19 Then
he measured the width from the front of
the lower gateway to the front of the inner
court exterior, one hundred cubits toward
the east and the north.

The Northern Gateway

20 On the outer court was also a gateway
facing north, and he measured its length
and its width. 21 Its gate chambers, three
on this side and three on that side, its
gateposts and its archways, had the same
measurements as the first gate; its length
was fifty cubits and its width twenty-
five cubits. 22 Its windows and those of its
archways, and also its palm trees, *had* the
same measurements as the gateway facing
east; it was ascended by seven steps, and
its archway *was* in front of it. 23 A gate of
the inner court was opposite the northern
gateway, just as the eastern *gateway;* and
he measured from gateway to gateway, one
hundred cubits.

The Southern Gateway

24 After that he brought me toward the
south, and there a gateway was facing
south; and he measured its gateposts and
archways according to these same mea-
surements. 25 *There were* windows in it
and in its archways all around like those
windows; its length *was* fifty cubits and
its width twenty-five cubits. 26 Seven steps
led up to it, and its archway *was* in front
of them; and it had palm trees on its gate-
posts, one on this side and one on that side.
27 *There was* also a gateway on the inner
court, facing south; and he measured from
gateway to gateway toward the south, one
hundred cubits.

Gateways of the Inner Court

28 Then he brought me to the inner court
through the southern gateway; he mea-
sured the southern gateway according to
these same measurements. 29 Also its gate
chambers, its gateposts, and its archways
were according to these same measure-
ments; *there were* windows in it and in its
archways all around; *it was* fifty cubits
long and twenty-five cubits wide. 30 *There
were* archways all around, [q]twenty-five
cubits long and five cubits wide. 31 Its arch-
ways faced the outer court, palm trees
were on its gateposts, and going up to it
were eight steps.

32 And he brought me into the inner court
facing east; he measured the gateway ac-
cording to these same measurements.
33 Also its gate chambers, its gateposts,
and its archways *were* according to these
same measurements; and *there were* win-
dows in it and in its archways all around; *it
was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits
wide. 34 Its archways faced the outer court,
and palm trees *were* on its gateposts on
this side and on that side; and going up to
it *were* eight steps.

35 Then he brought me to the north gate-
way and measured *it* according to these
same measurements— 36 also its gate
chambers, its gateposts, and its archways.
It had windows all around; its length *was*
fifty cubits and its width twenty-five cubits.
37 Its gateposts faced the outer court, palm
trees *were* on its gateposts on this side and
on that side, and going up to it *were* eight
steps.

Where Sacrifices Were Prepared

38 *There was* a chamber and its entrance
by the gateposts of the gateway, where
they [r]washed the burnt offering. 39 In the
vestibule of the gateway *were* two tables
on this side and two tables on that side, on
which to slay the burnt offering, [s]the sin
offering, and [t]the trespass offering. 40 At
the outer side of the *vestibule*, as one goes
up to the entrance of the northern gateway,
were two tables; and on the other side of
the vestibule of the gateway *were* two ta-
bles. 41 Four tables *were* on this side and
four tables on that side, by the side of the
gateway, eight tables on which they slaugh-
tered *the sacrifices*. 42 *There were* also four
tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering,
one cubit and a half long, one cubit and
a half wide, and one cubit high; on these
they laid the instruments with which they
slaughtered the burnt offering and the sac-
rifice. 43 Inside *were* hooks, a handbreadth
wide, fastened all around; and the flesh of
the sacrifices *was* on the tables.

Chambers for Singers and Priests

44 Outside the inner gate *were* the cham-
bers for [u]the singers in the inner court,

40:22 ***ascended by seven steps.*** This would indicate that the temple area is a huge raised area, built up above the level of the surrounding land.

40:38–43 ***Four tables were on this side . . . on which they slaughtered the sacrifices.*** Ezekiel observes a room where the animals are slaughtered and washed for sacrificial offerings. These sacrifices point to the ultimate sacrifice; the sacrifice of God's only Son on the cross once for all (Heb. 7:20–28; 9:25–30).

40:44–47 ***chamber . . . for the priests.*** The guide explains that the chamber on the north side is for the priests who run the day-to-day operations of the

40:17 [n] Rev. 11:2 [o] 1 Kin. 6:5 [p] Ezek. 45:5 **40:30** [q] Ezek. 40:21, 25, 33, 36 **40:38** [r] 2 Chr. 4:6 **40:39** [s] Lev. 4:2, 3 [t] Lev. 5:6; 6:6; 7:1 **40:44** [u] 1 Chr. 6:31, 32; 16:41–43; 25:1–7

one facing south at the side of the northern gateway, and the other facing north at the side of the southern* gateway. 45Then he said to me, "This chamber which faces south *is* for [v]the priests who have charge of the temple. 46The chamber which faces north *is* for the priests [w]who have charge of the altar; these *are* the sons of [x]Zadok, from the sons of Levi, who come near the LORD to minister to Him."

Dimensions of the Inner Court and Vestibule

47And he measured the court, one hundred cubits long and one hundred cubits wide, foursquare. The altar *was* in front of the temple. 48Then he brought me to the [y]vestibule of the temple and measured the doorposts of the vestibule, five cubits on this side and five cubits on that side; and the width of the gateway was three cubits on this side and three cubits on that side. 49[z]The length of the vestibule *was* twenty cubits, and the width eleven cubits; and by the steps which led up to it *there were* [a]pillars by the doorposts, one on this side and another on that side.

Dimensions of the Sanctuary

41 Then he [a]brought me into the sanctuary* and measured the doorposts, six cubits wide on one side and six cubits wide on the other side—the width of the tabernacle. 2The width of the entryway *was* ten cubits, and the side walls of the entrance *were* five cubits on this side and five cubits on the other side; and he measured its length, forty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits.

3Also he went inside and measured the doorposts, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits *high;* and the width of the entrance, seven cubits. 4[b]He measured the length, twenty cubits; and the width, twenty cubits, beyond the sanctuary; and he said to me, "This *is* the Most Holy *Place*."

The Side Chambers on the Wall

5Next, he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits. The width of each side chamber all around the temple *was* four cubits on every side. 6[c]The side chambers *were* in three stories, one above the other, thirty chambers in each story; they rested on ledges which *were* for the side chambers all around, that they might be supported, but [d]not fastened to the wall of the temple. 7As one went up from story to story, the side chambers [e]became wider all around, because their supporting ledges in the wall of the temple ascended like steps; therefore the width of the structure increased as one went up *from* the lowest *story* to the highest by way of the middle one. 8I also saw an elevation all around the temple; it was the foundation of the side chambers, [f]a full rod, *that is,* six cubits *high.* 9The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers *was* five cubits, and so also the remaining terrace by the place of the side chambers of the temple. 10And between *it and* the *wall* chambers was a width of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side. 11The doors of the side chambers opened on the terrace, one door toward the north and another toward the south; and the width of the terrace *was* five cubits all around.

The Building at the Western End

12The building that faced the separating courtyard at its western end *was* seventy cubits wide; the wall of the building *was* five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits.

Dimensions and Design of the Temple Area

13So he measured the temple, one [g]hundred cubits long; and the separating courtyard with the building and its walls *was* one hundred cubits long; 14also the width of the eastern face of the temple, including the separating courtyard, *was* one hundred cubits. 15He measured the length of the building behind it, facing the separating courtyard, with its [h]galleries on the one side and on the other side, one hundred cubits, as well as the inner temple and the porches of the court, 16their doorposts and [i]the beveled window frames. And the galleries all around their three stories opposite the threshold were paneled with [j]wood from the ground to the windows—the windows were covered— 17from the space above the door, even to the inner room,*

* **40:44** Following Septuagint; Masoretic Text and Vulgate read *eastern.* * **41:1** Hebrew *heykal,* here the main room of the temple, sometimes called the *holy place* (compare Exodus 26:33) * **41:17** Literally *house,* here *the Most Holy Place*

temple. The chamber on the south side is for the priests who perform the sacrifices.

41:1–4 ***Then he brought me into the sanctuary.*** The basic temple has three areas: the outer area, the holy place or "nave," and the inner area or the "Most Holy Place." The innermost room is the focal point of the whole structure. Only the high priest could enter it and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

41:13–15 ***So he measured the temple.*** Ezekiel would have found pleasure in the symmetrical precision of the temple. It would have meant that it all fit together perfectly. There was nothing that was out of place. This may represent the order and harmony in God's future kingdom.

40:45 [v] Lev. 8:35 **40:46** [w] Num. 18:5 [x] 1 Kin. 2:35 **40:48** [y] 1 Kin. 6:3 **40:49** [z] 1 Kin. 6:3 [a] 1 Kin. 7:15–22 **41:1** [a] Ezek. 40:2, 3, 17 **41:4** [b] 1 Kin. 6:20 **41:6** [c] 1 Kin. 6:5–10 [d] 1 Kin. 6:6, 10 **41:7** [e] 1 Kin. 6:8 **41:8** [f] Ezek. 40:5 **41:13** [g] Ezek. 40:47 **41:15** [h] Ezek. 42:3, 5 **41:16** [i] Ezek. 40:16, 25 [j] 1 Kin. 6:15

as well as outside, and on every wall all around, inside and outside, by measure.
18 And *it was* made [k]with cherubim and [l]palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. *Each* cherub had two faces,
19 [m]so that the face of a man *was* toward a palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion toward a palm tree on the other side; thus *it was* made throughout the temple all around. 20 From the floor to the space above the door, and on the wall of the sanctuary, cherubim and palm trees *were* carved.
21 The [n]doorposts of the temple *were* square, *as was* the front of the sanctuary; their appearance was similar. 22 [o]The altar *was* of wood, three cubits high, and its length two cubits. Its corners, its length, and its sides *were* of wood; and he said to me, "This *is* [p]the table that *is* [q]before the LORD."
23 [r]The temple and the sanctuary had two doors. 24 The doors had two [s]panels *apiece,* two folding panels: two *panels* for one door and two panels for the other *door.* 25 Cherubim and palm trees *were* carved on the doors of the temple just as they *were* carved on the walls. A wooden canopy *was* on the front of the vestibule outside. 26 *There were* [t]beveled window *frames* and palm trees on one side and on the other, on the sides of the vestibule—also on the side chambers of the temple and on the canopies.

The Chambers for the Priests

42 Then he [a]brought me out into the outer court, by the way toward the [b]north; and he brought me into [c]the chamber which *was* opposite the separating courtyard, and which *was* opposite the building toward the north. 2 Facing the length, *which was* one hundred cubits (the width was fifty cubits), was the north door. 3 Opposite the inner court of twenty *cubits,* and opposite the [d]pavement of the outer court, *was* [e]gallery against gallery in three *stories.* 4 In front of the chambers, toward the inside, *was* a walk ten cubits wide, at a distance of one cubit; and their doors faced north. 5 Now the upper chambers *were* shorter, because the galleries took away *space* from them more than from the lower and middle stories of the building. 6 For they *were* in three *stories* and did not have pillars like the pillars of the courts; therefore *the upper level* was shortened more than the lower and middle levels from the ground up. 7 And a wall which *was* outside ran parallel to the chambers, at the front of the chambers, toward the outer court; its length *was* fifty cubits. 8 The length of the chambers toward the outer court *was* fifty cubits, whereas that facing the temple *was* one [f]hundred cubits. 9 At the lower chambers *was* the entrance on the east side, as one goes into them from the outer court.
10 Also *there were* chambers in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, opposite the separating courtyard and opposite the building. 11 [g]*There was* a walk in front of them also, and their appearance *was* like the chambers which *were* toward the north; they *were* as long and as wide as the others, and all their exits and entrances *were* according to plan. 12 And corresponding to the doors of the chambers that *were* facing south, as one enters them, *there was* a door in front of the walk, the way directly in front of the wall toward the east.
13 Then he said to me, "The north chambers *and* the south chambers, which *are* opposite the separating courtyard, *are* the holy chambers where the priests who approach the LORD [h]shall eat the most holy offerings. There they shall lay the most holy offerings—[i]the grain offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering—for the place *is* holy. 14 [j]When the priests enter them, they shall not go out of the holy *chamber* into the outer court; but there they shall leave their garments in which they minister, for they *are* holy. They shall put on other garments; then they may approach *that* which *is* for the people."

Outer Dimensions of the Temple

15 Now when he had finished measuring the inner temple, he brought me out through the gateway that faces toward the [k]east, and measured it all around.
16 He measured the east side with the

41:22 ***This is the table that is before the LORD.*** This is a reference to the table that held the showbread or bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23–30), a reminder that man lives his whole life constantly in the divine presence. When God is not present to bless His people, their worship is unacceptable, because such worship will inevitably be merely formal and devoid of blessing. When God is present with His people in worship, they are then enabled to worship.
42:1–14 ***Then he brought me out into the outer court.*** At this point the text has given us many details of the physical descriptions of the temple. No references have been made to God's spiritual presence. Ezekiel has set the scene for the return of the Lord to His temple and city.
42:13–14 ***holy chambers where the priests who approach the LORD shall eat.*** This chapter focuses on the buildings designed for the use of the priests. They were used for storage, changing, and eating.
42:15–20 ***he brought me out.*** After seeing the inside of the temple area, the guide takes Ezekiel to see the surrounding grounds.

41:18 [k] 1 Kin. 6:29 [l] Ezek. 40:16 **41:19** [m] Ezek. 1:10; 10:14 **41:21** [n] 1 Kin. 6:33 **41:22** [o] Ex. 30:1–3 [p] Ex. 25:23, 30 [q] Ex. 30:8 **41:23** [r] 1 Kin. 6:31–35 **41:24** [s] 1 Kin. 6:34 **41:26** [t] Ezek. 40:16 **42:1** [a] Ezek. 41:1 [b] Ezek. 40:20 [c] Ezek. 41:12, 15 **42:3** [d] Ezek. 40:17 [e] Ezek. 41:15, 16; 42:5 **42:8** [f] Ezek. 41:13, 14 **42:11** [g] Ezek. 42:4 **42:13** [h] Lev. 6:16, 26; 24:9 [i] Lev. 2:3, 10; 6:14, 17, 25 **42:14** [j] Ezek. 44:19 **42:15** [k] Ezek. 40:6; 43:1

measuring rod,* five hundred rods by the measuring rod all around. 17He measured the north side, five hundred rods by the measuring rod all around. 18He measured the south side, five hundred rods by the measuring rod. 19He came around to the west side *and* measured five hundred rods by the measuring rod. 20He measured it on the four sides; [l]it had a wall all around, [m]five hundred *cubits* long and five hundred wide, to separate the holy areas from the common.

The Temple, the LORD's Dwelling Place

43 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate [a]that faces toward the east. 2[b]And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. [c]His voice *was* like the sound of many waters; [d]and the earth shone with His glory. 3*It was* [e]like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I* came [f]to destroy the city. The visions *were* like the vision which I saw [g]by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4[h]And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. 5[i]The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, [j]the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

6Then I heard *Him* speaking to me from the temple, while [k]a man stood beside me. 7And He said to me, "Son of man, *this is* [l]the place of My throne and [m]the place of the soles of My feet, [n]where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. [o]No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with [p]the carcasses of their kings on their high places. 8[q]When they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore I have consumed them in My anger. 9Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

10"Son of man, [r]describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. 11And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its [s]ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write *it* down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its ordinances, and [t]perform them. 12This *is* the law of the temple: The whole area surrounding [u]the mountaintop *is* most holy. Behold, this *is* the law of the temple.

Dimensions of the Altar

13"These are the measurements of the [v]altar in cubits [w](the cubit *is* one cubit and a handbreadth): the base one cubit high and one cubit wide, with a rim all around its edge of one span. This *is* the height of the altar: 14from the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits; the width of the ledge, one cubit; from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge, four cubits; and the width of the ledge, *one* cubit. 15The altar hearth *is* four cubits high, with four [x]horns extending upward from the hearth. 16The altar hearth *is* twelve *cubits* long, twelve wide, [y]square at its four corners; 17the ledge, fourteen *cubits* long and fourteen wide on its four sides, with a rim of half a cubit around it; its base, one cubit all around; and [z]its steps face toward the east."

Consecrating the Altar

18And He said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: 'These *are* the ordinances for the altar on the day when it is made, for sacrificing [a]burnt offerings on it, and for [b]sprinkling blood on it. 19You shall give [c]a young bull for a sin offering to [d]the priests, the Levites, who are of the seed of [e]Zadok, who approach Me to minister to Me,' says the Lord GOD. 20'You shall take some of its blood and put *it* on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim around it; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it. 21Then you shall also take the bull of the sin offering, and [f]burn it in the appointed place of the temple, [g]outside the

* **42:16** Compare 40:5 * **43:3** Some Hebrew manuscripts and Vulgate read *He*.

43:2 ***the glory of the God of Israel came.*** Nineteen years before, Ezekiel had a vision of the Lord leaving His temple (10:18–22; 11:22–24). Now he gets a chance to see His return. Ezekiel's response is one of being overwhelmed with awe.

43:3 ***the River Chebar.*** This was where the Jewish exiles were located in Babylonia.

43:7–12 ***I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.*** When God left Jerusalem, it rapidly moved towards destruction. Here, when God returned, everything was rebuilt as a permanent dwelling. The Lord stipulated that Israel was not to defile God's holiness as it had done in the past.

43:20–23 ***cleanse . . . sin offering.*** These suggest purification and cleansing from sin. Because of the sinlessness—without blemish—of the sacrifice, the

42:20 [l] Ezek. 40:5 [m] Ezek. 45:2 **43:1** [a] Ezek. 10:19; 46:1 **43:2** [b] Ezek. 11:23 [c] Rev. 1:15; 14:2 [d] Rev. 18:1 **43:3** [e] Ezek. 1:4–28 [f] Jer. 1:10 [g] Ezek. 1:28; 3:23 **43:4** [h] Ezek. 10:19; 11:23 **43:5** [i] Ezek. 3:12, 14; 8:3 [j] 1 Kin. 8:10, 11 **43:6** [k] Ezek. 1:26; 40:3 **43:7** [l] Ps. 99:1 [m] 1 Chr. 28:2 [n] Joel 3:17 [o] Ezek. 39:7 [p] Lev. 26:30 **43:8** [q] Ezek. 8:3; 23:39; 44:7 **43:10** [r] Ezek. 40:4 **43:11** [s] Ezek. 44:5 [t] Ezek. 11:20 **43:12** [u] Ezek. 40:2 **43:13** [v] Ex. 27:1–8 [w] Ezek. 41:8 **43:15** [x] Ex. 27:2 **43:16** [y] Ex. 27:1 **43:17** [z] Ex. 20:26 **43:18** [a] Ex. 40:29 [b] Lev. 1:5, 11 **43:19** [c] Lev. 8:14 [d] Ezek. 44:15, 16 [e] Ezek. 40:46 **43:21** [f] Ex. 29:14 [g] Heb. 13:11

sanctuary. 22On the second day you shall offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they cleansed *it* with the bull. 23When you have finished cleansing *it*, you shall offer a young bull without blemish, and a ram from the flock without blemish. 24When you offer them before the LORD, [h]the priests shall throw salt on them, and they will offer them up *as* a burnt offering to the LORD. 25Every day for [i]seven days you shall prepare a goat *for* a sin offering; they shall also prepare a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish. 26Seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it, and so consecrate *it*. 27[j]When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will [k]accept you,' says the Lord GOD."

The East Gate and the Prince

44 Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary [a]which faces toward the east, but it *was* shut. 2And the LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, [b]because the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut. 3*As for* the [c]prince, *because* he *is* the prince, he may sit in it to [d]eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way."

Those Admitted to the Temple

4Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and [e]behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD; [f]and I fell on my face. 5And the LORD said to me, [g]"Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes and hear with your ears, all that I say to you concerning all the [h]ordinances of the house of the LORD and all its laws. Mark well who may enter the house and all who go out from the sanctuary.

6"Now say to the [i]rebellious, to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "O house of Israel, [j]let Us have no more of all your abominations. 7[k]When you brought in [l]foreigners, [m]uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to defile it—My house—and when you offered [n]My food, [o]the fat and the blood, then they broke My covenant because of all your abominations. 8And you have not [p]kept charge of My holy things, but you have set *others* to keep charge of My sanctuary for you." 9Thus says the Lord GOD: [q]"No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter My sanctuary, including any foreigner who *is* among the children of Israel.

Laws Governing Priests

10[r]"And the Levites who went far from Me, when Israel went astray, who strayed away from Me after their idols, they shall bear their iniquity. 11Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, [s]*as* gatekeepers of the house and ministers of the house; [t]they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and [u]they shall stand before them to minister to them. 12Because they ministered to them before their idols and [v]caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity, therefore I have [w]raised My hand in an oath against them," says the Lord GOD, "that they shall bear their iniquity. 13[x]And they shall not come near Me to minister to Me as priest, nor come near any of My holy things, nor into the Most Holy *Place;* but they shall [y]bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed. 14Nevertheless I will make them [z]keep charge of the temple, for all its work, and for all that has to be done in it.

15[a]"But the priests, the Levites, [b]the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary [c]when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they [d]shall stand before Me to offer to Me the [e]fat and the blood," says the Lord GOD. 16"They shall [f]enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near [g]My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge. 17And it shall be, whenever they enter the gates of the inner court, that [h]they shall put on linen garments; no wool shall

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people for whom the sacrifice is made are declared acceptable before God (v. 27; Ex. 29:14; Lev. 3; 4:12).

44:1–3 ***This gate shall be shut.*** Today this is known as the "Golden Gate" and dates from several centuries after Christ. It is walled shut today in accordance with an Islamic tradition.

44:4–9 ***I looked . . . I fell on my face.*** Ezekiel experiences another awe-inspiring vision of God's glory leading him to bow in worship (1:28—2:1). God demands that His renewed people follow His regulations exactly. He emphasizes the necessity of holiness and righteousness, especially in light of Israel's past.

44:11–14 ***Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary.*** God explains to Ezekiel why the Levites would be limited to certain types of temple ministry. The Levites (with the exception of the sons of Zadok; v. 15) could not be priests but could be ministers (servants or attendants). They could not serve in the inner court or temple, where the holy things are located; but they could oversee the general operation of the temple complex.

43:24 [h] Lev. 2:13 **43:25** [i] Ex. 29:35 **43:27** [j] Lev. 9:1–4 [k] Ezek. 20:40, 41 **44:1** [a] Ezek. 43:1 **44:2** [b] Ezek. 43:2–4 **44:3** [c] Gen. 31:54 [d] Ezek. 46:2, 8 **44:4** [e] Ezek. 3:23; 43:5 [f] Ezek. 1:28; 43:3 **44:5** [g] Ezek. 40:4 [h] Ezek. 43:10, 11 **44:6** [i] Ezek. 2:5 [j] 1 Pet. 4:3 **44:7** [k] Acts 21:28 [l] Lev. 22:25 [m] Lev. 26:41 [n] Lev. 21:17 [o] Lev. 3:16 **44:8** [p] Lev. 22:2 **44:9** [q] Ezek. 44:7 **44:10** [r] 2 Kin. 23:8 **44:11** [s] 1 Chr. 26:1–19 [t] 2 Chr. 29:34; 30:17 [u] Num. 16:9 **44:12** [v] Is. 9:16 [w] Ps. 106:26 **44:13** [x] 2 Kin. 23:9 [y] Ezek. 32:30 **44:14** [z] Num. 18:4 **44:15** [a] Ezek. 40:46 [b] [1 Sam. 2:35] [c] Ezek. 44:10 [d] Deut. 10:8 [e] Ezek. 44:7 **44:16** [f] Num. 18:5, 7, 8 [g] Ezek. 41:22 **44:17** [h] Ex. 28:39–43; 39:27–29

come upon them while they minister within the gates of the inner court or within the house. 18[i]They shall have linen turbans on their heads and linen trousers on their bodies; they shall not clothe themselves with *anything that causes* sweat. 19When they go out to the outer court, to the outer court to the people, [j]they shall take off their garments in which they have ministered, leave them in the holy chambers, and put on other garments; and in their holy garments they shall [k]not sanctify the people.

20[l]"They shall neither shave their heads nor let their hair grow [m]long, but they shall keep their hair well trimmed. 21[n]No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. 22They shall not take as wife a [o]widow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests.

23"And [p]they shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to [q]discern between the unclean and the clean. 24[r]In controversy they shall stand as judges, *and* judge it according to My judgments. They shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, [s]and they shall hallow My Sabbaths.

25"They shall not defile *themselves* by coming near a dead person. Only for father or mother, for son or daughter, for brother or unmarried sister may they defile themselves. 26[t]After he is cleansed, they shall count seven days for him. 27And on the day that he goes to the sanctuary to minister in the sanctuary, [u]he must offer his sin offering [v]in the inner court," says the Lord GOD.

28"It shall be, in regard to their inheritance, *that* I [w]*am* their inheritance. You shall give them no [x]possession in Israel, for I *am* their possession. 29[y]They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering; [z]every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. 30The [a]best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you [b]shall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, [c]to cause a blessing to rest on your house. 31The priests shall not eat anything, bird or beast, that [d]died naturally or was torn *by wild beasts.*

The Holy District

45 "Moreover, when you [a]divide the land by lot into inheritance, you shall [b]set apart a district for the LORD, a holy section of the land; its length *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits,* and the width ten thousand. It *shall be* holy throughout its territory all around. 2Of this there shall be a square plot for the sanctuary, [c]five hundred by five hundred *rods,* with fifty cubits around it for an open space. 3So this is the district you shall measure: twenty-five thousand *cubits* long and ten thousand wide; [d]in it shall be the sanctuary, the Most Holy *Place.* 4It shall be [e]a holy *section* of the land, belonging to the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who come near to minister to the LORD; it shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. 5[f]*An area* twenty-five thousand *cubits* long and ten thousand wide shall belong to the Levites, the ministers of the temple; they shall have [g]twenty chambers as a possession.*

Properties of the City and the Prince

6[h]"You shall appoint as the property of the city *an area* five thousand *cubits* wide and twenty-five thousand long, adjacent to the district of the holy *section;* it shall belong to the whole house of Israel.

7[i]"The prince shall have *a section* on one side and the other of the holy district and the city's property; and bordering on the holy district and the city's property,

* **45:5** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *a possession, cities of dwelling.*

44:23 ***they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy.*** These verses speak of holiness in conduct. These regulations continued practices already prescribed in the law of Moses (Lev. 10:6,9; 21:1–7,10,14). Their aim was to help the priests avoid conformity to the immoral and idolatrous religious rituals and conduct among the pagan nations. The priests, then and in the future, have the responsibility of modeling and maintaining the highest standards of morality, self-control, self-denial, discipline, and obedience to God's will.

44:28 ***I am their possession.*** God was to be the priests' inheritance in all respects; they were not to inherit land or cities.

45:1–5 ***a holy section of the land.*** A distinct or holy section was to be allocated for God. This area would be divided into two equal sections. One would be the portion for the Zadokites. In the center of this part of the holy district is the holy square-mile environs for the temple. The other half of the holy district would be the portion given to the Levites. All this is holy; God owns it.

45:6 ***the city.*** Most likely the city is Jerusalem.

45:7–8 ***The prince . . . My princes.*** Their identity is unknown (44:3), but the allotted area is on both sides of the holy district. The prince and God's princes of the messianic period—in contrast to previous leaders of Israel (11:1–13; 14:1–11,20–22; 34:1–10)—will

44:18 [i] Ex. 28:40; 39:28 **44:19** [j] Ezek. 42:14 [k] Lev. 6:27 **44:20** [l] Lev. 21:5 [m] Num. 6:5 **44:21** [n] Lev. 10:9 **44:22** [o] Lev. 21:7, 13, 14 **44:23** [p] Mal. 2:6–8 [q] Lev. 20:25 **44:24** [r] Deut. 17:8, 9 [s] Ezek. 22:26 **44:26** [t] Num. 6:10; 19:11, 13–19 **44:27** [u] Lev. 5:3, 6 [v] Ezek. 44:17 **44:28** [w] Num. 18:20 [x] Ezek. 45:4 **44:29** [y] Lev. 7:6 [z] Lev. 27:21, 28 **44:30** [a] Num. 3:13; 18:12 [b] Neh. 10:37 [c] [Mal. 3:10] **44:31** [d] Lev. 22:8 **45:1** [a] Ezek. 47:22 [b] Ezek. 48:8, 9 **45:2** [c] Ezek. 42:20 **45:3** [d] Ezek. 48:10 **45:4** [e] Ezek. 48:10, 11 **45:5** [f] Ezek. 48:13 [g] Ezek. 40:17 **45:6** [h] Ezek. 48:15 **45:7** [i] Ezek. 48:21

extending westward on the west side and eastward on the east side, the length *shall be* side by side with one of the *tribal* portions, from the west border to the east border. 8The land shall be his possession in Israel; and [j]My princes shall no more oppress My people, but they shall give *the rest of* the land to the house of Israel, according to their tribes."

Laws Governing the Prince

9'Thus says the Lord GOD: [k]"Enough, O princes of Israel! [l]Remove violence and plundering, execute justice and righteousness, and stop dispossessing My people," says the Lord GOD. 10"You shall have [m]honest scales, an honest ephah, and an honest bath. 11The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, so that the bath contains one-tenth of a homer, and the ephah one-tenth of a homer; their measure shall be according to the homer. 12The [n]shekel *shall be* twenty gerahs; twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, *and* fifteen shekels shall be your mina.

13"This *is* the offering which you shall offer: you shall give one-sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat, and one-sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley. 14The ordinance concerning oil, the bath of oil, *is* one-tenth of a bath from a kor. *A kor is* a homer or ten baths, for ten baths *are* a homer. 15And one lamb shall be given from a flock of two hundred, from the rich pastures of Israel. These shall be for grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings, [o]to make atonement for them," says the Lord GOD. 16"All the people of the land shall give this offering for the prince in Israel. 17Then it shall be the [p]prince's part *to give* burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel. He shall prepare the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel."

Keeping the Feasts

18'Thus says the Lord GOD: "In the first *month*, on the first *day* of the month, you shall take a young bull without blemish and [q]cleanse the sanctuary. 19[r]The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put *it* on the doorposts of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the gateposts of the gate of the inner court. 20And so you shall do on the seventh *day* of the month [s]for everyone who has sinned unintentionally or in ignorance. Thus you shall make atonement for the temple.

21[t]"In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. 22And on that day the prince shall prepare for himself and for all the people of the land [u]a bull *for* a sin offering. 23On the [v]seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bulls and seven rams without blemish, daily for seven days, [w]and a kid of the goats daily *for* a sin offering. 24[x]And he shall prepare a grain offering of one ephah for each bull and one ephah for each ram, together with a hin of oil for each ephah.

25"In the seventh *month*, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the [y]feast, he shall do likewise for seven days, according to the sin offering, the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the oil."

The Manner of Worship

46 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "The gateway of the inner court that faces toward the east shall be shut the six [a]working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the New Moon it shall be opened. 2[b]The prince shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway from the outside, and stand by the gatepost. The priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings. He shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. 3Likewise the people of the land shall

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not be greedy for riches and real estate but will give the land that remains to the people.

45:10–11 ***You shall have honest scales.*** The merchants were exhorted to use accurate measures. They must not cheat anymore when weighing produce (Lev. 19:35; Amos 8:5; Mic. 6:10–12). God called for an end to dishonesty and deceit; a time is coming when all such scheming will end (37:15–28).

45:18 ***In the first month, on the first day of the month.*** This is an annual day of purifying the temple sanctuary. In the light of Jesus' death on the cross, the actions of the prince symbolize and emphasize that God has made atonement for all through the sacrifice of the Messiah. The prince represents the people in these actions of worship.

45:21 ***you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days.*** In this passage the Feasts of Passover and Tabernacles are observed (Ex. 12:1–14; Lev. 23:5–8,33–43; Num. 28:16–25). The dates are in relation to the Levitical calendar, the Jewish religious year. The procedures as well are very similar to those of the Mosaic system. These feasts commemorate God's faithfulness to His promises.

46:1–8 ***The prince shall enter.*** What the rituals signified under the law was fulfilled by the Messiah. At the time of this prince, certain promises were being fulfilled and the covenants consummated in the messianic age (40:6–16,28–37; 43:18–27; Ex. 20:8–11).

45:8 *j* Ezek. 22:27 **45:9** *k* Ezek. 44:6 *l* Jer. 22:3 **45:10** *m* Lev. 19:36 **45:12** *n* Ex. 30:13 **45:15** *o* Lev. 1:4; 6:30 **45:17** *p* Ezek. 46:4–12 **45:18** *q* Lev. 16:16, 33 **45:19** *r* Ezek. 43:20 **45:20** *s* Lev. 4:27 **45:21** *t* Ex. 12:18 **45:22** *u* Lev. 4:14 **45:23** *v* Lev. 23:8 *w* Num. 28:15, 22, 30; 29:5, 11, 16, 19 **45:24** *x* Ezek. 46:5, 7 **45:25** *y* Num. 29:12 **46:1** *a* Ex. 20:9 **46:2** *b* Ezek. 44:3

worship at the entrance to this gateway
before the LORD on the Sabbaths and the
New Moons. 4The burnt offering that [c]the
prince offers to the LORD on the [d]Sabbath
day *shall be* six lambs without blemish,
and a ram without blemish; 5[e]and the grain
offering *shall be one* ephah for a ram, and
the grain offering for the lambs, as much as
he wants to give, as well as a hin of oil with
every ephah. 6On the day of the New Moon
it shall be a young bull without blemish,
six lambs, and a ram; they shall be without
blemish. 7He shall prepare a grain offering
of an ephah for a bull, an ephah for a ram,
as much as he wants to give for the lambs,
and a hin of oil with every ephah. 8[f]When
the prince enters, he shall go in by way of
the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the
same way.

9"But when the people of the land [g]come
before the LORD on the appointed feast
days, whoever enters by way of the north
[h]gate to worship shall go out by way of the
south gate; and whoever enters by way of
the south gate shall go out by way of the
north gate. He shall not return by way of
the gate through which he came, but shall
go out through the opposite gate. 10The
prince shall then be in their midst. When
they go in, he shall go in; and when they
go out, he shall go out. 11At the festivals
and the appointed feast days [i]the grain
offering shall be an ephah for a bull, an
ephah for a ram, as much as he wants to
give for the lambs, and a hin of oil with
every ephah.

12"Now when the prince makes a vol-
untary burnt offering or voluntary peace
offering to the LORD, the gate that faces to-
ward the east [j]shall then be opened for him;
and he shall prepare his burnt offering and
his peace offerings as he did on the Sab-
bath day. Then he shall go out, and after he
goes out the gate shall be shut.

13[k]"You shall daily make a burnt offer-
ing to the LORD *of* a lamb of the first year
without blemish; you shall prepare it every
morning. 14And you shall prepare a grain
offering with it every morning, a sixth
of an ephah, and a third of a hin of oil to
moisten the fine flour. This grain offering
is a perpetual ordinance, to be made regu-
larly to the LORD. 15Thus they shall prepare
the lamb, the grain offering, and the oil, *as*
a [l]regular burnt offering every morning."

The Prince and Inheritance Laws

16'Thus says the Lord GOD: "If the prince
gives a gift *of some* of his inheritance to
any of his sons, it shall belong to his sons;
it is their possession by inheritance. 17But if
he gives a gift of some of his inheritance to
one of his servants, it shall be his until [m]the
year of liberty, after which it shall return to
the prince. But his inheritance shall belong
to his sons; it shall become theirs. 18More-
over [n]the prince shall not take any of the
people's inheritance by evicting them from
their property; he shall provide an inheri-
tance for his sons from his own property,
so that none of My people may be scattered
from his property."'"

How the Offerings Were Prepared

19Now he brought me through the en-
trance, which *was* at the side of the gate,
into the holy [o]chambers of the priests
which face toward the north; and there a
place *was* situated at their extreme western
end. 20And he said to me, "This *is* the place
where the priests shall [p]boil the trespass
offering and the sin offering, *and* where
they shall [q]bake the grain offering, so that
they do not bring *them* out into the outer
court [r]to sanctify the people."

21Then he brought me out into the outer
court and caused me to pass by the four
corners of the court; and in fact, in every
corner of the court *there was another*
court. 22In the four corners of the court
were enclosed courts, forty *cubits* long and
thirty wide; all four corners *were* the same
size. 23*There was* a row *of building stones*
all around in them, all around the four of
them; and cooking hearths were made un-
der the rows of stones all around. 24And he
said to me, "These *are* the kitchens where
the ministers of the temple shall [s]boil the
sacrifices of the people."

The Healing Waters and Trees

47 Then he brought me back to the door
of the temple; and there was [a]water,
flowing from under the threshold of the
temple toward the east, for the front of the
temple faced east; the water was flowing
from under the right side of the temple,
south of the altar. 2He brought me out by
way of the north gate, and led me around
on the outside to the outer gateway that

46:9 ***He shall not return by the way of the gate through which he came.*** The prescribed protocol was probably to ensure an orderly procession and service. Such regulations would be needed on the special feast days due to the participation of large numbers of people.

46:14 ***a perpetual ordinance.*** This is a change from the provisions in the law (Num. 28:5). God's people cannot be reminded too often of God's provisions for them; nor can they thank Him too much or too frequently.

46:24 ***These are the kitchens.*** These were kitchen areas for the people to boil their sacrifices. The temple was a place for sacrificing, cooking, and eating. To combine the two elements is healthy for spiritual fellowship.

46:4 [c] Ezek. 45:17 [d] Num. 28:9, 10 **46:5** [e] Ezek. 45:24; 46:7, 11 **46:8** [f] Ezek. 44:3; 46:2 **46:9** [g] Ex. 23:14–17; 34:23 [h] Ezek. 48:31, 33 **46:11** [i] Ezek. 46:5, 7 **46:12** [j] Ezek. 44:3; 46:1, 2, 8 **46:13** [k] Num. 28:3–5 **46:15** [l] Ex. 29:42 **46:17** [m] Lev. 25:10 **46:18** [n] Ezek. 45:8 **46:19** [o] Ezek. 42:13 **46:20** [p] 2 Chr. 35:13 [q] Lev. 2:4, 5, 7 [r] Ezek. 44:19 **46:24** [s] Ezek. 46:20 **47:1** [a] Joel 3:18

faces [b]east; and there was water, running out on the right side.
3And when [c]the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my* ankles. 4Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my* knees. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water *came up to my* waist. 5Again he measured one thousand, *and it was* a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed. 6He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen *this?*" Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river.
7When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, *were* very many [d]trees on one side and the other. 8Then he said to me: "This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. *When it* reaches the sea, *its* waters are healed. 9And it shall be *that* every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes. 10It shall be *that* fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be *places* for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish [e]of the Great Sea, exceedingly many. 11But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt. 12[f]Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all *kinds of* trees used for food; [g]their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for [h]medicine."

Borders of the Land

13Thus says the Lord GOD: "These *are* the [i]borders by which you shall divide the land as an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. [j]Joseph *shall have two* portions. 14You shall inherit it equally with one another; for I [k]raised My hand in an oath to give it to your fathers, and this land shall [l]fall to you as your inheritance.
15"This *shall be* the border of the land on the north: from the Great Sea, *by* [m]the road to Hethlon, as one goes to [n]Zedad, 16[o]Hamath, [p]Berothah, Sibraim (which *is* between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath), to Hazar Hatticon (which *is* on the border of Hauran). 17Thus the boundary shall be from the Sea to [q]Hazar Enan, the border of Damascus; and as for the north, northward, it is the border of Hamath. *This is* the north side.
18"On the east side you shall mark out the border from between Hauran and Damascus, and between Gilead and the land of Israel, along the Jordan, and along the eastern side of the sea. *This is* the east side.
19"The south side, toward the South,* *shall be* from Tamar to [r]the waters of Meribah by Kadesh, along the brook to the Great Sea. *This is* the south side, toward the South.
20"The west side *shall be* the Great Sea, from the *southern* boundary until one comes to a point opposite Hamath. This *is* the west side.
21"Thus you shall [s]divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. 22It shall be that you will divide it by [t]lot as an inheritance for yourselves, [u]and for the strangers who dwell among you and who bear children among you. [v]They shall be to you as native-born among the children of Israel; they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. 23And it shall be *that* in whatever tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give *him* his inheritance," says the Lord GOD.

Division of the Land

48 "Now these *are* the names of the tribes: [a]From the northern border along the road to Hethlon at the entrance of Hamath, to Hazar Enan, the border of Damascus northward, in the direction of Hamath, *there shall be* one *section for* [b]Dan from its east to its west side; 2by the border of Dan, from the east side to the west, one *section for* [c]Asher; 3by the border of Asher, from the east side to the west, one *section for* [d]Naphtali; 4by the border

* **47:19** Hebrew *Negev*

47:7–12 *their water flows from the sanctuary.* The living water that God will provide has immeasurable power to renew, restore, and resurrect life. The water is a river of healing and the source of abundant life for everything and everyone.
47:14 *You shall inherit it equally.* Equality of inheritance is stressed. The unilateral and unconditional nature of the Abrahamic covenant is suggested; this inheritance is a free gift of God's grace which God's people did and could do nothing to deserve.
47:21–23 *and for the strangers.* Non-Israelites who married and settled within the Jewish communities were to be accepted as native Israelites, qualified to share in the territorial inheritance of whatever tribe they joined (Lev. 19:34).
48:1 *Now these are the names.* The land would be

47:2 [b] Ezek. 44:1, 2 **47:3** [c] Ezek. 40:3 **47:7** [d] [Rev. 22:2] **47:10** [e] Num. 34:3 **47:12** [f] Ezek. 47:7 [g] [Jer. 17:8] [h] [Rev. 22:2] **47:13** [i] Num. 34:1–29 [j] Gen. 48:5 **47:14** [k] Ezek. 20:5, 6, 28, 42 [l] Ezek. 48:29 **47:15** [m] Ezek. 48:1 [n] Num. 34:7, 8 **47:16** [o] Num. 34:8 [p] 2 Sam. 8:8 **47:17** [q] Num. 34:9 **47:19** [r] Ps. 81:7 **47:21** [s] Ezek. 45:1 **47:22** [t] Num. 26:55, 56 [u] [Eph. 3:6] [v] [Col. 3:11] **48:1** [a] Ezek. 47:15 [b] Josh. 19:40–48 **48:2** [c] Josh. 19:24–31 **48:3** [d] Josh. 19:32–39

of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, one *section for* [e]Manasseh; 5by the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, one *section for* [f]Ephraim; 6by the border of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, one *section for* [g]Reuben; 7by the border of Reuben, from the east side to the west, one *section for* [h]Judah; 8by the border of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall be [i]the district which you shall set apart, twenty-five thousand *cubits* in width, and *in* length the same as one of the *other* portions, from the east side to the west, with the [j]sanctuary in the center.

9"The district that you shall set apart for the LORD *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and ten thousand in width. 10To these—to the priests—the holy district shall belong: on the north twenty-five thousand *cubits in length*, on the west ten thousand in width, on the east ten thousand in width, and on the south twenty-five thousand in length. The sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the center. 11[k]*It shall be* for the priests of the sons of Zadok, who are sanctified, who have kept My charge, who did not go astray when the children of Israel went astray, [l]as the Levites went astray. 12And *this* district of land that is set apart shall be to them a thing most [m]holy by the border of the Levites.

13"Opposite the border of the priests, the [n]Levites *shall have an area* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and ten thousand in width; its entire length *shall be* twenty-five thousand and its width ten thousand. 14[o]And they shall not sell or exchange any of it; they may not alienate this best *part* of the land, for *it is* holy to the LORD.

15[p]"The five thousand *cubits* in width that remain, along the edge of the twenty-five thousand, shall be [q]for general use by the city, for dwellings and common-land; and the city shall be in the center. 16These *shall be* its measurements: the north side four thousand five hundred *cubits*, the south side four thousand five hundred, the east side four thousand five hundred, and the west side four thousand five hundred. 17The common-land of the city shall be: to the north two hundred and fifty *cubits*, to the south two hundred and fifty, to the east two hundred and fifty, and to the west two hundred and fifty. 18The rest of the length, alongside the district of the holy *section*, *shall be* ten thousand *cubits* to the east and ten thousand to the west. It shall be adjacent to the district of the holy *section*, and its produce shall be food for the workers of the city. 19[r]The workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it. 20The entire district *shall be* twenty-five thousand *cubits* by twenty-five thousand *cubits*, foursquare. You shall set apart the holy district with the property of the city.

21[s]"The rest *shall belong* to the prince, on one side and on the other of the holy district and of the city's property, next to the twenty-five thousand *cubits* of the *holy* district as far as the eastern border, and westward next to the twenty-five thousand as far as the western border, adjacent to the *tribal* portions; *it shall belong* to the prince. It shall be the holy district, [t]and the sanctuary of the temple *shall be* in the center. 22Moreover, apart from the possession of the Levites and the possession of the city *which are* in the midst of what *belongs* to the prince, *the area* between the border of Judah and the border of [u]Benjamin shall belong to the prince.

23"As for the rest of the tribes, from the east side to the west, Benjamin *shall have* one *section;* 24by the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, [v]Simeon *shall have* one *section;* 25by the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west, [w]Issachar *shall have* one *section;* 26by the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west, [x]Zebulun *shall have* one *section;* 27by the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, [y]Gad *shall have* one *section;* 28by the border of Gad, on the south side, toward the South,* the border shall be from Tamar *to* [z]the waters of Meribah *by* Kadesh, along the brook to the [a]Great Sea. 29[b]This *is* the land which you shall divide by lot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these *are* their portions," says the Lord GOD.

The Gates of the City and Its Name

30"These *are* the exits of the city. On the north side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits* 31[c](the gates of the city *shall be* named after the tribes of Israel), the three gates northward: one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah, and one gate

* **48:28** Hebrew *Negev*

divided into thirteen parts. The division makes it clear that all who believe have a place.

48:28 ***Great Sea.*** This would have been the Mediterranean Sea.

48:31 ***named after the tribes of Israel.*** The gates are named after the original twelve tribes (Rev. 21:12–13). The gate for Joseph represents the two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim.

48:4 [e] Josh. 13:29–31; 17:1–11, 17, 18 **48:5** [f] Josh. 16:5–10; 17:8–10, 14–18 **48:6** [g] Josh. 13:15–23 **48:7** [h] Josh. 15:1–63; 19:9 **48:8** [i] Ezek. 45:1–6 [j] [Is. 12:6; 33:20–22] **48:11** [k] Ezek. 40:46; 44:15 [l] Ezek. 44:10, 12 **48:12** [m] Ezek. 45:4 **48:13** [n] Ezek. 45:5 **48:14** [o] Lev. 27:10, 28, 33 **48:15** [p] Ezek. 45:6 [q] Ezek. 42:20 **48:19** [r] Ezek. 45:6 **48:21** [s] Ezek. 34:24; 45:7; 48:22 [t] Ezek. 48:8, 10 **48:22** [u] Josh. 18:21–28 **48:24** [v] Josh. 19:1–9 **48:25** [w] Josh. 19:17–23 **48:26** [x] Josh. 19:10–16 **48:27** [y] Josh. 13:24–28 **48:28** [z] Ezek. 47:19 [a] Ezek. 47:10, 15, 19, 20 **48:29** [b] Ezek. 47:14, 21, 22 **48:31** [c] [Rev. 21:10–14]

for Levi; 32on the east side, four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan; 33on the south side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun; 34on the west side, four thousand five hundred *cubits* with their three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali. 35All the way around *shall be* eighteen thousand *cubits;* [d]and the name of the city from *that* day *shall be:* [e]THE LORD *IS* THERE."*

* **48:35** Hebrew *YHWH Shammah*

48:35 ***THE LORD IS THERE.*** This return of the Lord and the regathering of His people are predicted by Ezekiel in 11:17; 20:33–44; 37:15–28; and 39:21–29. The Lord was forced to depart from the city and the temple because of the wickedness of the Israelites (8:6; 10:18). But here, Ezekiel foresees the return of God in all His glory to His people, His temple, and His land. This was a powerful message in its context. Ezekiel and his immediate audience were far away from their homeland. This vision of the coming restoration would have inspired much hope in the faithful.

48:35 [d] Jer. 23:6; 33:16 [e] Joel 3:21

THE BOOK OF
DANIEL

▶ **AUTHOR:** Daniel's life and ministry bridge the entire seventy-year period of Babylonian captivity. This claims Daniel as author, and it uses the first person from 7:2 onward. The Jewish Talmud supports this claim, and Christ attributed a quote from 9:27 to "Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15). Daniel's wisdom and divinely given interpretive abilities brought him into a position of prominence, especially in the courts of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius.

▶ **TIME:** c. 605–536 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Dan. 2:20–22

▶ **THEME:** Daniel is one of very few heroes in the Bible whose record is flawless. He is an example of how to live and work as a believer in a hostile environment; a man of action while at the same time fully aware of his dependence on God. The important prophecies in Daniel have inspired many interpretations over the years. Many have attempted to identify the various elements of the prophecies and apply them to contemporary figures.

Daniel and His Friends Obey God

1 In the third year of the reign of [a]Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. **2**And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with [b]some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried [c]into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; [d]and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

3Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring [e]some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, **4**young men [f]in whom *there was* no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who *had* ability to serve in the king's palace, and [g]whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. **5**And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of *that time* they might [h]serve before the king. **6**Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. **7**[i]To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: [j]he gave Daniel *the name* Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

1:1 ***Jehoiakim king of Judah.*** Jehoiakim was an evil king who sided first with the Egyptians and then with the Babylonians, until he finally decided to rebel. His independence was short-lived, however, and he remained under Babylonian domination until his death (2 Kin. 23:34—24:6).

1:2 ***the treasure house of his god.*** These articles taken from the temple appear later, on the night of Belshazzar's feast (ch. 5). Eventually they were returned to Zerubbabel, who brought them back to Israel (Ezra 1:7).

1:3 ***master of his eunuchs.*** A term which became synonymous with "official." In ancient Middle Eastern monarchies, royal harems were typically superintended by men who had been emasculated and were considered reliable to serve in that capacity. A eunuch was often regarded as a privileged official. Some have speculated that Daniel and his friends were eunuchs, but there is no specific statement in the book to this effect.

1:4 ***language and literature.*** The language of most of Mesopotamia was Akkadian, which was written in cuneiform script. Over the centuries the Babylonians and Assyrians produced a massive body of literature of all types. Though Aramaic had begun to replace Akkadian by the time of Nebuchadnezzar, scholars continued to study and write literature in their classical tongue. ***Chaldeans.*** This name was commonly applied to Babylonians in general, and also to the guild of astrologers, diviners, and other practitioners of wisdom to which Daniel was being introduced (1:17; 2:2; 3:8).

1:7 ***names.*** Daniel means "God is my judge"; Belteshazzar means "lady protect the king," referring to the goddess Sarpanitu, wife of the god Marduk. Hananiah means "the Lord is gracious"; Shadrach means "I am fearful of the God." Mishael means "who is what God is?" Meshach means "I am of little

1:1 [a] 2 Kin. 24:1, 2 **1:2** [b] Jer. 27:19, 20 [c] Zech. 5:11 [d] 2 Chr. 36:7 **1:3** [e] Is. 39:7 **1:4** [f] Lev. 24:19, 20 [g] Acts 7:22 **1:5** [h] Dan. 1:19 **1:7** [i] 2 Kin. 24:17 [j] Dan. 2:26; 4:8; 5:12

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he
would not defile himself [k]with the portion
of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine
which he drank; therefore he requested
of the chief of the eunuchs that he might
not defile himself. 9 Now [l]God had brought
Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the
chief of the eunuchs. 10 And the chief of the
eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the
king, who has appointed your food and
drink. For why should he see your faces
looking worse than the young men who
are your age? Then you would endanger
my head before the king."
11 So Daniel said to the steward* whom
the chief of the eunuchs had set over
Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,
12 "Please test your servants for ten days,
and let them give us vegetables to eat and
water to drink. 13 Then let our appearance
be examined before you, and the appear-
ance of the young men who eat the portion
of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit,
so deal with your servants." 14 So he con-
sented with them in this matter, and tested
them ten days.
15 And at the end of ten days their fea-
tures appeared better and fatter in flesh
than all the young men who ate the portion
of the king's delicacies. 16 Thus the steward
took away their portion of delicacies and
the wine that they were to drink, and gave
them vegetables.
17 As for these four young men, [m]God
gave them [n]knowledge and skill in all lit-
erature and wisdom; and Daniel had [o]un-
derstanding in all visions and dreams.
18 Now at the end of the days, when the
king had said that they should be brought
in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them
in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 Then the
king interviewed* them, and among them
all none was found like Daniel, Hanani-
ah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore [p]they
served before the king. 20 [q]And in all mat-
ters of wisdom *and* understanding about
which the king examined them, he found
them ten times better than all the magi-
cians *and* astrologers who *were* in all his
realm. 21 [r]Thus Daniel continued until the
first year of King Cyrus.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

2 Now in the second year of Nebuchad-
nezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had
dreams; [a]and his spirit was *so* troubled that
[b]his sleep left him. 2 [c]Then the king gave
the command to call the magicians, the as-
trologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans
to tell the king his dreams. So they came
and stood before the king. 3 And the king
said to them, "I have had a dream, and my
spirit is anxious to know the dream."
4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king
in Aramaic,* [d]"O king, live forever! Tell
your servants the dream, and we will give
the interpretation."
5 The king answered and said to the
Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you
do not make known the dream to me,
and its interpretation, you shall be [e]cut in
pieces, and your houses shall be made an
ash heap. 6 [f]However, if you tell the dream
and its interpretation, you shall receive
from me gifts, rewards, and great honor.
Therefore tell me the dream and its inter-
pretation."
7 They answered again and said, "Let the
king tell his servants the dream, and we
will give its interpretation."
8 The king answered and said, "I know
for certain that you would gain time, be-
cause you see that my decision is firm: 9 if
you do not make known the dream to me,
there is only one decree for you! For you
have agreed to speak lying and corrupt
words before me till the time has changed.
Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall
know that you can give me its interpreta-
tion."
10 The Chaldeans answered the king, and
said, "There is not a man on earth who can
tell the king's matter; therefore no king,
lord, or ruler has *ever* asked such things of
any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. 11 *It*
is a difficult thing that the king requests,
and there is no other who can tell it to the
king [g]except the gods, whose dwelling is
not with flesh."
12 For this reason the king was angry and
very furious, and gave the command to de-
stroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. 13 So the
decree went out, and they began killing the
wise *men;* and they sought [h]Daniel and his
companions, to kill *them.*

* **1:11** Hebrew *Melzar,* also in verse 16 * **1:19** Literally *talked with them* * **2:4** The original language of Daniel 2:4b through 7:28 is Aramaic.

account." Azariah means "the Lord has helped me"; Abed-Nego means "servant of [the god] Nebo."

1:8 *defile himself.* The issue here was not the richness of the food or the alcohol. The king's table no doubt included unclean meats and food which had not been prepared according to the law. In addition, both meat and wines may well have already been offered to idols.

2:2 *magicians.* The word translated "magicians" refers to those who use a pen—most likely, those learned in the sacred writings of the Babylonians.

2:4 *in Aramaic.* Daniel 2:4b—7:28 is written in Aramaic, the common language of the day.

2:8 *gain time.* Nebuchadnezzar obviously did not have any faith in the integrity of his wise men or in the reality of their wisdom. He wanted to know for sure that the interpretation of his dream was a supernatural revelation, not just a clever story to please a king.

1:8 [k] Hos. 9:3 **1:9** [l] Gen. 39:21 **1:17** [m] [James 1:5–7] [n] Acts 7:22 [o] 2 Chr. 26:5 **1:19** [p] Gen. 41:46 **1:20** [q] 1 Kin. 10:1 **1:21** [r] Dan. 6:28; 10:1 **2:1** [a] Gen. 40:5–8; 41:1, 8 [b] Esth. 6:1 **2:2** [c] Ex. 7:11 **2:4** [d] Dan. 3:9; 5:10; 6:6, 21 **2:5** [e] Ezra 6:11 **2:6** [f] Dan. 5:16 **2:11** [g] Dan. 5:11 **2:13** [h] Dan. 1:19, 20

God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

14 Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel
answered Arioch, the captain of the king's
guard, who had gone out to kill the wise
men of Babylon; 15 he answered and said
to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the
decree from the king so urgent?" Then Ari-
och made the decision known to Daniel.
16 So Daniel went in and asked the king
to give him time, that he might tell the king
the interpretation. 17 Then Daniel went to
his house, and made the decision known to
Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his com-
panions, 18 *i*that they might seek mercies
from the God of heaven concerning this
secret, so that Daniel and his companions
might not perish with the rest of the wise
men of Babylon. 19 Then the secret was re-
vealed to Daniel *j*in a night vision. So Dan-
iel blessed the God of heaven.
20 Daniel answered and said:

k"Blessed be the name of God forever
and ever,
*l*For wisdom and might are His.
21 And He changes *m*the times and the
seasons;
*n*He removes kings and raises up kings;
*o*He gives wisdom to the wise
And knowledge to those who have
understanding.
22 *p*He reveals deep and secret things;
*q*He knows what *is* in the darkness,
And *r*light dwells with Him.

23 "I thank You and praise You,
O God of my fathers;
You have given me wisdom and might,
And have now made known to me
what we *s*asked of You,
For You have made known to us the
king's demand."

Daniel Explains the Dream

24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch,
whom the king had appointed to destroy
the wise *men* of Babylon. He went and said
thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise *men*
of Babylon; take me before the king, and I
will tell the king the interpretation."
25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel
before the king, and said thus to him, "I
have found a man of the captives* of Ju-
dah, who will make known to the king the
interpretation."
26 The king answered and said to Dan-
iel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, "Are
you able to make known to me the dream
which I have seen, and its interpretation?"
27 Daniel answered in the presence of the
king, and said, "The secret which the king
has demanded, the wise *men,* the astrolo-
gers, the magicians, and the soothsayers
cannot declare to the king. 28 *t*But there is
a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and
He has made known to King Nebuchadnez-
zar *u*what will be in the latter days. Your
dream, and the visions of your head upon
your bed, were these: 29 As for you, O king,
thoughts came *to* your *mind while* on your
bed, *about* what would come to pass after
this; *v*and He who reveals secrets has made
known to you what will be. 30 *w*But as for
me, this secret has not been revealed to me
because I have more wisdom than anyone
living, but for *our* sakes who make known
the interpretation to the king, *x*and that you
may know the thoughts of your heart.
31 "You, O king, were watching; and
behold, a great image! This great image,
whose splendor *was* excellent, stood before
you; and its form *was* awesome. 32 *y*This
image's head *was* of fine gold, its chest
and arms of silver, its belly and thighs*
of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly
of iron and partly of clay.* 34 You watched
while a stone was cut out *z*without hands,
which struck the image on its feet of iron
and clay, and broke them in pieces. 35 *a*Then
the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and
the gold were crushed together, and be-
came *b*like chaff from the summer thresh-
ing floors; the wind carried them away
so that *c*no trace of them was found. And
the stone that struck the image *d*became a
great mountain *e*and filled the whole earth.
36 "This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the
interpretation of it before the king. 37 *f*You,
O king, *are* a king of kings. *g*For the God

* **2:25** Literally *of the sons of the captivity*
* **2:32** Or *sides* * **2:33** Or *baked clay,* and so in verses 34, 35, and 42

2:11 ***except the gods.*** The wise men were forced to acknowledge their own limitations. As far as they knew, they were doomed because the gods who had the answers did not speak with men.

2:18 ***that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven.*** Daniel and his friends knew the same thing that the other wise men did: only God could possibly reveal the king's dream. But, unlike the other wise men, they knew that their God would answer when they called on Him.

2:28 ***the latter days.*** This is an expression used frequently for the end times when God will intervene in human history to establish His eternal kingdom (Is. 2:2; Hos. 3:5; Mic. 4:1–3).

2:31 ***a great image.*** The image that Nebuchadnezzar saw represented four kingdoms that would rule over all the earth.

2:37 ***the God of heaven has given you a kingdom.*** The rulers of the nations of the world may not recognize God's authority, but that does not alter the fact that they have their positions only through His permission.

2:18 *i* [Matt. 18:19] **2:19** *j* Job 33:15 **2:20** *k* Ps. 113:2 *l* [Jer. 32:19] **2:21** *m* Esth. 1:13 *n* [Ps. 75:6, 7] *o* [James 1:5] **2:22** *p* Ps. 25:14 *q* [Heb. 4:13] *r* Dan. 5:11, 14 **2:23** *s* Dan. 2:18, 29, 30 **2:28** *t* Gen. 40:8 *u* Gen. 49:1 **2:29** *v* [Dan. 2:22, 28] **2:30** *w* Acts 3:12 *x* Dan. 2:47 **2:32** *y* Dan. 2:38, 45 **2:34** *z* [Zech. 4:6] **2:35** *a* [Rev. 16:14] *b* Hos. 13:3 *c* Ps. 37:10, 36 *d* [Is. 2:2, 3] *e* Ps. 80:9 **2:37** *f* Jer. 27:6, 7 *g* Ezra 1:2

of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; 38 [h]and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—[i]you *are* this head of gold. 39 But after you shall arise [j]another kingdom [k]inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 40 And [l]the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush all the others. 41 Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. 42 And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, [m]so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. 43 As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. 44 And in the days of these kings [n]the God of heaven will set up a kingdom [o]which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; [p]it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. 45 [q]Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Daniel and His Friends Promoted

46 [r]Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering [s]and incense to him. 47 The king answered Daniel, and said, "Truly [t]your God *is* the God of [u]gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret." 48 [v]Then the king promoted Daniel [w]and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and [x]chief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon. 49 Also Daniel petitioned the king, [y]and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel [z]*sat* in the gate* of the king.

The Image of Gold

3 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* sixty cubits *and* its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. 2 And King Nebuchadnezzar sent *word* to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 3 So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 4 Then a herald cried aloud:

* **2:49** That is, the king's court

2:38 ***head of gold.*** The first worldwide empire, the head of gold, was Babylon.

2:39 ***another kingdom inferior to yours.*** The second empire, the chest and arms of silver, was Medo-Persia. Just as silver is inferior to gold, Medo-Persia was inferior to Babylon, not in size but in its effectiveness in governing its people. ***third kingdom of bronze.*** The third kingdom would be the Greek Empire.

2:40 ***fourth kingdom . . . strong as iron.*** The fourth kingdom, the legs of iron, is the only one not specifically identified within the Book of Daniel. Rome is the most likely choice, for it succeeded Greece, and was certainly a very strong empire.

2:41–45 ***the kingdom shall be divided.*** Some believe that this is a reference to the Roman Empire's decline, when the kingdom was divided and the fabric of the empire was weakening in the early centuries after Christ. In this case the "kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (obviously the kingdom of God) is a spiritual kingdom introduced by Christ at His first coming, and the mountain that grew from the rock would be a reference to the spread of Christianity, which eventually was named the state religion of the Roman Empire.

Others believe that verses 41–45 point to future events that have not yet been fulfilled. When this vision is compared with the four beasts of chapter 7, it seems clear that the fourth kingdom is yet to come. It is theorized that the kingdom of iron does actually refer to the Roman Empire, which will be revived in some form in the last days, perhaps as a ten-nation confederacy (the ten toes, or the ten horns of the beast of chapter 7). In this case, the "kingdom which shall never be destroyed" is a literal kingdom to be established by Jesus Christ at the second coming, at which time He will destroy the kingdoms of the world (Rev. 19:15).

3:1 ***cubits.*** A cubit in Israel was approximately 18 inches; in Babylon it was about 20 inches. Nebuchadnezzar's image was 90 to 100 feet tall. The odd proportions of this figure (a normal human height-to-width ratio is about 4:1 rather than 10:1) may indicate that the height includes a base or pedestal.

3:2 ***satraps.*** Satraps were the chief officials of the provinces of the empire.

2:38 [h] Dan. 4:21, 22 [i] Dan. 2:32 **2:39** [j] Dan. 5:28, 31 [k] Dan. 2:32 **2:40** [l] Dan. 7:7, 23 **2:42** [m] Dan. 7:24 **2:44** [n] Dan. 2:28, 37 [o] [Luke 1:32, 33] [p] Is. 60:12 **2:45** [q] Dan. 2:35 **2:46** [r] Acts 10:25; 14:13 [s] Ezra 6:10 **2:47** [t] Dan. 3:28, 29; 4:34–37 [u] [Deut. 10:17] **2:48** [v] [Prov. 14:35; 21:1] [w] Dan. 2:6 [x] Dan. 4:9; 5:11 **2:49** [y] Dan. 1:7; 3:12 [z] Esth. 2:19, 21; 3:2

"To you it is commanded, [a]O peoples, nations, and languages, 5*that* at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; 6and whoever does not fall down and worship shall [b]be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

7So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, *and* lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down *and* worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Daniel's Friends Disobey the King

8Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans [c]came forward and accused the Jews. 9They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, [d]"O king, live forever! 10You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; 11and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. 12[e]There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have [f]not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up."

13Then Nebuchadnezzar, in [g]rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. 14Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "*Is it* true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *that* you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? 15Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, [h]*good!* But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. [i]And who *is* the god who will deliver you from my hands?"

16Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, [j]we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17If that *is the case*, our [k]God whom we serve is able to [l]deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. 18But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we [m]worship the gold image which you have set up."

Saved in Fiery Trial

19Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. 20And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *and* cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. 21Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 22Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. 23And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

24Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste *and* spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

25"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, [n]walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like [o]the Son of God."*

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

26Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace *and* spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the [p]Most High God, come out, and come *here*." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. 27And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men [q]on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

* **3:25** Or *a son of the gods*

3:18 ***But if not.*** The faithful men knew that God could deliver them (v. 17), yet they were also aware that God could have chosen not to do so. Faith in God may not translate into victory in every circumstance (Heb. 11:32–39). To these men the outcome was irrelevant, for what was at stake was not God's ability or their own lives, but their faith and obedience to serve Him regardless of the cost.

3:25 ***I see four men loose.*** The fourth man walking with the three friends in the furnace may have been an angel. Many believe that this was an appearance of the preincarnate Christ.

3:4 [a] Dan. 4:1; 6:25 **3:6** [b] Jer. 29:22 **3:8** [c] Dan. 6:12, 13 **3:9** [d] Dan. 2:4; 5:10; 6:6, 21 **3:12** [e] Dan. 2:49 [f] Dan. 1:8; 6:12, 13 **3:13** [g] Dan. 2:12; 3:19 **3:15** [h] Luke 13:9 [i] Ex. 5:2 **3:16** [j] [Matt. 10:19] **3:17** [k] [Is. 26:3, 4] [l] 1 Sam. 17:37 **3:18** [m] Job 13:15 **3:25** [n] Is. 43:2 [o] [Ps. 34:7] **3:26** [p] [Dan. 4:2, 3, 17, 34, 35] **3:27** [q] Heb. 11:34

28 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying,
"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach,
and Abed-Nego, who sent His [r]Angel* and
delivered His servants who trusted in Him,
and they have frustrated the king's word,
and yielded their bodies, that they should
not serve nor worship any god except their
own God! 29 [s]Therefore I make a decree
that any people, nation, or language which
speaks anything amiss against the [t]God of
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall
be [u]cut in pieces, and their houses shall be
made an ash heap; [v]because there is no oth-
er God who can deliver like this."
30 Then the king promoted Shadrach,
Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province
of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream

4 Nebuchadnezzar the king,

[a]To all peoples, nations, and languages
that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

2 I thought it good to declare the signs
and wonders [b]that the Most High God
has worked for me.

3 [c]How great *are* His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!
His kingdom *is* [d]an everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion *is* from generation
to generation.

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my
house, and flourishing in my palace.
5 I saw a dream which made me afraid,
[e]and the thoughts on my bed and
the visions of my head [f]troubled me.
6 Therefore I issued a decree to bring in
all the wise *men* of Babylon before me,
that they might make known to me the
interpretation of the dream. 7 [g]Then the
magicians, the astrologers, the Chal-
deans, and the soothsayers came in,
and I told them the dream; but they did
not make known to me its interpreta-
tion. 8 But at last Daniel came before me
[h](his name *is* Belteshazzar, according
to the name of my god; [i]in him *is* the
Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the
dream before him, *saying*: 9 "Belteshaz-
zar, [j]chief of the magicians, because I
know that the Spirit of the Holy God
is in you, and no secret troubles you,
explain to me the visions of my dream
that I have seen, and its interpretation.

10 "These *were* the visions of my head
while on my bed:

I was looking, and behold,
[k]A tree in the midst of the earth,
And its height was great.
11 The tree grew and became strong;
Its height reached to the heavens,
And it could be seen to the ends of all
the earth.
12 Its leaves *were* lovely,
Its fruit abundant,
And in it *was* food for all.
[l]The beasts of the field found shade
under it,
The birds of the heavens dwelt in its
branches,
And all flesh was fed from it.

13 "I saw in the visions of my head *while*
on my bed, and there was [m]a watcher,
[n]a holy one, coming down from heaven.
14 He cried aloud and said thus:

[o]'Chop down the tree and cut off its
branches,
Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.
[p]Let the beasts get out from under it,
And the birds from its branches.
15 Nevertheless leave the stump and
roots in the earth,
Bound with a band of iron and bronze,
In the tender grass of the field.
Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,
And *let* him graze with the beasts
On the grass of the earth.
16 Let his heart be changed from *that of*
a man,
Let him be given the heart of a beast,
And let seven [q]times* pass over him.

* **3:28** Or *angel* * **4:16** Possibly *seven years*, and so in verses 23, 25, and 32

3:28 ***Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.*** Pagan cultures did not deny the existence of other gods, even those of other peoples. Nebuchadnezzar was impressed with the God of Israel, but that did not mean that he recognized that God is the only true god.

4:1 ***Nebuchadnezzar the king.*** These verses are a royal proclamation by Nebuchadnezzar concerning the God of Israel, in which the king celebrated what God had done for him and extolled His power and dominion.

4:8 ***my god.*** This refers to Marduk. Nebuchadnezzar was still a pagan, but he also recognized that Daniel had the spirit of his God, and that Daniel's God was different from other gods.

4:9 ***chief of the magicians.*** Daniel's position as head magician did not mean that he practiced sorcery or witchcraft, a thing clearly forbidden by the law (Deut. 18:10–11). In the pluralistic Babylonian society, Daniel's relationship with the God of Israel would automatically have been categorized as another form of magic, or astrology, or divination, the "wisdom" of the day. He received the honor and position of one who has favor with the gods.

4:16 ***seven times.*** These times could refer to years, months, weeks, days, or hours. Most take them as years, as elsewhere in the book (7:25).

3:28 [r] [Ps. 34:7, 8] **3:29** [s] Dan. 6:26 [t] Dan. 2:46, 47; 4:34–37 [u] Dan. 2:5 [v] Dan. 6:27 **4:1** [a] Dan. 3:4; 6:25 **4:2** [b] Dan. 3:26 **4:3** [c] 2 Sam. 7:16 [d] [Dan. 2:44; 4:34; 6:26] **4:5** [e] Dan. 2:28, 29 [f] Dan. 2:1 **4:7** [g] Dan. 2:2 **4:8** [h] Dan. 1:7 [i] Dan. 2:11; 4:18; 5:11, 14 **4:9** [j] Dan. 2:48; 5:11 **4:10** [k] Ezek. 31:3 **4:12** [l] Lam. 4:20 **4:13** [m] [Dan. 4:17, 23] [n] Deut. 33:2 **4:14** [o] Ezek. 31:10–14 [p] Ezek. 31:12, 13 **4:16** [q] Dan. 11:13; 12:7

17 'This decision *is* by the decree of the
watchers,
And the sentence by the word of the
holy ones,
In order [r]that the living may know
[s]That the Most High rules in the
kingdom of men,
[t]Gives it to whomever He will,
And sets over it the [u]lowest of men.'

18 "This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, [v]since all the wise *men* of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you *are* able, [w]for the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you."

Daniel Explains the Second Dream

19 Then Daniel, [x]whose name *was* Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts [y]troubled him. *So* the king spoke, and said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you."

Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, *may* [z]the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!

20 [a]"The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which *could be* seen by all the earth, 21whose leaves *were* lovely and its fruit abundant, in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home— 22[b]it *is* you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, [c]and your dominion to the end of the earth.

23 [d]"And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, *bound* with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, [e]and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him'; 24this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: 25They shall [f]drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you [g]eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, [h]till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and [i]gives it to whomever He chooses.

26 "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump *and* roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that [j]Heaven rules. 27Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; [k]break off your sins by *being* righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor. [l]Perhaps there may be [m]a lengthening of your prosperity."

Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation

28 All *this* came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. 29At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. 30The king [n]spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?"

31 [o]While the word *was still* in the king's mouth, [p]a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! 32And [q]they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."

33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

34 And [r]at the end of the time* I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to

* **4:34** Literally *days*

4:20 *tree.* In the Old Testament, a tree is a common symbol for a ruler (Judg. 9:7–15; Ezek. 31:2–14; Zech. 11:1–2).
4:23 *a watcher.* The term "watcher" means "waking one," one who is constantly alert. The parallel "holy one" suggests that the watcher is either the Lord Himself or one of His angels (3:28; 6:22; 8:16; 10:13).
4:32 *until you know that the Most High rules.* Nebuchadnezzar would become insane, yet in his animal-like state he would learn more of God than he ever had before. The chastisement of God is always for a holy and helpful purpose, if we will accept it.

4:17 [r] Ps. 9:16; 83:18 [s] Dan. 2:21; 4:25, 32; 5:21 [t] Jer. 27:5–7 [u] 1 Sam. 2:8 **4:18** [v] Gen. 41:8, 15 [w] Dan. 4:8, 9; 5:11, 14 **4:19** [x] Dan. 4:8 [y] Dan. 7:15, 28; 8:27 [z] 2 Sam. 18:32 **4:20** [a] Dan. 4:10–12 **4:22** [b] Dan. 2:37, 38 [c] Jer. 27:6–8 **4:23** [d] Dan. 4:13–15 [e] Dan. 5:21 **4:25** [f] Dan. 4:32; 5:21 [g] Ps. 106:20 [h] Dan. 4:2, 17, 32 [i] Jer. 27:5 **4:26** [j] Matt. 21:25 **4:27** [k] [1 Pet. 4:8] [l] [Ps. 41:1–3] [m] 1 Kin. 21:29 **4:30** [n] Prov. 16:18 **4:31** [o] Luke 12:20 [p] Dan. 4:24 **4:32** [q] [Dan. 4:25] **4:34** [r] Dan. 4:26

me; and I blessed the Most High and
praised and honored Him [s]who lives
forever:

For His dominion *is* [t]an everlasting
dominion,
And His kingdom *is* from generation
to generation.
35 [u]All the inhabitants of the earth *are*
reputed as nothing;
[v]He does according to His will in the
army of heaven
And *among* the inhabitants of the
earth.
[w]No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, [x]"What have You
done?"

36 At the same time my reason returned to
me, [y]and for the glory of my kingdom,
my honor and splendor returned to me.
My counselors and nobles resorted to
me, I was [z]restored to my kingdom, and
excellent majesty was [a]added to me.
37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, [b]praise and
extol and honor the King of heaven, [c]all
of whose works *are* truth, and His ways
justice. [d]And those who walk in pride
He is able to put down.

Belshazzar's Feast

5 Belshazzar the king [a]made a great feast
for a thousand of his lords, and drank
wine in the presence of the thousand.
2 While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave
the command to bring the gold and silver
vessels [b]which his father Nebuchadnez-
zar had taken from the temple which *had
been* in Jerusalem, that the king and his
lords, his wives, and his concubines might
drink from them. 3 Then they brought the
gold [c]vessels that had been taken from the
temple of the house of God which *had been*
in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords,
his wives, and his concubines drank from
them. 4 They drank wine, [d]and praised the
gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron,
wood and stone.
5 [e]In the same hour the fingers of a man's
hand appeared and wrote opposite the
lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the
king's palace; and the king saw the part
of the hand that wrote. 6 Then the king's
countenance changed, and his thoughts
troubled him, so that the joints of his hips
were loosened and his [f]knees knocked
against each other. 7 [g]The king cried aloud
to bring in [h]the astrologers, the Chaldeans,
and the soothsayers. The king spoke, say-
ing to the wise *men* of Babylon, "Whoever
reads this writing, and tells me its inter-
pretation, shall be clothed with purple and
have a chain of gold around his neck; [i]and
he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."
8 Now all the king's wise *men* came, [j]but
they could not read the writing, or make
known to the king its interpretation. 9 Then
King Belshazzar was greatly [k]troubled, his
countenance was changed, and his lords
were astonished.
10 The queen, because of the words
of the king and his lords, came to the
banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying,
"O king, live forever! Do not let your
thoughts trouble you, nor let your coun-
tenance change. 11 [l]There is a man in your
kingdom in whom *is* the Spirit of the Holy
God. And in the days of your father, light
and understanding and wisdom, like the
wisdom of the gods, were found in him;
and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—
your father the king—made him chief of
the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans,
and soothsayers. 12 Inasmuch as an ex-
cellent spirit, knowledge, understanding,
interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and
explaining enigmas* were found in this
Daniel, [m]whom the king named Belte-
shazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he
will give the interpretation."

The Writing on the Wall Explained

13 Then Daniel was brought in before
the king. The king spoke, and said to Dan-
iel, "*Are* you that Daniel who is one of the
captives* from Judah, whom my father the
king brought from Judah? 14 I have heard of
you, that [n]the Spirit of God *is* in you, and
that light and understanding and excellent

* **5:12** Literally *untying knots*, and so in verse 16
* **5:13** Literally *of the sons of the captivity*

5:1 ***Belshazzar the king.*** Belshazzar is called the king and the son of Nebuchadnezzar. Other ancient records, however, seem to dispute both facts. These records indicate that Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon. It is possible that Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. In ancient writings, the term *father* is often used to indicate ancestry rather than immediate family (2 Kin. 14:3). Belshazzar may have served as vice-regent while his father was still living (Nabonidus seems to have spent a number of the years of his reign in Arabia). Thus, he would have been acting as king, even if he was not officially king. Note that Darius the Mede was also called king, even though he served Cyrus (5:31; 6:6).

5:7 ***third ruler.*** Assuming that Belshazzar was acting as regent for his father Nabonidus, the "third ruler" would have been next in line for the throne.

5:11 ***the Spirit of the Holy God.*** This is the same expression used by Nebuchadnezzar (4:8–9,18).

5:13 ***that Daniel who is one of the captives.*** Daniel was an old man by this time, possibly 80 years old or older.

4:34 [s] [Rev. 4:10] [t] [Luke 1:33] **4:35** [u] Is. 40:15, 17 [v] Ps. 115:3; 135:6 [w] Job 34:29 [x] Rom. 9:20 **4:36** [y] Dan. 4:26 [z] 2 Chr. 20:20 [a] [Prov. 22:4] **4:37** [b] Dan. 2:46, 47; 3:28, 29 [c] [Ps. 33:4] [d] Ex. 18:11 **5:1** [a] Esth. 1:3 **5:2** [b] Dan. 1:2 **5:3** [c] 2 Chr. 36:10 **5:4** [d] Rev. 9:20 **5:5** [e] Dan. 4:31 **5:6** [f] Ezek. 7:17; 21:7 **5:7** [g] Dan. 4:6, 7; 5:11, 15 [h] Is. 47:13 [i] Dan. 6:2, 3 **5:8** [j] Dan. 2:27; 4:7; 5:15 **5:9** [k] Dan. 2:1; 5:6 **5:11** [l] Dan. 2:48; 4:8, 9, 18 **5:12** [m] Dan. 1:7; 4:8 **5:14** [n] Dan. 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11, 12

wisdom are found in you. 15Now [o]the wise *men,* the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. 16And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. [p]Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and *have* a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

17Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. 18O king, [q]the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. 19And because of the majesty that He gave him, [r]all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he [s]executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. 20[t]But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. 21Then he was [u]driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, [v]till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

22"But you his son, Belshazzar, [w]have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. 23[x]And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the [y]vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, [z]which do not see or hear or know; and the God who *holds* your breath in His hand [a]and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. 24Then the fingers* of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

25"And this is the inscription that was written:

MENE,* MENE, TEKEL,*
UPHARSIN.*

26This *is* the interpretation of *each* word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; 27TEKEL: [b]You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; 28PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the [c]Medes and [d]Persians."* 29Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him [e]that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Belshazzar's Fall

30[f]That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31[g]And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, *being* about sixty-two years old.

The Plot Against Daniel

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; 2and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel *was* one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. 3Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, [a]because an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. 4[b]So the governors and satraps sought to find *some* charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he *was* faithful; nor was there any error or

* **5:24** Literally *palm* * **5:25** Literally *a mina* (50 shekels) from the verb "to number" • Literally *a shekel* from the verb "to weigh" • Literally *and half-shekels* from the verb "to divide" * **5:28** Aramaic *Paras,* consonant with *Peres*

5:25–28 ***Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.*** MENE means "numbered." The repetition is for emphasis. God had numbered the days of Belshazzar's kingdom, and the time was up. TEKEL means "weighed." God had weighed Belshazzar's character, and he did not measure up. UPHARSIN (the plural of PERES) means "divided." That very night Babylon would be divided and defeated by the Medes and the Persians.

5:30 ***That very night.*** That very evening (October 12, 539 B.C.), Babylon fell to the Persian army commanded by Gubaru.

5:31 ***Darius the Mede.*** Darius the Mede is mentioned by name only in the Book of Daniel. He cannot be the famous Darius I Hystaspes because Darius I was not a Mede, and he lived too late (522–486 B.C.) to be a contemporary of Daniel. It is believed that "Darius the Mede" was Gubaru, a governor appointed by Cyrus. Ancient literary sources indicate that this official took over immediately in Babylon until Cyrus appointed his own son Cambyses as co-ruler around 538 B.C. Why Gubaru might have been called Darius is uncertain, though ancient rulers often took other names for themselves.

6:3 ***an excellent spirit.*** This probably refers to Daniel's surpassing ability to do his job well and perhaps also indicates a commendable attitude.

5:15 [o] Dan. 5:7, 8 **5:16** [p] Dan. 5:7, 29 **5:18** [q] Dan. 2:37, 38; 4:17, 22, 25 **5:19** [r] Jer. 27:7 [s] Dan. 2:12, 13; 3:6 **5:20** [t] Dan. 4:30, 37 **5:21** [u] Dan. 4:32, 33 [v] Ezek. 17:24 **5:22** [w] 2 Chr. 33:23; 36:12 **5:23** [x] Dan. 5:3, 4 [y] Ex. 40:9 [z] Ps. 115:5, 6 [a] [Jer. 10:23] **5:27** [b] Ps. 62:9 **5:28** [c] Dan. 5:31; 9:1 [d] Dan. 6:28 **5:29** [e] Dan. 5:7, 16 **5:30** [f] Jer. 51:31, 39, 57 **5:31** [g] Dan. 2:39; 9:1 **6:3** [a] Dan. 5:12 **6:4** [b] Eccl. 4:4

fault found in him. 5Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God."

6So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: [c]"King Darius, live forever! 7All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have [d]consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. 8Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the [e]law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." 9Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

10Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open [f]toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees [g]three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

11Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. 12[h]And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?"

The king answered and said, "The thing *is* true, [i]according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

13So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, [j]who is one of the captives* from Judah, [k]does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

14And the king, when he heard *these* words, [l]was greatly displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. 15Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that *it is* [m]the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

16So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast *him* into the den of lions. *But* the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you." 17[n]Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, [o]and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

Daniel Saved from the Lions

18Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians* were brought before him. [p]Also his sleep went from him. 19Then the [q]king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. 20And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, [r]has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

21Then Daniel said to the king, [s]"O king, live forever! 22[t]My God sent His angel and [u]shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

23Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, [v]because he believed in his God.

Darius Honors God

24And the king gave the command, [w]and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions—them, [x]their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

* **6:13** Literally *of the sons of the captivity*
* **6:18** Exact meaning unknown

6:5 *the law of his God.* Daniel had such integrity that, even after a life spent in government circles, his enemies could find nothing against him. His devotion to God was so well known that these men were confident that Daniel would obey His law even if it would cost him his life.

6:13 *who is one of the captives from Judah.* Daniel's accusers did not describe him as governor (v. 2), but as a captive from another land, in order to implicate him as a treasonous and dangerous person.

6:14 *was greatly displeased.* It is clear that Darius had not factored Daniel into the situation in the beginning. He never had the intention of harming him.

6:23 *he believed in his God.* Daniel's faithfulness got him into trouble; faith got him out of it (Heb. 11:33).

6:24 *their children, and their wives.* The entire families of the wicked conspirators were destroyed because the Persians, like the Hebrews and other peoples, considered guilt a collective responsibility (Num. 16:1–35; Josh. 7).

6:6 [c] Neh. 2:3 **6:7** [d] Ps. 59:3; 62:4; 64:2–6 **6:8** [e] Esth. 1:19, 8:8 **6:10** [f] Jon. 2:4 [g] Ps. 55:17 **6:12** [h] Dan. 3:8–12 [i] Dan. 6:8, 15 **6:13** [j] Dan. 1:6; 5:13 [k] Dan. 3:12 **6:14** [l] Mark 6:26 **6:15** [m] Dan. 6:8, 12 **6:17** [n] Lam. 3:53 [o] Matt. 27:66 **6:18** [p] Dan. 2:1 **6:19** [q] Dan. 3:24 **6:20** [r] Dan. 3:17 **6:21** [s] Dan. 2:4; 6:6 **6:22** [t] Dan. 3:28 [u] Heb. 11:33 **6:23** [v] Heb. 11:33 **6:24** [w] Deut. 19:18, 19 [x] Deut. 24:16

25 [y]Then King Darius wrote:

To all peoples, nations, and languages
that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

26 [z]I make a decree that in every dominion
of my kingdom *men must* [a]tremble and
fear before the God of Daniel.

[b]For He *is* the living God,
And steadfast forever;
His kingdom *is the one* which shall
not be [c]destroyed,
And His dominion *shall endure* to the
end.
27 He delivers and rescues,
[d]And He works signs and wonders
In heaven and on earth,
Who has delivered Daniel from the
power of the lions.

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign
of Darius [e]and in the reign of [f]Cyrus the
Persian.

Vision of the Four Beasts

7 In the first year of Belshazzar king of
Babylon, [a]Daniel had a dream and [b]vi-
sions of his head *while* on his bed. Then
he wrote down the dream, telling the main
facts.*

2 Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vi-
sion by night, and behold, the four winds
of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.
3 And four great beasts [c]came up from the
sea, each different from the other. 4 The first
was [d]like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I
watched till its wings were plucked off; and
it was lifted up from the earth and made to
stand on two feet like a man, and a [e]man's
heart was given to it.

5 [f]"And suddenly another beast, a second,
like a bear. It was raised up on one side,
and *had* three ribs in its mouth between
its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise,
devour much flesh!'

6 "After this I looked, and there was
another, like a leopard, which had on its
back four wings of a bird. The beast also had
[g]four heads, and dominion was given to it.

7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and
behold, [h]a fourth beast, dreadful and terri-
ble, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron
teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces,
and trampling the residue with its feet. It
was different from all the beasts that *were*
before it, [i]and it had ten horns. 8 I was con-
sidering the horns, and [j]there was another
horn, a little one, coming up among them,
before whom three of the first horns were
plucked out by the roots. And there, in this
horn, *were* eyes like the eyes [k]of a man, [l]and
a mouth speaking pompous words.

Vision of the Ancient of Days

9 "I[m] watched till thrones were put in
place,
And [n]the Ancient of Days was seated;
[o]His garment *was* white as snow,
And the hair of His head *was* like pure
wool.
His throne *was* a fiery flame,
[p]Its wheels a burning fire;
10 [q]A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before Him.
[r]A thousand thousands ministered to
Him;
Ten thousand times ten thousand
stood before Him.
[s]The court* was seated,
And the books were opened.

11 "I watched then because of the sound
of the pompous words which the horn was
speaking; [t]I watched till the beast was
slain, and its body destroyed and given
to the burning flame. 12 As for the rest of
the beasts, they had their dominion taken
away, yet their lives were prolonged for a
season and a time.

* **7:1** Literally *the head* (or *chief*) *of the words*
* **7:10** Or *judgment*

6:28 ***and in the reign of Cyrus.*** Gubaru, or Darius, served Cyrus for about one year, after which Cyrus appointed his son Cambyses as regent over Babylon.
7:1 ***the first year of Belshazzar.*** Chapter 5 records Belshazzar's death, indicating that the Book of Daniel is not arranged chronologically.
7:3 ***four great beasts.*** These four beasts represent kings or kingdoms, like the four metals of the statue in chapter 2.
7:4 ***like a lion, and had eagle's wings.*** There has been almost universal agreement from the early centuries until today that this beast represents Babylon. It is also agreed that the visions of chapters 2 and 7 speak of the same four kingdoms.
7:5 ***like a bear.*** The bear seems to represent Babylon's successor, the Medo-Persian Empire (2:38–39). The three ribs may represent the three kingdoms that Medo-Persia devoured—Babylon, Libya, and Egypt.
7:6 ***like a leopard.*** The leopard is believed to represent Greece. The Greeks, under the leadership of Alexander the Great, rapidly conquered the known world. ***four heads.*** After Alexander's death, his empire was divided into four different parts (8:8–22)—Macedonia, Egypt, Syria, and Thracia.
7:7 ***fourth beast.*** The last of the beasts may represent Rome (2:40).
7:9 ***Ancient of Days.*** "Ancient of Days" is a reference to God the Father as certified by the submission of the "One like the Son of Man" (vv. 13–14) and His role in judgment (v. 22).
7:10 ***And the books were opened.*** The books record the names and deeds of those who will be judged (Rev. 20:12).

6:25 [y] Dan. 4:1 **6:26** [z] Dan. 3:29 [a] Ps. 99:1 [b] Dan. 4:34; 6:20 [c] Dan. 2:44; 4:3; 7:14, 27 **6:27** [d] Dan. 4:2, 3 **6:28** [e] Dan. 1:21 [f] Ezra 1:1, 2 **7:1** [a] [Amos 3:7] [b] [Dan. 2:28] **7:3** [c] Rev. 13:1; 17:8 **7:4** [d] Deut. 28:49 [e] Dan. 4:16, 34 **7:5** [f] Dan. 2:39 **7:6** [g] Dan. 8:8, 22 **7:7** [h] Dan. 2:40 [i] Rev. 12:3; 13:1 **7:8** [j] Dan. 8:9 [k] Rev. 9:7 [l] Rev. 13:5, 6 **7:9** [m] [Rev. 20:4] [n] Ps. 90:2 [o] Rev. 1:14 [p] Ezek. 1:15 **7:10** [q] Is. 30:33; 66:15 [r] Rev. 5:11 [s] [Rev. 20:11–15] **7:11** [t] [Rev. 19:20; 20:10]

13 "I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, [u]*One* like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.
14 [v]Then to Him was given dominion and
glory and a kingdom,
That all [w]peoples, nations, and
languages should serve Him.
His dominion *is* [x]an everlasting
dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one*
Which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel's Visions Interpreted

15 "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit
within *my* body, and the visions of my head
troubled me. 16 I came near to one of those
who stood by, and asked him the truth of
all this. So he told me and made known
to me the interpretation of these things:
17 'Those great beasts, which are four, *are*
four kings* *which* arise out of the earth.
18 But [y]the saints of the Most High shall re-
ceive the kingdom, and possess the king-
dom forever, even forever and ever.'
19 "Then I wished to know the truth about
the fourth beast, which was different from
all the others, exceedingly dreadful, *with*
its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze,
which devoured, broke in pieces, and tram-
pled the residue with its feet; 20 and the ten
horns that *were* on its head, and the other
horn which came up, before which three
fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and
a mouth which spoke pompous words,
whose appearance *was* greater than his
fellows.
21 "I was watching; [z]and the same horn
was making war against the saints, and
prevailing against them, 22 until the An-
cient of Days came, [a]and a judgment was
made *in favor* of the saints of the Most
High, and the time came for the saints to
possess the kingdom.
23 "Thus he said:

'The fourth beast shall be
[b]A fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from all *other*
kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.
24 [c]The ten horns *are* ten kings
Who shall arise from this
kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first
ones,
And shall subdue three kings.
25 [d]He shall speak *pompous* words
against the Most High,
Shall [e]persecute* the saints of the
Most High,
And shall [f]intend to change times and
law.
Then [g]*the saints* shall be given into
his hand
[h]For a time and times and half a
time.

26 'But[i] the court shall be seated,
And they shall [j]take away his
dominion,
To consume and destroy *it* forever.
27 Then the [k]kingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms
under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the saints
of the Most High.
[l]His kingdom *is* an everlasting
kingdom,
[m]And all dominions shall serve and
obey Him.'

28 "This *is* the end of the account.* As for
me, Daniel, [n]my thoughts greatly troubled
me, and my countenance changed; but I
[o]kept the matter in my heart."

* **7:17** Representing their kingdoms (compare verse 23) * **7:25** Literally *wear out* * **7:28** Literally *the word*

7:13 ***with the clouds of heaven.*** John uses the same expression to speak of Jesus coming in judgment (Rev. 1:7). ***One like the Son of Man.*** The term "son of man" is an expression meaning "human," but clearly this "One like the Son of Man" was no ordinary human. Jewish and Christian expositors have both identified this individual as the Messiah. Jesus Himself used this name to emphasize His humanity (Matt. 9:6; 10:23).

7:14 ***to Him was given dominion.*** Jesus will reign over all things (1 Cor. 15:27–28; Eph. 1:20–23; Phil. 2:9–11; Rev. 17:14; 19:10).

7:21 ***the same horn was making war.*** The little horn's militaristic character is seen also in 11:38–39 and particularly in Revelation 13:1–10. There, in the guise of a beast, this blasphemous enemy of the saints prevails for 42 months. The connection between Daniel's little horn and John's beast from the sea is unmistakable.

7:24 ***The ten horns.*** Some perceive the fourth beast as representing Rome, and the ten horns as the fragments of the Roman Empire. Others see the fourth beast as a revived Roman Empire and the ten horns as kings of a future realm.

7:25 ***a time and times and half a time.*** If the expression "time" is taken to mean a year, and "times" as two years, the three and a half years would exactly equal the 42 months mentioned in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 13:1–10), half of the 70th "week" of years of 9:27. Some also believe that the expression does not indicate a specific number of years but instead a period of time that God in His mercy would shorten.

7:13 [u] [Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev. 1:7, 12; 14:14] **7:14** [v] [Matt. 28:18; John 3:35, 36; 1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 2:9–11; Rev. 1:6; 11:15] [w] Dan. 3:4 [x] Mic. 4:7 [Luke 1:33]; John 12:34; Heb. 12:28 **7:18** [y] Is. 60:12–14 **7:21** [z] Rev. 11:7; 13:7; 17:14 **7:22** [a] [Rev. 1:6] **7:23** [b] Dan. 2:40 **7:24** [c] Rev. 13:1; 17:12 **7:25** [d] Rev. 13:1–6 [e] Rev. 17:6 [f] Dan. 2:21 [g] Rev. 13:7; 18:24 [h] Rev. 12:14 **7:26** [i] [Dan. 2:35; 7:10, 22] [j] Rev. 19:20 **7:27** [k] Dan. 7:14, 18, 22 [l] [Luke 1:32, 33] [m] Is. 60:12 **7:28** [n] Dan. 8:27 [o] Luke 2:19, 51

Vision of a Ram and a Goat

8 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared *to* me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me [a]the first time. **2**I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I *was* in [b]Shushan, the citadel, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. **3**Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns *were* high; but one *was* [c]higher than the other, and the higher *one* came up last. **4**I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor *was there any* that could deliver from his hand, [d]but he did according to his will and became great.

5And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a notable [e]horn between his eyes. **6**Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. **7**And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.

8Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it [f]four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. **9**[g]And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, [h]toward the east, and toward the [i]Glorious *Land*. **10**[j]And it grew up to [k]the host of heaven; and [l]it cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. **11**[m]He even exalted *himself* as high as [n]the Prince of the host; [o]and by him [p]the daily *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. **12**Because of transgression, [q]an army was given over *to the horn* to oppose the daily *sacrifices;* and he cast [r]truth down to the ground. He [s]did *all this* and prospered.

13Then I heard [t]a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, "How long *will* the vision *be, concerning* the daily *sacrifices* and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?"

14And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days;* then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

Gabriel Interprets the Vision

15Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and [u]was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me [v]one having the appearance of a man. **16**And I heard a man's voice [w]between *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, [x]"Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision." **17**So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and [y]fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision *refers* to the time of the end."

18[z]Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; [a]but he touched me, and stood me upright. **19**And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; [b]for at the appointed time the end *shall be*. **20**The ram which you saw, having the two horns—*they are* the kings of Media and Persia. **21**And the male goat *is* the kingdom* of Greece. The large horn that *is* between its eyes [c]*is* the first king. **22**[d]As for the broken *horn* and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.

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* **8:14** Literally *evening-mornings* * **8:21** Literally *king*, representing his kingdom (compare 7:17, 23)

8:1 ***In the third year.*** After writing in Aramaic from 2:4—7:28, Daniel returns to writing in Hebrew.

8:3 ***a ram which had two horns.*** The ram represents Medo-Persia (v. 20). The two horns symbolize the peoples of Media and Persia.

8:5 ***a male goat.*** The goat represents Greece (v. 21). The notable horn symbolizes Alexander the Great (v. 21) who launched his attack against Persia in 334 B.C. Within two years, he had essentially subdued the Persian Empire. His conquest was so rapid that it seemed as if he never touched the ground.

8:8 ***the large horn was broken.*** Alexander the Great died at the height of his career, before he was 33 years old. After his death, his empire was divided among his four generals (11:4).

8:9 ***a little horn.*** This horn is Antiochus Epiphanes, who ruled part of the Greek Empire from 175 to 164 B.C.

8:11 ***Prince of the host.*** This is clearly God Himself. The "host" refers to God's people (12:3; Gen. 15:5).

Antiochus is remembered in infamy by the Jews because he desecrated the temple by setting up a statue of Zeus and sacrificing a pig on the holy altar.

8:14 ***two thousand three hundred days.*** This was the amount of time between Antiochus' pollution of the temple and the Maccabees' cleansing of it.

8:16 ***Gabriel.*** This is the first mention of the angel Gabriel. This angel is mentioned by name three other times (9:21; Luke 1:19,26).

8:1 [a] Dan. 7:1 **8:2** [b] Esth. 1:2, 2:8 **8:3** [c] Dan. 7:5 **8:4** [d] Dan. 5:19 **8:5** [e] Dan. 8:8, 21; 11:3 **8:8** [f] Dan. 7:6; 8:22; 11:4 **8:9** [g] Dan. 11:21 [h] Dan. 11:25 [i] Ps. 48:2 **8:10** [j] Dan. 11:28 [k] Is. 14:13 [l] Rev. 12:4 **8:11** [m] Dan. 8:25; 11:36, 37 [n] Josh. 5:14 [o] Dan. 11:31; 12:11 [p] Ex. 29:38 **8:12** [q] Dan. 11:31 [r] Is. 59:14 [s] Dan. 8:4; 11:36 **8:13** [t] Dan. 4:13, 23 **8:15** [u] 1 Pet. 1:10 [v] Ezek. 1:26 **8:16** [w] Dan. 12:6, 7 [x] Luke 1:19, 26 **8:17** [y] Rev. 1:17 **8:18** [z] Luke 9:32 [a] Ezek. 2:2 **8:19** [b] Hab. 2:3 **8:21** [c] Dan. 11:3 **8:22** [d] Dan. 11:4

23 "And in the latter time of their kingdom,
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,
A king shall arise,
[e]Having fierce features,
Who understands sinister schemes.
24 His power shall be mighty, [f]but not by his own power;
He shall destroy fearfully,
[g]And shall prosper and thrive;
[h]He shall destroy the mighty, and *also* the holy people.
25 "Through[i] his cunning
He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule;*
[j]And he shall exalt *himself* in his heart.
He shall destroy many in *their* prosperity.
[k]He shall even rise against the Prince of princes;
But he shall be [l]broken without *human* means.*
26 "And the vision of the evenings and mornings
Which was told is true;
[m]Therefore seal up the vision,
For *it refers* to many days *in the future*."

27[n]And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

Daniel's Prayer for the People

9 In the first year [a]of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through [b]Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3[c]Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. 4And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O [d]Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, 5[e]we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. 6[f]Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. 7O Lord, [g]righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

8"O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9[h]To the Lord our God *belong* mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. 10We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. 11Yes, [i]all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the [j]Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. 12And He has [k]confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; [l]for under the whole heaven such

* **8:25** Literally *hand* • Literally *hand*

8:24 ***not by his own power.*** Like the antichrist (2 Thess. 2:9), Antiochus would be energized by Satan.

8:25 ***broken without human means.*** According to the book of 2 Maccabees, Antiochus died of a painful disease.

9:2 ***by the books.*** The "books" were the Scriptures, specifically the Book of Jeremiah, which states that the captivity would last 70 years (Jer. 25:11–12; 29:10–14). By this time, Daniel himself had been in captivity for about 67 years, and he knew that the punishment was nearly over.

9:3–4 Prayer and Fasting—There are many examples in Scripture of people who pray to learn the will of God. There are also some examples of people who do not pray and find themselves in trouble (Josh. 9). Most Christians quickly learn that one of the most important ways we learn the will of God for our lives is through prayer. "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). See also Psalm 143:8–10 and James 4:2.

Other verses in the Bible link prayer with fasting. To fast is to abstain for a period of time from some important and necessary activity in our lives. The purpose of fasting is to be able to spend that time in prayer before God. Different kinds of fasting are possible. One may for a time refrain from sleep (2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27), marital sex (1 Cor. 7:1–5), or food (Matt. 4:1–2). There are also many examples of fasting in the Word: Moses in Deuteronomy 9:9, Elijah in 1 Kings 19:8, Daniel in Daniel 9:3, Ezra in Ezra 10:6, and Nehemiah in Nehemiah 1:4.

9:11 ***the curse and the oath.*** Covenant documents typically contained statements concerning the penalties for covenant violation (Lev. 26:3–45; Deut. 27–28). The most feared and devastating curse of all had come to pass when the people were deported from the land.

8:23 [e] Deut. 28:50 **8:24** [f] Rev. 17:13 [g] Dan. 11:36 [h] Dan. 7:25 **8:25** [i] Dan. 11:21 [j] Dan. 8:11–13; 11:36; 12:7 [k] Rev. 19:19, 20 [l] Job 34:20 **8:26** [m] Ezek. 12:27 **8:27** [n] Dan. 7:28; 8:17 **9:1** [a] Dan. 1:21 **9:2** [b] 2 Chr. 36:21 **9:3** [c] Neh. 1:4 **9:4** [d] Ex. 20:6 **9:5** [e] 1 Kin. 8:47, 48 **9:6** [f] 2 Chr. 36:15 **9:7** [g] Neh. 9:33 **9:9** [h] [Ps. 130:4, 7] **9:11** [i] Is. 1:3–6 [j] Lev. 26:14 **9:12** [k] Zech. 1:6 [l] Lam. 1:12; 2:13

has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.
13 [m]"As *it is* written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; [n]yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. 14 Therefore the LORD has [o]kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for [p]the LORD our God *is* righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, [q]who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself [r]a name, as *it is* this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!
16 "O Lord, [s]according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, [t]Your holy mountain; because for our sins, [u]and for the iniquities of our fathers, [v]Jerusalem and Your people [w]*are* a reproach to all *those* around us. 17 Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, [x]and [y]for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, [z]which is desolate. 18 [a]O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes [b]and see our desolations, and the city [c]which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. 19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

20 Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, 21 yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man [d]Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. 22 And he informed *me,* and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell *you,* for you *are* greatly [e]beloved; therefore [f]consider the matter, and understand the vision:

24 "Seventy weeks* are determined
For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of* sins,
[g]To make reconciliation for iniquity,
[h]To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
[i]And to anoint the Most Holy.

25 "Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until [j]Messiah [k]the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The street* shall be built again, and the wall,*
Even in troublesome times.

26 "And after the sixty-two weeks
[l]Messiah shall be cut off, [m]but not for Himself;
And [n]the people of the prince who is to come
[o]Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it *shall be* with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.
27 Then he shall confirm [p]a covenant with [q]many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
[r]Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the desolate."

* **9:24** Literally *sevens*, and so throughout the chapter • Following Qere, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate; Kethib and Theodotion read *To seal up.*
* **9:25** Or *open square* • Or *moat*

9:21 ***the time of the evening offering.*** The temple was in ruins, and regular daily sacrifices were impossible. Nevertheless, Daniel observed the ritual of worship by praying at the hour of the evening sacrifice. Daniel's prayer was his evening offering.
9:24 ***Seventy weeks.*** The word "weeks" can also be translated "sevens." Many scholars agree that the "sevens" are periods of seven years.
9:25 ***the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.*** This may refer to the decree of Cyrus in Ezra 1, the decree of Darius in Ezra 6, the decree of Artaxerxes in Ezra 7, or the decree of Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2.
9:26 ***sixty-two weeks.*** When the 7 weeks and 62 weeks (v. 25) are added together, they equal 483 years. If these years are added to the date of the decree of Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2 (445 B.C.), with an adjustment to allow for a 360-day year, the end of the 69 weeks coincides with the date of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem just before the crucifixion. ***the prince who is to come.*** This seems to be a reference to the antichrist.
9:27 ***in the middle of the week.*** That is, 3-1/2 years later. These 3-1/2 years of the rule of the antichrist

9:13 [m] Deut. 28:15–68 [n] Is. 9:13 **9:14** [o] Jer. 31:28; 44:27 [p] Neh. 9:33 **9:15** [q] Neh. 1:10 [r] Neh. 9:10 **9:16** [s] 1 Sam. 12:7 [t] Zech. 8:3 [u] Ex. 20:5 [v] Lam. 2:16 [w] Ps. 79:4 **9:17** [x] Num. 6:24–26 [y] Lam. 5:18 [z] [John 16:24] **9:18** [a] Is. 37:17 [b] Ex. 3:7 [c] Jer. 25:29 **9:21** [d] Dan. 8:16 **9:23** [e] Dan. 10:11, 19 [f] Matt. 24:15 **9:24** [g] [Is. 53:10] [h] Rev. 14:6 [i] Ps. 45:7 **9:25** [j] John 1:41; 4:25 [k] Is. 55:4 **9:26** [l] [Is. 53:8]; Matt. 27:50; Mark 9:12; 15:37; [Luke 23:46; 24:26]; John 19:30; Acts 8:32 [m] [1 Pet. 2:21] [n] Matt. 22:7 [o] Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:2; Luke 19:43, 44 **9:27** [p] Is. 42:6 [q] [Matt. 26:28] [r] Dan. 11:36

Vision of the Glorious Man

10 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose [a]name was called Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, but the appointed time *was* long;* and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. **2**In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. **3**I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

4Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that *is,* the Tigris,* **5**I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in [b]linen, whose waist *was* [c]girded with gold of Uphaz! **6**His body *was* like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, [d]and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

7And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. **8**Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. **9**Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

10[e]Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands. **11**And he said to me, "O Daniel, [f]man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

12Then he said to me, [g]"Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, [h]your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. **13**[i]But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, [j]Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. **14**Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people [k]in the latter days, [l]for the vision *refers* to *many* days yet *to come*."

15When he had spoken such words to me, [m]I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. **16**And suddenly, [n]*one* having the likeness of the sons* of men [o]touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision [p]my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. **17**For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me."

18Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. **19**[q]And he said, "O man greatly beloved, [r]fear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!"

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

20Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight [s]with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. **21**But I will tell you

* **10:1** Or *and of great conflict* * **10:4** Hebrew *Hiddekel* * **10:16** Theodotion and Vulgate read *the son;* Septuagint reads *a hand.*

seem to correspond with the "time and times and half a time" when the fourth beast rules (7:25) and with the 42-month rule of the beast from the sea (Rev. 13:1–10). ***one who makes desolate.*** Antiochus committed an abomination by setting up an altar to the god Zeus in the holy place in the temple in Jerusalem (11:31). The antichrist will also commit an abomination of desolation against the living God. Jesus' reference to "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15) occurred long after the desolation caused by Antiochus and indicates that this verse is describing the abomination of the antichrist and not that of Antiochus.

10:2 ***three full weeks.*** This period of time refers to Daniel's observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which took place during the first month of the year (Ex. 12:1–20).

10:6 ***his face like the appearance of lightning.*** The description of this man is very much like Ezekiel's description of the glory of God (Ezek. 1:4–28) and John's description of the risen Christ (Rev. 1:9–20).

10:13 ***the prince of the kingdom of Persia.*** This prince cannot be a human ruler because the conflict referred to here is in the spiritual, heavenly realm, as the allusion to the angel Michael (also referred to as a prince) makes clear. This prince, therefore, must be understood as a satanic figure who was to supervise the affairs of Persia, inspiring its religious, social, and political structures to evil. The apostle Paul refers to "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). The prince of Persia apparently sought to detain the angel so that Daniel would be prevented from hearing more of God's revelation (vv. 12–14).

Michael. Michael seems to be one of the most powerful angels. He is mentioned three times in the Old Testament, all in the Book of Daniel (v. 21; 12:1), and twice in the New Testament (Jude 9; Rev. 12:7).

10:20 ***with the prince of Persia.*** Persia was under

10:1 [a] Dan. 1:7 **10:5** [b] Ezek. 9:2; 10:2 [c] Rev. 1:13; 15:6 **10:6** [d] [Rev. 1:15] **10:10** [e] Dan. 9:21 **10:11** [f] Dan. 9:23 **10:12** [g] Rev. 1:17 [h] Acts 10:4 **10:13** [i] Dan. 10:20 [j] Dan. 10:21; 12:1 **10:14** [k] Dan. 2:28 [l] Dan. 8:26; 10:1 **10:15** [m] Dan. 8:18; 10:9 **10:16** [n] Dan. 8:15 [o] Jer. 1:9 [p] Dan. 10:8, 9 **10:19** [q] Dan. 10:11 [r] Judg. 6:23 **10:20** [s] Dan. 10:13

what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, [t]except Michael your prince.

11 "Also [a]in the first year of [b]Darius the Mede, I, *even* I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.) **2**And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than *them* all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. **3**Then [c]a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and [d]do according to his will. **4**And when he has arisen, [e]his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity [f]nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

Warring Kings of North and South

5"Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as *one* of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion *shall be* a great dominion. **6**And at the end of *some* years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority,* and neither he nor his authority* shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in *those* times. **7**But from a branch of her roots *one* shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. **8**And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes* *and* their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue *more* years than the king of the North.

9"Also *the king of the North* shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. **10**However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and *one* shall certainly come [g]and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return [h]to his fortress and stir up strife.

11"And the king of the South shall be [i]moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the [j]multitude shall be given into the hand of his *enemy.* **12**When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail. **13**For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.

14"Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men* of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall [k]fall. **15**So the king of the North shall come and [l]build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces* of the South shall not withstand *him.* Even his choice troops *shall have* no strength to resist. **16**But he who comes against him [m]shall do according to his own will, and [n]no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.*

17"He shall also [o]set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones* with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand *with him,*

* **11:6** Literally *arm* • Literally *arm* * **11:8** Or *molded images* * **11:14** Or *robbers*, literally *sons of breakage* * **11:15** Literally *arms* * **11:16** Literally *hand* * **11:17** Or *bring equitable terms*

the ultimate dominion of an evil spirit from Satan (vv. 13–14), and so also was Greece. The succession of world powers follows the pattern of Daniel's second vision (8:20–22).

11:1 *the first year of Darius.* This is the same year as that of the revelation of the 70 weeks, 539 B.C.

11:2 *three more kings.* Darius (under Cyrus) was followed by Cambyses (530–522 B.C.), Gaumata (522 B.C.), Darius I (522–486 B.C.), and Xerxes (486–465 B.C.)—who was the richest king of all, due to the extent of the empire's conquests and the severe taxation.

11:4 *but not among his posterity.* The "mighty king" of verse 3 fits with Alexander the Great, the first ruler of the Greek Empire. When Alexander died, his four generals carved up the Macedonian Empire. Antigonus ruled from southern Syria to central Asia; Cassander ruled over Macedonia; Ptolemy ruled in Egypt and southern Syria, including Palestine; Lysimachus ruled over Thrace.

11:5 *the king of the South.* Alexander's general Ptolemy I Soter was the first king of the southern kingdom—that is, Egypt.

11:6–15 *at the end of some years.* The events described in these verses fit with the actual history of the divided Greek Empire. ***the daughter of the king.*** This refers to Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–246 B.C.) of Egypt. ***the king of the North.*** This is Antiochus II Theos (261–246 B.C.) of Syria. ***a branch of her roots.*** This is Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Eurgetes (246–221 B.C.), who conquered Seleucus Callinicus (246–226 B.C.) of Syria (the king of the North). Seleucus did attempt a return attack on Egypt, but returned to Syria without accomplishing his goal. The kings of Egypt and Syria (the south and the north) continued to war against each other in the manner described in the prophecy. ***take a fortified city.*** Antiochus of Syria defeated the fortified city of Sidon in 198 B.C.

11:17 *the daughter of women.* Antiochus III's daughter Cleopatra was given in marriage to Ptolemy V Epiphanes of Egypt in order to destroy or undermine

10:21 [t] [Rev. 12:7] **11:1** [a] Dan. 9:1 [b] Dan. 5:31 **11:3** [c] Dan. 7:6; 8:5 [d] Dan. 8:4; 11:16, 36 **11:4** [e] Zech. 2:6 [f] Dan. 8:22 **11:10** [g] Is. 8:8 [h] Dan. 11:7 **11:11** [i] Prov. 16:14 [j] [Ps. 33:10, 16] **11:14** [k] Job 9:13 **11:15** [l] Ezek. 4:2; 17:17 **11:16** [m] Dan. 8:4, 7 [n] Josh. 1:5 **11:17** [o] 2 Chr. 20:3

[p]or be for him. 18After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. 19Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall [q]stumble and fall, [r]and not be found.

20"There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes *on* the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. 21And in his place [s]shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. 22With the force* of a [t]flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, [u]and also the prince of the covenant. 23And after the league *is made* with him [v]he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small *number of* people. 24He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do *what* his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but *only* for a time.

25"He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. 26Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. 27Both these kings' hearts *shall be* bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end *will* still *be* at the [w]appointed time. 28While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be *moved* against the holy covenant; so he shall do *damage* and return to his own land.

The Northern King's Blasphemies

29"At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. 30[x]For ships from Cyprus* shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do *damage*.

"So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31And forces* shall be mustered by him, [y]and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily *sacrifices*, and place *there* the abomination of desolation. 32Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*. 33And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet *for many* days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. 34Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. 35And *some* of those of understanding shall fall, [z]to refine them, purify *them*, and make *them* white, *until* the time of the end; because *it is* still for the appointed time.

* **11:22** Literally *arms* * **11:30** Hebrew *Kittim*, western lands, especially Cyprus * **11:31** Literally *arms*

Egypt, but Cleopatra sided with her husband over her father.

11:18–19 ***the coastlands . . . his own land.*** Antiochus III undertook a vigorous campaign into Asia Minor and the Aegean region. The Roman Lucius Cornelius Scipio defeated Antiochus. Having lost all that he had gained, Antiochus returned to his own land, where he was defeated and killed while trying to plunder a temple.

11:21 ***a vile person.*** Antiochus IV Epiphanes seized the throne through treachery and later defiled the temple in Jerusalem (v. 31; 9:27).

11:29 ***he shall return and go toward the south.*** After learning that Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII had formed a union against him, Antiochus returned to Egypt in 168 B.C., but he was driven out by the Romans.

11:31 ***abomination of desolation.*** Antiochus defiled the sanctuary by sacrificing a pig on the altar. He put a stop to the daily sacrifices, and he set up an image of Zeus in the holy place. Jesus said that a similar thing would happen just prior to His return (Matt. 24:15).

11:32 ***the people who know their God.*** The books of Maccabees record the story of Mattathias, the father of five sons, who refused to offer profane sacrifices and killed the king's agents. He and his sons then fled to the mountains and began the famous Maccabean revolt.

11:32 Know God Through His Word—The highest knowledge to which men and women can attain is personal knowledge of God (Jer. 9:24). One of the most valuable teachings of Scripture is that we can actually know God through His Word. To know God personally is to be saved and have eternal life (Job 17:3). We gain this knowledge primarily through interaction with His Word in four ways: First, we listen to and receive God's Word as the Holy Spirit interprets it and applies it to our hearts. Second, Scripture reveals God's nature and character. We know God through understanding of the works He has done, which are explained in Scripture. Third, our knowledge of God moves from intellectual to personal when we accept the invitation He has given us and do what He commands. Fourth, our personal knowledge of God grows as we rejoice in the love He shows us in Scripture and express joy in response to what He has done for us and given us. The Word leads to knowledge of all that is true about God. This knowledge of God then produces fellowship with Him.

11:35 ***it is still for the appointed time.*** Clearly, the trouble and wickedness of Antiochus' reign was not the end. That is yet to come.

11:17 [p] Dan. 9:26 **11:19** [q] Jer. 46:6 [r] Ps. 37:36
11:21 [s] Dan. 7:8 **11:22** [t] Dan. 9:26 [u] Dan. 8:10, 11
11:23 [v] Dan. 8:25 **11:27** [w] Hab. 2:3 **11:30** [x] Jer. 2:10
11:31 [y] Dan. 8:11–13; 12:11 **11:35** [z] Dan. 12:10

36"Then the king shall do according to
his own will: he shall [a]exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak
blasphemies against the God of gods, and
shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined
shall be done. 37He shall regard neither the
God* of his fathers nor the desire of women, [b]nor regard any god; for he shall exalt
himself above *them* all. 38But in their place
he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a
god which his fathers did not know he shall
honor with gold and silver, with precious
stones and pleasant things. 39Thus he shall
act against the strongest fortresses with a
foreign god, which he shall acknowledge,
and advance *its* glory; and he shall cause
them to rule over many, and divide the land
for gain.

The Northern King's Conquests

40"At the [c]time of the end the king of
the South shall attack him; and the king
of the North shall come against him [d]like
a whirlwind, with chariots, [e]horsemen,
and with many ships; and he shall enter
the countries, overwhelm *them*, and pass
through. 41He shall also enter the Glorious
Land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his
hand: [f]Edom, Moab, and the prominent
people of Ammon. 42He shall stretch out
his hand against the countries, and the
land of [g]Egypt shall not escape. 43He shall
have power over the treasures of gold and
silver, and over all the precious things of
Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians
shall follow [h]at his heels. 44But news from
the east and the north shall trouble him;
therefore he shall go out with great fury
to destroy and annihilate many. 45And he
shall plant the tents of his palace between
the seas and [i]the glorious holy mountain;
[j]yet he shall come to his end, and no one
will help him.

Prophecy of the End Time

12 "At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands *watch*
over the sons of your people;
[a]And there shall be a time of
trouble,
Such as never was since there was a
nation,
Even to that time.
And at that time your people [b]shall be
delivered,
Every one who is found [c]written in the
book.
2 And many of those who sleep in the
dust of the earth shall awake,
[d]Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame [e]*and* everlasting
contempt.
3 Those who are wise shall [f]shine
Like the brightness of the
firmament,
[g]And those who turn many to
righteousness
[h]Like the stars forever and ever.

4"But you, Daniel, [i]shut up the words,
and seal the book until the time of the end;
many shall [j]run to and fro, and knowledge
shall increase."

5Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood
two others, one on this riverbank and the
other on that [k]riverbank. 6And *one* said to
the man clothed in [l]linen, who *was* above
the waters of the river, [m]"How long shall
the fulfillment of these wonders *be*?"

7Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river,
when he [n]held up his right hand and his left
hand to heaven, and swore by Him [o]who
lives forever, [p]that *it shall be* for a time,
times, and half *a time;* [q]and when the power of [r]the holy people has been completely
shattered, all these *things* shall be finished.

* **11:37** Or *gods*

11:36 ***Then the king.*** Many ancient and modern interpreters have concluded that at this point a new person, the antichrist, is introduced. This king is distinguished from the king of the North (v. 40); therefore, he cannot be Antiochus Epiphanes. It appears that there is a gap of many years between verses 35 and 36, and this refers back to "the time of the end" which will come at the "appointed time" (v. 35).

11:38 ***a god which his fathers did not know.*** This is probably a reference to self-worship (v. 37; 2 Thess. 2:4).

11:40 ***time of the end.*** This is the period just before the return of Christ (Matt. 24:14).

11:45 ***no one will help him.*** The end of the king is sealed at Christ's second coming (Rev. 19:11–21).

12:1 ***written in the book.*** The Book of Life is God's record of those who are justified by faith (Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Luke 10:20; Rev. 20:12).

12:2 ***many . . . who sleep . . . shall awake.*** This passage appears to refer to a general resurrection, while other passages suggest that there is more than one (John 5:25). It is not unusual for prophecy in the Old Testament to present events separated by a considerable span of time as if they occurred in immediate relationship to each other (see, for example, Is. 61:1–2).

12:6 ***How long.*** This question refers to the duration of the trials, not the dates of the events.

12:7 ***a time, times, and half a time.*** If a "time" is a year, this adds up to 3-1/2 years (7:25), which may refer to the period immediately preceding the second coming of Christ (7:27). Some believe that this expression is not meant to indicate anything more specific than a length of time.

11:36 [a] Dan. 7:8, 25 **11:37** [b] Is. 14:13 **11:40** [c] Dan. 11:27, 35; 12:4, 9 [d] Is. 21:1 [e] Rev. 9:16 **11:41** [f] Is. 11:14 **11:42** [g] Joel 3:19 **11:43** [h] Ex. 11:8 **11:45** [i] Ps. 48:2 [j] Rev. 19:20 **12:1** [a] Jer. 30:7 [b] Rom. 11:26 [c] Ex. 32:32 **12:2** [d] [John 5:28, 29] [e] [Is. 66:24] **12:3** [f] Matt. 13:43 [g] [James 5:19, 20] [h] 1 Cor. 15:41 **12:4** [i] Rev. 22:10 [j] Amos 8:12 **12:5** [k] Dan. 10:4 **12:6** [l] Ezek. 9:2 [m] Dan. 8:13; 12:8 **12:7** [n] Deut. 32:40 [o] Dan. 4:34 [p] Dan. 7:25 [q] Luke 21:24 [r] Dan. 8:24

8 Although I heard, I did not understand.
Then I said, "My lord, what *shall be* the end
of these *things*?"
9 And he said, "Go *your way,* Daniel, for
the words *are* closed up and sealed till the
time of the end. 10 [s]Many shall be purified,
made white, and refined, [t]but the wicked
shall do wickedly; and none of the wick-
ed shall understand, but [u]the wise shall
understand.
11 "And from the time *that* the daily *sac-
rifice* is taken away, and the abomination
of desolation is set up, *there shall be* one
thousand two hundred and ninety days.
12 Blessed *is* he who waits, and comes to
the one thousand three hundred and thirty-
five days.
13 "But you, go *your way* till the end; [v]for
you shall rest, [w]and will arise to your in-
heritance at the end of the days."

12:11 ***one thousand two hundred and ninety days.*** Various interpretations have been suggested. One significant interpretation is that these days refer to the time following a point halfway through a seven-year period of tribulation prior to the coming of Christ (9:27).

12:12 ***the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.*** The extra 45 days may be the amount of time that the last battles will take before the victory is completely established.

12:13 ***you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance.*** Daniel died before these things came to pass, but at the end he will be among those resurrected (v. 2).

12:10 [s] Zech. 13:9 [t] Is. 32:6, 7 [u] John 7:17; 8:47
12:13 [v] Rev. 14:13 [w] Ps. 1:5

THE BOOK OF
HOSEA

▶ **AUTHOR:** Few critics argue with the claim in 1:1 that Hosea is the author of this book. The author's place of birth is not given but his familiarity and obvious concern with the northern kingdom point to his living in Israel, rather than Judah. Hosea had a real compassion for his people. His personal suffering because of his wife, Gomer, gave him some understanding of God's grief over the people's sin, and this grief becomes the source of the unique tenderness and hope that characterizes Hosea's book.

▶ **TIME:** c. 755–710 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Hos. 4:1

▶ **THEME:** Hosea was a contemporary of Isaiah, prophesying near the end of Israel's existence. It is clear from reading the text that Assyria was about to take over. In the second verse of Hosea, God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer to provide a living illustration of God's faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness. By this, Hosea demonstrates that God loves us, as He did Israel, knowingly and in spite of all our propensities to reject His love for us.

1 The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of [a]Uzziah, [b]Jotham, [c]Ahaz, *and* [d]Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of [e]Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

The Family of Hosea

2 When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea:

[f]"Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry
And children of harlotry,
For [g]the land has committed great harlotry
By departing from the LORD."

3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. **4** Then the LORD said to him:

"Call his name Jezreel,
For in a little *while*
[h]I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu,
[i]And bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

5 [j]It shall come to pass in that day
That I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel."

6 And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then *God* said to him:

"Call her name Lo-Ruhamah,*
[k]For I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel,
But I will utterly take them away.*
7 [l]Yet I will have mercy on the house of Judah,
Will save them by the LORD their God,
And [m]will not save them by bow,
Nor by sword or battle,
By horses or horsemen."

8 Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. **9** Then *God* said:

* **1:6** Literally *No-Mercy* • Or *That I may forgive them at all*

1:2–3 ***wife of harlotry.*** Gomer may have been a common prostitute at the time Hosea married her, or perhaps she had participated in a ritual sexual act as part of a Baal cult. However, it is more likely that the descriptive phrase anticipates what Gomer would become following her marriage to Hosea. ***children of harlotry.*** If Gomer was a prostitute when she married Hosea, this could refer to children that Gomer already had and that Hosea adopted at the time of marriage. A more likely possibility is that the title anticipates children born to a mother whose reputation and escapades would make their lineage suspect. Gomer's marital infidelity is a picture of Israel's idolatry and unfaithfulness to its covenant with God.

1:5 ***break the bow.*** This phrase means to destroy an opponent's military strength (1 Sam. 2:4; Ps. 46:9; Jer. 49:35).

1:6 ***Lo-Ruhamah.*** This means "no mercy" or "not loved," foreshadowing the Lord's rejection of Israel.

1:9 ***Lo-Ammi.*** This means "not my people,"

1:1 [a] Amos 1:1 [b] 2 Chr. 27 [c] 2 Chr. 28 [d] 2 Chr. 29:1—32:33 [e] 2 Kin. 13:13; 14:23–29 **1:2** [f] Hos. 3:1 [g] Jer. 2:13 **1:4** [h] 2 Kin. 10:11 [i] 2 Kin. 15:8–10; 17:6, 23; 18:11 **1:5** [j] 2 Kin. 15:29 **1:6** [k] 2 Kin. 17:6 **1:7** [l] 2 Kin. 19:29–35 [m] [Zech. 4:6]

"Call his name Lo-Ammi,*
For you *are* not My people,
And I will not be your *God*.

The Restoration of Israel

10 "Yet [n]the number of the children of Israel
Shall be as the sand of the sea,
Which cannot be measured or
numbered.
[o]And it shall come to pass
In the place where it was said to them,
'You *are* not My [p]people,'*
There it shall be said to them,
'*You are* [q]sons of the living God.'
11 [r]Then the children of Judah and the
children of Israel
Shall be gathered together,
And appoint for themselves one head;
And they shall come up out of the
land,
For great *will be* the day of Jezreel!
2 Say to your brethren, 'My people,'*
And to your sisters, 'Mercy* *is shown*.'

God's Unfaithful People

2 "Bring charges against your mother,
bring charges;
For [a]she *is* not My wife, nor *am* I her
Husband!
Let her put away her [b]harlotries from
her sight,
And her adulteries from between her
breasts;
3 Lest [c]I strip her naked
And expose her, as in the day she was
[d]born,
And make her like a wilderness,
And set her like a dry land,
And slay her with [e]thirst.
4 "I will not have mercy on her children,
For they *are* the [f]children of harlotry.
5 For their mother has played the
harlot;
She who conceived them has behaved
shamefully.
For she said, 'I will go after my lovers,
[g]Who give *me* my bread and my water,
My wool and my linen,
My oil and my drink.'
6 "Therefore, behold,
[h]I will hedge up your way with thorns,
And wall her in,
So that she cannot find her paths.
7 She will chase her lovers,
But not overtake them;
Yes, she will seek them, but not find
them.
Then she will say,
[i]'I will go and return to my [j]first
husband,
For then *it was* better for me than now.'
8 For she did not [k]know
That I gave her grain, new wine, and
oil,
And multiplied her silver and gold—
Which they prepared for Baal.
9 "Therefore I will return and take
away
My grain in its time
And My new wine in its season,
And will take back My wool and My
linen,
Given to cover her nakedness.
10 Now [l]I will uncover her lewdness in
the sight of her lovers,
And no one shall deliver her from My
hand.
11 [m]I will also cause all her mirth to
cease,
Her feast days,
Her New Moons,
Her Sabbaths—
All her appointed feasts.
12 "And I will destroy her vines and her
fig trees,
Of which she has said,
'These *are* my wages that my lovers
have given me.'
So I will make them a forest,
And the beasts of the field shall eat
them.
13 I will punish her
For the days of the Baals to which she
burned incense.
She decked herself with her earrings
and jewelry,
And went after her lovers;
But Me she forgot," says the LORD.

* **1:9** Literally *Not-My-People* * **1:10** Hebrew *lo-ammi* (compare verse 9) * **2:1** Hebrew *Ammi* (compare 1:9, 10) • Hebrew *Ruhamah* (compare 1:6)

threatening the termination of the Lord's covenant relationship with His people (Lev. 26:12).

1:10 *Shall be as the sand of the sea.* The Lord would not reject His people forever. God would fulfill His promise to Abraham (Gen. 22:17; 32:12).

2:2 *she is not My wife.* This may be a formal announcement of divorce or a realistic confession that the relationship between God and Israel had lost its vitality.

2:3 *And make her like a wilderness.* This simile pictures the loss of fertility, an appropriate punishment for a nation that had sought fertility by worshiping another god.

2:6–7 *She will chase her lovers.* This word draws attention to the strong passion the people of Israel felt for Baal. These verses anticipate the exile, when Israel would be separated from the idols of Baal.

2:12 *beasts of the field.* The Lord would break down the nation's defenses and turn them into overgrown thickets inhabited by wild animals.

1:10 [n] Gen. 22:17; 32:12 [o] 1 Pet. 2:10 [p] Rom. 9:26 [q] [John 1:12] **1:11** [r] Is. 11:11–13 **2:2** [a] Is. 50:1 [b] Ezek. 16:25 **2:3** [c] Jer. 13:22, 26 [d] Ezek. 16:4–7, 22 [e] Amos 8:11–13 **2:4** [f] John 8:41 **2:5** [g] Hos. 2:8, 12 **2:6** [h] Lam. 3:7, 9 **2:7** [i] Luke 15:17, 18 [j] Ezek. 16:8; 23:4 **2:8** [k] Is. 1:3 **2:10** [l] Ezek. 16:37 **2:11** [m] Amos 5:21; 8:10

God's Mercy on His People

14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
Will bring her into the wilderness,
And speak comfort to her.
15 I will give her her vineyards from there,
And [n]the Valley of Achor as a door of hope;
She shall sing there,
As in [o]the days of her youth,
[p]As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

16 "And it shall be, in that day,"
Says the LORD,
"*That* you will call Me 'My Husband,'*
And no longer call Me 'My Master,'*
17 For [q]I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals,
And they shall be remembered by their name no more.
18 In that day I will make a [r]covenant for them
With the beasts of the field,
With the birds of the air,
And *with* the creeping things of the ground.
Bow and sword of battle [s]I will shatter from the earth,
To make them [t]lie down safely.

19 "I will betroth you to Me forever;
Yes, I will betroth you to Me
In righteousness and justice,
In lovingkindness and mercy;
20 I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness,
And [u]you shall know the LORD.

21 "It shall come to pass in that day
That [v]I will answer," says the LORD;
"I will answer the heavens,
And they shall answer the earth.
22 The earth shall answer
With grain,
With new wine,
And with oil;
They shall answer Jezreel.*
23 Then [w]I will sow her for Myself in the earth,
[x]And I will have mercy on *her who had* not obtained mercy;*
Then [y]I will say to *those who were* not My people,*
'You *are* My people!'
And they shall say, '*You are* my God!'"

Israel Will Return to God

3 Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman *who is* loved by a [a]lover* and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love *the* raisin cakes *of the pagans.*"

2So I bought her for myself for fifteen *shekels* of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley. 3And I said to her, "You shall [b]stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, *will* I *be* toward you."

4For the children of Israel shall abide many days [c]without king or prince, without sacrifice or *sacred* pillar, without [d]ephod or [e]teraphim. 5Afterward the children of Israel shall return and [f]seek the LORD their God and [g]David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the [h]latter days.

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* **2:16** Hebrew *Ishi* • Hebrew *Baali* * **2:22** Literally *God Will Sow* * **2:23** Hebrew *lo-ruhamah* • Hebrew *lo-ammi* * **3:1** Literally *friend* or *husband*

2:14 ***I will allure her.*** Having separated Israel from her lovers, the Lord would seek to win her back by making romantic overtures and wooing her with tender words of love.

2:15 ***Valley of Achor.*** This meant "valley of trouble." It was a reminder of the sin of Achan and God's discipline of the nation of Israel for his sin (Josh. 7:24–26).

2:19–20 ***betroth.*** Betrothal was a binding commitment, the last step before the wedding and consummation of the marriage.

3:1–2 ***I bought her.*** Gomer had become the property of another man. Hosea's purchase of Gomer symbolized God's great devotion, which moves Him to seek reconciliation even if it means subjecting Himself to humiliation (Phil. 2:8). One of the great truths presented in the Old Testament is God's undying love for Israel. From among all the ancient nations on earth, He had chosen Israel.

3:1 The Extent of God's Love—People who think of the God of the Old Testament as a God of judgment and the God of the New Testament as a God of love should spend some time studying Hosea. In the book God instructs Hosea to marry a woman named Gomer who is consistently unfaithful. The Book of Hosea is a living parable about how far God will go to love Israel. While there is definitely judgment in Hosea, the consistent ongoing message is God will go to any extreme to demonstrate His love.

He is even willing to play the betrayed spouse in order to save us. He is willing to be an object of scorn and disrespect if that is what it takes to win us back to Him. God's own given law allows for the execution of both parties in an adulterous affair (Lev. 20:10). God cares deeply about this sin. He cares more deeply about His people.

It is important to understand how much He takes the initiative. He does not wait passively for us to come to Him. He is faithful about the task of going after us. Even though there is every reason to reject and ignore us, God is right there working to win us in spite of the fact that we reject Him at every turn.

3:4 ***sacred pillar.*** These were stone pillars used by the Canaanites in their worship of Baal and other gods (2 Kin. 3:2; 10:26–27; 17:10). ***ephod.*** This was a priestly garment.

2:15 [n] Josh. 7:26 [o] Ezek. 16:8–14 [p] Ex. 15:1 **2:17** [q] Ex. 23:13 **2:18** [r] Job 5:23 [s] Is. 2:4 [t] Lev. 26:5 **2:20** [u] [Jer. 31:33, 34] **2:21** [v] Zech. 8:12 **2:23** [w] Jer. 31:27 [x] Hos. 1:6 [y] Hos. 1:10 **3:1** [a] Jer. 3:20 **3:3** [b] Deut. 21:13 **3:4** [c] Hos. 10:3 [d] Ex. 28:4–12 [e] Judg. 17:5; 18:14, 17 **3:5** [f] Jer. 50:4 [g] Jer. 30:9 [h] [Is. 2:2, 3]

God's Charge Against Israel

4 Hear the word of the LORD,
You children of Israel,
For the LORD *brings* a [a]charge against
the inhabitants of the land:

"There is no truth or mercy
Or [b]knowledge of God in the land.
2 *By* swearing and lying,
Killing and stealing and committing
adultery,
They break all restraint,
With bloodshed upon bloodshed.
3 Therefore [c]the land will mourn;
And [d]everyone who dwells there will
waste away
With the beasts of the field
And the birds of the air;
Even the fish of the sea will be taken
away.

4 "Now let no man contend, or rebuke
another;
For your people *are* like those [e]who
contend with the priest.
5 Therefore you shall stumble [f]in the
day;
The prophet also shall stumble with
you in the night;
And I will destroy your mother.
6 [g]My people are destroyed for lack of
knowledge.
Because you have rejected knowledge,
I also will reject you from being priest
for Me;
[h]Because you have forgotten the law of
your God,
I also will forget your children.

7 "The more they increased,
The more they sinned against Me;
[i]I will change* their glory* into shame.
8 They eat up the sin of My people;
They set their heart on their iniquity.
9 And it shall be: [j]like people, like priest.
So I will punish them for their ways,
And reward them for their deeds.
10 For [k]they shall eat, but not have enough;
They shall commit harlotry, but not
increase;
Because they have ceased obeying the
LORD.

The Idolatry of Israel

11 "Harlotry, wine, and new wine [l]enslave
the heart.
12 My people ask counsel from their
[m]wooden *idols*,
And their staff informs them.
For [n]the spirit of harlotry has caused
them to stray,
And they have played the harlot
against their God.
13 [o]They offer sacrifices on the
mountaintops,
And burn incense on the hills,
Under oaks, poplars, and terebinths,
Because their shade *is* good.
[p]Therefore your daughters commit
harlotry,
And your brides commit adultery.

14 "I will not punish your daughters when
they commit harlotry,
Nor your brides when they commit
adultery;
For *the men* themselves go apart with
harlots,
And offer sacrifices with a [q]ritual
harlot.*
Therefore people *who* do not
understand will be trampled.

15 "Though you, Israel, play the harlot,
Let not Judah offend.
[r]Do not come up to Gilgal,
Nor go up to [s]Beth Aven,
[t]Nor swear an oath, *saying*, 'As the
LORD lives'—

16 "For Israel [u]is stubborn
Like a stubborn calf;
Now the LORD will let them forage
Like a lamb in open country.

* **4:7** Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; scribal tradition, Syriac, and Targum read *They will change.* • Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; scribal tradition reads *My glory.* * **4:14** Compare Deuteronomy 23:18

4:1 ***charge.*** The Hebrew word refers to a formal complaint charging Israel with breaking the covenant. ***mercy.*** This means loyalty or devotion. ***knowledge.*** This does not refer to intellectual awareness, but to recognition of God's authority as Israel's covenant Lord.

4:2 ***swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery.*** Five of the Ten Commandments are mentioned here.

4:5–6 ***lack of knowledge.*** The priests had failed to teach God's law to the people (Mal. 2:7). As a result, the priests would be the special object of God's judgment. He would terminate the priestly line.

4:7–8 ***They eat up the sin of My people.*** The priests greedily accepted the meat from the people's hypocritical and empty sacrifices (6:6; 8:11–13).

4:10 ***harlotry.*** This refers to religious prostitution associated with Baal worship, not to immorality in general. The Israelites worshiped Baal in order to have good crops and many children, but they still would not have enough to eat, nor would they multiply in number.

4:12 ***their staff.*** This refers to wooden idols that Baal worshipers consulted for guidance.

4:15 ***Gilgal.*** This was an important religious center in the north, known in Hosea's time for its hypocritical religious practices (9:15; 12:11; Amos 4:4). ***Beth Aven.*** This means "house of iniquity," and is a sarcastic reference to the important religious center Bethel, which means "house of God" (Amos 5:5).

4:1 [a] Is. 1:18 [b] Jer. 4:22 **4:3** [c] Amos 5:16; 8:8 [d] Zeph. 1:3 **4:4** [e] Deut. 17:12 **4:5** [f] Jer. 15:8 **4:6** [g] Is. 5:13 [h] Ezek. 22:26 **4:7** [i] 1 Sam. 2:30 **4:9** [j] Is. 24:2 **4:10** [k] Lev. 26:26 **4:11** [l] Is. 5:12; 28:7 **4:12** [m] Jer. 2:27 [n] Is. 44:19, 20 **4:13** [o] Is. 1:29; 57:5, 7 [p] Amos 7:17 **4:14** [q] Deut. 23:18 **4:15** [r] Hos. 9:15; 12:11 [s] 1 Kin. 12:29 [t] Amos 8:14 **4:16** [u] Jer. 3:6; 7:24; 8:5

17 "Ephraim *is* joined to idols,
[v]Let him alone.
18 Their drink is rebellion,
They commit harlotry continually.
[w]Her rulers dearly* love dishonor.
19 [x]The wind has wrapped her up in its wings,
And [y]they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

Impending Judgment on Israel and Judah

5 "Hear this, O priests!
Take heed, O house of Israel!
Give ear, O house of the king!
For yours *is* the judgment,
Because [a]you have been a snare to Mizpah
And a net spread on Tabor.
2 The revolters are [b]deeply involved in slaughter,
Though I rebuke them all.
3 [c]I know Ephraim,
And Israel is not hidden from Me;
For now, O Ephraim, [d]you commit harlotry;
Israel is defiled.
4 "They do not direct their deeds
Toward turning to their God,
For [e]the spirit of harlotry is in their midst,
And they do not know the LORD.
5 The [f]pride of Israel testifies to his face;
Therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity;
Judah also stumbles with them.
6 "With their flocks and herds
[g]They shall go to seek the LORD,
But they will not find *Him;*
He has withdrawn Himself from them.
7 They have [h]dealt treacherously with the LORD,
For they have begotten pagan children.
Now a New Moon shall devour them and their heritage.
8 "Blow[i] the ram's horn in Gibeah,
The trumpet in Ramah!
[j]Cry aloud *at* [k]Beth Aven,
'*Look* behind you, O Benjamin!'
9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke;
Among the tribes of Israel I make known what is sure.
10 "The princes of Judah are like those who [l]remove a landmark;
I will pour out My wrath on them like water.
11 Ephraim is [m]oppressed *and* broken in judgment,
Because he willingly walked by [n]*human* precept.
12 Therefore I *will be* to Ephraim like a moth,
And to the house of Judah [o]like rottenness.
13 "When Ephraim saw his sickness,
And Judah *saw* his [p]wound,
Then Ephraim went [q]to Assyria
And sent to King Jareb;
Yet he cannot cure you,
Nor heal you of your wound.
14 For [r]I *will be* like a lion to Ephraim,
And like a young lion to the house of Judah.
[s]I, *even* I, will tear *them* and go away;
I will take *them* away, and no one shall rescue.
15 I will return again to My place
Till they acknowledge their offense.
Then they will seek My face;
In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me."

A Call to Repentance

6 Come,[a] and let us return to the LORD;
For [b]He has torn, but [c]He will heal us;
He has stricken, but He will bind us up.
2 [d]After two days He will revive us;
On the third day He will raise us up,
That we may live in His sight.

* **4:18** Hebrew is difficult; a Jewish tradition reads *Her rulers shamefully love, 'Give!'*

4:17–19 *Ephraim.* This tribe was one of the largest tribes of Israel. It is used here to represent the entire northern kingdom.
5:4 *spirit of harlotry.* The people had an uncontrollable desire to worship other gods.
5:8–9 *Blow the ram's horn.* This act signaled an emergency and mustered the fighting men to defend the land. The towns mentioned were north of Jerusalem, within or near the borders of Benjamin. The implication is that the enemy army had already swept through the north and was ready to invade Judah.
5:10 *remove a landmark.* Stones were used to mark the boundaries of property. A thief could steal a part of someone's land by moving one. The law warned that altering a boundary in this way would bring a special judgment from God (Deut. 19:14; 27:17; Prov. 22:28).
5:12 *I will be to Ephraim like a moth.* As a moth slowly destroys clothing, so the Lord would destroy Israel (Job 13:28; Is. 50:9; 51:8). ***rottenness.*** Elsewhere this word refers to bone or to decay (Prov. 12:4; 14:30; Hab. 3:16).
5:14–15 *like a young lion.* God would scatter His people as judgment for their treachery. But the purpose of the Lord's discipline was to drive the people to earnestly seek Him.

4:17 [v] Matt. 15:14 **4:18** [w] Mic. 3:11 **4:19** [x] Jer. 51:1 [y] Is. 1:29 **5:1** [a] Hos. 6:9 **5:2** [b] Is. 29:15 **5:3** [c] Amos 3:2; 5:12 [d] Hos. 4:17 **5:4** [e] Hos. 4:12 **5:5** [f] Hos. 7:10 **5:6** [g] Prov. 1:28 **5:7** [h] Jer. 3:20 **5:8** [i] Joel 2:1 [j] Is. 10:30 [k] Josh. 7:2 **5:10** [l] Deut. 19:14; 27:17 **5:11** [m] Deut. 28:33 [n] Mic. 6:16 **5:12** [o] Prov. 12:4 **5:13** [p] Jer. 30:12–15 [q] 2 Kin. 15:19 **5:14** [r] Lam. 3:10 [s] Ps. 50:22 **6:1** [a] Is. 1:18 [b] Deut. 32:39 [c] Jer. 30:17 **6:2** [d] Luke 24:26; Acts 10:40; [1 Cor. 15:4]

3 [e]Let us know,
Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD.
His going forth is established [f]as the morning;
[g]He will come to us [h]like the rain,
Like the latter *and* former rain to the earth.

Impenitence of Israel and Judah

4 "O Ephraim, what shall I do to you?
O Judah, what shall I do to you?
For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud,
And like the early dew it goes away.
5 Therefore I have hewn *them* by the prophets,
I have slain them by [i]the words of My mouth;
And your judgments *are like* light *that* goes forth.
6 For I desire [j]mercy and [k]not sacrifice,
And the [l]knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
7 "But like men* they transgressed the covenant;
There they dealt treacherously with Me.
8 [m]Gilead *is* a city of evildoers
And defiled with blood.
9 As bands of robbers lie in wait for a man,
So the company of [n]priests [o]murder on the way to Shechem;
Surely they commit [p]lewdness.
10 I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel:
There *is* the harlotry of Ephraim;
Israel is defiled.
11 Also, O Judah, a harvest is appointed for you,
When I return the captives of My people.

7 "When I would have healed Israel,
Then the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered,
And the wickedness of Samaria.
For [a]they have committed fraud;
A thief comes in;
A band of robbers takes spoil outside.
2 They do not consider in their hearts
That [b]I remember all their wickedness;
Now their own deeds have surrounded them;
They are before My face.
3 They make a [c]king glad with their wickedness,
And princes [d]with their lies.
4 "They[e] *are* all adulterers.
Like an oven heated by a baker—
He ceases stirring *the fire* after kneading the dough,
Until it is leavened.
5 In the day of our king
Princes have made *him* sick, inflamed with [f]wine;
He stretched out his hand with scoffers.
6 They prepare their heart like an oven,
While they lie in wait;
Their baker* sleeps all night;
In the morning it burns like a flaming fire.
7 They are all hot, like an oven,
And have devoured their judges;
All their kings have fallen.
[g]None among them calls upon Me.
8 "Ephraim [h]has mixed himself among the peoples;
Ephraim is a cake unturned.
9 [i]Aliens have devoured his strength,
But he does not know *it;*
Yes, gray hairs are here and there on him,
Yet he does not know *it.*
10 And the [j]pride of Israel testifies to his face,
But [k]they do not return to the LORD their God,
Nor seek Him for all this.

* **7:6** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Syriac and Targum read *Their anger;* Septuagint reads *Ephraim.*

6:3 ***like the latter and former rain.*** Two periods of rain are alluded to here. The former rains came in the autumn and softened the ground for plowing and sowing. The latter rains came in the spring and caused the plants to grow.

6:5 ***judgments are like light that goes forth.*** This comparison suggests that God's judgment, like bright sunlight, was obvious to all; or that, like a bolt of lightning or a blinding flash of light, it came swiftly.

6:11 ***a harvest is appointed for you.*** The comparison of God's judgment to a harvest indicates that the judgment was inevitable and implies that it would be thorough in its destruction.

7:4–7 ***Like an oven.*** The background for these verses is the political turmoil of the northern kingdom. During a 20-year period (752–732 B.C.), four Israelite kings were assassinated (2 Kin. 15). The dangerous, uncontrollable perpetuators of these crimes are described here. These conspirators were like a large baker's oven that has been heating up for several hours while the bread dough rises. By morning the fire in the oven can be destructive.

7:8 ***Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples.*** Instead of depending on the Lord for political stability, Israel formed alliances with surrounding nations. The destructive outcome of this policy is compared to a cake that has been placed over a fire and left unturned.

7:9–10 ***gray hairs.*** Israel did not recognize that its power was declining and its freedom was slipping

6:3 [e] Is. 54:13 [f] 2 Sam. 23:4 [g] Ps. 72:6 [h] Job 29:23
6:5 [i] [Jer. 23:29] **6:6** [j] Matt. 9:13; 12:7 [k] [Mic. 6:6–8] [l] [John 17:3] **6:8** [m] Hos. 12:11 **6:9** [n] Hos. 5:1 [o] Jer. 7:9, 10 [p] Ezek. 22:9; 23:27 **7:1** [a] Hos. 5:1 **7:2** [b] Jer. 14:10; 17:1 **7:3** [c] Hos. 1:1 [d] [Rom. 1:32] **7:4** [e] Jer. 9:2; 23:10 **7:5** [f] Is. 28:1, 7 **7:7** [g] Is. 64:7 **7:8** [h] Ps. 106:35
7:9 [i] Hos. 8:7 **7:10** [j] Hos. 5:5 [k] Is. 9:13

Futile Reliance on the Nations

11 "Ephraim[l] also is like a silly dove,
without sense—
[m]They call to Egypt,
They go to [n]Assyria.
12 Wherever they go, I will [o]spread My
net on them;
I will bring them down like birds of
the air;
I will chastise them
[p]According to what their congregation
has heard.

13 "Woe to them, for they have fled from
Me!
Destruction to them,
Because they have transgressed
against Me!
Though [q]I redeemed them,
Yet they have spoken lies against Me.
14 [r]They did not cry out to Me with their
heart
When they wailed upon their beds.

"They assemble together for* grain and
new [s]wine,
They rebel against Me;*
15 Though I disciplined *and* strengthened
their arms,
Yet they devise evil against Me;
16 They return, *but* not to the Most High;*
[t]They are like a treacherous bow.
Their princes shall fall by the sword
For the [u]cursings of their tongue.
This *shall be* their derision [v]in the land
of Egypt.

The Apostasy of Israel

8 "*Set* the trumpet* to your mouth!
He shall come [q]like an eagle against
the house of the LORD,
Because they have transgressed My
covenant
And rebelled against My law.
2 [b]Israel will cry to Me,
'My God, [c]we know You!'
3 Israel has rejected the good;
The enemy will pursue him.

4 "They[d] set up kings, but not by Me;
They made princes, but I did not
acknowledge *them.*
From their silver and gold
They made idols for themselves—
That they might be cut off.
5 Your calf is rejected, O Samaria!
My anger is aroused against them—
[e]How long until they attain to innocence?
6 For from Israel *is* even this:
A [f]workman made it, and it *is* not God;
But the calf of Samaria shall be
broken to pieces.

7 "They[g] sow the wind,
And reap the whirlwind.
The stalk has no bud;
It shall never produce meal.
If it should produce,
[h]Aliens would swallow it up.
8 [i]Israel is swallowed up;
Now they are among the Gentiles
[j]Like a vessel in which *is* no pleasure.
9 For they have gone up to Assyria,
Like [k]a wild donkey alone by itself;
Ephraim [l]has hired lovers.
10 Yes, though they have hired among
the nations,
Now [m]I will gather them;
And they shall sorrow a little,*
Because of the burden* of [n]the king of
princes.

* **7:14** Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Vulgate reads *thought upon;* Septuagint reads *slashed themselves for* (compare 1 Kings 18:28). • Following Masoretic Text, Syriac, and Targum; Septuagint omits *They rebel against Me;* Vulgate reads *They departed from Me.* * **7:16** Or *upward* * **8:1** Hebrew *shophar,* ram's horn * **8:10** Or *begin to diminish* • Or *oracle*

away, like an aging man who is gradually overtaken by the signs of old age.

7:11–12 *Egypt . . . Assyria.* Israel was caught between these two superpowers. It tried to maintain its independence by playing one power against the other, but this vacillating policy didn't work. Israel was like a silly dove, flitting about from place to place.

7:13 *Woe to them.* When prophets spoke this way, they were saying a funeral dirge for those under the sentence of God's judgment.

7:14 *grain and new wine.* God sent a drought on Israel, but instead of the people turning to Him in repentance, the idolatrous Israelites demonstrated their devotion to Baal. According to Canaanite religious beliefs, prolonged drought was a signal that the storm god Baal had been temporarily defeated by the god of death and was imprisoned by the underworld. Baal's worshipers would mourn his death in hopes that their tears might facilitate his resurrection and the restoration of crops.

8:1–3 *like an eagle.* As a bird of prey would do, Assyria would invade Israel and take its people into captivity. ***we know You.*** Though Israel claimed to acknowledge the Lord's authority, it had violated His covenant and rejected the qualities the Lord regarded as good, such as justice, loyalty, and humility (Amos 5:14–15; Mic. 6:8).

8:4 *They set up kings.* This phrase alludes to the political turmoil surrounding the throne of the northern kingdom during the eighth century B.C., when four kings were assassinated during a 20-year period (7:4–7).

8:6 *A workman made it.* Hosea reasoned that anything that is made with human hands cannot possibly qualify as a god.

8:9–10 *a wild donkey.* This comparison draws attention to Israel's free-spirited attitude and desire to live unrestrained by God's standards.

7:11 [l] Hos. 11:11 [m] Is. 30:3 [n] Hos. 5:13; 8:9 **7:12** [o] Ezek. 12:13 [p] Lev. 26:14 **7:13** [q] Mic. 6:4 **7:14** [r] Job 35:9, 10 [s] Amos 2:8 **7:16** [t] Ps. 78:57 [u] Ps. 73:9 [v] Hos. 8:13; 9:3 **8:1** [a] Deut. 28:49 **8:2** [b] Ps. 78:34 [c] Titus 1:16 **8:4** [d] 2 Kin. 15:23, 25 **8:5** [e] Jer. 13:27 **8:6** [f] Is. 40:19 **8:7** [g] Prov. 22:8 [h] Hos. 7:9 **8:8** [i] 2 Kin. 17:6 [j] Jer. 22:28; 25:34 **8:9** [k] Jer. 2:24 [l] Ezek. 16:33, 34 **8:10** [m] Ezek. 16:37; 22:20 [n] Is. 10:8

11 "Because Ephraim has made many
altars for sin,
They have become for him altars for
sinning.
12 I have written for him [o]the great
things of My law,
But they were considered a strange
thing.
13 *For* the sacrifices of My offerings
[p]they sacrifice flesh and eat *it*,
[q]*But* the LORD does not accept them.
[r]Now He will remember their iniquity
and punish their sins.
They shall return to Egypt.
14 "For[s] Israel has forgotten [t]his Maker,
And has built temples;*
Judah also has multiplied [u]fortified
cities;
But [v]I will send fire upon his cities,
And it shall devour his palaces."

Judgment of Israel's Sin

9 Do[a] not rejoice, O Israel, with joy like
other peoples,
For you have played the harlot against
your God.
You have made love *for* [b]hire on every
threshing floor.
2 The threshing floor and the winepress
Shall not feed them,
And the new wine shall fail in her.
3 They shall not dwell in [c]the LORD's
land,
[d]But Ephraim shall return to Egypt,
And [e]shall eat unclean *things* in
Assyria.
4 They shall not offer wine *offerings* to
the LORD,
Nor [f]shall their [g]sacrifices be pleasing
to Him.
It shall be like bread of mourners to
them;
All who eat it shall be defiled.
For their bread *shall be* for their *own*
life;
It shall not come into the house of the
LORD.
5 What will you do in the appointed day,
And in the day of the feast of the
LORD?
6 For indeed they are gone because of
destruction.
Egypt shall gather them up;
Memphis shall bury them.
[h]Nettles shall possess their valuables
of silver;
Thorns *shall be* in their tents.
7 The [i]days of punishment have come;
The days of recompense have come.
Israel knows!
The prophet *is* a [j]fool,
[k]The spiritual man *is* insane,
Because of the greatness of your
iniquity and great enmity.
8 The [l]watchman of Ephraim *is* with my
God;
But the prophet *is* a fowler's* snare in
all his ways—
Enmity in the house of his God.
9 [m]They are deeply corrupted,
As in the days of [n]Gibeah.
He will remember their iniquity;
He will punish their sins.
10 "I found Israel
Like grapes in the [o]wilderness;
I saw your fathers
As the [p]firstfruits on the fig tree in its
first season.
But they went to [q]Baal Peor,
And separated themselves *to that*
shame;
[r]They became an abomination like the
thing they loved.
11 *As for* Ephraim, their glory shall fly
away like a bird—
No birth, no pregnancy, and no
conception!
12 Though they bring up their children,
Yet I will bereave them to the last man.
Yes, [s]woe to them when I depart from
them!

* **8:14** Or *palaces* * **9:8** That is, one who catches birds in a trap or snare

8:14 ***temples . . . multiplied fortified cities.*** True security comes from the Creator, but God's people trusted instead in their own efforts, symbolized by their important buildings.

9:1–2 ***threshing floor.*** Because of their association with the harvest, threshing floors were the site of agricultural festivals in which Israel offered up sacrifices to Baal. The Lord would take away the joy of the harvest by destroying the crops and leaving the threshing floors and wine vats empty.

9:3 ***the LORD's land.*** Israel had forgotten that their land belonged to the Lord. He alone decided who would or would not live in it (Lev. 25:23).

9:7 ***the spiritual man is insane.*** The word translated "insane" is used in 1 Samuel 21:15 of David when he pretended to be insane before the Philistine king.

9:8 ***watchman.*** He would look for approaching armies and then warn the people so that they could secure the city and prepare for battle (Ezek. 33:6). The prophets were like watchmen because they were sent by God to warn the people of judgment and urge them to repent (Ezek. 3:17).

9:9 ***As in the days of Gibeah.*** The reference here is to the rape and murder of a young woman by men of Gibeah, an event that started a civil war (Judg. 19). Those who witnessed this violent deed remarked that it was the worst crime committed in Israel's history until that time. However, the sins of Hosea's generation rivaled the infamous Gibeah.

8:12 [o] [Deut. 4:6–8] **8:13** [p] Zech. 7:6 [q] Jer. 14:10 [r] Amos 8:7 **8:14** [s] Deut. 32:18 [t] Is. 29:23 [u] Num. 32:17 [v] Jer. 17:27 **9:1** [a] Is. 22:12, 13 [b] Jer. 44:17 **9:3** [c] [Lev. 25:23] [d] Hos. 7:16; 8:13 [e] Ezek. 4:13 **9:4** [f] Jer. 6:20 [g] Hos. 8:13 **9:6** [h] Is. 5:6; 7:23 **9:7** [i] Is. 10:3 [j] Lam. 2:14 [k] Mic. 2:11 **9:8** [l] Ezek. 3:17; 33:7 **9:9** [m] Hos. 10:9 [n] Judg. 19:22 **9:10** [o] Jer. 2:2 [p] Is. 28:4 [q] Num. 25:3 [r] Ps. 81:12 **9:12** [s] Deut. 31:17

13 Just [t]as I saw Ephraim like Tyre,
planted in a pleasant place,
So Ephraim will bring out his children
to the murderer."

14 Give them, O LORD—
What will You give?
Give them [u]a miscarrying womb
And dry breasts!

15 "All their wickedness *is* in [v]Gilgal,
For there I hated them.
Because of the evil of their deeds
I will drive them from My house;
I will love them no more.
[w]All their princes *are* rebellious.

16 Ephraim is [x]stricken,
Their root is dried up;
They shall bear no fruit.
Yes, were they to bear children,
I would kill the darlings of their womb."

17 My God will [y]cast them away,
Because they did not obey Him;
And they shall be [z]wanderers among
the nations.

Israel's Sin and Captivity

10 Israel [a]empties *his* vine;
He brings forth fruit for himself.
According to the multitude of his fruit
[b]He has increased the altars;
According to the bounty of his land
They have embellished *his sacred*
pillars.

2 Their heart is [c]divided;
Now they are held guilty.
He will break down their altars;
He will ruin their *sacred* pillars.

3 For now they say,
"We have no king,
Because we did not fear the LORD.
And as for a king, what would he do
for us?"

4 They have spoken words,
Swearing falsely in making a covenant.
Thus judgment springs up [d]like
hemlock in the furrows of the
field.

5 The inhabitants of Samaria fear
Because of the [e]calf* of Beth Aven.
For its people mourn for it,
And its priests shriek for it—
Because its [f]glory has departed
from it.

6 *The idol* also shall be carried to
Assyria
As a present for King [g]Jareb.
Ephraim shall receive shame,
And Israel shall be ashamed of his
own counsel.

7 *As for* Samaria, her king is cut off
Like a twig on the water.

8 Also the [h]high places of Aven, [i]the sin
of Israel,
Shall be destroyed.
The thorn and thistle shall grow on
their altars;
[j]They shall say to the mountains,
"Cover us!"
And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

9 "O Israel, you have sinned from the
days of [k]Gibeah;
There they stood.
The [l]battle in Gibeah against the
children of iniquity*
Did not overtake them.

10 When *it is* My desire, I will chasten
them.
[m]Peoples shall be gathered against
them
When I bind them for their two
transgressions.*

11 Ephraim *is* [n]a trained heifer
That loves to thresh *grain;*
But I harnessed her fair neck,
I will make Ephraim pull *a plow.*
Judah shall plow;
Jacob shall break his clods."

12 Sow for yourselves righteousness;
Reap in mercy;
[o]Break up your fallow ground,
For *it is* time to seek the LORD,
Till He [p]comes and rains
righteousness on you.

* **10:5** Literally *calves* * **10:9** So read many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *unruliness.* * **10:10** Or *in their two habitations*

9:14 ***miscarrying womb.*** Some women of Israel would be barren (v. 11); others would bear children, only to lose them to the invader's sword (vv. 12–13). Still others would conceive but miscarry.

10:1 ***Israel empties his vine.*** This refers to God's blessings upon the nation, which contrast with the nation's ingratitude and idolatry.

10:4 ***judgment springs up like hemlock in the furrows of the field.*** In much the same way judgment would replace God's blessings.

10:11 ***loves to thresh grain.*** Israel preferred to be unrestrained, like an unmuzzled heifer at the threshing floor that can simply lean down and eat grain. ***I will make Ephraim pull a plow.*** Israel's rebellious spirit necessitated harsh treatment, compared here to a farmer binding his calf to the yoke and forcing it to do hard labor. Threshing in this context refers to Israel's service to the Lord; plowing refers to the discipline that Israel had to acquire through judgment and exile.

10:12 ***Break up your fallow ground.*** Plowing and planting are necessary preliminary steps for growing a crop, which eventually sprouts when the rain falls

9:13 [t] Ezek. 26–28 **9:14** [u] Luke 23:29 **9:15** [v] Hos. 4:15; 12:11 [w] Is. 1:23 **9:16** [x] Hos. 5:11 **9:17** [y] [Zech. 10:6] [z] Lev. 26:33 **10:1** [a] Nah. 2:2 [b] Jer. 2:28 **10:2** [c] 1 Kin. 18:21 **10:4** [d] Amos 5:7 **10:5** [e] Hos. 8:5, 6; 13:2 [f] Hos. 9:11 **10:6** [g] Hos. 5:13 **10:8** [h] Hos. 4:15 [i] 1 Kin. 13:34 [j] Luke 23:30 **10:9** [k] Hos. 9:9 [l] Judg. 20 **10:10** [m] Jer. 16:16 **10:11** [n] [Mic. 4:13] **10:12** [o] Jer. 4:3 [p] Hos. 6:3

13 [q]You have plowed wickedness;
You have reaped iniquity.
You have eaten the fruit of lies,
Because you trusted in your own way,
In the multitude of your mighty men.
14 Therefore tumult shall arise among your people,
And all your fortresses shall be plundered
As Shalman plundered Beth Arbel in the day of battle—
A mother dashed in pieces upon *her* children.
15 Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel,
Because of your great wickedness.
At dawn the king of Israel
Shall be cut off utterly.

God's Continuing Love for Israel

11 "When Israel *was* a child, I loved him,
And out of Egypt [a]I called My [b]son.
2 *As* they called them,*
So they [c]went from them;*
They sacrificed to the Baals,
And burned incense to carved images.
3 "I[d] taught Ephraim to walk,
Taking them by their arms;*
But they did not know that [e]I healed them.
4 I drew them with gentle cords,*
With bands of love,
And [f]I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck.*
[g]I stooped *and* fed them.
5 "He shall not return to the land of Egypt;
But the Assyrian shall be his king,
Because they refused to repent.
6 And the sword shall slash in his cities,
Devour his districts,
And consume *them*,
Because of their own counsels.
7 My people are bent on [h]backsliding from Me.
Though they call to the Most High,*
None at all exalt *Him*.
8 "How[i] can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, Israel?
How can I make you like [j]Admah?
How can I set you like Zeboiim?
My heart churns within Me;
My sympathy is stirred.
9 I will not execute the fierceness of My anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim.
[k]For I *am* God, and not man,
The Holy One in your midst;
And I will not come with terror.*
10 "They shall walk after the LORD.
[l]He will roar like a lion.
When He roars,
Then *His* sons shall come trembling from the west;
11 They shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt,
[m]Like a dove from the land of Assyria.
[n]And I will let them dwell in their houses,"
Says the LORD.

God's Charge Against Ephraim

12 "Ephraim has encircled Me with lies,
And the house of Israel with deceit;
But Judah still walks with God,
Even with the Holy One* *who is* faithful.

12 "Ephraim [a]feeds on the wind,
And pursues the east wind;
He daily increases lies and desolation.
[b]Also they make a covenant with the Assyrians,
And [c]oil is carried to Egypt.
2 "The[d] LORD also *brings* a charge against Judah,
And will punish Jacob according to his ways;
According to his deeds He will recompense him.

* **11:2** Following Masoretic Text and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Just as I called them;* Targum interprets as *I sent prophets to a thousand of them.* • Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *from My face.*
* **11:3** Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *My arms.* * **11:4** Literally *cords of a man* • Literally *jaws* * **11:7** Or *upward*
* **11:9** Or *I will not enter a city* * **11:12** Or *holy ones*

in season. In the same way, repentance would set the stage for restored blessing, which God would eventually rain down on His people.

11:3 ***I taught Ephraim to walk.*** Like a father teaching his child to walk, the Lord patiently gave the people of Israel direction and cared for them tenderly when they experienced pain or injury.

11:4 ***cords . . . bands.*** The Lord had placed restraints on Israel, but His regulations, rather than being overly strict or harsh, reflected His concern for the people's well-being. God did not drive them mercilessly but provided for their needs, like a farmer who periodically removes the yoke from an animal's neck so that it can eat.

11:6 ***consume.*** This is the same Hebrew word translated "fed" in verse 4. The people of Israel had rejected the gentle Master who fed them and provided for their needs. As a result, they would be devoured by the swords of the invading Assyrians.

11:9 ***For I am God, and not man.*** When human beings get angry, they are often incapable of tempering their anger with compassion, but God's emotions operate in perfect balance.

12:1 ***oil is carried to Egypt.*** Oil may have been used

10:13 [q] [Prov. 22:8] **11:1** [a] Matt. 2:15 [b] Ex. 4:22, 23 **11:2** [c] 2 Kin. 17:13–15 **11:3** [d] Deut. 1:31; 32:10, 11 [e] Ex. 15:26 **11:4** [f] Lev. 26:13 [g] Ps. 78:25 **11:7** [h] Jer. 3:6, 7; 8:5 **11:8** [i] Jer. 9:7 [j] Gen. 14:8; 19:24, 25 **11:9** [k] Num. 23:19 **11:10** [l] [Joel 3:16] **11:11** [m] Is. 11:11; 60:8 [n] Ezek. 28:25, 26; 34:27, 28 **12:1** [a] Job 15:2, 3 [b] 2 Kin. 17:4 [c] Is. 30:6 **12:2** [d] Mic. 6:2

3 He took his brother [e]by the heel in the womb,
And in his strength he [f]struggled with God.*
4 Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed;
He wept, and sought favor from Him.
He found Him *in* [g]Bethel,
And there He spoke to us—
5 That is, the LORD God of hosts.
The LORD *is* His [h]memorable name.
6 [i]So you, by *the help of* your God, return;
Observe mercy and justice,
And wait on your God continually.

7 "A cunning Canaanite!
[j]Deceitful scales *are* in his hand;
He loves to oppress.
8 And Ephraim said,
[k]'Surely I have become rich,
I have found wealth for myself;
In all my labors
They shall find in me no iniquity that *is* sin.'

9 "But I *am* the LORD your God,
Ever since the land of Egypt;
[l]I will again make you dwell in tents,
As in the days of the appointed feast.
10 [m]I have also spoken by the prophets,
And have multiplied visions;
I have given symbols through the witness of the prophets."

11 Though [n]Gilead *has* idols—
Surely they are vanity—
Though they sacrifice bulls in [o]Gilgal,
Indeed their altars *shall be* heaps in the furrows of the field.

12 Jacob [p]fled to the country of Syria;
[q]Israel served for a spouse,
And for a wife he tended *sheep.*
13 [r]By a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt,
And by a prophet he was preserved.
14 Ephraim [s]provoked *Him* to anger most bitterly;
Therefore his Lord will leave the guilt of his bloodshed upon him,
[t]And return his reproach upon him.

Relentless Judgment on Israel

13 When Ephraim spoke, trembling,
He exalted *himself* in Israel;
But when he offended through Baal *worship*, he died.
2 Now they sin more and more,
And have made for themselves molded images,
Idols of their silver, according to their skill;
All of it *is* the work of craftsmen.
They say of them,
"Let the men who sacrifice* kiss the calves!"
3 Therefore they shall be like the morning cloud
And like the early dew that passes away,
[a]Like chaff blown off from a threshing floor
And like smoke from a chimney.

4 "Yet [b]I *am* the LORD your God
Ever since the land of Egypt,
And you shall know no God but Me;
For [c]*there is* no savior besides Me.
5 [d]I knew you in the wilderness,
[e]In the land of great drought.
6 [f]When they had pasture, they were filled;
They were filled and their heart was exalted;
Therefore they forgot Me.

7 "So [g]I will be to them like a lion;
Like [h]a leopard by the road I will lurk;
8 I will meet them [i]like a bear deprived *of her cubs;*
I will tear open their rib cage,
And there I will devour them like a lion.
The wild beast shall tear them.

9 "O Israel, you are destroyed,*
But your help* *is* from Me.
10 I will be your King;*
[j]Where *is any other,*
That he may save you in all your cities?
And your judges to whom [k]you said,
'Give me a king and princes'?

* **12:3** Compare Genesis 32:28 * **13:2** Or *those who offer human sacrifice* * **13:9** Literally *it* or *he destroyed you* • Literally *in your help* * **13:10** Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *Where is your king?*

in a ritual ratifying a treaty or given as a sign of loyalty.

12:7 *Deceitful scales are in his hand.* In violation of the Old Testament law (Lev. 19:36), dishonest merchants sometimes rigged their scales so that they could give buyers less than what they thought they were purchasing (Prov. 11:1; 16:11).

12:9 *I will again make you dwell in tents.* During the Feast of the Tabernacles people lived in tents to commemorate the wilderness wandering (Lev. 23:33–43).

13:2 *kiss the calves.* This is a reference to the idolatrous practice of kissing images as a sign of homage (1 Kin. 19:18).

13:6–9 *I will be to them like a lion.* God provided for Israel's needs and richly blessed the people, like a shepherd leading his flock to lush pasturelands. In return, Israel forgot the Lord. The Lord's relationship with Israel would change drastically from caring Shepherd to ravaging Predator. Ironically and

12:3 [e] Gen. 25:26 [f] Gen. 32:24–28 **12:4** [g] [Gen. 28:12–19; 35:9–15] **12:5** [h] Ex. 3:15 **12:6** [i] Mic. 6:8 **12:7** [j] Amos 8:5 **12:8** [k] Rev. 3:17 **12:9** [l] Lev. 23:42 **12:10** [m] 2 Kin. 17:13 **12:11** [n] Hos. 6:8 [o] Hos. 9:15 **12:12** [p] Gen. 28:5 [q] Gen. 29:20, 28 **12:13** [r] Ex. 12:50, 51; 13:3 **12:14** [s] Ezek. 18:10–13 [t] Dan. 11:18
13:3 [a] Dan. 2:35 **13:4** [b] Is. 43:11 [c] Is. 43:11; 45:21, 22 **13:5** [d] Deut. 2:7; 32:10 [e] Deut. 8:15 **13:6** [f] Deut. 8:12, 14; 32:13–15 **13:7** [g] Lam. 3:10 [h] Jer. 5:6 **13:8** [i] 2 Sam. 17:8 **13:10** [j] Deut. 32:38 [k] 1 Sam. 8:5, 6

11 [l]I gave you a king in My anger,
And took *him* away in My wrath.

12 "The[m] iniquity of Ephraim *is* bound up;
His sin *is* stored up.
13 [n]The sorrows of a woman in childbirth
shall come upon him.
He *is* an unwise son,
For he should not stay long where
children are born.

14 "I will ransom them from the power of
the grave;*
I will redeem them from death.
[o]O Death, I will be your plagues!*
O Grave,* I will be your destruction!*
[p]Pity is hidden from My eyes."

15 Though he is fruitful among *his*
brethren,
[q]An east wind shall come;
The wind of the LORD shall come up
from the wilderness.
Then his spring shall become dry,
And his fountain shall be dried up.
He shall plunder the treasury of every
desirable prize.
16 Samaria is held guilty,*
For she has [r]rebelled against her God.
They shall fall by the sword,
Their infants shall be dashed in pieces,
And their women with child [s]ripped
open.

Israel Restored at Last

14 O Israel, [a]return to the LORD your
God,
For you have stumbled because of your
iniquity;
2 Take words with you,
And return to the LORD.
Say to Him,
"Take away all iniquity;
Receive *us* graciously,
For we will offer the [b]sacrifices* of
our lips.
3 Assyria shall [c]not save us,
[d]We will not ride on horses,
Nor will we say anymore to the work
of our hands, '*You are* our gods.'
[e]For in You the fatherless finds mercy."

4 "I will heal their [f]backsliding,
I will [g]love them freely,
For My anger has turned away from
him.
5 I will be like the [h]dew to Israel;
He shall grow like the lily,
And lengthen his roots like Lebanon.
6 His branches shall spread;
[i]His beauty shall be like an olive tree,
And [j]his fragrance like Lebanon.
7 [k]Those who dwell under his shadow
shall return;
They shall be revived *like* grain,
And grow like a vine.
Their scent* *shall be* like the wine of
Lebanon.

8 "Ephraim *shall say*, 'What have I to do
anymore with idols?'
I have heard and observed him.
I *am* like a green cypress tree;
[l]Your fruit is found in Me."

9 Who *is* wise?
Let him understand these things.
Who is prudent?
Let him know them.
For [m]the ways of the LORD *are* right;
The righteous walk in them,
But transgressors stumble in them.

* **13:14** Or *Sheol* • Septuagint reads *where is your punishment?* • Or *Sheol* • Septuagint reads *where is your sting?* * **13:16** Septuagint reads *shall be disfigured* * **14:2** Literally *bull calves;* Septuagint reads *fruit.* * **14:7** Literally *remembrance*

tragically, Israel's rebellion had turned its Helper into a Destroyer.

13:12 ***bound up . . . stored up.*** God had kept a careful record of Israel's sins, to be revealed as evidence of guilt in the day of judgment.

13:13 ***The sorrows of a woman in childbirth.*** This metaphor illustrates Israel's spiritual insensitivity. When the crucial time of judgment arrived, Israel would respond unwisely, resulting in death. The nation's failure to repent is compared to a baby that is not positioned properly during labor and jeopardizes the life of both mother and child.

14:1–3 ***Take away all iniquity.*** The final section of Hosea's prophecy begins with a call to repentance that includes a model prayer. The people of Israel were to pray for God's gracious forgiveness and renew their allegiance to Him by renouncing foreign alliances, their own military strength, and artificial gods.

14:4 ***I will heal their backsliding.*** The grief-stricken Hosea does not tell us whether a reconciliation took place between him and his adulterous wife Gomer. But there is no question concerning the outcome between God and faithless Israel. Several beautiful figures of speech are employed by Hosea to describe the results and effects of God's love for Israel.

14:9 ***For the ways of the LORD are right.*** God's demands and principles are completely true. The wise person will choose to obey them, but the foolish person will ignore them and consequently stumble into judgment.

13:11 [l] 1 Sam. 8:7; 10:17–24 **13:12** [m] Deut. 32:34, 35 **13:13** [n] Is. 13:8 **13:14** [o] [1 Cor. 15:54, 55] [p] Jer. 15:6 **13:15** [q] Jer. 4:11, 12 **13:16** [r] 2 Kin. 18:12 [s] 2 Kin. 15:16 **14:1** [a] [Joel 2:13] **14:2** [b] [Heb. 13:15] **14:3** [c] Hos. 7:11; 10:13; 12:1 [d] [Ps. 33:17] [e] Ps. 10:14; 68:5 **14:4** [f] Jer. 14:7 [g] [Eph. 1:6] **14:5** [h] Prov. 19:12 **14:6** [i] Ps. 52:8; 128:3 [j] Gen. 27:27 **14:7** [k] Dan. 4:12 **14:8** [l] [John 15:4] **14:9** [m] [Prov. 10:29]

THE BOOK OF
JOEL

▶ **AUTHOR:** Although there are several other Joels in the Bible, the prophet Joel is known only from this book. It has been suggested that he lived not far from Jerusalem and some think that Joel was possibly a priest as well as a prophet on account of references to the priesthood throughout the book (1:13–14; 2:17).

▶ **TIME:** c. 835 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Joel 2:11

▶ **THEME:** For the true agrarian society, crops are life itself. It is hard to imagine how devastating the natural disasters described in Joel are, and he uses these painful events as a megaphone to get the attention of the people. There is urgency in this call, because the day of the Lord is coming. This day will be a day of judgment or a day of blessing depending on where one stands with God.

1 The word of the LORD that came to [a]Joel the son of Pethuel.

The Land Laid Waste

2 Hear this, you elders,
And give ear, all you inhabitants of the land!
[b]Has *anything like* this happened in your days,
Or even in the days of your fathers?
3 [c]Tell your children about it,
Let your children *tell* their children,
And their children another generation.

4 [d]What the chewing locust* left, the
[e]swarming locust has eaten;
What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten;
And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.

5 Awake, you [f]drunkards, and weep;
And wail, all you drinkers of wine,
Because of the new wine,
[g]For it has been cut off from your mouth.
6 For [h]a nation has come up against My land,
Strong, and without number;
[i]His teeth *are* the teeth of a lion,
And he has the fangs of a fierce lion.
7 He has [j]laid waste My vine,
And ruined My fig tree;
He has stripped it bare and thrown *it* away;
Its branches are made white.

8 [k]Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth
For [l]the husband of her youth.
9 [m]The grain offering and the drink offering
Have been cut off from the house of the LORD;
The priests [n]mourn, who minister to the LORD.
10 The field is wasted,
[o]The land mourns;
For the grain is ruined,
[p]The new wine is dried up,
The oil fails.

11 [q]Be ashamed, you farmers,
Wail, you vinedressers,
For the wheat and the barley;
Because the harvest of the field has perished.

* **1:4** Exact identity of these locusts is unknown.

1:2 ***happened in your days.*** The calamity of recent days was unprecedented in the memory of the people.
1:4 ***locust.*** Many interpreters have viewed these locusts as foreign armies that attacked Judah in successive waves—Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome. Yet literal locust plagues were one of the judgments promised if the people disobeyed God and broke their covenant with Him (Deut. 28:38–42). Further, Joel's description of the damage done by the locusts compares with eyewitness reports. The impression given is one of overwhelming devastation.
1:9 ***The grain offering and the drink offering.*** This phrase refers to the wine offerings that accompanied the priests' morning and evening sacrifices (Ex. 29:38–41). The devastation of the locust meant that no sacrifice could be offered.
1:10 ***The land mourns.*** The land is personified as mourning because the three principal crops it produced—grain, grapes, and olives—had been destroyed (Deut. 7:13; Ps. 104:15).

1:1 [a] Acts 2:16 **1:2** [b] Joel 2:2 **1:3** [c] Ps. 78:4
1:4 [d] Deut. 28:38 [e] Is. 33:4 **1:5** [f] Is. 5:11; 28:1 [g] Is. 32:10 **1:6** [h] Joel 2:2, 11, 25 [i] Rev. 9:8 **1:7** [j] Is. 5:6
1:8 [k] Is. 22:12 [l] Jer. 3:4 **1:9** [m] Joel 1:13; 2:14 [n] Joel 2:17
1:10 [o] Jer. 12:11 [p] Is. 24:7 **1:11** [q] Jer. 14:3, 4

12 [r]The vine has dried up,
And the fig tree has withered;
The pomegranate tree,
The palm tree also,
And the apple tree—
All the trees of the field are withered;
Surely [s]joy has withered away from
the sons of men.

Mourning for the Land

13 [t]Gird yourselves and lament, you
priests;
Wail, you who minister before the altar;
Come, lie all night in sackcloth,
You who minister to my God;
For the grain offering and the drink
offering
Are withheld from the house of your
God.
14 [u]Consecrate a fast,
Call [v]a sacred assembly;
Gather the elders
And [w]all the inhabitants of the land
Into the house of the LORD your God,
And cry out to the LORD.

15 [x]Alas for the day!
For [y]the day of the LORD *is* at hand;
It shall come as destruction from the
Almighty.
16 Is not the food [z]cut off before our
eyes,
[a]Joy and gladness from the house of
our God?
17 The seed shrivels under the clods,
Storehouses are in shambles;
Barns are broken down,
For the grain has withered.
18 How [b]the animals groan!
The herds of cattle are restless,
Because they have no pasture;
Even the flocks of sheep suffer
punishment.*

19 O LORD, [c]to You I cry out;
For [d]fire has devoured the open
pastures,
And a flame has burned all the trees of
the field.
20 The beasts of the field also [e]cry out to
You,
For [f]the water brooks are dried up,
And fire has devoured the open
pastures.

The Day of the LORD

2 Blow [a]the trumpet in Zion,
And [b]sound an alarm in My holy
mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land
tremble;
For [c]the day of the LORD is coming,
For it is at hand:
2 [d]A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
Like the morning *clouds* spread over
the mountains.
[e]A people *come,* great and strong,
[f]The like of whom has never been;
Nor will there ever be any *such* after
them,
Even for many successive generations.

3 A fire devours before them,
And behind them a flame burns;
The land *is* like [g]the Garden of Eden
before them,
[h]And behind them a desolate wilderness;
Surely nothing shall escape them.
4 [i]Their appearance is like the
appearance of horses;
And like swift steeds, so they run.
5 [j]With a noise like chariots
Over mountaintops they leap,
Like the noise of a flaming fire that
devours the stubble,
Like a strong people set in battle array.

6 Before them the people writhe in pain;
[k]All faces are drained of color.*
7 They run like mighty men,
They climb the wall like men of war;
Every one marches in formation,
And they do not break [l]ranks.
8 They do not push one another;
Every one marches in his own column.*
Though they lunge between the
weapons,
They are not cut down.*
9 They run to and fro in the city,
They run on the wall;
They climb into the houses,
They [m]enter at the windows [n]like a
thief.

* **1:18** Septuagint and Vulgate read *are made desolate.* * **2:6** Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *gather blackness.* * **2:8** Literally *his own highway* • That is, they are not halted by losses

1:15 *the day of the LORD.* This phrase refers to a time of judgment and deliverance. Joel views the locust plague as a contemporary day of judgment that was serving as a token or forewarning of an even greater, future "day of the LORD."

1:17 *The seed shrivels.* This indicated further devastation in the land and an inability to replant the following year.

2:1 *at hand.* The Bible presents the day of the Lord as an imminent reality. It is not something that we are gradually moving toward; rather, it is ever ready to burst in on us. At any moment, the day that is "at hand" may become present.

2:2 *darkness and gloominess.* This phrase is used as a figure for misery, distress, and judgment (Is. 8:22; 60:2; Jer. 13:16).

2:4 *the appearance of horses.* Joel compared the speed and strength of the invaders to galloping horses.

1:12 [r] Joel 1:10 [s] Jer. 48:33 **1:13** [t] Jer. 4:8 **1:14** [u] Joel 2:15, 16 [v] Lev. 23:36 [w] 2 Chr. 20:13 **1:15** [x] [Jer. 30:7] [y] Is. 13:6 **1:16** [z] Is. 3:1 [a] Deut. 12:7 **1:18** [b] Hos. 4:3 **1:19** [c] [Ps. 50:15] [d] Jer. 9:10 **1:20** [e] Ps. 104:21; 147:9 [f] 1 Kin. 17:7; 18:5 **2:1** [a] Jer. 4:5 [b] Num. 10:5 [c] [Obad. 15] **2:2** [d] Amos 5:18 [e] Joel 1:6; 2:11, 25 [f] Dan. 9:12; 12:1 **2:3** [g] Is. 51:3 [h] Zech. 7:14 **2:4** [i] Rev. 9:7 **2:5** [j] Rev. 9:9 **2:6** [k] Nah. 2:10 **2:7** [l] Prov. 30:27 **2:9** [m] Jer. 9:21 [n] John 10:1

10 [o]The earth quakes before them,
The heavens tremble;
[p]The sun and moon grow dark,
And the stars diminish their brightness.
11 [q]The LORD gives voice before His army,
For His camp is very great;
[r]For strong *is the One* who executes
His word.
For the [s]day of the LORD *is* great and
very terrible;
[t]Who can endure it?

A Call to Repentance

12 "Now, therefore," says the LORD,
[u]"Turn to Me with all your heart,
With fasting, with weeping, and with
mourning."
13 So [v]rend your heart, and not [w]your
garments;
Return to the LORD your God,
For He *is* [x]gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.
14 [y]Who knows *if* He will turn and relent,
And leave [z]a blessing behind Him—
[a]A grain offering and a drink offering
For the LORD your God?

15 [b]Blow the trumpet in Zion,
[c]Consecrate a fast,
Call a sacred assembly;
16 Gather the people,
[d]Sanctify the congregation,
Assemble the elders,
Gather the children and nursing babes;
[e]Let the bridegroom go out from his
chamber,
And the bride from her dressing room.
17 Let the priests, who minister to the
LORD,
Weep [f]between the porch and the altar;
Let them say, [g]"Spare Your people,
O LORD,
And do not give Your heritage to
reproach,
That the nations should rule over them.
[h]Why should they say among the
peoples,
'Where *is* their God?'"

The Land Refreshed

18 Then the LORD will [i]be zealous for His
land,
And pity His people.
19 The LORD will answer and say to His
people,
"Behold, I will send you [j]grain and new
wine and oil,
And you will be satisfied by them;
I will no longer make you a reproach
among the nations.

20 "But [k]I will remove far from you [l]the
northern *army*,
And will drive him away into a barren
and desolate land,
With his face toward the eastern sea
And his back [m]toward the western sea;
His stench will come up,
And his foul odor will rise,
Because he has done monstrous
things."

21 Fear not, O land;
Be glad and rejoice,
For the LORD has done marvelous
things!
22 Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field;
For [n]the open pastures are springing up,
And the tree bears its fruit;
The fig tree and the vine yield their
strength.
23 Be glad then, you children of Zion,
And [o]rejoice in the LORD your God;
For He has given you the former rain
faithfully,*
And He [p]will cause the rain to come
down for you—
The former rain,
And the latter rain in the first *month*.

* **2:23** Or *the teacher of righteousness*

2:11 ***Who can endure it.*** Nothing will be able to withstand the wrath of God (Matt. 24:21–22).

2:13 ***rend your heart.*** God is not satisfied with outward acts of repentance. Tearing one's garments was a customary way of expressing grief or remorse (Josh. 7:6; 1 Sam. 4:12). However, like all outward acts, the tearing of a garment could be done without true sorrow or repentance. God required more than mere external words or actions; He wanted a change of heart and sorrow over sin.

2:14 ***Who knows.*** These words suggest that even at the last moment, the Lord would withhold His wrath and display His grace if the people would truly repent. As a result, agriculture would be restored and productivity would return. There would be food and drink for the people and for offerings to the Lord.

2:16 ***bridegroom . . . bride.*** According to Jewish tradition codified in the Mishnah, a couple could be excused from reciting daily prayers on their wedding day. But Joel excused no one from prayer at this time of spiritual emergency.

2:17 ***Why should they say among the peoples.*** This rhetorical question was designed to move God to intervene. Failure to come to Judah's aid might encourage the nations to make a mockery of Judah's God.

2:18–19 ***zealous for His land.*** The deep love of God for the land of Israel is coupled with His abiding love for the people. On every occasion in which God brought judgment on the land, there was the hope that one day His zeal for the land would lead to a renewal of blessing. Genuine repentance is the prerequisite for God's blessing. In response to repentance, God would bring restoration and blessing.

2:22 ***the open pastures are springing up . . . the tree***

2:10 [o] Ps. 18:7 [p] Is. 13:10; 34:4 **2:11** [q] Jer. 25:30 [r] Rev. 18:8 [s] Amos 5:18 [t] [Mal. 3:2] **2:12** [u] Jer. 4:1 **2:13** [v] [Ps. 34:18; 51:17] [w] Gen. 37:34 [x] [Ex. 34:6] **2:14** [y] Jer. 26:3 [z] Hag. 2:19 [a] Joel 1:9, 13 **2:15** [b] Num. 10:3 [c] Joel 1:14 **2:16** [d] Ex. 19:10 [e] Ps. 19:5 **2:17** [f] Matt. 23:35 [g] Ex. 32:11, 12 [h] Ps. 42:10 **2:18** [i] [Is. 60:10; 63:9, 15] **2:19** [j] [Mal. 3:10] **2:20** [k] Ex. 10:19 [l] Jer. 1:14, 15 [m] Deut. 11:24 **2:22** [n] Joel 1:19 **2:23** [o] Is. 41:16 [p] Lev. 26:4

24 The threshing floors shall be full of wheat,
And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.

25 "So I will restore to you the years [q]that the swarming locust has eaten,
The crawling locust,
The consuming locust,
And the chewing locust,*
My great army which I sent among you.
26 You shall [r]eat in plenty and be satisfied,
And praise the name of the LORD your God,
Who has dealt wondrously with you;
And My people shall never be put to [s]shame.
27 Then you shall know that I *am* [t]in the midst of Israel:
[u]I *am* the LORD your God
And there is no other.
My people shall never be put to shame.

God's Spirit Poured Out

28 "And[v] it shall come to pass afterward
That [w]I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
[x]Your sons and your [y]daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions.
29 And also on *My* [z]menservants and on *My* maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

30 "And [a]I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth:
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
31 [b]The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
[c]Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
32 And it shall come to pass
That [d]whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Shall be saved.
For [e]in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance,
As the LORD has said,
Among [f]the remnant whom the LORD calls.

God Judges the Nations

3 "For behold, [a]in those days and at that time,
When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem,
2 [b]I will also gather all nations,
And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;
And I [c]will enter into judgment with them there
On account of My people, My heritage Israel,
Whom they have scattered among the nations;
They have also divided up My land.
3 They have [d]cast lots for My people,
Have given a boy *as payment* for a harlot,
And sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.

4 "Indeed, what have you to do with Me,
[e]O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia?
Will you retaliate against Me?
But if you retaliate against Me,
Swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head;
5 Because you have taken My silver and My gold,
And have carried into your temples My prized possessions.
6 Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem
You have sold to the Greeks,
That you may remove them far from their borders.

7 "Behold, [f]I will raise them
Out of the place to which you have sold them,
And will return your retaliation upon your own head.
8 I will sell your sons and your daughters
Into the hand of the people of Judah,
And they will sell them to the [g]Sabeans,*
To a people [h]far off;
For the LORD has spoken."

* **2:25** Compare 1:4 * **3:8** Literally *Shebaites* (compare Isaiah 60:6 and Ezekiel 27:22)

bears its fruit. The renewal of agriculture would be a sign that God had renewed prosperity and peace to His land.

2:28–32 ***I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.*** Peter quotes this passage on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17–21) to explain the miracle of speaking in tongues. There are three main viewpoints regarding how Peter uses Joel's prophecy: (1) Some interpreters see a complete fulfillment of Joel's prophecy in the experience of the first believers on the Day of Pentecost. The outpouring of the Spirit ushered in the kingdom age; (2) some interpreters believe that Peter was simply using Joel's prophecy as an illustration of what was happening. In effect, Peter was saying, "This is that same Holy Spirit which was spoken of by Joel"; (3) some others suggest that Joel's prophecy was partially fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. The gift of the Holy Spirit was given, but the signs mentioned in verses 30–32 will be fulfilled later in connection with the return of Christ in great glory.

3:2 ***Valley of Jehoshaphat.*** The name Jehoshaphat means "the Lord judges." The location of this valley is not known. Perhaps this was merely a symbolic name for the location of the great battle in the end times.

2:25 [q] Joel 1:4–7; 2:2–11 **2:26** [r] Lev. 26:5 [s] Is. 45:17 **2:27** [t] Lev. 26:11, 12 [u] [Is. 45:5, 6] **2:28** [v] Ezek. 39:29 [w] Zech. 12:10 [x] Is. 54:13 [y] Acts 21:9 **2:29** [z] [Gal. 3:28] **2:30** [a] Matt. 24:29 **2:31** [b] Is. 13:9, 10; 34:4 [c] [Mal. 4:1, 5, 6] **2:32** [d] Rom. 10:13 [e] Is. 46:13 [f] [Mic. 4:7] **3:1** [a] Jer. 30:3 **3:2** [b] Zech. 14:2 [c] Is. 66:16 **3:3** [d] Nah. 3:10 **3:4** [e] Amos 1:6–8 **3:7** [f] Jer. 23:8 **3:8** [g] Ezek. 23:42 [h] Jer. 6:20

9 [i]Proclaim this among the nations:
"Prepare for war!
Wake up the mighty men,
Let all the men of war draw near,
Let them come up.
10 [j]Beat your plowshares into swords
And your pruning hooks into spears;
[k]Let the weak say, 'I *am* strong.'"
11 Assemble and come, all you nations,
And gather together all around.
Cause [l]Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD.

12 "Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;
For there I will sit to [m]judge all the surrounding nations.
13 [n]Put in the sickle, for [o]the harvest is ripe.
Come, go down;
For the [p]winepress is full,
The vats overflow—
For their wickedness *is* great."

14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!
For [q]the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision.
15 The sun and moon will grow dark,
And the stars will diminish their brightness.
16 The LORD also will roar from Zion,
And utter His voice from Jerusalem;
The heavens and earth will shake;
[r]But the LORD will be a shelter for His people,
And the strength of the children of Israel.

17 "So you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God,
Dwelling in Zion My [s]holy mountain.
Then Jerusalem shall be holy,
And no aliens shall ever pass through her again."

God Blesses His People

18 And it will come to pass in that day
That the mountains shall drip with new wine,
The hills shall flow with milk,
And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water;
A [t]fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD
And water the Valley of Acacias.

19 "Egypt shall be a desolation,
And Edom a desolate wilderness,
Because of violence *against* the people of Judah,
For they have shed innocent blood in their land.
20 But Judah shall abide forever,
And Jerusalem from generation to generation.
21 For I will [u]acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted;
For the LORD dwells in Zion."

3:11 *nations . . . mighty ones.* Joel saw two different armies assembling for battle (Mark 8:38; Rev. 19:14).

3:14 *the valley of decision.* This may be a symbolic name for the Valley of Jehoshaphat (3:2), or it may refer to the option before the people to continue toward certain judgment or to turn to God in repentance (vv. 12–13).

3:18 *in that day.* These words indicate the prophetic future. Joel uses poetic imagery to describe the productivity of the land in the messianic age. The Valley of Acacias was the location of the last encampment before the Israelites entered Canaan (Num. 25:1; Josh. 3:1).

3:9 [i] Ezek. 38:7 **3:10** [j] [Is. 2:4] [k] Zech. 12:8 **3:11** [l] Is. 13:3 **3:12** [m] Is. 2:4 **3:13** [n] Rev. 14:15 [o] Jer. 51:33 [p] [Is. 63:3] **3:14** [q] Joel 2:1 **3:16** [r] [Is. 51:5, 6] **3:17** [s] Zech. 8:3 **3:18** [t] Ezek. 47:1 **3:21** [u] Is. 4:4

THE BOOK OF
AMOS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The only Old Testament appearance of the name Amos is in this book. Amos's objective appraisal of Israel's spiritual condition was not well received, not least because he was just a farmer from Judah. The author said of his background, "I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but I was a sheepbreeder and a tender of sycamore fruit" (7:14). He delivered his message in Bethel because it was the residence of the king of Israel and a center of idolatry.

▶ **TIME:** c. 760–753 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Amos 3:1–2

▶ **THEME:** Amos was a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea. The unusual aspect of his ministry is that he was a farmer and herdsman from Judah prophesying to the northern kingdom of Israel. The issues he addresses are the usual prophetic concerns, but with a heavy emphasis on social justice. When injustice is rampant, expect God's judgment. No one is immune. In fact, the more God has given, the more God expects in response.

1 The words of Amos, who was among
the [a]sheepbreeders* of [b]Tekoa, which
he saw concerning Israel in the days of
[c]Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of
[d]Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel,
two years before the [e]earthquake.

2 And he said:

"The LORD [f]roars from Zion,
And utters His voice from Jerusalem;
The pastures of the shepherds mourn,
And the top of [g]Carmel withers."

Judgment on the Nations

3 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of
[h]Damascus, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they have [i]threshed Gilead
with implements of iron.

4 [j]But I will send a fire into the house of
Hazael,
Which shall devour the palaces of
[k]Ben-Hadad.

5 I will also break the *gate* [l]bar of
Damascus,
And cut off the inhabitant from the
Valley of Aven,
And the one who holds the scepter
from Beth Eden.
The people of Syria shall go captive
to Kir,"
Says the LORD.

6 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of [m]Gaza,
and for four,

* **1:1** Compare 2 Kings 3:4

1:1—2:16 ***The words of Amos.*** The Lord sent Amos, a Judean, to Bethel to prophesy of coming judgment on Israel. But in Bethel, Amos faced a hostile audience. Israel's first king, Jeroboam I, had made the town a center of pagan worship. Because the temple in Jerusalem was in Judah and not in the nation of Israel, Jeroboam had encouraged the Israelites to worship at Bethel instead of Jerusalem. Thus the Israelites who gathered at Bethel would regard Amos, a Judean, with suspicion. Yet Amos bravely condemned there the sins of Israel's neighbors. He also points to the iniquity of Israel and Judah. They both had rejected the God who had covenanted with them.

1:1 ***Tekoa.*** This town was about ten miles south of Jerusalem, in a region well suited for raising sheep and goats.

1:3 ***For three . . . and for four.*** This stylistic device indicated the exhaustion of God's patience—the Syrians had continued to sin, again and again. This device is repeated as Amos speaks God's words against nation after sinful nation. ***Gilead.*** This was the region on the east side of the Jordan from the Yarmuk River to the Dead Sea.

1:4 ***I will send a fire . . . devour the palaces.*** Fire in an ancient city was a real threat. Cities were crowded with houses close together on very narrow streets; there was too little water to effectively fight them.

1:5 ***the gate bar.*** This was a large timber that barred the city gate from the inside. If it was broken, the city would lose its security and could be captured easily.

1:6 ***Gaza.*** This was one of the five principal cities of the Philistines.

1:1 [a] 2 Kin. 3:4; Amos 7:14 [b] 2 Sam. 14:2 [c] 2 Chr. 26:1–23 [d] Amos 7:10 [e] Zech. 14:5 **1:2** [f] Joel 3:16 [g] 1 Sam. 25:2 **1:3** [h] Is. 8:4; 17:1–3 [i] 2 Kin. 10:32, 33 **1:4** [j] Jer. 49:27; 51:30 [k] 2 Kin. 6:24 **1:5** [l] Jer. 51:30 **1:6** [m] Jer. 47:1, 5

I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they took captive the whole captivity
To deliver *them* up to Edom.
7 [n]But I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza,
Which shall devour its palaces.
8 I will cut off the inhabitant [o]from Ashdod,
And the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon;
I will [p]turn My hand against Ekron,
And [q]the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,"
Says the Lord GOD.

9 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of [r]Tyre, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom,
And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.
10 But I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre,
Which shall devour its palaces."

11 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of [s]Edom, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because he pursued his [t]brother with the sword,
And cast off all pity;
His anger tore perpetually,
And he kept his wrath forever.
12 But [u]I will send a fire upon Teman,
Which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah."

13 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of [v]the people of Ammon, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead,
That they might enlarge their territory.
14 But I will kindle a fire in the wall of [w]Rabbah,
And it shall devour its palaces,
[x]Amid shouting in the day of battle,
And a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.
15 [y]Their king shall go into captivity,
He and his princes together,"
Says the LORD.

2 Thus says the LORD:

[a]"For three transgressions of Moab, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because he [b]burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.
2 But I will send a fire upon Moab,
And it shall devour the palaces of [c]Kerioth;
Moab shall die with tumult,
With shouting *and* trumpet sound.
3 And I will cut off [d]the judge from its midst,
And slay all its princes with him,"
Says the LORD.

Judgment on Judah

4 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of [e]Judah, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
[f]Because they have despised the law of the LORD,
And have not kept His commandments.
[g]Their lies lead them astray,
Lies [h]which their fathers followed.
5 [i]But I will send a fire upon Judah,
And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem."

Judgment on Israel

6 Thus says the LORD:

"For three transgressions of [j]Israel, and for four,
I will not turn away its *punishment*,
Because [k]they sell the righteous for silver,
And the [l]poor for a pair of sandals.

1:11 ***Edom.*** This nation was located southeast of the Dead Sea. It controlled important caravan trade routes, and thus was deeply involved in commerce. Its citizens were descendants of Esau.

1:13 ***Ammon.*** The nation of Ammon was located east of Gilead on the edge of the desert. Its people were descended from one of the sons of Lot (Gen. 19:36–38).

2:1 ***burned the bones.*** This act was believed to desecrate the remains of a deceased person, a heinous act in ancient times and a great dishonor to the person's memory.

2:6 ***sell the righteous for silver.*** In His law, God had instructed the Israelites to work off their debts through indentured service—administered humanely and for a strictly limited time (Lev. 25:39–43; Deut. 15:12). By Amos's day, those in power in Israel were taking advantage of the courts to sell debtors as slaves, termed "the righteous" here because they were the innocent victims of the corruption of the courts. ***for a pair of sandals.*** This means for little or nothing.

1:7 [n] Jer. 47:1 **1:8** [o] Zeph. 2:4 [p] Ps. 81:14 [q] Ezek. 25:16 **1:9** [r] Is. 23:1–18 **1:11** [s] Is. 21:11 [t] Obad. 10–12 **1:12** [u] Obad. 9, 10 **1:13** [v] Ezek. 25:2 **1:14** [w] Deut. 3:11 [x] Amos 2:2 **1:15** [y] Jer. 49:3 **2:1** [a] Zeph. 2:8–11 [b] 2 Kin. 3:26, 27 **2:2** [c] Jer. 48:24, 41 **2:3** [d] Num. 24:17 **2:4** [e] Hos. 12:2 [f] Lev. 26:14 [g] Jer. 16:19 [h] Ezek. 20:13, 16, 18 **2:5** [i] Hos. 8:14 **2:6** [j] 2 Kin. 17:7–18; 18:12 [k] Is. 29:21 [l] Amos 4:1; 5:11; 8:6

7 They pant after* the dust of the earth
which is on the head of the poor,
And [m]pervert the way of the humble.
[n]A man and his father go in to the *same* girl,
[o]To defile My holy name.
8 They lie down [p]by every altar on clothes [q]taken in pledge,
And drink the wine of the condemned *in* the house of their god.
9 "Yet *it was* I *who* destroyed the [r]Amorite before them,
Whose height *was* like the [s]height of the cedars,
And he *was as* strong as the oaks;
Yet I [t]destroyed his fruit above
And his roots beneath.
10 Also *it was* [u]I *who* brought you up from the land of Egypt,
And [v]led you forty years through the wilderness,
To possess the land of the Amorite.
11 I raised up some of your sons as [w]prophets,
And some of your young men as [x]Nazirites.
Is it not so, O you children of Israel?"
Says the LORD.
12 "But you gave the Nazirites wine to drink,
And commanded the prophets [y]saying,
'Do not prophesy!'
13 "Behold,[z] I am weighed down by you,
As a cart full of sheaves is weighed down.
14 [a]Therefore flight shall perish from the swift,
The strong shall not strengthen his power,
[b]Nor shall the mighty deliver himself;
15 He shall not stand who handles the bow,
The swift of foot shall not escape,
Nor shall he who rides a horse deliver himself.
16 The most courageous men of might
Shall flee naked in that day,"
Says the LORD.

Authority of the Prophet's Message

3 Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel,
against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:
2 "You[a] only have I known of all the families of the earth;
[b]Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."
3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?
4 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey?
Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?
5 Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it?
Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?
6 If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?
[c]If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done *it?*
7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing,
Unless [d]He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

* **2:7** Or *trample on*

2:7 *humble.* Those without power or influence should have been able to depend on the justice due them. Instead, justice was denied them. As a result, their lives were turned to poverty, oppression, and insecurity.
2:8 *clothes taken in pledge.* Clothing taken as security for a loan was supposed to be returned in the evening so that it could be used as bedding for the poor (Ex. 22:26–27). The powerful in Israel were spreading the clothes out as beds for themselves beside the altars, in a show of empty, merciless piety.
2:9 *it was I who destroyed.* This emphatic statement underscores the fact that God had been Israel's champion, and the nation's success had not been its own doing. ***the Amorite.*** This refers to the previous inhabitants of the land of Canaan.
2:13 *I am weighed down by you.* This is a powerful metaphor of the burden of Israel's sin on the Lord. This is the same God Isaiah describes as measuring the waters of the earth in the hollow of His hand, measuring the heavens with the span of His hand, and weighing the mountains in His balance (Is. 40:12).
3:1 *the whole family which I brought up.* This phrase emphasizes the personal, intimate relationship that God had with Israel.
3:2 *You only have I known.* God's relationship with Israel was not only intimate, it was exclusive. God had been faithful to Israel, yet Israel had not been faithful to God. For this reason, the nation would be judged.
3:2 Selection of Israel—The selection of Israel as a special nation to God was part of God's plan (Rom. 11:2). Historically, the selection of Israel began with the Lord's promise to Abraham, "I will make you a great nation" (Gen. 12:2). The name Israel actually comes from the new name which God gave to Abraham's grandson Jacob when they fought at the ford of Jabbok (Gen. 32:28). This fact explains why his descendants are often called the children of Israel.
The motivation for the Lord's choice of Israel as His select nation did not lie in any special attraction the nation possessed. Its people were, in fact, the least in number among all the nations (Deut. 7:6–8). Rather, the Lord chose them because of His love for them and because of His covenant with Abraham. This fact does not mean that God did not love other nations, because it was through Israel that He blessed all nations in Christ.
3:3–6 *Can two walk together.* This series of rhetorical questions illustrates the seriousness, certainty, and righteousness of God's impending action against

2:7 [m] Amos 5:12 [n] Ezek. 22:11 [o] Lev. 20:3 **2:8** [p] 1 Cor. 8:10 [q] Ex. 22:26 **2:9** [r] Num. 21:25 [s] Ezek. 31:3 [t] [Mal. 4:1] **2:10** [u] Ex. 12:51 [v] Deut. 2:7 **2:11** [w] Num. 12:6 [x] Num. 6:2, 3 **2:12** [y] Is. 30:10 **2:13** [z] Is. 1:14 **2:14** [a] Jer. 46:6 [b] Ps. 33:16 **3:2** [a] [Deut. 7:6] [b] [Rom. 2:9] **3:6** [c] Is. 45:7 **3:7** [d] [John 15:15]

8 A lion has roared!
Who will not fear?
The Lord GOD has spoken!
[e]Who can but prophesy?

Punishment of Israel's Sins

9 "Proclaim in the palaces at Ashdod,*
And in the palaces in the land of
Egypt, and say:
'Assemble on the mountains of
Samaria;
See great tumults in her midst,
And the oppressed within her.
10 For they [f]do not know to do right,'
Says the LORD,
'Who store up violence and robbery in
their palaces.'"

11 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

"An adversary *shall be* all around the
land;
He shall sap your strength from you,
And your palaces shall be
plundered."

12 Thus says the LORD:

"As a shepherd takes from the mouth
of a lion
Two legs or a piece of an ear,
So shall the children of Israel be taken
out
Who dwell in Samaria—
In the corner of a bed and on the edge*
of a couch!
13 Hear and testify against the house of
Jacob,"
Says the Lord GOD, the God of hosts,
14 "That in the day I punish Israel for their
transgressions,
I will also visit *destruction* on the
altars of [g]Bethel;
And the horns of the altar shall be
cut off
And fall to the ground.
15 I will destroy [h]the winter house along
with [i]the summer house;
The [j]houses of ivory shall perish,
And the great houses shall have an
end,"
Says the LORD.

4 Hear this word, you [a]cows of Bashan,
who *are* on the mountain of
Samaria,
Who oppress the [b]poor,
Who crush the needy,
Who say to your husbands,* "Bring
wine, let us [c]drink!"
2 [d]The Lord GOD has sworn by His
holiness:
"Behold, the days shall come upon you
When He will take you away [e]with
fishhooks,
And your posterity with fishhooks.
3 [f]You will go out *through* broken *walls,*
Each one straight ahead of her,
And you will be cast into Harmon,"
Says the LORD.

4 "Come[g] to Bethel and transgress,
At [h]Gilgal multiply transgression;
[i]Bring your sacrifices every morning,
[j]Your tithes every three days.*
5 [k]Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with
leaven,
Proclaim *and* announce [l]the freewill
offerings;
For this you love,
You children of Israel!"
Says the Lord GOD.

Israel Did Not Accept Correction

6 "Also I gave you cleanness of teeth in
all your cities,

* **3:9** Following Masoretic Text; Septuagint reads *Assyria.* * **3:12** The Hebrew is uncertain. * **4:1** Literally *their lords* or *their masters* * **4:4** Or *years* (compare Deuteronomy 14:28)

Israel. Each question is framed so as to require a resounding "no" as its answer.

3:11 ***An adversary shall be all around the land.*** This verse pictures a formal sentencing of Israel in the presence of the witnesses whom God had called (v. 9). Sapping Israel's strength was exactly what Assyria did in the years following Amos's prophecies, finally putting an end to the nation in 722 B.C.

3:12 ***As a shepherd takes from the mouth of a lion.*** The hired shepherd was responsible to the owner for the safety of the sheep. He had to make good any loss, unless he could prove it was unavoidable. A lion taking a sheep was an unavoidable loss, but the shepherd had to prove that the lion had taken it. A couple of small bones or a piece of an ear was sufficient; the owner would recognize the lion's work. As complete as the destruction of a sheep by a lion would be the destruction of Israel that God would bring.

3:15 ***the great houses shall have an end.*** The four houses mentioned here were all symbols of oppression. Many small inheritances had been stolen to form the large estates of the wealthy and powerful, where they built their opulent houses.

4:1 ***cows of Bashan.*** This phrase refers to the well-fed women of Samaria. Bashan, the region east and northeast of the Sea of Galilee, was a prime grassland area renowned for its cattle.

4:3 ***broken walls.*** These were a symbol of the thoroughness of the destruction of the city and the homes that the people held so dear. In an undamaged city, the usual way in and out was the one main gate. But Samaria would be so ruined that the deportees would be driven straight through the breaches in the walls of their houses and their city.

4:6–11 ***you have not returned to Me.*** This passage describes a series of five calamities that God had already sent upon the Israelites in an effort to drive them to repentance. A striking feature of this narrative is God's emphatic claim that the Israelites had brought these disasters on themselves. They had

3:8 [e] Acts 4:20 **3:10** [f] Jer. 4:22 **3:14** [g] Amos 4:4
3:15 [h] Jer. 36:22 [i] Judg. 3:20 [j] 1 Kin. 22:39 **4:1** [a] Ps. 22:12
[b] Amos 2:6 [c] Prov. 23:20 **4:2** [d] Ps. 89:35 [e] Jer. 16:16
4:3 [f] Ezek. 12:5 **4:4** [g] Ezek. 20:39 [h] Hos. 4:15 [i] Num. 28:3
[j] Deut. 14:28 **4:5** [k] Lev. 7:13 [l] Lev. 22:18

And lack of bread in all your places;
[m]Yet you have not returned to Me,"
Says the LORD.

7 "I also withheld rain from you,
When *there were* still three months to the harvest.
I made it rain on one city,
I withheld rain from another city.
One part was rained upon,
And where it did not rain the part withered.
8 So two *or* three cities wandered to another city to drink water,
But they were not satisfied;
Yet you have not returned to Me,"
Says the LORD.

9 "I[n] blasted you with blight and mildew.
When your gardens increased,
Your vineyards,
Your fig trees,
And your olive trees,
[o]The locust devoured *them;*
Yet you have not returned to Me,"
Says the LORD.

10 "I sent among you a plague [p]after the manner of Egypt;
Your young men I killed with a sword,
Along with your captive horses;
I made the stench of your camps come up into your nostrils;
Yet you have not returned to Me,"
Says the LORD.

11 "I overthrew *some* of you,
As God overthrew [q]Sodom and Gomorrah,
And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning;
Yet you have not returned to Me,"
Says the LORD.

12 "Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel;
Because I will do this to you,
[r]Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!"

13 For behold,
He who forms mountains,
And creates the wind,
[s]Who declares to man what his*
thought *is,*
And makes the morning darkness,
[t]Who treads the high places of the earth—
[u]The LORD God of hosts *is* His name.

A Lament for Israel

5 Hear this word which I [q]take up against you, a lamentation, O house of Israel:

2 The virgin of Israel has fallen;
She will rise no more.
She lies forsaken on her land;
There is no one to raise her up.

3For thus says the Lord GOD:

"The city that goes out by a thousand
Shall have a hundred left,
And that which goes out by a hundred
Shall have ten left to the house of Israel."

A Call to Repentance

4For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel:

[b]"Seek Me [c]and live;
5 But do not seek [d]Bethel,
Nor enter Gilgal,
Nor pass over to [e]Beersheba;
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,
And [f]Bethel shall come to nothing.
6 [g]Seek the LORD and live,
Lest He break out like fire *in* the house of Joseph,
And devour *it,*
With no one to quench *it* in Bethel—
7 You who [h]turn justice to wormwood,
And lay righteousness to rest in the earth!"

8 He made the [i]Pleiades and Orion;
He turns the shadow of death into morning
[j]And makes the day dark as night;
He [k]calls for the waters of the sea
And pours them out on the face of the earth;
[l]The LORD *is* His name.

* **4:13** Or *His*

repeatedly failed to understand the implications of the disasters.

4:10 ***after the manner of Egypt.*** This fourth calamity suggests that God was reminding Israel of the ten plagues that preceded their exodus from Egypt; these included epidemic diseases and other disasters.

4:11 ***like a firebrand plucked from the burning.*** This refers to a stick snatched from a fire with one end already ablaze. Here it was a vivid metaphor for God's last-minute rescue of most of Israel from the fate He brought upon some of its cities and territories.

4:12 ***Prepare to meet your God.*** Because Israel had not returned to God through these five calamities, it would have to meet God Himself. To be confronted—inescapably—by the God it had scorned and rejected would be a fate more terrible than Israel could imagine.

5:2 ***The virgin of Israel.*** This term depicts the nation as a young maiden, cut off from her life before it had really begun. ***on her land.*** This is a reminder that the land had been God's gift to Israel. By their faithlessness, the people had turned God's gift into the place of their death and burial.

5:6 ***in the house of Joseph.*** This phrase refers to the whole nation.

5:8 ***the Pleiades.*** This refers to a cluster of stars within the constellation Taurus, one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac. One of Israel's idolatries was astral worship. Far from being deities, Amos asserted,

4:6 [m] Jer. 5:3 **4:9** [n] Hag. 2:17 [o] Joel 1:4, 7 **4:10** [p] Ps. 78:50 **4:11** [q] Is. 13:19 **4:12** [r] Jer. 5:22 **4:13** [s] Ps. 139:2 [t] Mic. 1:3 [u] Is. 47:4 **5:1** [a] Jer. 7:29; 9:10, 17 **5:4** [b] [Jer. 29:13] [c] [Is. 55:3] **5:5** [d] Amos 4:4 [e] Amos 8:14 [f] Hos. 4:15 **5:6** [g] [Is. 55:3, 6, 7] **5:7** [h] Amos 6:12 **5:8** [i] Job 9:9; 38:31 [j] Ps. 104:20 [k] Job 38:34 [l] [Amos 4:13]

9 He rains ruin upon the strong,
So that fury comes upon the fortress.

10 [m]They hate the one who rebukes in the gate,
And they [n]abhor the one who speaks uprightly.
11 [o]Therefore, because you tread down the poor
And take grain taxes from him,
Though [p]you have built houses of hewn stone,
Yet you shall not dwell in them;
You have planted pleasant vineyards,
But you shall not drink wine from them.
12 For I [q]know your manifold transgressions
And your mighty sins:
[r]Afflicting the just *and* taking bribes;
[s]Diverting the poor *from justice* at the gate.
13 Therefore [t]the prudent keep silent at that time,
For it *is* an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil,
That you may live;
So the LORD God of hosts will be with you,
[u]As you have spoken.
15 [v]Hate evil, love good;
Establish justice in the gate.
[w]It may be that the LORD God of hosts
Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

The Day of the LORD

16 Therefore the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, says this:

"*There shall be* wailing in all streets,
And they shall say in all the highways,
'Alas! Alas!'
They shall call the farmer to mourning,
[x]And skillful lamenters to wailing.
17 In all vineyards *there shall be* wailing,
For [y]I will pass through you,"
Says the LORD.

18 [z]Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD!
For what good *is* [a]the day of the LORD to you?
It *will be* darkness, and not light.
19 It *will be* [b]as though a man fled from a lion,
And a bear met him!
Or *as though* he went into the house,
Leaned his hand on the wall,
And a serpent bit him!
20 *Is* not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light?
Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?

21 "I[c] hate, I despise your feast days,
And [d]I do not savor your sacred assemblies.
22 [e]Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings,
I will not accept *them,*
Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.

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the constellations also were God's creations. ***Orion.*** This is a reference to a prominent constellation in the southern sky in the shape of a hunter.

5:10 ***the gate.*** This was the location of the town court, where justice was to be upheld in all legal proceedings whether civil or criminal.

5:11–15 God's Justice—The Israelites in Amos's day had lost sight of God's commands to treat the poor compassionately. There is no record that Israel ever practiced the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:11) that is part of Old Testament law, for instance.

As many of the prophets did, Amos called on the Israelites to practice justice and see to it that the poor were not abused. He made it clear that the rich in his day were taking advantage of the poor. The justice system was ineffective because of rampant bribery. The prophets repeatedly made the point that the sacrifices were not enough. The sacrificial process needed to be connected with a response in behavior. God's justice demanded more than the sacrifices. It demanded obedience.

Amos teaches us to be observant about where this injustice is being practiced. He teaches us to look for movements, forces, or programs that can work against the accumulation of power and unjustly gained wealth.

One of the first things the Jerusalem church did when it formed was to put in place a system of some kind to care for the widows and orphans (Acts 6:1–4). Belief in God included an understanding of His desire for justice and the believer's need to act on it.

5:11 ***grain taxes.*** To take grain taxes from the poor was to put them at risk of starvation if the harvest had not been bountiful. Yet the rich and powerful had sufficient resources to build luxurious houses for themselves. God promised that the rich would not enjoy their luxury stolen from the lifeblood of the poor and powerless.

5:12 ***your mighty sins.*** Israel's leaders did not sin incidentally or furtively; they sinned brazenly and habitually, as though God had never revealed Himself and His standards of justice and mercy.

5:18 ***the day of the LORD.*** The popular theology of Amos's time apparently looked forward to this day as the time of Israel's restoration to military, political, and economic greatness, perhaps to the greatness of the reigns of David and Solomon. Amos declared such hopes futile, even pitiable. What the people looked forward to as a day of light and triumph would rise upon them instead as a day of darkness and ruin.

5:19 ***bear . . . serpent.*** These images evoke the terror that follows when a person escapes a terrible danger and is exhausted and relieved, only to find a worse danger so close at hand that it is inescapable.

5:21–23 ***feast days . . . sacred assemblies.*** By stating He would no longer accept Israel's sacrifices or

5:10 [m] Is. 29:21; 66:5 [n] 1 Kin. 22:8 **5:11** [o] Amos 2:6 [p] Mic. 6:15 **5:12** [q] Hos. 5:3 [r] Amos 2:6 [s] Is. 29:21 **5:13** [t] Amos 6:10 **5:14** [u] Mic. 3:11 **5:15** [v] Rom. 12:9 [w] Joel 2:14 **5:16** [x] Jer. 9:17 **5:17** [y] Ex. 12:12 **5:18** [z] Is. 5:19 [a] Joel 2:2 **5:19** [b] Jer. 48:44 **5:21** [c] Is. 1:11–16 [d] Lev. 26:31 **5:22** [e] Mic. 6:6, 7

23 Take away from Me the noise of your songs,
For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.
24 [f]But let justice run down like water,
And righteousness like a mighty stream.

25 "Did[g] you offer Me sacrifices and offerings
In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?
26 You also carried Sikkuth* [h]your king*
And Chiun,* your idols,
The star of your gods,
Which you made for yourselves.
27 Therefore I will send you into captivity [i]beyond Damascus,"
Says the LORD, [j]whose name *is* the God of hosts.

Warnings to Zion and Samaria

6 Woe [a]to you *who are* at [b]ease in Zion,
And [c]trust in Mount Samaria,
Notable persons in the [d]chief nation,
To whom the house of Israel comes!
2 [e]Go over to [f]Calneh and see;
And from there go to [g]Hamath the great;
Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
[h]*Are you* better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory greater than your territory?

3 *Woe to* you who [i]put far off the day of [j]doom,
[k]Who cause [l]the seat of violence to come near;
4 Who lie on beds of ivory,
Stretch out on your couches,
Eat lambs from the flock
And calves from the midst of the stall;
5 [m]Who sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments,
And invent for yourselves [n]musical instruments [o]like David;
6 Who [p]drink wine from bowls,
And anoint yourselves with the best ointments,
[q]But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

7 Therefore they shall now go [r]captive as the first of the captives,
And those who recline at banquets shall be removed.

8 [s]The Lord GOD has sworn by Himself,
The LORD God of hosts says:
"I abhor [t]the pride of Jacob,
And hate his palaces;
Therefore I will deliver up *the* city
And all that is in it."

9 Then it shall come to pass, that if ten men remain in one house, they shall die. 10 And when a relative *of the dead*, with one who will burn *the bodies*, picks up the bodies* to take them out of the house, he will say to one inside the house, "*Are there* any more with you?"
Then someone will say, "None."
And he will say, [u]"Hold your tongue! [v]For we dare not mention the name of the LORD."

11 For behold, [w]the LORD gives a command:
[x]He will break the great house into bits,
And the little house into pieces.

12 Do horses run on rocks?
Does *one* plow *there* with oxen?
Yet [y]you have turned justice into gall,
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,
13 You who rejoice over Lo Debar,*
Who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim* for ourselves
By our own strength?"

14 "But, behold, [z]I will raise up a nation against you,
O house of Israel,"
Says the LORD God of hosts;
"And they will afflict you from the [a]entrance of Hamath
To the Valley of the Arabah."

Vision of the Locusts

7 Thus the Lord GOD showed me: Behold, He formed locust swarms at the beginning of the late crop; indeed *it was* the late

* **5:26** A pagan deity • Septuagint and Vulgate read *tabernacle of Moloch.* • *A pagan deity*
* **6:10** Literally *bones* * **6:13** Literally *Nothing* • Literally *Horns,* symbol of strength

listen to them, God was rejecting Israel's worship as hypocritical, dishonest, and meaningless.

5:25 *Did you offer Me.* This verse is a rhetorical question with "yes" as the expected answer.

6:3 *you who put far off the day of doom.* This refers to those who insisted that Israel was too strong for destruction to fall upon the nation any time soon.

6:4–6 *lambs . . . calves.* This passage describes the extravagant living indulged in by the rich and paid for with the wealth stolen from the poor. Meat was a luxury for most families of the ancient Middle East, consumed only on special occasions. Meat on a daily basis was the privilege only of the rich and powerful. The upper classes of Israel were so engrossed in their own privileges and luxuries that they cared nothing for the affliction of their fellow Israelites, though it was their transgressions that had caused it.

7:1 *the king's mowings.* These words imply that

5:24 [f] Mic. 6:8 **5:25** [g] Deut. 32:17 **5:26** [h] 1 Kin. 11:33 **5:27** [i] 2 Kin. 17:6 [j] Amos 4:13 **6:1** [a] Luke 6:24 [b] Zeph. 1:12 [c] Is. 31:1 [d] Ex. 19:5 **6:2** [e] Jer. 2:10 [f] Is. 10:9 [g] 2 Kin. 18:34 [h] Nah. 3:8 **6:3** [i] Is. 56:12 [j] Amos 5:18 [k] Amos 5:12 [l] Ps. 94:20 **6:5** [m] Is. 5:12; Amos 5:23 [n] 1 Chr. 15:16; 16:42 [o] 1 Chr. 23:5 **6:6** [p] Amos 2:8; 4:1 [q] Gen. 37:25 **6:7** [r] Amos 5:27 **6:8** [s] Jer. 51:14 [t] Amos 8:7 **6:10** [u] Amos 5:13 [v] Amos 8:3 **6:11** [w] Is. 55:11 [x] Amos 3:15 **6:12** [y] Hos. 10:4 **6:14** [z] Jer. 5:15 [a] 1 Kin. 8:65

crop after the king's mowings. 2And so it
was, when they had finished eating the
grass of the land, that I said:

"O Lord GOD, forgive, I pray!
[a]Oh, that Jacob may stand,
For he *is* small!"
3 *So* [b]the LORD relented concerning
this.
"It shall not be," said the LORD.

Vision of the Fire

4Thus the Lord GOD showed me: Behold, the Lord GOD called for conflict by fire, and it consumed the great deep and devoured the territory. 5Then I said:

"O Lord GOD, cease, I pray!
[c]Oh, that Jacob may stand,
For he *is* small!"
6 *So* the LORD relented concerning this.
"This also shall not be," said the Lord
GOD.

Vision of the Plumb Line

7Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall *made* with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. 8And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?"
And I said, "A plumb line."
Then the Lord said:

"Behold, [d]I am setting a plumb line
In the midst of My people Israel;
[e]I will not pass by them anymore.
9 [f]The high places of Isaac shall be
desolate,
And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be
laid waste.
[g]I will rise with the sword against the
house of Jeroboam."

Amaziah's Complaint

10Then Amaziah the [h]priest of [i]Bethel sent to [j]Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. 11For thus Amos has said:

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
And Israel shall surely be led away
[k]captive
From their own land.'"

12Then Amaziah said to Amos:

"Go, you seer!
Flee to the land of Judah.
There eat bread,
And there prophesy.
13 But [l]never again prophesy at Bethel,
[m]For it *is* the king's sanctuary,
And it *is* the royal residence."

14Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah:

"I *was* no prophet,
Nor *was* I [n]a son of a prophet,
But I *was* a [o]sheepbreeder*
And a tender of sycamore fruit.
15 Then the LORD took me as I followed
the flock,
And the LORD said to me,
'Go, [p]prophesy to My people Israel.'
16 Now therefore, hear the word of the
LORD:
You say, 'Do not prophesy against
Israel,
And [q]do not spout against the house
of Isaac.'

* **7:14** Compare 2 Kings 3:4

the king took the first harvest of hay as a tax. Thus a swarm of locusts devouring the late crop would leave the people with nothing for themselves, inflicting a crippling economic blow.

7:2–3 ***that Jacob may stand.*** If God carried out the threatened punishment, Jacob (the nation of Israel) might be destroyed. One function of the prophet was to serve as intercessor for the people before God. Amos prayed that the vision decreed in heaven might be halted before it was accomplished on earth. The basis of Amos's petition lay in the true assessment of Israel's position. They were not large and strong, as they thought; rather they were small and weak. In response to Amos's intercession, and out of His own love for Israel, God stayed His decree.

7:7–9 ***a plumb line.*** This apparatus is a string with a weight tied to one end, used to establish a vertical line so that a wall can be built straight. ***what do you see.*** Unlike the first two visions of natural disasters, the visions of the plumb line and the basket of summer fruit were not self-explanatory. God asked Amos what he saw, then explained the visions' meaning. Also unlike the first two visions, God did not give Amos opportunity to intercede, nor did He relent. These judgments would be executed. ***the house of Jeroboam.*** This is a metaphor for the nation.

7:10–11 ***Amaziah.*** Amaziah was the priest in charge of the temple at Bethel, who informed the king about the prophet who was making threats against the king's house. Amaziah was reacting to Amos's third vision which ended with God's promise to bring the sword against the house of Jeroboam. Amaziah regarded Amos's words as a political threat, and reported them not as a prophecy from God, but as Amos's call to revolt.

7:14–17 ***Nor was I a son of a prophet.*** Amos's answer to Amaziah came in two parts. First, he denied being a prophet by profession. He did not come from a family of prophets, nor had he been trained in prophecy. Amos made it clear that he had neither desired nor sought his prophetic task. ***Your wife shall be a harlot.*** The only way the spouse of an important official like Amaziah would be reduced to prostitution would be if all her family and all her resources were taken away and she were left to fend entirely for herself.

7:2 [a] Is. 51:19 **7:3** [b] Jon. 3:10 **7:5** [c] Amos 7:2, 3 **7:8** [d] 2 Kin. 21:13 [e] Mic. 7:18 **7:9** [f] Gen. 46:1 [g] 2 Kin. 15:8–10 **7:10** [h] 1 Kin. 12:31, 32; 13:33 [i] Amos 4:4 [j] 2 Kin. 14:23 **7:11** [k] Amos 5:27; 6:7 **7:13** [l] Amos 2:12 [m] 1 Kin. 12:29, 32 **7:14** [n] 1 Kin. 20:35 [o] Zech. 13:5 **7:15** [p] Amos 3:8 **7:16** [q] Ezek. 21:2

17 "Therefore[r] thus says the LORD:

"Your wife[s] shall be a harlot in the city;
Your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword;
Your land shall be divided by *survey* line;
You shall die in a [t]defiled land;
And Israel shall surely be led away captive
From his own land.'"

Vision of the Summer Fruit

8 Thus the Lord GOD showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit. 2 And He said, "Amos, what do you see?"

So I said, "A basket of summer fruit."

Then the LORD said to me:

"The end has come upon[a] My people Israel;
[b]I will not pass by them anymore.
3 And [c]the songs of the temple
Shall be wailing in that day,"
Says the Lord GOD—
"Many dead bodies everywhere,
[d]They shall be thrown out in silence."

4 Hear this, you who swallow up* the needy,
And make the poor of the land fail,

5 Saying:

"When will the New Moon be past,
That we may sell grain?
And [e]the Sabbath,
That we may trade wheat?
[f]Making the ephah small and the shekel large,
Falsifying the scales by [g]deceit,
6 That we may buy the poor for [h]silver,
And the needy for a pair of sandals—
Even sell the bad wheat?"

7 The LORD has sworn by [i]the pride of Jacob:
"Surely [j]I will never forget any of their works.
8 [k]Shall the land not tremble for this,
And everyone mourn who dwells in it?
All of it shall swell like the River,*
Heave and subside
[l]Like the River of Egypt.

9 "And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD,

[m]"That I will make the sun go down at noon,
And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;
10 I will turn your feasts into [n]mourning,
[o]And all your songs into lamentation;
[p]I will bring sackcloth on every waist,
And baldness on every head;
I will make it like mourning for an only *son*,
And its end like a bitter day.

11 "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD,
"That I will send a famine on the land,
Not a famine of bread,
Nor a thirst for water,
But [q]of hearing the words of the LORD.
12 They shall wander from sea to sea,
And from north to east;
They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD,
But shall [r]not find *it*.

13 "In that day the fair virgins
And strong young men
Shall faint from thirst.
14 Those who [s]swear by [t]the sin* of Samaria,
Who say,
'As your god lives, O Dan!'
And, 'As the way of [u]Beersheba lives!'
They shall fall and never rise again."

The Destruction of Israel

9 I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and He said:

"Strike the doorposts, that the thresholds may shake,
And [a]break them on the heads of them all.
I will slay the last of them with the sword.
[b]He who flees from them shall not get away,
And he who escapes from them shall not be delivered.

* **8:4** Or *trample on* (compare 2:7) * **8:8** That is, the Nile; some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read *River;* Masoretic Text reads *the light*. * **8:14** Or *Ashima*, a Syrian goddess

8:1–3 ***a basket of summer fruit.*** The fruits that came at the end of the harvest in late summer included grapes, pomegranates, and figs. ***The end has come.*** Amos could not have discerned the meaning of this vision until God's pronouncement. Israel's wickedness was about to result in a harvest of judgment.
8:5 ***Making the ephah small.*** This was a way of cheating the customer of value received for price paid. ***shekel.*** This was a unit of money so making it "great" was also a way of cheating.
8:12–13 ***sea to sea.*** This meant from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. ***fair virgins . . . young men.*** This refers to those who are most vigorous to survive.
8:14 ***Dan . . . Beersheba.*** This was a phrase that indicated the limits of the Israelite territory. In Amos's day, Beersheba was in the kingdom of Judah. Israel could swear oaths by the Lord, claiming they loyally worshiped Him from the extreme north to the extreme south of His land, but that would not relieve the famine of God's word.

7:17 [r] Jer. 28:12; 29:21, 32 [s] Zech. 14:2 [t] Hos. 9:3
8:2 [a] Ezek. 7:2 [b] Amos 7:8 **8:3** [c] Amos 5:23 [d] Amos 6:9, 10 **8:5** [e] Neh. 13:15 [f] Mic. 6:10, 11 [g] Lev. 19:35, 36 **8:6** [h] Amos 2:6 **8:7** [i] Amos 6:8 [j] Hos. 7:2; 8:13
8:8 [k] Hos. 4:3 [l] Amos 9:5 **8:9** [m] Job 5:14 **8:10** [n] Ezek. 7:18 [o] Ezek. 27:31 [p] [Zech. 12:10] **8:11** [q] Ezek. 7:26
8:12 [r] Hos. 5:6 **8:14** [s] Hos. 4:15 [t] Deut. 9:21 [u] Amos 5:5
9:1 [a] Hab. 3:13 [b] Amos 2:14

2 "Though[c] they dig into hell,*
From there My hand shall take them;
[d]Though they climb up to heaven,
From there I will bring them down;
3 And though they [e]hide themselves on top of Carmel,
From there I will search and take them;
Though they hide from My sight at the bottom of the sea,
From there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them;
4 Though they go into captivity before their enemies,
From there [f]I will command the sword,
And it shall slay them.
[g]I will set My eyes on them for harm and not for good."

5 The Lord GOD of hosts,
He who touches the earth and it [h]melts,
[i]And all who dwell there mourn;
All of it shall swell like the River,*
And subside like the River of Egypt.
6 He who builds His [j]layers in the sky,
And has founded His strata in the earth;
Who [k]calls for the waters of the sea,
And pours them out on the face of the earth—
[l]The LORD *is* His name.

7 "*Are* you not like the people of Ethiopia to Me,
O children of Israel?" says the LORD.
"Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt,
The [m]Philistines from [n]Caphtor,
And the Syrians from [o]Kir?

8 "Behold, [p]the eyes of the Lord GOD *are* on the sinful kingdom,
And I [q]will destroy it from the face of the earth;
Yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,"
Says the LORD.

9 "For surely I will command,
And will sift the house of Israel among all nations,
As *grain* is sifted in a sieve;
[r]Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.
10 All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword,
[s]Who say, 'The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.'

Israel Will Be Restored

11 "On[t] that day I will raise up
The tabernacle* of David, which has fallen down,
And repair its damages;
I will raise up its ruins,
And rebuild it as in the days of old;
12 [u]That they may possess the remnant of [v]Edom,*
And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,"
Says the LORD who does this thing.

13 "Behold, [w]the days are coming," says the LORD,
"When the plowman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;
[x]The mountains shall drip with sweet wine,
And all the hills shall flow *with it.*
14 [y]I will bring back the captives of My people Israel;
[z]They shall build the waste cities and inhabit *them;*
They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them;
They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.
15 I will plant them in their land,
[a]And no longer shall they be pulled up
From the land I have given them,"
Says the LORD your God.

* **9:2** Or *Sheol* * **9:5** That is, the Nile * **9:11** Literally *booth*, figure of a deposed dynasty
* **9:12** Septuagint reads *mankind.*

9:2 ***hell . . . heaven.*** In this imagery, Israel's fugitives from God's judgment could escape neither up nor down; God would find them no matter where in the universe they fled.
9:3 ***top of Carmel.*** This peak represented the highest point on earth. Whether as high as that, or as low as the bottom of the sea, the earth would provide no escape.
9:8 ***the sinful kingdom.*** This is Israel. ***I will not utterly destroy.*** This was a glimmer of hope in a long passage of judgment and doom. God's judgment would be thorough, but a remnant would survive.
9:9 ***As grain is sifted in a sieve.*** Sifting grain was the final operation in cleaning it before gathering it into storage. In winnowing, all the chaff was blown away; only pebbles and small clumps of mud remained with the grain. The sieve was constructed with holes that were sized so debris were retained in the sieve.
9:13 ***the plowman shall overtake the reaper.*** For this to happen it would mean such an abundant harvest that it would last all summer and would not be gathered until the plowing had started again. Grapes were harvested from mid-summer to early fall. The grain crop was sown after the plowing in late fall.
9:15 ***plant them in their land.*** God does not abandon His promises or His covenant, nor does He leave His people without hope. God's punishment is certain, but His restoration is just as certain. The word of hope for God's people of old is valid also for God's people of today.

9:2 [c] Ps. 139:8 [d] Jer. 51:53 **9:3** [e] Jer. 23:24 **9:4** [f] Lev. 26:33 [g] Jer. 21:10; 39:16; 44:11 **9:5** [h] Mic. 1:4 [i] Amos 8:8 **9:6** [j] Ps. 104:3, 13 [k] Amos 5:8 [l] Amos 4:13; 5:27 **9:7** [m] Jer. 47:4 [n] Deut. 2:23 [o] Amos 1:5 **9:8** [p] Amos 9:4 [q] Jer. 5:10; 30:11 **9:9** [r] [Is. 65:8–16] **9:10** [s] Amos 6:3 **9:11** [t] Acts 15:16–18 **9:12** [u] Obad. 19 [v] Num. 24:18 **9:13** [w] Lev. 26:5 [x] Joel 3:18 **9:14** [y] Jer. 30:3, 18 [z] Is. 61:4 **9:15** [a] Ezek. 34:28; 37:25

THE BOOK OF
OBADIAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** Obadiah was an obscure prophet who probably lived in the southern kingdom of Judah. It is assumed, however, that he was not a priest, since his father is not mentioned and nothing is given of his background. There are 13 Obadiahs in the Old Testament. Four of the better prospects for this Obadiah are: (1) the officer in Ahab's palace that hid God's prophets in a cave (1 Kin. 18:3); (2) one of the officials sent out by Jehoshaphat to teach the law in the cities of Judah (2 Chr. 17:7); (3) one of the overseers who took part in repairing the temple under Josiah (2 Chr. 34:12); or (4) a priest in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 10:5).

▶ **TIME:** c. 840 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Obad. 10

▶ **THEME:** Obadiah is a prophecy against Edom, the nation that descended from Esau. Edom included the area south and east of the Dead Sea. Throughout most of Old Testament history, if Edom is mentioned, it is in the context of some kind of skirmish. This friction started when the king of Edom refused to let the Israelites cross his territory as they journeyed towards the Promised Land in Numbers 20:14–21. When Israel and Judah were taken into exile, Edom stood by and watched. The purpose of Obadiah seems clear. He is out to encourage the Israelites in the context of captivity. God will rescue His people.

The Coming Judgment on Edom

The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD [a]concerning Edom
[b](We have heard a report from the LORD,
And a messenger has been sent among the nations, *saying*,
"Arise, and let us rise up against her for battle"):

2 "Behold, I will make you small among the nations;
You shall be greatly despised.
3 The [c]pride of your heart has deceived you,
You who dwell in the clefts of the rock,
Whose habitation is high;
[d]*You* who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?'
4 [e]Though you ascend *as* high as the eagle,
And though you [f]set your nest among the stars,
From there I will bring you down," says the LORD.

5 "If [g]thieves had come to you,
If robbers by night—
Oh, how you will be cut off!—
Would they not have stolen till they had enough?
If grape-gatherers had come to you,
[h]Would they not have left *some* gleanings?

6 "Oh, how Esau shall be searched out!
How his hidden treasures shall be sought after!
7 All the men in your confederacy
Shall force you to the border;
[i]The men at peace with you
Shall deceive you *and* prevail against you.
Those who eat your bread shall lay a trap* for you.
[j]No one is aware of it.

* **1:7** Or *wound*, or *plot*

2 ***I will make you small.*** God would bring about a reversal of Edom's inflated self-importance.
3 ***Whose habitation is high.*** Some of the mountain peaks of Edom reached over 6,000 feet. Jerusalem is about 2,300 feet above sea level. ***Who will bring me down to the ground?*** Edom's presumed physical safety led the Edomites to become haughty; this would be their downfall.
4 ***ascend as high as the eagle.*** Edom's physical location became a metaphor of the proud and haughty spirit that the nation had displayed at the time of Judah's distress. Trusting in its high places and mountainous strongholds, Edom reckoned that no one could bring it to account for its actions.

1 [a] Is. 21:11 [b] Jer. 49:14–16 **3** [c] Jer. 49:16 [d] Rev. 18:7
4 [e] Job 20:6 [f] Hab. 2:9 **5** [g] Jer. 49:9 [h] Deut. 24:21
7 [i] Jer. 38:22 [j] Is. 19:11

8 "Will[k] I not in that day," says the LORD,
"Even destroy the wise *men* from Edom,
And understanding from the mountains of Esau?
9 Then your [l]mighty men, O [m]Teman, shall be dismayed,
To the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau
May be cut off by slaughter.

Edom Mistreated His Brother

10 "For [n]violence against your brother Jacob,
Shame shall cover you,
And [o]you shall be cut off forever.
11 In the day that you [p]stood on the other side—
In the day that strangers carried captive his forces,
When foreigners entered his gates
And [q]cast lots for Jerusalem—
Even you *were* as one of them.

12 "But you should not have [r]gazed on the day of your brother
In the day of his captivity;*
Nor should you have [s]rejoiced over the children of Judah
In the day of their destruction;
Nor should you have spoken proudly
In the day of distress.
13 You should not have entered the gate of My people
In the day of their calamity.
Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction
In the day of their calamity,
Nor laid *hands* on their substance
In the day of their calamity.
14 You should not have stood at the crossroads
To cut off those among them who escaped;
Nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained
In the day of distress.

15 "For[t] the day of the LORD upon all the nations *is* near;
[u]As you have done, it shall be done to you;
Your reprisal shall return upon your own head.
16 [v]For as you drank on My holy mountain,
So shall all the nations drink continually;
Yes, they shall drink, and swallow,
And they shall be as though they had never been.

Israel's Final Triumph

17 "But on Mount Zion there [w]shall be deliverance,
And there shall be holiness;
The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.
18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
And the house of Joseph [x]a flame;
But the house of Esau *shall be* stubble;
They shall kindle them and devour them,
And no survivor shall *remain* of the house of Esau,"
For the LORD has spoken.

19 The South* [y]shall possess the mountains of Esau,
[z]And the Lowland shall possess Philistia.
They shall possess the fields of Ephraim
And the fields of Samaria.
Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.
20 And the captives of this host of the children of Israel
Shall possess the land of the Canaanites
As [a]far as Zarephath.
The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad

* **1:12** Literally *on the day he became a foreigner*
* **1:19** Hebrew *Negev*

8 ***destroy the wise men from Edom.*** The nation had a reputation for having many wise men among its citizens (Jer. 49:7).
9 ***O Teman.*** This name comes from a son of Eliphaz, who was the firstborn son of Esau (Gen. 36:9–11).
11 ***In the day.*** This refers to the time of Judah's distress. ***strangers . . . foreigners.*** These words are used to describe Judah's principal enemies, contrasted with the words of verse 10, "your brother." It was one thing for the Babylonians to attack Judah; for a nation like Edom to join the Babylonians against their own brothers was unthinkable.
13 ***the day of their calamity.*** This phrase is repeated three times in this verse. It refers to the day of God's judgment upon Judah, carried out by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.
15 ***the day of the LORD.*** This is a technical term used by the prophets to indicate the day of God's judgment (Amos 5:18–20). Here the term likely refers to the time when God would judge all the nations, including Edom, that had participated in Judah's destruction.
18 ***house of Jacob . . . house of Joseph.*** Together these signify a unified Israel. God intends to rejoin the kingdoms of Israel and Judah as one people again.
20 ***Zarephath.*** This was a Phoenician city 14 miles north of Tyre (1 Kin. 17:8–24). ***Sepharad.*** This was a city to which some Judeans were exiled. The restoration of Judah from exile, which these verses predict, was a sign to Judah and all nations that the God of Israel was not just a local God. He had not been defeated by the Babylonian god Marduk. The fact that He could allow His people to be carried into captivity in a foreign land and then bring them back

8 [k] [Job 5:12–14] **9** [l] Ps. 76:5 [m] Jer. 49:7 **10** [n] Gen. 27:41 [o] Ezek. 35:9 **11** [p] Ps. 83:5–8 [q] Nah. 3:10 **12** [r] Mic. 4:11; 7:10 [s] [Prov. 17:5] **15** [t] Ezek. 30:3 [u] Hab. 2:8 **16** [v] Joel 3:17 **17** [w] Amos 9:8 **18** [x] Zech. 12:6 **19** [y] Is. 11:14 [z] Zeph. 2:7 **20** [a] 1 Kin. 17:9

[b]Shall possess the cities of the
South.*
21 Then [c]saviors* shall come to Mount
Zion
To judge the mountains of Esau,
And the [d]kingdom shall be the LORD's.

* **1:20** Hebrew *Negev* * **1:21** Or *deliverers*

to their own land was proof of His power and sovereignty over all the earth.

21 ***saviors.*** The Judeans who had been taken into captivity would come back as deliverers, and they would reign over the people of Edom. ***the kingdom shall be the LORD's.*** These were Obadiah's last words against all human arrogance, pride, and rebellion. Edom had thought itself indestructible; but the Lord humbled that nation and restored the fallen Judah. Many people are tempted to consider themselves beyond the reach of God. But God will bring them low, just as He will lift those who humble themselves before Him. And one great day, He will establish His just rule over all.

20 [b] Jer. 32:44 **21** [c] [James 5:20] [d] [Rev. 11:15]

THE BOOK OF
JONAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** Jonah was "the son of Amittai" and nothing more would be known about him were it not for a reference in 2 Kings 14:25 calling him a prophet in the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel. Jonah was a Galilean, contrary to the Pharisees' claim that "no prophet has arisen out of Galilee" (John 7:52). One Jewish tradition says that Jonah was the son of the widow of Zarephath whom Elijah raised from the dead (1 Kin. 17:8–24).

▶ **TIME:** c. 760 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Jon. 2:8–9

▶ **THEME:** The Book of Jonah directs us towards God's greatness and mercy. He will go to any lengths in order to assure that His message is heard. He makes it possible for people to repent and be redeemed no matter how decadent and far away from God they are. Jonah himself is a prime example of the power of storytelling, as he gives us an amazingly visual and memorable image of God's far-reaching grace and His involvement in individual lives to accomplish His purposes.

Jonah's Disobedience

1 Now the word of the LORD came to [a]Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, **2**"Arise, go to [b]Nineveh, that [c]great city, and cry out against it; for [d]their wickedness has come up before Me." **3**But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to [e]Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to [f]Tarshish [g]from the presence of the LORD.

The Storm at Sea

4But [h]the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.

5Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that *was* in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load.* But Jonah had gone down [i]into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep.

6So the captain came to him, and said to him, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, [j]call on your God; [k]perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish."

7And they said to one another, "Come, let us [l]cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble *has come* upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. **8**Then they said to him, [m]"Please tell us! For whose cause *is* this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?"

9So he said to them, "I *am* a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, [n]who made the sea and the dry *land*."

Jonah Thrown into the Sea

10Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "Why have you done this?" For the men knew that he fled

* **1:5** Literally *from upon them*

1:1 ***the word of the LORD.*** This phrase affirms the divine source of the message to Jonah (Jer. 1:4; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Mic. 1:1). The name "Jonah" means "dove."

1:2 ***Nineveh.*** Nineveh is located on the Tigris River, the capital of ancient Assyria (2 Kin. 19:36) for about a century. It was over 500 miles from Jonah's home near Nazareth.

1:3 ***a ship going to Tarshish.*** The location of this port city is uncertain, but it could be Tartessus on the southeast coast of Spain. The city represents the most distant place known to the Israelites. Joppa was about 50 miles southwest of Jonah's hometown in the opposite direction from Nineveh.

1:4–5 ***the LORD sent out a great wind.*** Throughout the Book of Jonah, the Lord shows Himself sovereign over every aspect of creation. In this case, the storm at sea was so ferocious that even the experienced mariners were afraid.

1:9 ***I am a Hebrew.*** With these words, Jonah identified himself with the people of the Lord's covenant (Gen. 14:13). ***I fear the LORD.*** Fear here indicates an ongoing activity of awe before the Lord, of piety in His presence, of obedience to His word, and of saving faith (Gen. 22:12; Ex. 20:20; Prov. 1:7). Yet Jonah's actions contradicted his words.

1:10 ***exceedingly afraid.*** This is the same term for

1:1 [a] 2 Kin. 14:25 **1:2** [b] Is. 37:37 [c] Gen. 10:11, 12 [d] Gen. 18:20 **1:3** [e] Josh. 19:46 [f] Is. 23:1 [g] Gen. 4:16 **1:4** [h] Ps. 107:25 **1:5** [i] 1 Sam. 24:3 **1:6** [j] Ps. 107:28 [k] Joel 2:14 **1:7** [l] Josh. 7:14 **1:8** [m] Josh. 7:19 **1:9** [n] [Neh. 9:6]

from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. 11Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?"—for the sea was growing more tempestuous.

12And he said to them, [o]"Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest *is* because of me."

13Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, [p]but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them. 14Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, "We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and [q]do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, [r]have done as it pleased You." 15So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, [s]and the sea ceased from its raging. 16Then the men [t]feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows.

Jonah's Prayer and Deliverance

17Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And [u]Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly. 2And he said:

"I [a]cried out to the LORD because of my affliction,
[b]And He answered me.
"Out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
And You heard my voice.
3 [c]For You cast me into the deep,
Into the heart of the seas,
And the floods surrounded me;
[d]All Your billows and Your waves passed over me.
4 [e]Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight;
Yet I will look again [f]toward Your holy temple.'
5 The [g]waters surrounded me, *even* to my soul;
The deep closed around me;
Weeds were wrapped around my head.
6 I went down to the moorings of the mountains;
The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever;
Yet You have brought up my [h]life from the pit,
O LORD, my God.
7 "When my soul fainted within me,
I remembered the LORD;
[i]And my prayer went *up* to You,
Into Your holy temple.
8 "Those who regard [j]worthless idols
Forsake their own Mercy.
9 But I will [k]sacrifice to You
With the voice of thanksgiving;
I will pay what I have [l]vowed.
[m]Salvation *is* of the [n]LORD."

10So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry *land.*

Jonah Preaches at Nineveh

3 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." 3So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was

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"fear" that Jonah used in his statement of piety (v. 9). But here the word means to be in terror; it refers to overwhelming dread (v. 16). God, the Creator of the universe, was after Jonah. And because God was after Jonah, He was after the sailors as well. They had every right to be afraid (Gen. 12:18; Judg. 15:11).

1:14 *they cried out to the LORD.* Ironically, the pagan sailors prayed to the Lord on behalf of the Lord's rebellious prophet. Jonah needed God's grace as much as Nineveh did. ***as it pleased You.*** The narrator skillfully uses the sailors' words to express one of the book's themes: the Lord is free to act as He wills.

1:17 *the LORD had prepared a great fish.* God sent the fish—not a whale, as is commonly thought—to rescue Jonah from drowning, not to punish him (ch. 2). Three days and three nights may refer to one full day and portions of two more (Gen. 30:36; Ex. 3:18; 1 Sam. 30:12). Jesus Christ said that His death and resurrection were foreshadowed by Jonah's experience (Matt. 12:39–40; 16:4; Luke 11:29).

2:2 *I cried . . . I cried.* These terms come from two different verbs. The first is a more general term meaning "to call aloud," with a wide range of usage in the Bible. The second is a term that means a "cry for help," particularly as a scream to God (Ps. 5:2; 18:6; 22:24; 88:13; 119:146).

2:4 *I will look again toward Your holy temple.* The man who had run from God's presence was alone, yet he clung to the hope that God would not abandon him. The temple, the sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut. 12:5–7; Ps. 48; 79:1; Heb. 9:24), was the symbol of God's presence.

2:6 *the moorings of the mountains.* Jonah pictures himself so deep in the sea that it is as if he had found the deepest place possible. ***pit.*** This term, along with hell (v. 2), is used to describe the realm of the dead (Job 33:24; Ps. 30:9; 49:9).

2:9 *I will sacrifice to You . . . voice of thanksgiving.* This vow is common in the Psalms (Ps. 13:6; 142:7). ***I will pay what I have vowed.*** Jonah declares that he will keep his promise, a pledge both to sacrifice and to acknowledge God's help (Job 22:27; Ps. 50:14; 66:13; Rom. 6:13; 1 Pet. 2:5).

2:10 *the LORD spoke to the fish.* The focus in the story of Jonah is on the Lord's sovereign control over creation to bring about His purpose.

3:1–2 *the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time.* Jonah's new commission was essentially the same as the one he had received in 1:1.

1:12 [o] John 11:50 **1:13** [p] [Prov. 21:30] **1:14** [q] Deut. 21:8 [r] Ps. 115:3 **1:15** [s] [Ps. 89:9; 107:29] **1:16** [t] Acts 5:11 **1:17** [u] [Matt. 12:40] **2:2** [a] Ps. 120:1 [b] Ps. 65:2 **2:3** [c] Ps. 88:6 [d] Ps. 42:7 **2:4** [e] Ps. 31:22 [f] 1 Kin. 8:38 **2:5** [g] Lam. 3:54 **2:6** [h] [Ps. 16:10] **2:7** [i] Ps. 18:6 **2:8** [j] Jer. 10:8 **2:9** [k] Hos. 14:2 [l] [Eccl. 5:4, 5] [m] Ps. 3:8 [n] [Jer. 3:23]

an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey* *in extent.* 4And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then [a]he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

The People of Nineveh Believe

5So the [b]people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. 6Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered *himself* with sackcloth [c]and sat in ashes. 7[d]And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,

> Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. 8But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, [e]let every one turn from his evil way and from [f]the violence that is in his hands. 9[g]Who can tell *if* God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

10[h]Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

Jonah's Anger and God's Kindness

4 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. 2So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I [a]fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You *are* a [b]gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. 3[c]Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for [d]*it is* better for me to die than to live!"

4Then the LORD said, "*Is it* right for you to be angry?"

5So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city. 6And the LORD God prepared a plant* and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant. 7But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it *so* damaged the plant that it withered. 8And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, [e]"*It is* better for me to die than to live."

9Then God said to Jonah, "*Is it* right for you to be angry about the plant?"

And he said, "*It is* right for me to be angry, even to death!"

10But the LORD said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. 11And should I not pity Nineveh, [f]that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons [g]who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"

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* **3:3** Exact meaning unknown * **4:6** Hebrew *kikayon,* exact identity unknown

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3:5 *the people of Nineveh believed God.* The term used for God here is the general term for deity. In contrast, the sailors in chapter 1 proclaimed faith in the Lord, using the personal, covenant name for God (1:16). The fact that the writer does not use the personal name for God here may suggest that the Ninevites had a short-lived or imperfect understanding of God's message. History bears this out. We have no historical record of a lasting period of belief in Nineveh. Eventually the city was destroyed in 612 B.C.

3:10 *God relented.* The Ninevites' repentance moved the Lord to extend grace and mercy to them.

4:1 *displeased.* Jonah's irritation belied the good news that the city would be spared God's judgment, but he was unable to appreciate the parallel.

Jonah . . . became angry. In contrast to God, Jonah had no compassion on the people of Nineveh.

4:5 *till he might see what would become of the city.* In his continuing stubbornness and lack of compassion, Jonah held out hope that God would judge Nineveh. This was God's chief complaint against him (Ps. 58).

4:7 *God prepared a worm.* The Book of Jonah depicts the Lord as both sovereign and free to act in creation. God placed the worm in the plant to serve as His agent in Jonah's life.

4:9 *right for me to be angry.* Jonah's anger (v. 1) did not arise from a desire for justice, but from his own selfishness. He continued to justify his rebellious attitude. And again, God was merciful.

4:11 *pity.* The same word used to describe Jonah's feeling toward the plant in verse 10 is used for God's feeling toward the people of Nineveh. People are of more value than animals and animals of more value than plants, but the Lord has a concern that extends to all of His creation. The Lord's compassion comes from His character (v. 2; Joel 2:13–14).

3:4 [a] [Deut. 18:22] **3:5** [b] [Matt. 12:41] **3:6** [c] Job 2:8 **3:7** [d] 2 Chr. 20:3 **3:8** [e] Is. 58:6 [f] Is. 59:6 **3:9** [g] Joel 2:14 **3:10** [h] Jer. 18:8 **4:2** [a] Jon. 1:3 [b] Joel 2:13 **4:3** [c] 1 Kin. 19:4 [d] Jon. 4:8 **4:8** [e] Jon. 4:3 **4:11** [f] Jon. 1:2; 3:2, 3 [g] Deut. 1:39

THE BOOK OF
MICAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** Micah was from Moresheth Gath (1:14) which was located about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem, near Gath. Although Micah was not as politically aware as Isaiah or Daniel, he showed a profound concern for the suffering of the people and had a clear sense of his prophetic calling. A contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea, Micah may have been a farmer-turned-prophet like Amos.

▶ **TIME:** c. 735–710 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Mic. 6:8

▶ **THEME:** Micah was from a town in southwestern Judah. His message was directed at both capital cities, Samaria and Jerusalem. He was probably around when the Assyrians destroyed Samaria in 722 B.C., and may have even lived through the siege of Jerusalem by Assyria. Micah's message comes out of unique visions from God. In effect he saw things that others couldn't, such as the prophecy of Bethlehem as the birthplace of Christ.

1 The word of the LORD that came to [a]Micah of Moresheth in the days of [b]Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

The Coming Judgment on Israel

2 Hear, all you peoples!
Listen, O earth, and all that is in it!
Let the Lord GOD be a witness against you,
The Lord from [c]His holy temple.

3 For behold, the LORD is coming out of His place;
He will come down
And tread on the high places of the earth.

4 [d]The mountains will melt under Him,
And the valleys will split
Like wax before the fire,
Like waters poured down a steep place.

5 All this is for the transgression of Jacob
And for the sins of the house of Israel.
What *is* the transgression of Jacob?
Is it not Samaria?
And what *are* the [e]high places of Judah?
Are they not Jerusalem?

6 "Therefore I will make Samaria [f]a heap of ruins in the field,
Places for planting a vineyard;
I will pour down her stones into the valley,
And I will [g]uncover her foundations.

7 All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces,
And all her [h]pay as a harlot shall be burned with the fire;
All her idols I will lay desolate,
For she gathered *it* from the pay of a harlot,
And they shall return to the [i]pay of a harlot."

1:1 ***Micah.*** The name means "who is like the Lord?" The question presents a major biblical theme, the idea that God is incomparable (7:18; Deut. 4:32–40; Ps. 113:4–6). Micah's ministry centered on the Assyrian threat to Samaria, the capital of Israel, that was destroyed in 722 B.C. and Jerusalem, the capital of Judah.
1:3 ***the LORD is coming.*** This is the language of epiphany, the dramatic coming of God to earth, here in a solemn procession of judgment. In other texts the language of epiphany is used to describe God's dramatic acts of deliverance (Ps. 18:7–19).
1:5 ***Jacob.*** The name is used to refer to the northern kingdom of Israel, whose transgression was centered in its capital Samaria. ***high places.*** Jerusalem, which was once "beautiful in elevation" (Ps. 48:2), was nothing more than another platform of pagan worship, like the "high places" of the Canaanites.
1:7 ***she gathered it from the pay of a harlot.*** Idolatry is often described in the Hebrew Bible as spiritual adultery (Jer. 3:1; Hos. 4:15). Israel is pictured here as a wife who is unfaithful to her husband. This is not just a metaphor, however; the worship system of Canaan was sexual in nature.

1:1 [a] Jer. 26:18 [b] Is. 1:1 **1:2** [c] [Ps. 11:4] **1:4** [d] Amos 9:5 **1:5** [e] Deut. 32:13; 33:29 **1:6** [f] 2 Kin. 19:25 [g] Ezek. 13:14 **1:7** [h] Hos. 2:5 [i] Deut. 23:18

Mourning for Israel and Judah

8 Therefore I will wail and howl,
I will go stripped and naked;
[j]I will make a wailing like the jackals
And a mourning like the ostriches,
9 For her wounds *are* incurable.
For [k]it has come to Judah;
It has come to the gate of My people—
To Jerusalem.

10 [l]Tell *it* not in Gath,
Weep not at all;
In Beth Aphrah*
Roll yourself in the dust.
11 Pass by in naked shame, you inhabitant of Shaphir;
The inhabitant of Zaanan* does not go out.
Beth Ezel mourns;
Its place to stand is taken away from you.

12 For the inhabitant of Maroth pined* for good,
But [m]disaster came down from the LORD
To the gate of Jerusalem.
13 O inhabitant of [n]Lachish,
Harness the chariot to the swift steeds
(She *was* the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion),
For the transgressions of Israel were [o]found in you.

14 Therefore you shall [p]give presents to Moresheth Gath;*
The houses of [q]Achzib* *shall be* a lie to the kings of Israel.
15 I will yet bring an heir to you,
O inhabitant of [r]Mareshah;*
The glory of Israel shall come to [s]Adullam.
16 Make yourself [t]bald and cut off your hair,
Because of your [u]precious children;
Enlarge your baldness like an eagle,
For they shall go from you into [v]captivity.

Woe to Evildoers

2 Woe to those who devise iniquity,
And work out evil on their beds!
At [a]morning light they practice it,
Because it is in the power of their hand.
2 They [b]covet fields and take *them* by violence,
Also houses, and seize *them.*
So they oppress a man and his house,
A man and his inheritance.

3 Therefore thus says the LORD:

"Behold, against this [c]family I am devising [d]disaster,
From which you cannot remove your necks;
Nor shall you walk haughtily,
For this *is* an evil time.
4 In that day *one* shall take up a proverb against you,
And [e]lament with a bitter lamentation, saying:
'We are utterly destroyed!
He has changed the heritage of my people;
How He has removed *it* from me!
To a turncoat He has divided our fields.'"

5 Therefore you will have no one to determine boundaries* by lot
In the assembly of the LORD.

* **1:10** Literally *House of Dust* * **1:11** Literally *Going Out* * **1:12** Literally *was sick* * **1:14** Literally *Possession of Gath* • Literally *Lie* * **1:15** Literally *Inheritance* * **2:5** Literally *one casting a surveyor's line*

1:8 ***stripped and naked.*** Micah's words describe mourning rites in which outer garments were laid aside in deep humility. The mourning person thought no longer about himself but only about the calamity that had overcome his senses.

1:10 ***in Gath.*** The reference here is to the lament of David in his mourning over the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:20). Just as it was unseemly then to have the bad news of God's people profaned in a foreign city, so it would be in the present circumstance.

1:12 ***Maroth.*** This name means "bitterness." The name Jerusalem suggests "peace." Thus, the inhabitants of the "town of bitterness" would be sickened with dread, and the inhabitants of the "town of peace" would experience God's judgments.

1:16 ***cut off your hair.*** This would have been the ultimate sign of mourning in a culture in which a man's hair was highly valued.

2:1–2 ***devise iniquity . . . covet.*** The ethical teaching of the prophets regularly included oracles of judgment against greed, theft, and oppression, actions of the powerful in attacking the weak. To covet is not just to have a passing thought; it is a determination to seize what is not one's own.

2:4 ***To a turncoat He has divided our fields.*** God would take the property rights from those who had seized them illegally and give them to people who were even more reprobate than they were.

2:5–6 ***no one to determine boundaries.*** Land-grabbers would no longer have a legitimate claim among God's people. God would dispossess them even as they had dispossessed others. ***Do not prattle.*** These words may have been a strong warning to Micah not to be like the lying prophets who counseled that all was well in the land.

1:8 [j] Ps. 102:6 **1:9** [k] 2 Kin. 18:13 **1:10** [l] 2 Sam. 1:20 **1:12** [m] Is. 59:9–11 **1:13** [n] Is. 36:2 [o] Ezek. 23:11 **1:14** [p] 2 Sam. 8:2 [q] Josh. 15:44 **1:15** [r] Josh. 15:44 [s] 2 Chr. 11:7 **1:16** [t] Job 1:20 [u] Lam. 4:5 [v] Amos 7:11, 17 **2:1** [a] Hos. 7:6, 7 **2:2** [b] Is. 5:8 **2:3** [c] Jer. 8:3 [d] Amos 5:13 **2:4** [e] 2 Sam. 1:17

Lying Prophets

6 "Do not prattle," *you say to those* who prophesy.
So they shall not prophesy to you;*
They shall not return insult for insult.*
7 *You who are* named the house of Jacob:
"Is the Spirit of the LORD restricted?
Are these His doings?
Do not My words do good
To him who walks uprightly?

8 "Lately My people have risen up as an enemy—
You pull off the robe with the garment
From those who trust *you,* as they pass by,
Like men returned from war.
9 The women of My people you cast out
From their pleasant houses;
From their children
You have taken away My glory forever.

10 "Arise and depart,
For this *is* not *your* [f]rest;
Because it is [g]defiled, it shall destroy,
Yes, with utter destruction.
11 If a man should walk in a false spirit
And speak a lie, *saying,*
'I will prophesy to you of wine and drink,'
Even he would be the [h]prattler of this people.

Israel Restored

12 "I[i] will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob,
I will surely gather the remnant of Israel;
I will put them together [j]like sheep of the fold,*
Like a flock in the midst of their pasture;
[k]They shall make a loud noise because of *so many* people.
13 The one who breaks open will come up before them;
They will break out,
Pass through the gate,
And go out by it;
[l]Their king will pass before them,
[m]With the LORD at their head."

Wicked Rulers and Prophets

3 And I said:
"Hear now, O heads of Jacob,
And you [a]rulers of the house of Israel:
[b]*Is it* not for you to know justice?
2 You who hate good and love evil;
Who strip the skin from My people,*
And the flesh from their bones;
3 Who also [c]eat the flesh of My people,
Flay their skin from them,
Break their bones,
And chop *them* in pieces
Like *meat* for the pot,
[d]Like flesh in the caldron."

4 Then [e]they will cry to the LORD,
But He will not hear them;
He will even hide His face from them at that time,
Because they have been evil in their deeds.

5 Thus says the LORD [f]concerning the prophets
Who make my people stray;
Who chant "Peace"
While they [g]chew with their teeth,
But who prepare war against him
[h]Who puts nothing into their mouths:
6 "Therefore[i] you shall have night without vision,
And you shall have darkness without divination;
The sun shall go down on the prophets,
And the day shall be dark for [j]them.
7 So the seers shall be ashamed,
And the diviners abashed;
Indeed they shall all cover their lips;
[k]For *there is* no answer from God."

8 But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD,
And of justice and might,
[l]To declare to Jacob his transgression
And to Israel his sin.

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* **2:6** Literally *to these* • Vulgate reads *He shall not take shame.* * **2:12** Hebrew *Bozrah*
* **3:2** Literally *them*

2:12–13 ***assemble . . . gather . . . put them together.*** The verbs are emphatic, demonstrating the certainty of God's determination to bring to pass His good pleasure on His people (Deut. 30:1–6). ***They will break out.*** This phrase speaks of regathering Israel from wherever the people may have been scattered.

3:1 ***Is it not for you to know justice?*** The idea here is that one might not expect justice from pagan leaders in a faraway place. But the rulers of the people of God were expected to emphasize justice. Justice is one of the key concepts of the law (Deut. 10:18; 32:4; 33:21). Perverting justice was strongly prohibited by God (Deut. 16:19; 24:17), yet this was precisely what the leaders of Judah were doing. They had used their authority to destroy justice rather than to establish it among the people.

3:5–7 ***concerning the prophets.*** This oracle was against false prophets who proclaimed peace, causing the people to be unprepared for trouble. These prophets would have neither true prophetic insight, nor help from the forbidden arts of divination. Finally, they would have nothing to say, for there would be no answer from God.

2:10 [f] Deut. 12:9 [g] Lev. 18:25 **2:11** [h] Is. 30:10 **2:12** [i] [Mic. 4:6, 7] [j] Jer. 31:10 [k] Ezek. 33:22; 36:37 **2:13** [l] [Hos. 3:5] [m] Is. 52:12 **3:1** [a] Ezek. 22:27 [b] Jer. 5:4, 5 **3:3** [c] Ps. 14:4; 27:2 [d] Ezek. 11:3, 6, 7 **3:4** [e] Jer. 11:11 **3:5** [f] Ezek. 13:10, 19 [g] Matt. 7:15 [h] Ezek. 13:18 **3:6** [i] Is. 8:20–22; 29:10–12 [j] Is. 29:10 **3:7** [k] Amos 8:11 **3:8** [l] Is. 58:1

9 Now hear this,
You heads of the house of Jacob
And rulers of the house of Israel,
Who abhor justice
And pervert all equity,
10 [m]Who build up Zion with [n]bloodshed
And Jerusalem with iniquity:
11 [o]Her heads judge for a bribe,
[p]Her priests teach for pay,
And her prophets divine for money.
[q]Yet they lean on the LORD, and say,
"Is not the LORD among us?
No harm can come upon us."
12 Therefore because of you
Zion shall be [r]plowed *like* a field,
[s]Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And [t]the mountain of the temple*
Like the bare hills of the forest.

The LORD's Reign in Zion

4 Now [a]it shall come to pass in the latter days
That the mountain of the LORD's house
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow to it.
2 Many nations shall come and say,
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths."
For out of Zion the law shall go forth,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
3 He shall judge between many peoples,
And rebuke strong nations afar off;
They shall beat their swords into [b]plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
[c]Neither shall they learn war anymore.*
4 [d]But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree,
And no one shall make *them* afraid;
For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.
5 For all people walk each in the name of his god,
But [e]we will walk in the name of the LORD our God
Forever and ever.

Zion's Future Triumph

6 "In that day," says the LORD,
[f]"I will assemble the lame,
[g]I will gather the outcast
And those whom I have afflicted;
7 I will make the lame [h]a remnant,
And the outcast a strong nation;
So the LORD [i]will reign over them in Mount Zion
From now on, even forever.
8 And you, O tower of the flock,
The stronghold of the daughter of Zion,
To you shall it come,
Even the former dominion shall come,
The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem."
9 Now why do you cry aloud?
[j]*Is there* no king in your midst?
Has your counselor perished?
For [k]pangs have seized you like a woman in labor.
10 Be in pain, and labor to bring forth,
O daughter of Zion,
Like a woman in birth pangs.
For now you shall go forth from the city,
You shall dwell in the field,
And to [l]Babylon you shall go.
There you shall be delivered;
There the [m]LORD will [n]redeem you
From the hand of your enemies.

* **3:12** Literally *house* * **4:3** Compare Isaiah 2:2–4

3:11 ***bribe . . . pay . . . money.*** The wicked leaders and prophets of Israel worked only when they could gain something from it. Needless to say, if justice had to be paid for, it would not be justice. ***Is not the LORD among us?*** Many people of Jerusalem believed that they would not be affected by God's judgment because God Himself dwelled in the holy temple in Jerusalem. They reasoned that, despite their evils, as long as God was in His temple they were safe—even from divine judgment. What people refused to believe was that God might leave His temple because of the sinfulness of the people (Ezek. 10).
4:1 ***in the latter days.*** This is an indication of a prophecy of end times.
4:2 ***we shall walk in His paths.*** Unlike the people of Micah's generation who were strangers to justice (3:1), the peoples of the coming kingdom will be obedient to God.
4:3 ***swords . . . spears.*** All weapons of destruction will be recycled into tools of production. There will finally be an end to conflict. War will not even be a subject for study any more.
4:4 ***vine . . . fig tree.*** Both are symbols of peace and prosperity (Zech. 3:10).
4:7 ***remnant.*** The majority of people in Israel did not live their lives in faith and dedication to the Lord. However, true faith never really died out in Israel, even in the worst of times.
4:9–10 ***like a woman in labor.*** The troubles of the present moment would lead finally to the birth of a deliverer. ***to Babylon you shall go.*** This refers to the exile.

3:10 [m] Jer. 22:13, 17 [n] Hab. 2:12 **3:11** [o] Is. 1:23 [p] Jer. 6:13 [q] Is. 48:2 **3:12** [r] Jer. 26:18 [s] Ps. 79:1 [t] Mic. 4:1, 2 **4:1** [a] Is. 2:2–4 **4:3** [b] Is. 2:4 [c] Ps. 72:7 **4:4** [d] Zech. 3:10 **4:5** [e] Zech. 10:12 **4:6** [f] Ezek. 34:16 [g] Ps. 147:2 **4:7** [h] Mic. 2:12 [i] [Is. 9:6; 24:23] **4:9** [j] Jer. 8:19 [k] Is. 13:8 **4:10** [l] Amos 5:27 [m] [Is. 45:13] [n] Ps. 18:17

11 [o]Now also many nations have gathered
against you,
Who say, "Let her be defiled,
And let our eye [p]look upon Zion."
12 But they do not know [q]the thoughts of
the LORD,
Nor do they understand His counsel;
For He will gather them [r]like sheaves
to the threshing floor.

13 "Arise[s] and [t]thresh, O daughter of Zion;
For I will make your horn iron,
And I will make your hooves bronze;
You shall [u]beat in pieces many
peoples;
[v]I will consecrate their gain to the LORD,
And their substance to [w]the Lord of
the whole earth."

5 Now gather yourself in troops,
O daughter of troops;
He has laid siege against us;
They will [a]strike the judge of Israel
with a rod on the cheek.

The Coming Messiah

2 "But you, [b]Bethlehem [c]Ephrathah,
Though you are little [d]among the
[e]thousands of Judah,
Yet out of you shall come forth to Me
The One to be [f]Ruler in Israel,
[g]Whose goings forth *are* from of old,
From everlasting."

3 Therefore He shall give them up,
Until the time *that* [h]she who is in labor
has given birth;
Then [i]the remnant of His brethren
Shall return to the children of Israel.
4 And He shall stand and [j]feed *His flock*
In the strength of the LORD,
In the majesty of the name of the LORD
His God;
And they shall abide,
For now He [k]shall be great
To the ends of the earth;
5 And this *One* [l]shall be peace.

Judgment on Israel's Enemies

When the Assyrian comes into our
land,
And when he treads in our palaces,
Then we will raise against him
Seven shepherds and eight princely
men.
6 They shall waste with the sword the
land of Assyria,
And the land of [m]Nimrod at its
entrances;
Thus He shall [n]deliver *us* from the
Assyrian,
When he comes into our land
And when he treads within our borders.

7 Then [o]the remnant of Jacob
Shall be in the midst of many peoples,
[p]Like dew from the LORD,
Like showers on the grass,
That tarry for no man
Nor wait for the sons of men.
8 And the remnant of Jacob
Shall be among the Gentiles,
In the midst of many peoples,
Like a [q]lion among the beasts of the
forest,
Like a young lion among flocks of
sheep,
Who, if he passes through,
Both treads down and tears in pieces,
And none can deliver.
9 Your hand shall be lifted against your
adversaries,
And all your enemies shall be cut off.

10 "And it shall be in that day," says the
LORD,
"That I will [r]cut off your [s]horses from
your midst
And destroy your [t]chariots.
11 I will cut off the cities of your land
And throw down all your
strongholds.
12 I will cut off sorceries from your hand,
And you shall have no [u]soothsayers.
13 [v]Your carved images I will also cut off,
And your *sacred* pillars from your
midst;
You shall [w]no more worship the work
of your hands;
14 I will pluck your wooden images* from
your midst;
Thus I will destroy your cities.

* **5:14** Hebrew *Asherim*, Canaanite deities

4:13 ***Arise and thresh.*** The nations would be gathered by the Lord like sheaves on the threshing floor (v. 12). This is a way of speaking of the final victory over all of Israel's foes.

5:2 ***Bethlehem.*** This name means "house of bread." ***Ephrathah.*** This locates the village in a known region in Judah (Gen. 35:16). This prophecy figures significantly in the New Testament story of the visit of the wise men to the Christ child (Matt. 2:1–12). ***goings forth.*** The birth of this Savior King would be unlike the birth of any other, because He was preexistent. He is "from everlasting."

5:3 ***she who is in labor.*** This probably refers to Zion (4:10). The metaphor refers to the deliverance in the end time of those who will be able to delight in the coming of God's kingdom (4:9—5:1).

5:7 ***dew . . . showers.*** Jewish people are blessings from God on their neighbors.

5:10 ***I will cut off.*** It was God's intention to destroy the evils in Israel's society. Horses and chariots represent the pride of Israel's military power. Israel's

4:11 [o] Lam. 2:16 [p] Obad. 12 **4:12** [q] [Is. 55:8, 9] [r] Is. 21:10 **4:13** [s] Jer. 51:33 [t] Is. 41:15 [u] Dan. 2:44 [v] Is. 18:7 [w] Zech. 4:14 **5:1** [a] Lam. 3:30; Matt. 27:30; Mark 15:19 **5:2** [b] John 7:42 [c] Gen. 35:19; 48:7; [d] 1 Sam. 23:23 [e] Ex. 18:25 [f] [Is. 9:6] [g] Ps. 90:2; [John 1:1] **5:3** [h] Mic. 4:10 [i] Mic. 4:7; 7:18 **5:4** [j] [Is. 40:11; 49:9] [k] Ps. 72:8 **5:5** [l] [Is. 9:6] **5:6** [m] Gen. 10:8–11 [n] Is. 14:25 **5:7** [o] Mic. 5:3 [p] Deut. 32:2 **5:8** [q] Num. 24:9 **5:10** [r] Zech. 9:10 [s] Deut. 17:16 [t] Is. 2:7; 22:18 **5:12** [u] Is. 2:6 **5:13** [v] Zech. 13:2 [w] Is. 2:8

15 And I will [x]execute vengeance in
anger and fury
On the nations that have not heard."*

God Pleads with Israel

6 Hear now what the LORD says:
"Arise, plead your case before the
mountains,
And let the hills hear your voice.
2 [a]Hear, O you mountains, [b]the LORD's
complaint,
And you strong foundations of the
earth;
For [c]the LORD has a complaint against
His people,
And He will contend with Israel.
3 "O My people, what [d]have I done to you?
And how have I [e]wearied you?
Testify against Me.
4 [f]For I brought you up from the land of
Egypt,
I redeemed you from the house of
bondage;
And I sent before you Moses, Aaron,
and Miriam.
5 O My people, remember now
What [g]Balak king of Moab counseled,
And what Balaam the son of Beor
answered him,
From Acacia Grove* to Gilgal,
That you may know [h]the righteousness
of the LORD."
6 With what shall I come before the LORD,
And bow myself before the High God?
Shall I come before Him with burnt
offerings,
With calves a year old?
7 [i]Will the LORD be pleased with
thousands of rams,
Ten thousand [j]rivers of oil?
[k]Shall I give my firstborn *for* my
transgression,
The fruit of my body *for* the sin of my
soul?
8 He has [l]shown you, O man, what *is*
good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But [m]to do justly,
To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?

Punishment of Israel's Injustice

9 The LORD's voice cries to the city—
Wisdom shall see Your name:
"Hear the rod!
Who has appointed it?
10 Are there yet the treasures of
wickedness
In the house of the wicked,
And the short measure *that is* an
abomination?
11 Shall I count pure *those* with [n]the
wicked scales,
And with the bag of deceitful weights?
12 For her rich men are full of [o]violence,
Her inhabitants have spoken lies,
And [p]their tongue is deceitful in their
mouth.
13 "Therefore I will also [q]make *you* sick by
striking you,
By making *you* desolate because of
your sins.
14 [r]You shall eat, but not be satisfied;
Hunger* *shall be* in your midst.
You may carry *some* away,* but shall
not save *them;*
And what you do rescue I will give
over to the sword.
15 "You shall [s]sow, but not reap;
You shall tread the olives, but not
anoint yourselves with oil;
And *make* sweet wine, but not drink
wine.
16 For the statutes of [t]Omri are [u]kept;
All the works of Ahab's house *are done;*
And you walk in their counsels,
That I may make you a desolation,
And your inhabitants a hissing.
Therefore you shall bear the [v]reproach
of My people."*

Sorrow for Israel's Sins

7 Woe is me!
For I am like those who gather
summer fruits,

* **5:15** Or *obeyed* * **6:5** Hebrew *Shittim* (compare Numbers 25:1; Joshua 2:1; 3:1) * **6:14** Or *Emptiness* or *Humiliation* • Targum and Vulgate read *You shall take hold.* * **6:16** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *of nations.*

tendency was to rely on its own military power rather than on the Lord.

6:1–2 *mountains . . . hills.* These were among the witnesses to the covenant that God made with His people (Deut. 4:26; 32:1; Is. 1:2).

6:7 *Will the LORD be pleased.* The idea of bringing pleasure to God through sacrifice is found elsewhere in the Bible. God is pleased with those who do as He commands (Gen. 4:1–8).

6:8 *what does the LORD require of you.* This verse speaks of the underlying attitudes that must accompany all true worship. The idea here is that God seeks certain characteristics of true worship from His people. ***do justly . . . love mercy . . . walk humbly.*** These three phrases summarize biblical piety in true worship. The majority of the people of Israel had violated each of these standards repeatedly. ***with your God.*** It is the Lord who ultimately gives a person strength, courage, and ability to exercise the virtues of godly living.

7:1–2 *Woe is me.* Micah was moved by the oracles of judgment that God delivered through him (1:8).

5:15 [x] [2 Thess. 1:8] **6:2** [a] Ps. 50:1, 4 [b] Hos. 12:2 [c] [Is. 1:18] **6:3** [d] Jer. 2:5, 31 [e] Is. 43:22, 23 **6:4** [f] [Deut. 4:20] **6:5** [g] Num. 22:5, 6 [h] Judg. 5:11 **6:7** [i] Is. 1:11 [j] Job 29:6 [k] 2 Kin. 16:3 **6:8** [l] [Deut. 10:12] [m] Gen. 18:19 **6:11** [n] Hos. 12:7 **6:12** [o] Mic. 2:1, 2 [p] Jer. 9:2–6, 8 **6:13** [q] Lev. 26:16 **6:14** [r] Lev. 26:26 **6:15** [s] Amos 5:11 **6:16** [t] 1 Kin. 16:25, 26 [u] Hos. 5:11 [v] Is. 25:8

Like those who [a]glean vintage
grapes;
There is no cluster to eat
Of the first-ripe fruit *which* [b]my soul
desires.
2 The [c]faithful *man* has perished from
the earth,
And *there is* no one upright among
men.
They all lie in wait for blood;
[d]Every man hunts his brother with a
net.
3 That they may successfully do evil
with both hands—
The prince asks *for gifts*,
The judge *seeks* a [e]bribe,
And the great *man* utters his evil
desire;
So they scheme together.
4 The best of them *is* [f]like a brier;
The most upright *is sharper* than a
thorn hedge;
The day of your watchman and your
punishment comes;
Now shall be their perplexity.
5 [g]Do not trust in a friend;
Do not put your confidence in a
companion;
Guard the doors of your mouth
From her who lies in your [h]bosom.
6 For [i]son dishonors father,
Daughter rises against her mother,
Daughter-in-law against her mother-
in-law;
A man's enemies *are* the men of his
own household.
7 Therefore I will look to the LORD;
I will [j]wait for the God of my
salvation;
My God will hear me.

Israel's Confession and Comfort

8 [k]Do not rejoice over me, my enemy;
[l]When I fall, I will arise;
When I sit in darkness,
The LORD *will be* a light to me.
9 [m]I will bear the indignation of the LORD,
Because I have sinned against Him,
Until He pleads my [n]case
And executes justice for me.
He will bring me forth to the light;
I will see His righteousness.
10 Then *she who is* my enemy will see,
And [o]shame will cover her who said
to me,
[p]"Where is the LORD your God?"
My eyes will see her;
Now she will be trampled down
Like mud in the streets.
11 *In* the day when your [q]walls are to be
built,
In that day the decree shall go far and
wide.*
12 *In* that day [r]they* shall come to you
From Assyria and the fortified cities,*
From the fortress* to the River,*
From sea to sea,
And mountain *to* mountain.
13 Yet the land shall be desolate
Because of those who dwell in it,
And [s]for the fruit of their deeds.

God Will Forgive Israel

14 Shepherd Your people with Your staff,
The flock of Your heritage,
Who dwell solitarily *in* a [t]woodland,
In the midst of Carmel;
Let them feed *in* Bashan and Gilead,
As in days of old.
15 "As[u] in the days when you came out of
the land of Egypt,
I will show them* [v]wonders."
16 The nations [w]shall see and be
ashamed of all their might;
[x]They shall put *their* hand over *their*
mouth;
Their ears shall be deaf.
17 They shall lick the [y]dust like a serpent;
[z]They shall crawl from their holes like
snakes of the earth.
[a]They shall be afraid of the LORD our
God,
And shall fear because of You.

* **7:11** Or *the boundary shall be extended*
* **7:12** Literally *he*, collective of the captives
• Hebrew *arey mazor*, possibly *cities of Egypt* • Hebrew *mazor*, possibly *Egypt* • That is, the Euphrates * **7:15** Literally *him*, collective for the captives

There is not a cluster. For Micah, the harvest was over. There was nothing around him but undesirable fruit.

The faithful man has perished. The norms of society had broken down; everyone was out to destroy someone else.

7:3–4 ***with both hands.*** The people were pursuing evil with gusto. The leaders of the state were leading the way in evil (3:11). ***The day of your watchman.*** This refers to the time when people needed to be alert for the approach of an enemy army. In this context, judgment was imminent.

7:7 ***I will look to the LORD.*** While there would need to be a watchman for the coming of an enemy army, Micah was going to look for the advent of the Lord.

7:8–9 ***I have sinned.*** This is the confession of the people in saving faith.

7:11–12 ***In the day.*** These words call attention to a future day, the time of the end.

7:16–17 ***nations shall see and be ashamed.*** The response of the wicked nations to the renewed mercies of God on His people would be terror. The nations would be humiliated because they had taunted Israel in the day of its trouble (vv. 8–10).

7:1 [a] Is. 17:6 [b] Is. 28:4 **7:2** [c] Is. 57:1 [d] Hab. 1:15 **7:3** [e] Mic. 3:11 **7:4** [f] Ezek. 2:6 **7:5** [g] Jer. 9:4 [h] Deut. 28:56 **7:6** [i] Matt. 10:36 **7:7** [j] Is. 25:9 **7:8** [k] Prov. 24:17 [l] [Prov. 24:16] **7:9** [m] Lam. 3:39, 40 [n] Jer. 50:34 **7:10** [o] Ps. 35:26 [p] Ps. 42:3 **7:11** [q] [Amos 9:11] **7:12** [r] [Is. 11:16; 19:23–25] **7:13** [s] Jer. 21:14 **7:14** [t] Is. 37:24 **7:15** [u] Ps. 68:22; 78:12 [v] Ex. 34:10 **7:16** [w] Is. 26:11 [x] Job 21:5 **7:17** [y] [Is. 49:23] [z] Ps. 18:45 [a] Jer. 33:9

18 [b]Who *is* a God like You,
[c]Pardoning iniquity
And passing over the transgression of
[d]the remnant of His heritage?

[e]He does not retain His anger forever,
Because He delights *in* [f]mercy.
19 He will again have compassion on us,
And will subdue our iniquities.
You will cast all our* sins
Into the depths of the sea.
20 [g]You will give truth to Jacob
And mercy to Abraham,
[h]Which You have sworn to our fathers
From days of old.

* **7:19** Literally *their*

7:18–20 God's Mercy—There is a significant passage on mercy or love like this in every book in the Old Testament. God wants His people to succeed and be prosperous. He wants the best for them. He is always eager to restore them. He protects, directs, sustains, and covenants with them. His steadfast love is characterized by faithfulness in spite of constant wandering in unfaithfulness.

In the New Testament, it is also easy to find passages in every book where someone is being judged. Usually it's the religious people who have set themselves up in God's place or those who have turned away from God when they should know better who are condemned.

The Old Testament predicts, leads toward, and sets the scene for the ultimate judgment of the New Testament. The entire Bible consistently points to the kind of creatures we are because of the fall and sin. Only God has the ultimate solution in Christ. God subjects Himself to that ultimate judgment for us so that all of His love for us may be realized. It's a mystery that we can solve only in our hearts by accepting and believing its implications.

Every day our prayer needs to be, "Lord, my sins are ever with me. I deserve Your judgment. Thank You for the great mercy I've received through Jesus' death for me. That He died in my place must always be the primary reality in my life."

7:18 *Who is a God like You.* These words speak of the incomparability of God. There is nothing in all of creation to compare with God (Is. 40:25).

7:20 *which You have sworn.* This last verse is reminiscent of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12; 15; 22 and His promises to Jacob in Genesis 32. The Lord had sworn to fulfill His promises to the patriarchs. He would not—could not—leave His promise unfulfilled (Ps. 89:33).

7:18 [b] Ex. 15:11 [c] Ex. 34:6, 7, 9 [d] Mic. 4:7 [e] Ps. 103:8, 9, 13 [f] [Ezek. 33:11] **7:20** [g] Luke 1:72, 73 [h] Ps. 105:9

THE BOOK OF
NAHUM

▶ **AUTHOR:** The only mention of Nahum in the Old Testament is found in 1:1 where he is called an Elkoshite. Scholars have been unable to determine the exact location of Elkosh and numerous theories exist, but due to his interest in the triumph of Judah (1:15; 2:2), some believe Nahum to be a prophet of the southern kingdom.

▶ **TIME:** c. 660 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Nah. 1:7–8

▶ **THEME:** Nahum is unique in that it is a prophecy addressed completely to a nation other than Israel: Assyria and its capital Nineveh. While Nineveh may be powerful, her day of destruction is coming. Nineveh is not invincible. The message is that God's standards apply to all nations, not just Israel and Judah. They need to be prepared to live by those standards or face judgment.

1 The burden* [a]against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

God's Wrath on His Enemies

2 God *is* [b]jealous, and the LORD avenges;
The LORD avenges and *is* furious.
The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries,
And He reserves *wrath* for His enemies;
3 The LORD *is* [c]slow to anger and [d]great in power,
And will not at all acquit *the wicked.*
[e]The LORD has His way
In the whirlwind and in the storm,
And the clouds *are* the dust of His feet.
4 [f]He rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
And dries up all the rivers.
[g]Bashan and Carmel wither,
And the flower of Lebanon wilts.
5 The mountains quake before Him,
The hills melt,
And the earth heaves* at His presence,
Yes, the world and all who dwell in it.
6 Who can stand before His indignation?
And [h]who can endure the fierceness of His anger?
His fury is poured out like fire,
And the rocks are thrown down by Him.
7 [i]The LORD *is* good,
A stronghold in the day of trouble;
And [j]He knows those who trust in Him.
8 But with an overflowing flood
He will make an utter end of its place,
And darkness will pursue His enemies.
9 [k]What do you conspire against the LORD?
[l]He will make an utter end *of it.*
Affliction will not rise up a second time.
10 For while tangled [m]*like* thorns,
[n]And while drunken *like* drunkards,
[o]They shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.
11 From you comes forth *one*
Who plots evil against the LORD,
A wicked counselor.
12Thus says the LORD:
"Though *they are* safe, and likewise many,
Yet in this manner they will be [p]cut down

* **1:1** Or *oracle* * **1:5** Targum reads *burns.*

1:2 *jealous, and the LORD avenges.* The repetition of words and the use of parallel terms are typical devices in Hebrew poetry for intensifying and sharpening the poet's message.
1:3 *whirlwind . . . storm . . . clouds.* The peoples of the ancient Middle East worshiped nature gods, particularly deities associated with storms, clouds, and rainfall. In Canaan, this fixation on storms was centered in the worship of Baal and his consorts Anat and Asherah. The Scriptures testify that there are no gods but the Lord; it is He who rules and is above all creation.
1:8 *flood . . . end . . . darkness.* The judgment of the Lord will be inescapable. The word "flood" is both a poetic term for overwhelming devastation and a specific reference to the actual manner of Nineveh's fall. It is believed that the invaders of Nineveh entered the city through its flooded waterways (2:6).
1:11 *A wicked counselor.* "Wicked" is one of the harshest terms in biblical language, nearly a curse

1:1 [a] Zeph. 2:13 **1:2** [b] Ex. 20:5 **1:3** [c] Ex. 34:6, 7 [d] [Job 9:4] [e] Ps. 18:17 **1:4** [f] Matt. 8:26 [g] Is. 33:9 **1:6** [h] [Mal. 3:2] **1:7** [i] [Jer. 33:11] [j] 2 Tim. 2:19 **1:9** [k] Ps. 2:1 [l] 1 Sam. 3:12 **1:10** [m] 2 Sam. 23:6 [n] Nah. 3:11 [o] Mal. 4:1 **1:12** [p] [Is. 10:16–19, 33, 34]

When he passes through.
Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more;
13 For now I will break off his yoke from you,
And burst your bonds apart."

14 The LORD has given a command concerning you:
"Your name shall be perpetuated no longer.
Out of the house of your gods
I will cut off the carved image and the molded image.
I will dig your [q]grave,
For you are [r]vile."

15 Behold, on the mountains
The [s]feet of him who brings good tidings,
Who proclaims peace!
O Judah, keep your appointed feasts,
Perform your vows.
For the wicked one shall no more pass through you;
He is [t]utterly cut off.

The Destruction of Nineveh

2 He who scatters* has come up before your face.
Man the fort!
Watch the road!
Strengthen *your* flanks!
Fortify *your* power mightily.

2 For the LORD will restore the excellence of Jacob
Like the excellence of Israel,
For the emptiers have emptied them out
And ruined their vine branches.

3 The shields of his mighty men *are* made red,
The valiant men *are* in scarlet.
The chariots *come* with flaming torches
In the day of his preparation,
And the spears are brandished.*
4 The chariots rage in the streets,
They jostle one another in the broad roads;
They seem like torches,
They run like lightning.

5 He remembers his nobles;
They stumble in their walk;
They make haste to her walls,
And the defense is prepared.
6 The gates of the rivers are opened,
And the palace is dissolved.
7 It is decreed:*
She shall be led away captive,
She shall be brought up;
And her maidservants shall lead *her* as with the voice of doves,
Beating their breasts.

8 Though Nineveh of old *was* like a pool of water,
Now they flee away.
"Halt! Halt!" *they cry;*
But no one turns back.
9 Take spoil of silver!
Take spoil of [q]gold!
There is no end of treasure,
Or wealth of every desirable prize.
10 She is empty, desolate, and waste!
The heart melts, and the knees shake;
Much pain *is* in every side,
And all their faces are drained of color.*

11 Where *is* the dwelling of the [b]lions,
And the feeding place of the young lions,
Where the lion walked, the lioness *and* lion's cub,
And no one made *them* afraid?

* **2:1** Vulgate reads *He who destroys.* * **2:3** Literally *the cypresses are shaken;* Septuagint and Syriac read *the horses rush about;* Vulgate reads *the drivers are stupefied.* * **2:7** Hebrew *Huzzab*
* **2:10** Compare Joel 2:6

word. The term speaks of someone who is utterly worthless.

1:14 *you are vile.* The only thing to be done with Nineveh was to dig a grave and bury it. The prophecy came true literally—the city was destroyed so completely that its very existence was questioned until its discovery by archaeologists in the nineteenth century (3:13–15).

2:1 *Man the fort.* These were sarcastic words to the people of Nineveh and its leaders, as if they would be able to protect themselves against the wrath of the Lord.

2:3 *red . . . scarlet . . . flaming torches.* These images speak of blood, violence, and warfare. Isaiah refers to the custom of the Assyrians of rolling their outer garments in blood before a battle (Is. 9:5) to strike terror in the hearts of their opponents. Here the tables would be turned. While others would have shields, chariots, and spears, the people of Nineveh would be bathed in blood—their own blood.

2:4 *The chariots rage.* The Assyrians used chariots as formidable war machines. The proficiency of the chariot drivers underlies the imagery of this verse. But, as in the case of the shields and spears of verse 3, the chariots of Nineveh would not prevail, no matter how fast they drove.

2:6 *gates of the rivers.* The destruction of Nineveh is believed to have taken place when the besiegers entered the city through its flooded waterways. The attack came at flood time, when rivers undermined the walls and defenses of the city. Archaeologists have found evidence of flood debris that may be associated with the destruction of the city. Thus, the words of Nahum were fulfilled exactly.

2:11–12 *dwelling of the lions.* Nineveh was the city of lions (v. 13). Yet, despite all the horrors that the lion of Nineveh had brought to other nations, it would no longer need to be feared by anyone. Although the Babylonians conquered the city, they were only God's instruments. Nineveh's greatest foe was God Himself.

1:14 [q] Ezek. 32:22, 23 [r] Nah. 3:6 **1:15** [s] Rom. 10:15 [t] Is. 29:7, 8 **2:9** [q] Zeph. 1:18 **2:11** [b] Job 4:10, 11

12 The lion tore in pieces enough for his
cubs,
Killed for his lionesses,
[c]Filled his caves with prey,
And his dens with flesh.

13 "Behold, [d]I *am* against you," says the
LORD of hosts, "I will burn your* chariots
in smoke, and the sword shall devour your
young lions; I will cut off your prey from
the earth, and the voice of your [e]messen-
gers shall be heard no more."

The Woe of Nineveh

3 Woe to the [a]bloody city!
It *is* all full of lies *and* robbery.
Its victim never departs.
2 The noise of a whip
And the noise of rattling wheels,
Of galloping horses,
Of clattering chariots!
3 Horsemen charge with bright sword
and glittering spear.
There is a multitude of slain,
A great number of bodies,
Countless corpses—
They stumble over the corpses—
4 Because of the multitude of harlotries
of the seductive harlot,
[b]The mistress of sorceries,
Who sells nations through her
harlotries,
And families through her
sorceries.

5 "Behold, I *am* [c]against you," says the
LORD of hosts;
[d]"I will lift your skirts over your face,
I will show the nations your
nakedness,
And the kingdoms your shame.
6 I will cast abominable filth upon you,
Make you [e]vile,
And make you [f]a spectacle.
7 It shall come to pass *that* all who look
upon you
[g]Will flee from you, and say,
[h]'Nineveh is laid waste!
[i]Who will bemoan her?'
Where shall I seek comforters for
you?"

8 [j]Are you better than [k]No Amon*
That was situated by the River,*
That had the waters around her,
Whose rampart *was* the sea,
Whose wall *was* the sea?
9 Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her
strength,
And *it was* boundless;
[l]Put and Lubim were your* helpers.
10 Yet she *was* carried away,
She went into captivity;
[m]Her young children also were dashed
to pieces
[n]At the head of every street;
They [o]cast lots for her honorable men,
And all her great men were bound in
chains.
11 You also will be [p]drunk;
You will be hidden;
You also will seek refuge from the
enemy.

12 All your strongholds *are* [q]fig trees
with ripened figs:
If they are shaken,
They fall into the mouth of the eater.
13 Surely, [r]your people in your midst *are*
women!
The gates of your land are wide open
for your enemies;
Fire shall devour the [s]bars of your
gates.

14 Draw your water for the siege!
[t]Fortify your strongholds!
Go into the clay and tread the mortar!
Make strong the brick kiln!
15 There the fire will devour you,
The sword will cut you off;
It will eat you up like a [u]locust.

Make yourself many—like the locust!
Make yourself many—like the
swarming locusts!
16 You have multiplied your [v]merchants
more than the stars of heaven.
The locust plunders and flies away.

*2:13 Literally *her* *3:8 That is, ancient Thebes; Targum and Vulgate read *populous Alexandria.* • Literally *rivers*, that is, the Nile and the surrounding canals *3:9 Septuagint reads *her.*

3:4 *harlotries.* Any worship of gods other than the God of Scriptures is an act of spiritual prostitution. Nineveh was so adept at pagan practices that the city earned the descriptive title, "the mistress of witchcrafts."

3:6–7 *I will cast abominable filth upon you.* The Lord described the fate of Nineveh as comparable to a person on whom unspeakable filth was thrown. When Nineveh lay in ruins, no one would grieve for her. The nations would be glad that the city was gone.

3:8 *No Amon.* This is the Hebrew name for Thebes, derived from the Egyptian name meaning "city of the god Amon." The argument seems to suggest that, before its destruction, no one would have even dreamed of the fall of Thebes. But the destruction had happened—not long before the writing of the Book of Nahum. The city of Thebes was rebuilt only to be destroyed later during the Roman period (29 B.C.). Nineveh, however, would never be rebuilt.

3:11 *drunk . . . hidden . . . seek refuge.* Nineveh would be like a helpless drunk hoping for strength but finding nowhere to turn for it.

3:16–17 *When the sun rises.* The people of Nineveh would be like nocturnal insects that disappear at daylight.

2:12 [c] Jer. 51:34 **2:13** [d] Nah. 3:5 [e] 2 Kin. 18:17–25; 19:9–13, 23 **3:1** [a] Hab. 2:12 **3:4** [b] Is. 47:9–12 **3:5** [c] Nah. 2:13 [d] Is. 47:2, 3 **3:6** [e] Nah. 1:14 [f] Heb. 10:33 **3:7** [g] Rev. 18:10 [h] Jon. 3:3; 4:11 [i] Jer. 15:5 **3:8** [j] Amos 6:2 [k] Jer. 46:25 **3:9** [l] Ezek. 27:10 **3:10** [m] Hos. 13:16 [n] Lam. 2:19 [o] Joel 3:3 **3:11** [p] Nah. 1:10 **3:12** [q] Rev. 6:12, 13 **3:13** [r] Is. 19:16 [s] Jer. 51:30 **3:14** [t] Nah. 2:1 **3:15** [u] Joel 1:4 **3:16** [v] Rev. 18:3, 11–19

17 [w]Your commanders *are* like *swarming* locusts,
And your generals like great grasshoppers,
Which camp in the hedges on a cold day;
When the sun rises they flee away,
And the place where they *are* is not known.

18 [x]Your shepherds slumber, O [y]king of Assyria;
Your nobles rest *in the dust.*
Your people are [z]scattered on the mountains,
And no one gathers them.

19 Your injury *has* no healing,
[a]Your wound is severe.
[b]All who hear news of you
Will clap *their* hands over you,
For upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?

3:19 ***All who hear.*** Every nation and people that had suffered under the abusive power of Nineveh would shout and clap upon hearing of the city's destruction. There would be no mourning for Nineveh.

3:17 [w] Rev. 9:7 **3:18** [x] Ps. 76:5, 6 [y] Jer. 50:18 [z] 1 Kin. 22:17 **3:19** [a] Mic. 1:9 [b] Lam. 2:15

THE BOOK OF
HABAKKUK

▶ **AUTHOR:** In both the introduction to the book (1:1) and the closing psalm (3:1) the author identifies himself as Habakkuk the prophet. It is believed that he might have been a priest as he mentions in the closing psalm, "To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments" (3:19). Also, in the apocryphal book of Bel and the Dragon, Daniel is rescued a second time by the prophet Habakkuk.

▶ **TIME:** c. 607 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Hab. 2:4

▶ **THEME:** This whole book of Habakkuk is really devoted to the question of "Lord, if You are all powerful, why is evil allowed to exist?" The events that seem to be precipitating this question are the victories of Babylon. God was using Babylon, a nation without God, to punish Israel, God's own people. The answers God gives us to this question in Habakkuk solidly point us in one direction, but ultimately the answers are in faith in Him alone.

1 The burden* which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

The Prophet's Question

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry,
[a]And You will not hear?
Even cry out to You, [b]"Violence!"
And You will [c]not save.
3 Why do You show me iniquity,
And cause *me* to see trouble?
For plundering and violence *are* before me;
There is strife, and contention arises.
4 Therefore the law is powerless,
And justice never goes forth.
For the [d]wicked surround the righteous;
Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

The LORD's Reply

5 "Look[e] among the nations and watch—
Be utterly astounded!
For *I will* work a work in your days
Which you would not believe, though it were told *you*.
6 For indeed I am [f]raising up the Chaldeans,
A bitter and hasty [g]nation
Which marches through the breadth of the earth,
To possess dwelling places *that are* not theirs.
7 They are terrible and dreadful;
Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves.
8 Their horses also are [h]swifter than leopards,
And more fierce than evening wolves.
Their chargers charge ahead;
Their cavalry comes from afar;
They fly as the [i]eagle *that* hastens to eat.
9 "They all come for violence;
Their faces are set *like* the east wind.
They gather captives like sand.
10 They scoff at kings,
And princes are scorned by them.
They deride every stronghold,
For they heap up earthen *mounds* and seize it.
11 Then *his* mind* changes, and he transgresses;
He commits offense,
[j]*Ascribing* this power to his god."

* **1:1** Or *oracle* * **1:11** Literally *spirit* or *wind*

1:2 ***O LORD, how long.*** This question is phrased as a formal complaint (Ps. 13:1–2).
1:4 ***the law is powerless.*** The revelation of God given at Mount Sinai had little impact on the hearts of people whose lives were focused on material success. These people had little interest in living by God's definition of what is fair and humane. ***wicked.*** God's chosen people committed and tolerated heinous acts through the corruption of the courts.
1:5 ***Look among the nations.*** The international scene during Habakkuk's lifetime was full of turmoil, with Assyria on the decline and Babylonia on the rise.
1:6 ***I am raising up.*** God controls the nations for His own purposes (Dan. 2:21), sometimes indirectly and at other times directly.
1:7 ***terrible and dreadful.*** Far from being humane, the Babylonians prided themselves on their arrogant use of raw power.
1:9 ***They gather captives like sand.*** The Babylonians

1:2 [a] Lam. 3:8 [b] Mic. 2:1, 2; 3:1–3 [c] [Job 21:5–16]
1:4 [d] Jer. 12:1 **1:5** [e] Is. 29:14 **1:6** [f] 2 Kin. 24:2 [g] Ezek. 7:24; 21:31 **1:8** [h] Jer. 4:13 [i] Hos. 8:1 **1:11** [j] Dan. 5:4

The Prophet's Second Question

12 Are You not [k]from everlasting,
O LORD my God, my Holy One?
We shall not die.
O LORD, [l]You have appointed them for judgment;
O Rock, You have marked them for [m]correction.
13 *You are* of purer eyes than to behold evil,
And cannot look on wickedness.
Why do You look on those who deal treacherously,
And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours
A *person* more righteous than he?
14 *Why* do You make men like fish of the sea,
Like creeping things *that have* no ruler over them?
15 They take up all of them with a hook,
They catch them in their net,
And gather them in their dragnet.
Therefore they rejoice and are glad.
16 Therefore [n]they sacrifice to their net,
And burn incense to their dragnet;
Because by them their share *is* sumptuous
And their food plentiful.
17 Shall they therefore empty their net,
And continue to slay nations without pity?

2 I will [a]stand my watch
And set myself on the rampart,
And watch to see what He will say to me,
And what I will answer when I am corrected.

The Just Live by Faith

2 Then the LORD answered me and said:

[b]"Write the vision
And make *it* plain on tablets,
That he may run who reads it.
3 For [c]the vision *is* yet for an appointed time;
But at the end it will speak, and it will [d]not lie.
Though it tarries, [e]wait for it;
Because it will [f]surely come,
It will not tarry.
4 "Behold the proud,
His soul is not upright in him;
But the [g]just shall live by his faith.

Woe to the Wicked

5 "Indeed, because he transgresses by wine,
He is a proud man,
And he does not stay at home.
Because he [h]enlarges his desire as hell,*
And he *is* like death, and cannot be satisfied,
He gathers to himself all nations
And heaps up for himself all peoples.
6 "Will not all these [i]take up a proverb against him,
And a taunting riddle against him, and say,
'Woe to him who increases
What is not his—how long?
And to him who loads himself with many pledges'?*
7 Will not your creditors* rise up suddenly?
Will they not awaken who oppress you?
And you will become their booty.
8 [j]Because you have plundered many nations,
All the remnant of the people shall plunder you,
Because of men's blood
And the violence of the land *and* the city,
And of all who dwell in it.

* **2:5** Or *Sheol* * **2:6** Syriac and Vulgate read *thick clay.* * **2:7** Literally *those who bite you*

resettled numerous conquered peoples with little regard for them as individuals.

1:12 ***Are You not from everlasting.*** Habakkuk's point seems to be that God's holiness should have prohibited Him from using a dirty instrument such as Babylon to accomplish His purposes in judging and reproving His own people.

1:16 ***they sacrifice to their net.*** This phrase speaks of the contemptuous pride of the Babylonians in their devices of destruction.

2:1 ***I will stand . . . on the rampart.*** Habakkuk stationed himself as a watchman to look at the nations, as God had commanded him. ***what He will say to me.*** Habakkuk's faith is seen in his anticipation of a response from God. ***when I am corrected.*** This phrase indicates the prophet's submission to God.

2:3 ***an appointed time.*** This speaks of a determined time in God's eyes. ***Though it tarries, wait for it.*** God knows His plan and the outworking of all things in accordance with His purposes. The godly are responsible to study and proclaim His revelation while awaiting its fulfillment. ***it will surely come.*** The fulfillment of the vision would not take any longer than God had planned.

2:4 ***the just shall live by his faith.*** True righteousness before God is linked to genuine faith in God. A proud person relies on self, power, position, and accomplishment; a righteous person relies on the Lord.

2:5 ***all nations . . . all peoples.*** These peoples of the earth should have been gathered together before the Lord in holy worship (Ps. 117:1); instead, they became morsels for the rapacious appetite of Babylon.

2:6 ***Woe to him.*** A woe is an oracle of judgment consisting of two parts: a declaration of the wrong and a notice of impending judgment. The judgment usually applies the principle of the law of retribution.

2:7 ***creditors.*** This Hebrew term has the idea of "those who bite," suggesting sudden attacks (Mic. 3:5).

1:12 [k] Ps. 90:2; 93:2 [l] Is. 10:5–7 [m] Jer. 25:9 **1:16** [n] Deut. 8:17 **2:1** [a] Is. 21:8, 11 **2:2** [b] Is. 8:1 **2:3** [c] Dan. 8:17, 19; 10:14 [d] Ezek. 12:24, 25 [e] [Heb. 10:37, 38] [f] [2 Pet. 3:9] **2:4** [g] [John 3:36]; Rom. 1:17 **2:5** [h] Is. 5:11–15 **2:6** [i] Mic. 2:4 **2:8** [j] Is. 33:1

9 "Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house,
That he may [k]set his nest on high,
That he may be delivered from the power of disaster!
10 You give shameful counsel to your house,
Cutting off many peoples,
And sin *against* your soul.
11 For the stone will cry out from the wall,
And the beam from the timbers will answer it.

12 "Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed,
Who establishes a city by iniquity!
13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts
That the peoples labor to feed the fire,*
And nations weary themselves in vain?
14 For the earth will be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea.

15 "Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor,
Pressing* *him to* your [l]bottle,
Even to make *him* drunk,
That you may look on his nakedness!
16 You are filled with shame instead of glory.
You also—drink!
And be exposed as uncircumcised!*
The cup of the LORD's right hand *will be* turned against you,
And utter shame will be on your glory.
17 For the violence *done to* Lebanon will cover you,
And the plunder of beasts *which* made them afraid,
Because of men's blood
And the violence of the land *and* the city,
And of all who dwell in it.

18 "What profit is the image, that its maker should carve it,
The molded image, a teacher of lies,
That the maker of its mold should trust in it,
To make mute idols?

19 Woe to him who says to wood, 'Awake!'
To silent stone, 'Arise! It shall teach!'
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
Yet in it there is no breath at all.

20 "But[m] the LORD is in His holy temple.
Let all the earth keep silence before Him."

The Prophet's Prayer

3 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth.*

2 O LORD, I have heard Your speech *and* was afraid;
O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years!
In the midst of the years make *it* known;
In wrath remember mercy.

3 God came from Teman,
The Holy One from Mount Paran.
Selah

His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of His praise.
4 *His* brightness was like the light;
He had rays *flashing* from His hand,
And there His power *was* hidden.
5 Before Him went pestilence,
And fever followed at His feet.

6 He stood and measured the earth;
He looked and startled the nations.
[a]And the everlasting mountains were scattered,
The perpetual hills bowed.
His ways *are* everlasting.
7 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction;
The curtains of the land of Midian trembled.

* **2:13** Literally *for what satisfies fire*, that is, for what is of no lasting value * **2:15** Literally *Attaching* or *Joining* * **2:16** Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint read *And reel!*; Syriac and Vulgate read *And fall fast asleep!* * **3:1** Exact meaning unknown

2:11 ***the stone will cry out . . . the beam from the timbers will answer it.*** The whole structure of Israel's society called out for justice; every part reverberated with the need for righting wrongs.
2:14 ***the glory of the LORD.*** This speaks to the full manifestation of His person, significance, presence, and wonder. The true knowledge of God in the time of His kingdom on earth will be like the waters—all-embracing, inescapable, and fully enveloping.
2:16 ***The cup of the LORD's right hand.*** This represents the wrath of God (Is. 51:17,22; Rev. 14:10; 16:19).
2:18 ***teacher of lies.*** Idolatry begins with deception, encourages deception, and calls for a commitment to deception (Is. 44:20).
2:20 ***keep silence before Him.*** The call to silence is not an invitation to worship, but a command to reflect on the terrible state of all who fall into the hands of the angry God (Zeph. 1:7).
3:2 ***I have heard.*** Habakkuk knew the stories of God's mighty acts as celebrated in song and in the feasts and festivals of Israel. These mighty acts included the exodus from Egypt, the miracles by the Red Sea, and the conquest of the land. ***revive . . . make it known.*** Habakkuk prayed for God's renewed involvement in Israel. ***in the midst of the years.*** This was a way of calling for a quick response.
3:4 ***His power was hidden.*** God reveals evidence of His power, but its totality and greatness remain hidden.

2:9 [k] Obad. 4 **2:15** [l] Hos. 7:5 **2:20** [m] Zeph. 1:7
3:6 [a] Nah. 1:5

8 O LORD, were *You* displeased with the rivers,
Was Your anger against the rivers,
Was Your wrath against the sea,
That You rode on Your horses,
Your chariots of salvation?
9 Your bow was made quite ready;
Oaths were sworn over *Your* arrows.* *Selah*

You divided the earth with rivers.
10 The mountains saw You *and* trembled;
The overflowing of the water passed by.
The deep uttered its voice,
And [b]lifted its hands on high.
11 The [c]sun and moon stood still in their habitation;
At the light of Your arrows they went,
At the shining of Your glittering spear.

12 You marched through the land in indignation;
You trampled the nations in anger.
13 You went forth for the salvation of Your people,
For salvation with Your Anointed.
You struck the head from the house of the wicked,
By laying bare from foundation to neck. *Selah*

14 You thrust through with his own arrows
The head of his villages.
They came out like a whirlwind to scatter me;
Their rejoicing was like feasting on the poor in secret.
15 [d]You walked through the sea with Your horses,
Through the heap of great waters.

16 When I heard, [e]my body trembled;
My lips quivered at *the* voice;
Rottenness entered my bones;
And I trembled in myself,
That I might rest in the day of trouble.
When he comes up to the people,
He will invade them with his troops.

A Hymn of Faith

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls—
18 Yet I will [f]rejoice in the LORD,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.

19 The LORD God* is my strength;
He will make my feet like [g]deer's *feet*,
And He will make me [h]walk on my high hills.

To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.

* **3:9** Literally *rods* or *tribes* (compare verse 14)
* **3:19** Hebrew *YHWH Adonai*

3:8 ***rivers . . . sea.*** The Lord had divided the Red Sea and the Jordan River for His people to cross (Ex. 14:26—15:5; Josh. 3:14–17). ***chariots of salvation.*** The appearance of the Lord was for the purpose of bringing deliverance to His people.
3:16 ***I might rest in the day of trouble.*** The prophet encouraged the godly not to be anxious in adversity.
3:17 God and Politics—Living in this physical, time-bound reality we see only a small portion of what God created. It is the bigger part of creation we need to be aware of and try to understand. We ultimately live beyond what we see and feel now. Life, as currently defined, is only that proverbial shadow of what it shall be. Our struggle is to have the vision to see beyond.

The same can be said for the political realities Habakkuk complains about. A season of failing crops isn't that much different than living a few years under the rule of an incompetent or cruel despot. It is tough and life can be severely affected, but the ultimate realities of how the world functions and how God relates to it remain unchanged.

God is a just God and will bring about justice. A period of injustice does not imply God has lost sight of what is going on or that He is losing His grip on the events of the world. He has different immediate purposes or works in a completely different timeframe.

Despots usually don't last more than a generation. We had many in recent times and most are gone, along with their whole empires.
3:19 ***my strength.*** God will strengthen those who trust in Him (Ps. 18:32,39). He will give those who live by faith the same confidence that a sure-footed deer has in climbing mountains.

3:10 [b] Ex. 14:22 **3:11** [c] Josh. 10:12–14 **3:15** [d] Ps. 77:19 **3:16** [e] Ps. 119:120 **3:18** [f] Is. 41:16; 61:10 **3:19** [g] 2 Sam. 22:34 [h] Deut. 32:13; 33:29

THE BOOK OF
ZEPHANIAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** In the beginning of the book, Zephaniah traces his lineage back four generations to the godly King Hezekiah. This would make him the only prophet of royal descent. His use of the phrase "this place" in reference to Jerusalem indicates that he was probably an inhabitant of Judah's royal city.

▶ **TIME:** c. 630 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Zeph. 1:14–15

▶ **THEME:** Contemporary with Jeremiah, Zephaniah was written during the reign of Josiah, one of the good kings of Judah. The book follows a fairly familiar pattern for the prophets. Judgment is pronounced on Judah as well as several surrounding nations. After the judgment of the first two chapters, the third declares a restoration process that sounds strongly encouraging.

1 The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of [a]Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

The Great Day of the LORD

2 "I will utterly consume everything
From the face of the land,"
Says the LORD;
3 "I[b] will consume man and beast;
I will consume the birds of the heavens,
The fish of the sea,
And the stumbling blocks* along with the wicked.
I will cut off man from the face of the land,"
Says the LORD.

4 "I will stretch out My hand against Judah,
And against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
I will cut off every trace of Baal from this place,
The names of the [c]idolatrous priests* with the *pagan* priests—
5 Those [d]who worship the host of heaven on the housetops;
Those who worship and swear *oaths* by the LORD,
But who *also* swear [e]by Milcom;*
6 [f]Those who have turned back from *following* the LORD,
And [g]have not sought the LORD, nor inquired of Him."

7 [h]Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD;
[i]For the day of the LORD *is* at hand,
For [j]the LORD has prepared a sacrifice;
He has invited* His guests.

8 "And it shall be,
In the day of the LORD's sacrifice,
That I will punish [k]the princes and the king's children,
And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.

* **1:3** Figurative of idols * **1:4** Hebrew *chemarim*
* **1:5** Or *Malcam*, an Ammonite god, also called *Molech* (compare Leviticus 18:21) * **1:7** Literally *set apart, consecrated*

1:1 ***Zephaniah*** means "hidden in the Lord," a name that relates to the principal message the prophet presented (2:3). The names of the prophets were often significantly associated with the message that God gave them to present to the people.

1:2–3 ***I will utterly consume everything.*** The message of Zephaniah begins with a pronouncement of universal judgment (Gen. 6–8). These words not only introduce the particular judgment that would be pronounced upon Judah (v. 4), but they also speak of the final judgment that will usher in the kingdom of God on earth (Rev. 20:11–15).

1:4–6 ***I will cut off every trace of Baal.*** Baal worship and its evils had led to the destruction of Israel and its capital Samaria in 722 B.C. Likewise Baal worship and its associations would lead to the destruction of Judah and its capital Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

1:7 ***Be silent.*** This prophetic call for silence was for solemn preparation for the horror of divine wrath (Hab. 2:20; Zech. 2:13). ***sacrifice.*** The people of God were expected to prepare sacrifices for the Lord as acts of contrition and celebration. But rebels, scofflaws, idolaters, and apostates would themselves become God's sacrifice.

1:8–9 ***foreign apparel.*** This suggests two things:

1:1 [a] 2 Kin. 22:1, 2 **1:3** [b] Hos. 4:3 **1:4** [c] Hos. 10:5
1:5 [d] 2 Kin. 23:12 [e] Josh. 23:7 **1:6** [f] Is. 1:4 [g] Hos. 7:7
1:7 [h] Zech. 2:13 [i] Is. 13:6 [j] Jer. 46:10 **1:8** [k] Jer. 39:6

9 In the same day I will punish
All those who [l]leap over the threshold,*
Who fill their masters' houses with
violence and deceit.

10 "And there shall be on that day," says
the LORD,
"The sound of a mournful cry from
[m]the Fish Gate,
A wailing from the Second Quarter,
And a loud crashing from the hills.
11 [n]Wail, you inhabitants of Maktesh!*
For all the merchant people are cut down;
All those who handle money are cut off.

12 "And it shall come to pass at that time
That I will search Jerusalem with
lamps,
And punish the men
Who are [o]settled in complacency,*
[p]Who say in their heart,
'The LORD will not do good,
Nor will He do evil.'
13 Therefore their goods shall become booty,
And their houses a desolation;
They shall build houses, but not
inhabit *them;*
They shall plant vineyards, but [q]not
drink their wine."

14 [r]The great day of the LORD *is* near;
It is near and hastens quickly.
The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter;
There the mighty men shall cry out.
15 [s]That day *is* a day of wrath,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of devastation and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 A day of [t]trumpet and alarm
Against the fortified cities
And against the high towers.

17 "I will bring distress upon men,
And they shall [u]walk like blind men,
Because they have sinned against the
LORD;
Their blood shall be poured out like
dust,
And their flesh like refuse."

18 [v]Neither their silver nor their gold
Shall be able to deliver them
In the day of the LORD's wrath;
But the whole land shall be devoured
By the fire of His jealousy,
For He will make speedy riddance
Of all those who dwell in the land.

A Call to Repentance

2 Gather[a] yourselves together, yes,
gather together,
O undesirable* nation,
2 Before the decree is issued,
Or the day passes like chaff,
Before the LORD's fierce anger comes
upon you,
Before the day of the LORD's anger
comes upon you!
3 [b]Seek the LORD, [c]all you meek of the
earth,
Who have upheld His justice.
Seek righteousness, seek humility.
[d]It may be that you will be hidden
In the day of the LORD's anger.

Judgment on Nations

4 For [e]Gaza shall be forsaken,
And Ashkelon desolate;
They shall drive out Ashdod [f]at
noonday,
And Ekron shall be uprooted.
5 Woe to the inhabitants of [g]the seacoast,
The nation of the Cherethites!
The word of the LORD *is* against you,
O [h]Canaan, land of the Philistines:
"I will destroy you;
So there shall be no inhabitant."

6 The seacoast shall be pastures,
With shelters* for shepherds [i]and folds
for flocks.
7 The coast shall be for [j]the remnant of
the house of Judah;
They shall feed *their* flocks there;

* **1:9** Compare 1 Samuel 5:5 * **1:11** Literally *Mortar,* a market district of Jerusalem * **1:12** Literally *on their lees,* that is, settled like the dregs of wine * **2:1** Or *shameless* * **2:6** Literally *excavations,* either underground huts or cisterns

(1) acts of greed and extortion against the populace, amassing funds for exotic clothing; and (2) participation in foreign religious rites associated with exotic clothing. ***leap over the threshold.*** This may refer to a pagan practice like the one mentioned in 1 Samuel 5:5. The priests of Dagon would not step on the doorway of the temple to Dagon because the hands and the head of Dagon had fallen there.

1:12–13 ***The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil.*** The complacency of the wicked people led them to believe that God is similarly complacent. Foolishly these people believed that the Lord would be inactive, neither blessing nor cursing, neither benefiting nor punishing His people.

1:17–18 ***like blind men.*** God's judgment would be so sudden and so overwhelming that the survivors would be in a state of shock, stumbling around in the dark.

2:1–3 ***you will be hidden.*** Zephaniah used a play on words with the meaning of his own name, "hidden in the Lord." Even in the midst of the most calamitous of judgment scenes, the mercy and grace of the Lord is still available to a repentant people.

2:4–5 ***Gaza . . . Ashkelon . . . Ashdod . . . Ekron.*** The focus of the book moves from the description of divine judgment on Judah and Jerusalem to a description of divine judgment on the surrounding nations. The judgment begins with the nation to the west, Philistia and its major cities.

1:9 [l] 1 Sam. 5:5 **1:10** [m] 2 Chr. 33:14 **1:11** [n] James 5:1 **1:12** [o] Jer. 48:11 [p] Ps. 94:7 **1:13** [q] Deut. 28:39 **1:14** [r] Joel 2:1, 11 **1:15** [s] Is. 22:5 **1:16** [t] Jer. 4:19 **1:17** [u] Deut. 28:29 **1:18** [v] Ezek. 7:19 **2:1** [a] Joel 1:14; 2:16 **2:3** [b] Amos 5:6 [c] Ps. 76:9 [d] Amos 5:14, 15 **2:4** [e] Zech. 9:5 [f] Jer. 6:4 **2:5** [g] Ezek. 25:15–17 [h] Josh. 13:3 **2:6** [i] Is. 17:2 **2:7** [j] [Mic. 5:7, 8]

In the houses of Ashkelon they shall
lie down at evening.
For the LORD their God will [k]intervene
for them,
And [l]return their captives.

8 "I[m] have heard the reproach of Moab,
And [n]the insults of the people of Ammon,
With which they have reproached My
people,
And [o]made arrogant threats against
their borders.
9 Therefore, as I live,"
Says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,
"Surely [p]Moab shall be like Sodom,
And [q]the people of Ammon like
Gomorrah—
[r]Overrun with weeds and saltpits,
And a perpetual desolation.
The residue of My people shall plunder
them,
And the remnant of My people shall
possess them."

10 This they shall have [s]for their pride,
Because they have reproached and
made arrogant threats
Against the people of the LORD of hosts.
11 The LORD *will be* awesome to them,
For He will reduce to nothing all the
gods of the earth;
[t]*People* shall worship Him,
Each one from his place,
Indeed all [u]the shores of the nations.

12 "You[v] Ethiopians also,
You shall be slain by [w]My sword."

13 And He will stretch out His hand
against the north,
[x]Destroy Assyria,
And make Nineveh a desolation,
As dry as the wilderness.
14 The herds shall lie down in her midst,
[y]Every beast of the nation.
Both the [z]pelican and the bittern
Shall lodge on the capitals *of* her *pillars;*
Their voice shall sing in the windows;
Desolation *shall be* at the threshold;
For He will lay bare the [a]cedar work.
15 This is the rejoicing city
[b]That dwelt securely,
[c]That said in her heart,
"I *am it,* and *there is* none besides me."
How has she become a desolation,
A place for beasts to lie down!
Everyone who passes by her
[d]Shall hiss and [e]shake his fist.

The Wickedness of Jerusalem

3 Woe to her who is rebellious and
polluted,
To the oppressing city!
2 She has not obeyed *His* voice,
She has not received correction;
She has not trusted in the LORD,
She has not drawn near to her God.

3 [a]Her princes in her midst *are* roaring lions;
Her judges *are* [b]evening wolves
That leave not a bone till morning.
4 Her [c]prophets are insolent,
treacherous people;
Her priests have polluted the sanctuary,
They have done [d]violence to the law.
5 The LORD *is* righteous in her midst,
He will do no unrighteousness.
Every morning He brings His justice
to light;
He never fails,
But [e]the unjust knows no shame.

6 "I have cut off nations,
Their fortresses are devastated;
I have made their streets desolate,
With none passing by.
Their cities are destroyed;
There is no one, no inhabitant.
7 [f]I said, 'Surely you will fear Me,
You will receive instruction'—
So that her dwelling would not be cut
off,
Despite everything for which I
punished her.
But they rose early and [g]corrupted all
their deeds.

A Faithful Remnant

8 "Therefore [h]wait for Me," says the LORD,
"Until the day I rise up for plunder;*

* **3:8** Septuagint and Syriac read *for witness;* Targum reads *for the day of My revelation for judgment;* Vulgate reads *for the day of My resurrection that is to come.*

2:11 ***The LORD will be awesome to them.*** There may be a double meaning in these words. For the righteous people of Judah and Jerusalem, there would be a response of awe and wonder before God, who had responded to the prayer of His servant. But for the wicked there would be quite another response, one of terror and dread. ***all the shores of the nations.*** Not only would there be a righteous remnant in Judah, there would also be people coming to God from the nations of the earth.

2:13–15 ***Their voice shall sing in the windows.*** The presence of birds in the ruins of Nineveh attests to the severity of the destruction announced on these people. ***the rejoicing city.*** The rejoicing here is ironic, seen as an act of the city's complacency. Soon the judgment of God would descend suddenly, and the region would be useful only for herding animals.

3:3–4 ***princes . . . judges . . . prophets . . . priests.*** God had designated these people to work for righteousness, but they were more wicked than the "regular" citizens of Jerusalem. These leaders were destroying and defrauding the weak, the needy, and the helpless.

3:8 ***All My fierce anger.*** God's response to the wickedness of Jerusalem was to declare His judgment.

2:7 [k] Luke 1:68 [l] Jer. 29:14 **2:8** [m] Jer. 48:27 [n] Ezek. 25:3 [o] Jer. 49:1 **2:9** [p] Is. 15:1–9 [q] Amos 1:13 [r] Deut. 29:23 **2:10** [s] Is. 16:6 **2:11** [t] Mal. 1:11 [u] Gen. 10:5 **2:12** [v] Is. 18:1–7 [w] Ps. 17:13 **2:13** [x] Is. 10:5–27; 14:24–27 **2:14** [y] Is. 13:21 [z] Is. 14:23; 34:11 [a] Jer. 22:14 **2:15** [b] Is. 47:8 [c] Rev. 18:7 [d] Lam. 2:15 [e] Nah. 3:19 **3:3** [a] Ezek. 22:27 [b] Hab. 1:8 **3:4** [c] Hos. 9:7 [d] Ezek. 22:26 **3:5** [e] Jer. 3:3 **3:7** [f] Jer. 8:6 [g] Gen. 6:12 **3:8** [h] Hab. 2:3

My determination *is* to [i]gather the nations
To My assembly of kingdoms,
To pour on them My indignation,
All My fierce anger;
All the earth [j]shall be devoured
With the fire of My jealousy.

9 "For then I will restore to the peoples [k]a pure language,
That they all may call on the name of the LORD,
To serve Him with one accord.
10 [l]From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia
My worshipers,
The daughter of My dispersed ones,
Shall bring My offering.
11 In that day you shall not be shamed for any of your deeds
In which you transgress against Me;
For then I will take away from your midst
Those who [m]rejoice in your pride,
And you shall no longer be haughty
In My holy mountain.
12 I will leave in your midst
[n]A meek and humble people,
And they shall trust in the name of the LORD.
13 [o]The remnant of Israel [p]shall do no unrighteousness
[q]And speak no lies,
Nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;
For [r]they shall feed *their* flocks and lie down,
And no one shall make *them* afraid."

Joy in God's Faithfulness

14 [s]Sing, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all *your* heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!
15 The LORD has taken away your judgments,
He has cast out your enemy.
[t]The King of Israel, the LORD, [u]*is* in your midst;
You shall see* disaster no more.

16 In that day [v]it shall be said to Jerusalem:
"Do not fear;
Zion, [w]let not your hands be weak.
17 The LORD your God [x]in your midst,
The Mighty One, will save;
[y]He will rejoice over you with gladness,
He will quiet *you* with His love,
He will rejoice over you with singing."

18 "I will gather those who [z]sorrow over the appointed assembly,
Who are among you,
To whom its reproach *is* a burden.
19 Behold, at that time
I will deal with all who afflict you;
I will save the [a]lame,
And gather those who were driven out;
I will appoint them for praise and fame
In every land where they were put to shame.
20 At that time [b]I will bring you back,
Even at the time I gather you;
For I will give you fame and praise
Among all the peoples of the earth,
When I return your captives before your eyes,"
Says the LORD.

* **3:15** Some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, and Bomberg read *see;* Masoretic Text and Vulgate read *fear.*

He would use other nations to punish the city for its rebellion.

3:8 God's Purpose in Judgment—What we don't properly understand is that judgment should lead us to a restoration or improvement in a relationship. We live with the tension of knowing God's judgment hangs over us while at the same time knowing that forgiveness is readily available to us too. Such is the message of Zephaniah.

Judgment implies a necessary purification process. You can't get the impurities out without first identifying their presence. We want to think of ourselves as pure without going through any process of purification. We want grace without judgment, but it doesn't work that way. Judgment reflects the true state of our being, namely that we are sinful and in need of grace. Often the only way to understand our reality is to go through a judgment process.

Once the judgment is accepted and the proper response is made, we fully experience God's grace. He deals with our enemies (3:15). He quiets us with His love (3:17). He removes our burdens (3:18). God stands ready to gather us back to Himself (3:19). He restores our fortunes (3:20).

The commonly held thought that the writings of the Old Testament prophets are all gloom and doom is actually myth and misnomer. There's always hope and renewal in the prophetic message. There are always opportunities for repentance, forgiveness, and restoration. God's judgment is in fact good for us because the sin in our lives needs to be brought to light in order for us to be restored to full fellowship with God.

3:9–13 *a pure language.* One day human language will become a unifying element in the true worship of God. ***My worshipers.*** God's people would come from all nations to worship Him.

3:20 *I will give you fame and praise.* Ordinarily Scripture speaks of the praise that should be brought to God. Here we find the praise that God will bring to His people. ***Says the LORD.*** This is a solemn vow of God to do what He has promised. Zephaniah begins and ends with the strong assertion that the Lord is speaking. The implication is clear: "Listen and live!"

3:8 [i] Joel 3:2 [j] Zeph. 1:18 **3:9** [k] Is. 19:18; 57:19 **3:10** [l] Ps. 68:31 **3:11** [m] Is. 2:12; 5:15 **3:12** [n] Is. 14:32 **3:13** [o] [Mic. 4:7] [p] Is. 60:21 [q] Rev. 14:5 [r] Ezek. 34:13–15, 28 **3:14** [s] Is. 12:6 **3:15** [t] [John 1:49] [u] Ezek. 48:35 **3:16** [v] Is. 35:3, 4 [w] Heb. 12:12 **3:17** [x] Zeph. 3:5, 15 [y] Is. 62:5; 65:19 **3:18** [z] Lam. 2:6 **3:19** [a] [Mic. 4:6, 7] **3:20** [b] Is. 11:12

THE BOOK OF
HAGGAI

▶ **AUTHOR:** The authorship of the book is virtually uncontested as Haggai's name is mentioned nine times. Haggai is known only from this book and two other references to him in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14. Haggai returned from Babylon with the remnant and may well have been one of the few people who could remember the former temple before its destruction. Haggai was therefore very instrumental in the rebuilding of the temple.

▶ **TIME:** c. 520 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Hag. 1:7–8

▶ **THEME:** Haggai is the first of the postexilic prophets, addressing the immediate problem of the rebuilding of the temple. The people had returned about 20 years earlier, but apathy and opposition were keeping the work from being completed. Haggai's concern is that neglect of the temple is a symptom of a bigger problem. God has dropped out of the Israelites' sight as a priority. The people are more concerned with building their materialistic lifestyles than they are with their relationship with God.

The Command to Build God's House

1 In [a]the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by [b]Haggai the prophet to [c]Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to [d]Joshua the son of [e]Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, **2**"Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying: 'This people says, "The time has not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built."'"

3Then the word of the LORD [f]came by Haggai the prophet, saying, **4**"*Is it* [g]time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple* *to lie* in ruins?" **5**Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: [h]"Consider your ways!

6 "You have [i]sown much, and bring in little;
You eat, but do not have enough;
You drink, but you are not filled with drink;
You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm;
And [j]he who earns wages,
Earns wages *to put* into a bag with holes."

7Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways! **8**Go up to the [k]mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the LORD. **9**[l]"*You* looked for much, but indeed *it came to* little; and when you brought it home, [m]I blew it away. Why?" says the LORD of hosts. "Because of My house that *is in* ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house. **10**Therefore [n]the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. **11**For I [o]called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on [p]all the labor of *your* hands."

The People's Obedience

12[q]Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high

* **1:4** Literally *house*, and so in verse 8

1:2 ***The time has not come.*** The people had decided that rebuilding the Lord's dwelling among His people was not important.

1:4 ***your paneled houses.*** Those who wanted to make their houses elaborate installed wood panels. The people of Haggai's time were making their homes elegant, rivaling royal residences and the holy temple itself. But they still did not feel that the time was right to begin working on the renewed temple. While this verse is not a blanket condemnation of elegant living among God's people, it certainly calls for a re-evaluation of priorities.

1:8 ***that I may take pleasure in it.*** God's joy in the temple is related to His pleasure in the people who would worship Him there. ***be glorified.*** Clearly God does not need to receive more glory (Ps. 24:7–10); however, He gladly receives the adoration of His people.

1:1 [a] Ezra 4:24 [b] Ezra 5:1; 6:14 [c] Ezra 2:2 [d] Ezra 5:2, 3 [e] 1 Chr. 6:15 **1:3** [f] Ezra 5:1 **1:4** [g] 2 Sam. 7:2 **1:5** [h] Lam. 3:40 **1:6** [i] Deut. 28:38–40 [j] Zech. 8:10 **1:8** [k] Ezra 3:7 **1:9** [l] Hag. 2:16 [m] Hag. 2:17 **1:10** [n] Deut. 28:23 **1:11** [o] 1 Kin. 17:1 [p] Hag. 2:17 **1:12** [q] Ezra 5:2

priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared the presence of the LORD. 13Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, spoke the LORD's message to the people, saying, [r]"I *am* with you, says the LORD." 14So [s]the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, [t]governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; [u]and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, 15on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.

The Coming Glory of God's House

2 In the seventh *month*, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: 2"Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: 3[a]'Who is left among you who saw this temple* in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, [b]*is this* not in your eyes as nothing? 4Yet now [c]be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the LORD; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the LORD, 'and work; for I *am* with you,' says the LORD of hosts. 5[d]'*According to* the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so [e]My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!'

6"For thus says the LORD of hosts: [f]'Once more (it *is* a little while) [g]I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to [h]the Desire of All Nations,* and I will fill this temple with [i]glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 8'The silver *is* Mine, and the gold *is* Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 9[j]'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give [k]peace,' says the LORD of hosts."

The People Are Defiled

10On the twenty-fourth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 11"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Now, [l]ask the priests *concerning the* law, saying, 12"If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?"'"

Then the priests answered and said, "No."

13And Haggai said, "If *one who is* [m]unclean *because* of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?"

So the priests answered and said, "It shall be unclean."

14Then Haggai answered and said, [n]"'So is this people, and so is this nation before Me,' says the LORD, 'and so is every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean.

Promised Blessing

15'And now, carefully [o]consider from this day forward: from before stone was laid upon stone in the temple of the LORD— 16since those *days*, [p]when *one* came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were *but* ten; when *one* came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were *but* twenty. 17[q]I struck you with blight and mildew and hail [r]in all the labors of your hands; [s]yet you did not *turn* to Me,' says the LORD. 18'Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day

* **2:3** Literally *house*, and so in verses 7 and 9
* **2:7** Or *the desire of all nations*

1:13 ***I am with you.*** God's promise to Moses was, "I will certainly be with you" (Ex. 3:12). God's promise to the people of Judah was that the name of the Coming One would be Immanuel, meaning "God is with us" (Is. 7:14). Here God repeated the same message of comfort and encouragement.

2:3 ***this temple in its former glory.*** The temple of Solomon was one of the wonders of the ancient world (1 Kin. 6). The older temple would have loomed large and magnificent, far outstripping the present structure. So even though the building was completed, there may have been the sense among some of the people that it was "as nothing."

2:6 ***I will shake heaven.*** This is another way of speaking of the day of the Lord. The purpose of the day of the Lord is to prepare the earth for the glorious reign of Jesus Christ on earth (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12–17).

2:9 ***I will give peace.*** Peace includes good health, well-being, and an abundant life. The term speaks of everything being as it ought to be.

2:12 ***will it become holy.*** Since the role of the priest was to interpret God's law, it was reasonable that questions on holiness should be addressed to them. Haggai asked whether holiness could be transferred by contact. The answer was no.

2:13–14 ***It shall be unclean.*** The priests were asked if a religiously unclean person, someone who had touched a corpse, could contaminate someone else by touch. The answer was yes (Num. 19:11–13). The people had worked hard to rebuild the temple, only to be told that their worship would be unacceptable in the new temple. The existence of the temple itself guaranteed nothing. The hearts of the people had to be in harmony with the sacrifices being made.

1:13 [r] [Matt. 28:20] **1:14** [s] Ezra 1:1 [t] Hag. 2:21 [u] Ezra 5:2, 8 **2:3** [a] Ezra 3:12, 13 [b] Zech. 4:10 **2:4** [c] Zech. 8:9 **2:5** [d] Ex. 29:45, 46 [e] [Neh. 9:20] **2:6** [f] Heb. 12:26 [g] [Joel 3:16] **2:7** [h] Gen. 49:10 [i] Is. 60:7 **2:9** [j] [John 1:14] [k] Ps. 85:8, 9 **2:11** [l] Mal. 2:7 **2:13** [m] Num. 19:11, 22 **2:14** [n] [Titus 1:15] **2:15** [o] Hag. 1:5, 7; 2:18 **2:16** [p] Zech. 8:10 **2:17** [q] Deut. 28:22 [r] Hag. 1:11 [s] Amos 4:6–11

of the ninth month, from [t]the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid—consider it: 19[u]Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded *fruit. But* from this day I will [v]bless *you.*'"

Zerubbabel Chosen as a Signet

20And again the word of the LORD came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, 21"Speak to Zerubbabel, [w]governor of Judah, saying:

[x]'I will shake heaven and earth.
22 [y]I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms;
I will destroy the strength of the
Gentile kingdoms.
[z]I will overthrow the chariots
And those who ride in them;
The horses and their riders shall come
down,
Every one by the sword of his
brother.

23'In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,' says the LORD, [a]'and will make you like a signet *ring;* for [b]I have chosen you,' says the LORD of hosts."

2:23 ***signet ring.*** This was an item of great value in the ancient world. The owner used it much like we use our personal signature on checks or other important documents. God used this imagery to indicate that Zerubbabel was in His hand, that he was highly valued, and that he represented God's authority in his leadership of the people. Even though the people had been told they were still unclean in God's eyes (2:10–14), their leader Zerubbabel was encouraged to guide them through those spiritually trying times.

2:18 [t] Zech. 8:9 **2:19** [u] Zech. 8:12 [v] [Mal. 3:10]
2:21 [w] Zech. 4:6–10 [x] Hag. 2:6, 7 **2:22** [y] [Dan. 2:44]
[z] Mic. 5:10 **2:23** [a] Song 8:6 [b] Is. 42:1; 43:10

THE BOOK OF
ZECHARIAH

▶ **AUTHOR:** The universal testimony of the Jewish and Christian tradition affirms Zechariah as the author of the entire book. Like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, he was of priestly lineage and was a young man when he was called to prophesy. According to Jewish tradition, Zechariah was a member of the Great Synagogue that collected and preserved the canon of revealed Scripture. He was born in Babylon and brought to Palestine by his grandfather when the Jewish exiles returned under Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest.

▶ **TIME:** 520–470 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Zech. 9:9

▶ **THEME:** Zechariah's writings were designed to encourage the Israelites and inspire energy, identity, and vision during the rebuilding of the temple. Like Isaiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel, his prophecies are characterized by visions of God and the future. In this context, many would describe the book to be apocalyptic with similarities to Revelation. Probably more than any of the other books, Zechariah makes concrete predictions about Christ, which are fulfilled in the New Testament. He also makes some startling predictions about Israel in the end times that have already seen fulfillment.

A Call to Repentance

1 In the eighth month [a]of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came [b]to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of [c]Iddo the prophet, saying, **2**"The LORD has been very angry with your fathers. **3**Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return [d]to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. **4**"Do not be like your fathers, [e]to whom the former prophets preached, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: [f]"Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds."' But they did not hear nor heed Me," says the LORD.

5 "Your fathers, where *are* they?
And the prophets, do they live forever?
6 Yet surely [g]My words and My statutes,
Which I commanded My servants the prophets,
Did they not overtake your fathers?

"So they returned and said:

[h]'Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us,
According to our ways and according to our deeds,
So He has dealt with us.'"'"

Vision of the Horses

7On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: **8**I saw by night, and behold, [i]a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him *were* [j]horses: red, sorrel, and white. **9**Then I said, [k]"My lord, what *are* these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they *are*."

10And the man who stood among the

1:1 ***Zechariah.*** The name means "Yahweh remembers," emphasizing God's faithfulness to His covenant promises and to His people.

1:3 ***Return to Me.*** These words remind us of the depth of God's unconditional love. ***says the LORD of hosts.*** The personal name translated "LORD" speaks of God's gracious nature as He relates to His people (Ex. 3:14–16); the hosts are the angelic armies that await His every command.

1:5–6 ***fathers . . . prophets.*** The previous generation had been overtaken by God's judgment (Deut. 28:15–68).

1:7—6:15 ***the word of the LORD.*** This section contains a sequence of eight night visions concerning Israel's future, followed by the symbolic crowning of the high priest Joshua. Here Zechariah pursues the same end as Haggai, rebuilding the temple as the center of worship and world rule, and as a place of pilgrimage for the nations (8:20–23).

1:8 ***myrtle.*** This was an evergreen tree that was once very common in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Neh. 8:15).

1:1 [a] Zech. 7:1 [b] Matt. 23:35 [c] Neh. 12:4, 16 **1:3** [d] [Mal. 3:7–10] **1:4** [e] 2 Chr. 36:15, 16 [f] Is. 31:6 **1:6** [g] [Is. 55:11] [h] Lam. 1:18; 2:17 **1:8** [i] [Rev. 6:4] [j] [Zech. 6:2–7] **1:9** [k] Zech. 4:4, 5, 13; 6:4

myrtle trees answered and said, [l]"These *are the ones* whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth."

11 [m]So they answered the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."

The LORD Will Comfort Zion

12 Then the Angel of the LORD answered and said, "O LORD of hosts, [n]how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry [o]these seventy years?"

13 And the LORD answered the angel who talked to me, *with* [p]good *and* comforting words. 14 So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"I am [q]zealous for Jerusalem
And for Zion with great zeal.
15 I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease;
For [r]I was a little angry,
And they helped—*but* with evil *intent*."

16 'Therefore thus says the LORD:

[s]"I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy;
My [t]house [u]shall be built in it," says the LORD of hosts,
"And [v]a *surveyor's* line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem."'

17 "Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"My cities shall again spread out through prosperity;
[w]The LORD will again comfort Zion,
And [x]will again choose Jerusalem."'"

Vision of the Horns

18 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there *were* four [y]horns. 19 And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these?"

So he answered me, [z]"These *are* the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

20 Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. 21 And I said, "What are these coming to do?"

So he said, "These *are* the [a]horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen* are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that [b]lifted up *their* horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

Vision of the Measuring Line

2 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, [a]a man with a measuring line in his hand. 2 So I said, "Where are you going?"

And he said to me, [b]"To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* its width and what *is* its length."

3 And there *was* the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, 4 who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: [c]'Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as* towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. 5 For I,' says the LORD, 'will be [d]a wall of fire all around her, [e]and I will be the glory in her midst.'"

Future Joy of Zion and Many Nations

6 "Up, up! Flee [f]from the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have [g]spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. 7 "Up, Zion! [h]Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon."

8 For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who [i]touches you touches the apple of His eye. 9 For surely I will [j]shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then [k]you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.

* **1:21** Literally *these*

1:12–13 *Angel of the LORD.* This may be a conversation between the preincarnate Jesus and the first Person of the Trinity, God the Father (Ps. 110:1–3). It is certainly an allusion to Jesus' role as Intercessor.

1:15 *I am exceedingly angry.* Here the anger of God was against the nations that He had used to punish His unrepentant people.

1:16 *line shall be stretched.* A measuring line was used to make measurements in preparation for new construction. The stretching of the line was a promise that the work would begin and that the completion of the task would follow.

1:18 *four horns.* Animal horns were often used by poets and prophets as symbols of powerful nations and their kings (Dan. 7:7–8,24). The horns that persecuted Israel and Judah included Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and later Greece.

2:4–5 *inhabited as towns without walls.* Jerusalem will have no need for defensive fortifications because God's presence will guarantee its safety and security. These words refer ultimately to the future Jerusalem under the rule of its glorious king (Zeph. 3:15–19).

2:8–9 *the apple of His eye.* This refers to the pupil, an endearing expression suggesting how enormously important the Hebrew people are to God because of His covenant with them. Just as we protect our eyes from even the smallest particles of dust, so God protects and cares for His people.

1:10 [l] [Heb. 1:14] **1:11** [m] [Ps. 103:20, 21] **1:12** [n] Ps. 74:10 [o] Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10 **1:13** [p] Jer. 29:10 **1:14** [q] Zech. 8:2 **1:15** [r] Is. 47:6 **1:16** [s] [Zech. 2:10; 8:3] [t] Ezra 6:14, 15 [u] Is. 44:28 [v] Zech. 2:1–3 **1:17** [w] [Is. 40:1, 2; 51:3] [x] Zech. 2:12 **1:18** [y] [Lam. 2:17] **1:19** [z] Ezra 4:1, 4, 7 **1:21** [a] [Ps. 75:10] [b] Ps. 75:4, 5 **2:1** [a] Jer. 31:39 **2:2** [b] Rev. 11:1 **2:4** [c] Jer. 31:27 **2:5** [d] [Is. 26:1] [e] [Is. 60:19] **2:6** [f] Is. 48:20 [g] Deut. 28:64 **2:7** [h] Is. 48:20 **2:8** [i] Deut. 32:10 **2:9** [j] Is. 19:16 [k] Zech. 4:9

10 [l]"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion!
For behold, I am coming and I [m]will dwell
in your midst," says the LORD. 11 [n]"Many
nations shall be joined to the LORD [o]in
that day, and they shall become [p]My peo-
ple. And I will dwell in your midst. Then
[q]you will know that the LORD of hosts has
sent Me to you. 12 And the LORD will [r]take
possession of Judah as His inheritance in
the Holy Land, and will again choose Je-
rusalem. 13 [s]Be silent, all flesh, before the
LORD, for He is aroused [t]from His holy
habitation!"

Vision of the High Priest

3 Then he showed me [a]Joshua the high
priest standing before the Angel of the
LORD, and [b]Satan standing at his right
hand to oppose him. 2 And the LORD said to
Satan, [c]"The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The
LORD who [d]has chosen Jerusalem rebuke
you! [e]*Is* this not a brand plucked from the
fire?"

3 Now Joshua was clothed with [f]filthy
garments, and was standing before the
Angel.

4 Then He answered and spoke to those
who stood before Him, saying, "Take away
the filthy garments from him." And to him
He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity
from you, [g]and I will clothe you with rich
robes."

5 And I said, "Let them put a clean [h]tur-
ban on his head."

So they put a clean turban on his head,
and they put the clothes on him. And the
Angel of the LORD stood by.

The Coming Branch

6 Then the Angel of the LORD admon-
ished Joshua, saying, 7 "Thus says the LORD
of hosts:

'If you will walk in My ways,
And if you will [i]keep My command,
Then you shall also [j]judge My
house,
And likewise have charge of My
courts;
I will give you places to walk
Among these who [k]stand here.

8 'Hear, O Joshua, the high priest,
You and your companions who sit
before you,
For they are [l]a wondrous sign;
For behold, I am bringing forth [m]My
Servant the [n]BRANCH.

9 For behold, the stone
That I have laid before Joshua:
[o]Upon the stone *are* [p]seven eyes.
Behold, I will engrave its inscription,'
Says the LORD of hosts,
'And [q]I will remove the iniquity of that
land in one day.

10 [r]In that day,' says the LORD of hosts,
'Everyone will invite his neighbor
[s]Under his vine and under his fig tree.'"

Vision of the Lampstand and Olive Trees

4 Now [a]the angel who talked with me
came back and wakened me, [b]as a man
who is wakened out of his sleep. 2 And he
said to me, "What do you see?"

So I said, "I am looking, and there *is* [c]a
lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top
of it, [d]and on the *stand* seven lamps with
seven pipes to the seven lamps. 3 [e]Two olive
trees *are* by it, one at the right of the bowl
and the other at its left." 4 So I answered
and spoke to the angel who talked with me,
saying, "What *are* these, my lord?"

5 Then the angel who talked with me an-
swered and said to me, "Do you not know
what these are?"

And I said, "No, my lord."

6 So he answered and said to me:

"This *is* the word of the LORD to
[f]Zerubbabel:
[g]'Not by might nor by power, but by My
Spirit,'
Says the LORD of hosts.

2:12 ***the Holy Land.*** Surprisingly, this phrase occurs in the Old Testament only here. The land is "holy" because of the presence of God among His believing people.

3:1 ***Satan.*** The Hebrew is literally "the Satan," meaning "the Accuser." The picture is not unlike that of Job 1, where Satan stands before the Lord making accusations against people who follow God.

3:3 ***with filthy garments.*** The high priest represented the people before God (Ex. 28:29) and under no circumstances was he to become defiled or unclean (Ex. 28:2; Lev. 21:10–15). Joshua's garments were literally "befouled with excrement."

3:8 ***the BRANCH.*** Isaiah used this word and a similar one to describe the Messiah who will grow out of the root of the family of Jesse as a tender sprout shoots up from the ground (6:12; Is. 4:2; 11:1; 53:2). Joshua and his companions were "men wondered at" because the reinstitution of the priesthood made public God's continuing intention to fulfill His promises to His people.

4:2–3 ***a lampstand of solid gold.*** This would remind people of the lampstand in the tabernacle and the temple.

4:6 ***but by My Spirit.*** The rebuilding of the temple, which had at last begun in earnest (Ezra 5:1–2; Hag. 1:14), would be accomplished not by human strength or resources, but by the power of God's Spirit.

2:10 [l] Is. 12:6 [m] [Lev. 26:12] **2:11** [n] [Is. 2:2, 3] [o] Zech. 3:10 [p] Ex. 12:49 [q] Ezek. 33:33 **2:12** [r] [Deut. 32:9] **2:13** [s] Hab. 2:20 [t] Ps. 68:5 **3:1** [a] Hag. 1:1 [b] Ps. 109:6 **3:2** [c] [Jude 9] [d] [Rom. 8:33] [e] Amos 4:11 **3:3** [f] Is. 64:6 **3:4** [g] Is. 61:10 **3:5** [h] Ex. 29:6 **3:7** [i] Lev. 8:35 [j] Deut. 17:9, 12 [k] Zech. 3:4 **3:8** [l] Ps. 71:7 [m] Is. 42:1 [n] Is. 11:1; 53:2; Jer. 23:5 **3:9** [o] [Zech. 4:10] [p] Ps. 118:22 [q] Jer. 31:34; 50:20 **3:10** [r] Zech. 2:11 [s] Is. 36:16 **4:1** [a] Zech. 1:9; 2:3 [b] Dan. 8:18 **4:2** [c] Rev. 1:12 [d] [Rev. 4:5] **4:3** [e] Rev. 11:3, 4 **4:6** [f] Hag. 1:1 [g] Hos. 1:7

7 'Who *are* you, [h]O great mountain?
Before Zerubbabel *you shall become*
a plain!
And he shall bring forth [i]the capstone
[j]With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"'"

8 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

9 "The hands of Zerubbabel
[k]Have laid the foundation of this
temple;*
His hands [l]shall also finish *it*.
Then [m]you will know
That the [n]LORD of hosts has sent Me
to you.
10 For who has despised the day of [o]small
things?
For these seven rejoice to see
The plumb line in the hand of
Zerubbabel.
[p]They are the eyes of the LORD,
Which scan to and fro throughout the
whole earth."

11 Then I answered and said to him, "What *are* these [q]two olive trees—at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" 12 And I further answered and said to him, "What *are these* two olive branches that *drip* into the receptacles* of the two gold pipes from which the golden *oil* drains?"

13 Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these *are*?"

And I said, "No, my lord."

14 So he said, [r]"These *are* the two anointed ones, [s]who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

Vision of the Flying Scroll

5 Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying [a]scroll.

2 And he said to me, "What do you see?"

So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length *is* twenty cubits and its width ten cubits."

3 Then he said to me, "This *is* the [b]curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according *to* this side of *the scroll;* and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according *to* that side of it."

4 "I will send out *the curse*," says the LORD of hosts;
"It shall enter the house of the [c]thief
And the house of [d]the one who swears
falsely by My name.
It shall remain in the midst of his
house
And consume [e]it, with its timber and
stones."

Vision of the Woman in a Basket

5 Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, "Lift your eyes now, and see what this *is* that goes forth."

6 So I asked, "What *is* it?" And he said, "It *is* a basket* that is going forth."

He also said, "This *is* their resemblance throughout the earth: 7 Here *is* a lead disc lifted up, and this *is* a woman sitting inside the basket"; 8 then he said, "This *is* Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover* over its mouth. 9 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there *were* two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a [f]stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven.

10 So I said to the [g]angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?"

11 And he said to me, "To [h]build a house for it in [i]the land of Shinar;* when it is ready, *the basket* will be set there on its base."

Vision of the Four Chariots

6 Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots *were* coming from between two mountains, and the mountains *were* mountains of bronze. 2 With the first chariot *were* [a]red horses, with the second chariot [b]black horses, 3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses—strong *steeds*. 4 Then I answered [c]and said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these, my lord?"

* **4:9** Literally *house* * **4:12** Literally *into the hands of* * **5:6** Hebrew *ephah*, a measuring container, and so elsewhere * **5:8** Literally *stone* * **5:11** That is, Babylon

4:7 ***O great mountain.*** This was a figurative reference to the great obstacles the people faced in rebuilding the temple (Ezra 5:3–17). The setting of the "capstone" would mark the completion of the project. ***Grace, grace to it.*** This may be understood as a prayer for God's favor, or as a cry of admiration over the grace and beauty of the newly built temple.

4:11–14 ***two olive trees . . . two anointed ones.*** These are identified as representatives of the religious and political offices in Israel, or of priest and king. Many identify the two branches with the high priest Joshua and the governor Zerubbabel.

5:4 ***And consume it.*** God's great love does not preclude the exercise of His judgment on those who violate His will. The judgment upon the disobedient would be certain and severe.

5:7–8 ***This is Wickedness.*** The woman sitting inside the basket is a personification of sin.

6:1 ***chariots.*** In ancient times two-wheeled and four-wheeled horse-drawn carts served as vehicles for transportation and for warfare. The war chariots usually had a crew of two or three men including a driver, an archer, and a defender who used a shield to protect the others.

4:7 [h] Jer. 51:25 [i] Ps. 118:22 [j] Ezra 3:10, 11, 13 **4:9** [k] Ezra 3:8–10; 5:16 [l] Ezra 6:14, 15 [m] Zech. 2:9, 11; 6:15 [n] [Is. 43:16] **4:10** [o] Hag. 2:3 [p] 2 Chr. 16:9 **4:11** [q] Zech. 4:3 **4:14** [r] Rev. 11:4 [s] Zech. 3:1–7 **5:1** [a] Ezek. 2:9 **5:3** [b] Mal. 4:6 **5:4** [c] Ex. 20:15 [d] Lev. 19:12 [e] Lev. 14:34, 35 **5:9** [f] Lev. 11:13, 19 **5:10** [g] Zech. 5:5 **5:11** [h] Jer. 29:5, 28 [i] Gen. 10:10 **6:2** [a] Zech. 1:8 [b] Rev. 6:5 **6:4** [c] Zech. 5:10

5 And the angel answered and said to me,
[d]"These *are* four spirits of heaven, who go
out from *their* [e]station before the Lord of
all the earth. 6 The one with the black horses is going to [f]the north country, the white
are going after them, and the dappled are
going toward the south country." 7 Then the
strong *steeds* went out, eager to go, that
they might [g]walk to and fro throughout
the earth. And He said, "Go, walk to and
fro throughout the earth." So they walked
to and fro throughout the earth. 8 And He
called to me, and spoke to me, saying, "See,
those who go toward the north country
have given rest to My [h]Spirit in the north
country."

The Command to Crown Joshua

9 Then the word of the LORD came to
me, saying: 10 "Receive *the gift* from the
captives—from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon—and
go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. 11 Take the silver
and gold, make [i]an elaborate crown, and
set *it* on the head of [j]Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. 12 Then speak to
him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts,
saying:

"Behold, [k]the Man whose name *is* the
[l]BRANCH!
From His place He shall branch out,
[m]And He shall build the temple of the
LORD;
13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the
LORD.
He [n]shall bear the glory,
And shall sit and rule on His throne;
So [o]He shall be a priest on His throne,
And the counsel of peace shall be
between them both."'

14 "Now the elaborate crown shall be
[p]for a memorial in the temple of the LORD
for Helem,* Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the
son of Zephaniah. 15 Even [q]those from afar
shall come and build the temple of the
LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD
of hosts has sent Me to you. And *this* shall
come to pass if you diligently obey the
voice of the LORD your God."

Obedience Better than Fasting

7 Now in the fourth year of King Darius it
came to pass *that* the word of the LORD
came to Zechariah, on the fourth *day* of
the ninth month, Chislev, 2 when *the people** sent Sherezer,* with Regem-Melech
and his men, *to* the house of God,* to pray
before the LORD, 3 *and* to [a]ask the priests
who *were* in the house of the LORD of hosts,
and the prophets, saying, "Should I weep in
[b]the fifth month and fast as I have done for
so many years?"

4 Then the word of the LORD of hosts
came to me, saying, 5 "Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When
you [c]fasted and mourned in the fifth [d]and
seventh *months* [e]during those seventy years, did you really fast [f]for Me—for
Me? 6 [g]When you eat and when you drink,
do you not eat and drink *for yourselves?*
7 *Should you* not *have obeyed* the words
which the LORD proclaimed through the
[h]former prophets when Jerusalem and the
cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and [i]the South* and the Lowland
were inhabited?'"

Disobedience Resulted in Captivity

8 Then the word of the LORD came to
Zechariah, saying, 9 "Thus says the LORD
of hosts:

[j]'Execute true justice,
Show mercy and compassion
Everyone to his brother.
10 [k]Do not oppress the widow or the
fatherless,
The alien or the poor.
[l]Let none of you plan evil in his heart
Against his brother.'

* **6:14** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Syriac reads *for Heldai* (compare verse 10); Septuagint reads *for the patient ones.*
* **7:2** Literally *they* (compare verse 5) • Or *Sar-Ezer* • Hebrew *Bethel* * **7:7** Hebrew *Negev*

6:5 ***four spirits of heaven.*** These spirits were probably angels.
6:11 ***make an elaborate crown.*** This crown was to be placed on the head of Joshua the high priest.
6:12 ***He shall build the temple of the LORD.*** Since the restoration temple (the second temple) was already being built and would be completed by Zerubbabel (4:9), the temple referred to here may be the future temple of the messianic kingdom (Is. 2:2–4; Ezek. 40–42; Mic. 4:1–5; Hag. 2:7–9). The Messiah Himself will build it. The temple of Zerubbabel was a prophetic symbol of the temple that is still to come.
6:13 ***sit and rule . . . be a priest.*** In the Messiah the two offices of king and priest will be united (John 1:49; Heb. 3:1).
7:3 ***the house of the LORD of hosts.*** This refers to the temple in Jerusalem.
7:5–6 ***did you really fast for Me.*** The rhetorical question was designed to confront the people and priests with the selfish motives of their self-righteous fasting. Biblical fasting is meant to be time taken from the normal routines of preparing and eating food to express humility and dependence on God during a time of prayer. There was only one required fast in the law of Moses, the fast on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:27).
7:9–10 ***Execute true justice.*** Judicial decisions must

6:5 [d] [Heb. 1:7, 14] [e] Dan. 7:10 **6:6** [f] Jer. 1:14 **6:7** [g] Zech. 1:10 **6:8** [h] Eccl. 10:4 **6:11** [i] Ex. 29:6 [j] Hag. 1:1 **6:12** [k] John 1:45 [l] Zech. 3:8 [m] [Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:20; Heb. 3:3] **6:13** [n] Is. 22:24 [o] Ps. 110:4; [Heb. 3:1] **6:14** [p] Ex. 12:14 **6:15** [q] Is. 57:19 **7:3** [a] Mal. 2:7 [b] Zech. 8:19 **7:5** [c] [Is. 58:1–9] [d] Jer. 41:1 [e] Zech. 1:12 [f] [Rom. 14:6] **7:6** [g] 1 Chr. 29:22 **7:7** [h] Zech. 1:4 [i] Jer. 17:26 **7:9** [j] Jer. 7:28 **7:10** [k] Ex. 22:22 [l] Mic. 2:1

11 "But they refused to heed, [m]shrugged
their shoulders, and [n]stopped their ears so
that they could not hear. 12 Yes, they made
their [o]hearts like flint, [p]refusing to hear the
law and the words which the LORD of hosts
had sent by His Spirit through the former
prophets. [q]Thus great wrath came from
the LORD of hosts. 13 Therefore it happened,
that just as He proclaimed and they would
not hear, so [r]they called out and I would
not listen," says the LORD of hosts. 14 "But
[s]I scattered them with a whirlwind among
all the nations which they had not known.
Thus the land became desolate after them,
so that no one passed through or returned;
for they made the pleasant land desolate."

Jerusalem, Holy City of the Future

8 Again the word of the LORD of hosts
came, saying, 2 "Thus says the LORD of
hosts:

[a]'I am zealous for Zion with great zeal;
With great fervor I am zealous for her.'

3 "Thus says the LORD:

[b]'I will return to Zion,
And [c]dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.
Jerusalem [d]shall be called the City of
Truth,
[e]The Mountain of the LORD of hosts,
[f]The Holy Mountain.'

4 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

[g]'Old men and old women shall again sit
In the streets of Jerusalem,
Each one with his staff in his hand
Because of great age.
5 The streets of the city
Shall be [h]full of boys and girls
Playing in its streets.'

6 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

'If it is marvelous in the eyes of the
remnant of this people in these
days,
[i]Will it also be marvelous in My eyes?'
Says the LORD of hosts.

7 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

'Behold, [j]I will save My people from the
land of the east
And from the land of the west;
8 I will [k]bring them *back,*
And they shall dwell in the midst of
Jerusalem.
[l]They shall be My people
And I will be their God,
[m]In truth and righteousness.'

9 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

[n]'Let your hands be strong,
You who have been hearing in these
days
These words by the mouth of [o]the
prophets,
Who *spoke* in [p]the day the foundation
was laid
For the house of the LORD of hosts,
That the temple might be built.
10 For before these days
There were no [q]wages for man nor any
hire for beast;
There was no peace from the enemy
for whoever went out or came in;
For I set all men, everyone, against his
neighbor.

11 [r]But now I *will* not *treat* the remnant of
this people as in the former days,' says the
LORD of hosts.

12 'For[s] the seed *shall be* prosperous,
The vine shall give its fruit,
[t]The ground shall give her increase,
And [u]the heavens shall give their
dew—
I will cause the remnant of this people
To possess all these.
13 And it shall come to pass
That just as you were [v]a curse among
the nations,
O house of Judah and house of Israel,
So I will save you, and [w]you shall be a
blessing.
Do not fear,
Let your hands be strong.'

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be made without partiality or bias. ***Show mercy and compassion.*** Loving commitment and concern should guide our relationships with others. ***Do not oppress.*** No advantage is to be taken of the helpless and less fortunate. ***none of you plan evil in his heart.*** Evil scheming against others is prohibited. Sacrifices and worship are of little interest to God if they are not accompanied by practical piety. Zechariah's four admonitions highlight the practical social concerns that many of the prophets emphasized (Is. 1:11–17; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6–8).

8:1–3 ***City of Truth.*** This label will be valid only when the Messiah brings His righteous reign to that city. Then the land will be holy (2:12).

8:7–8 ***land of the east . . . land of the west.*** These terms together represent all parts of the earth. ***My people . . . their God.*** This expression occurs in the descriptions of God's covenant relationship with His people (Ex. 19:5; 29:45; Lev. 26:12; Hos. 2:23). With these words, Zechariah anticipates a renewal of God's covenant with His people (Jer. 31:34).

8:10 ***no wages . . . no peace.*** Zechariah recounts the desperate situation in Judea before the work on the temple resumed in 520 B.C. (Hag. 1:1,6,10–11; 2:16–17).

8:11–13 ***Let your hands be strong.*** In view of God's gracious purposes and future plans for His people, they were called to be diligent in their present efforts to serve Him with sincere hearts (1 Cor. 15:58).

7:11 [m] Neh. 9:29 [n] Jer. 17:23 **7:12** [o] Ezek. 11:19 [p] Neh. 9:29, 30 [q] Dan. 9:11, 12 **7:13** [r] Prov. 1:24–28 **7:14** [s] Deut. 4:27; 28:64 **8:2** [a] Zech. 1:14 **8:3** [b] Zech. 1:16 [c] Zech. 2:10, 11 [d] Is. 1:21 [e] [Is. 2:2, 3] [f] Jer. 31:23 **8:4** [g] Is. 65:20 **8:5** [h] Jer. 30:19, 20 **8:6** [i] [Luke 1:37] **8:7** [j] Is. 11:11 **8:8** [k] Zeph. 3:20 [l] [Jer. 30:22; 31:1, 33] [m] Jer. 4:2 **8:9** [n] Hag. 2:4 [o] Ezra 5:1, 2; 6:14 [p] Hag. 2:18 **8:10** [q] Hag. 1:6, 9 **8:11** [r] Hag. 2:15–19 **8:12** [s] Joel 2:22 [t] Ps. 67:6 [u] Hag. 1:10 **8:13** [v] Jer. 42:18 [w] Gen. 12:2

14 "For thus says the LORD of hosts:

[x]'Just as I determined to punish you
When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,'
Says the LORD of hosts,
[y]'And I would not relent,
15 So again in these days
I am determined to do good
To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.
Do not fear.
16 These *are* the things you shall [z]do:
[a]Speak each man the truth to his neighbor;
Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace;
17 [b]Let none of you think evil in your* heart against your neighbor;
And do not love a false oath.
For all these *are things* that I hate,'
Says the LORD."

18 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, 19 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

[c]'The fast of the fourth *month*,
[d]The fast of the fifth,
[e]The fast of the seventh,
[f]And the fast of the tenth,
Shall be [g]joy and gladness and cheerful feasts
For the house of Judah.
[h]Therefore love truth and peace.'

20 "Thus says the LORD of hosts:

'Peoples shall yet come,
Inhabitants of many cities;
21 The inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying,
[i]"Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD,
And seek the LORD of hosts.
I myself will go also."
22 Yes, [j]many peoples and strong nations
Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem,
And to pray before the LORD.'

23 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In those days ten men [k]from every language of the nations shall [l]grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard [m]*that* God *is* with you."'"

Israel Defended Against Enemies

9 The burden* of the word of the LORD
Against the land of Hadrach,
And [a]Damascus its resting place
(For [b]the eyes of men
And all the tribes of Israel
Are on the LORD);
2 Also *against* [c]Hamath, *which* borders on it,
And *against* [d]Tyre and [e]Sidon, though they are very [f]wise.

3 For Tyre built herself a tower,
Heaped up silver like the dust,
And gold like the mire of the streets.
4 Behold, [g]the Lord will cast her out;
He will destroy [h]her power in the sea,
And she will be devoured by fire.

5 Ashkelon shall see *it* and fear;
Gaza also shall be very sorrowful;
And [i]Ekron, for He dried up her expectation.
The king shall perish from Gaza,
And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

6 "A mixed race shall settle [j]in Ashdod,
And I will cut off the pride of the [k]Philistines.
7 I will take away the blood from his mouth,
And the abominations from between his teeth.
But he who remains, even he *shall be* for our God,
And shall be like a leader in Judah,
And Ekron like a Jebusite.
8 [l]I will camp around My house
Because of the army,
Because of him who passes by and him who returns.
No more shall an oppressor pass through them,
For now I have seen with My eyes.

The Coming King

9 "Rejoice [m]greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, [n]your King is coming to you;
He *is* just and having salvation,
Lowly and riding on a donkey,
A colt, the foal of a donkey.

* **8:17** Literally *his* * **9:1** Or *oracle*

8:16–17 *truth, justice, and peace.* Zechariah set forth the ethical obligations of a life of faith. He upheld these important values and condemned evil plans and false oaths.

8:20–23 *Peoples shall yet come.* Here Zechariah announces a great turning of the nations to God. During the messianic era, a multitude of people from many cities will go to Jerusalem to "seek the LORD." These Gentiles will be included among the people of God by faith (Eph. 2:13–19).

9:1 *burden.* This word suggests that a weighty judgment must be declared.

9:7 *blood from his mouth . . . abominations from between his teeth.* These phrases refer to the cessation of unlawful and idolatrous practices (Lev. 17:14; Is. 65:4; 66:17).

9:9 *Lowly and riding on a donkey.* This prophecy

8:14 [x] Jer. 31:28 [y] [2 Chr. 36:16] **8:16** [z] Zech. 7:9, 10 [a] [Eph. 4:25] **8:17** [b] Prov. 3:29 **8:19** [c] Jer. 52:6 [d] Jer. 52:12 [e] 2 Kin. 25:25 [f] Jer. 52:4 [g] Esth. 8:17 [h] Zech. 8:16 **8:21** [i] [Is. 2:2, 3] **8:22** [j] Is. 60:3; 66:23 **8:23** [k] Is. 3:6 [l] [Is. 45:14] [m] 1 Cor. 14:25 **9:1** [a] Is. 17:1 [b] Amos 1:3–5 **9:2** [c] Jer. 49:23 [d] Is. 23 [e] 1 Kin. 17:9 [f] Ezek. 28:3 **9:4** [g] Is. 23:1 [h] Ezek. 26:17 **9:5** [i] Zeph. 2:4, 5 **9:6** [j] Amos 1:8 [k] Ezek. 25:15–17 **9:8** [l] [Ps. 34:7] **9:9** [m] Zech. 2:10 [n] [Jer. 23:5, 6]; Matt. 21:5; Mark 11:7, 9; Luke 19:35–38; John 12:15

10 I [o]will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
And the horse from Jerusalem;
The [p]battle bow shall be cut off.
He shall speak peace to the nations;
His dominion *shall be* [q]'from sea to sea,
And from the River to the ends of the earth.'*

God Will Save His People

11 "As for you also,
Because of the blood of your covenant,
I will set your [r]prisoners free from the waterless pit.
12 Return to the stronghold,
[s]You prisoners of hope.
Even today I declare
That I will restore [t]double to you.
13 For I have bent Judah, My *bow,*
Fitted the bow with Ephraim,
And raised up your sons, O Zion,
Against your sons, O Greece,
And made you like the sword of a mighty man."

14 Then the LORD will be seen over them,
And [u]His arrow will go forth like lightning.
The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,
And go [v]with whirlwinds from the south.
15 The LORD of hosts will [w]defend them;
They shall devour and subdue with slingstones.
They shall drink *and* roar as if with wine;
They shall be filled *with blood* like basins,
Like the corners of the altar.
16 The LORD their God will [x]save them in that day,
As the flock of His people.
For [y]they *shall be like* the jewels of a crown,
[z]Lifted like a banner over His land—
17 For [a]how great is its* goodness
And how great its* [b]beauty!
[c]Grain shall make the young men thrive,
And new wine the young women.

Restoration of Judah and Israel

10 Ask [a]the LORD for [b]rain
In [c]the time of the latter rain.*
The LORD will make flashing clouds;
He will give them showers of rain,
Grass in the field for everyone.

2 For the [d]idols* speak delusion;
The diviners envision [e]lies,
And tell false dreams;
They [f]comfort in vain.
Therefore *the people* wend their way like [g]sheep;
They are in trouble [h]because *there is* no shepherd.

3 "My anger is kindled against the [i]shepherds,
[j]And I will punish the goatherds.
For the LORD of hosts [k]will visit His flock,
The house of Judah,
And [l]will make them as His royal horse in the battle.
4 From him comes [m]the cornerstone,
From him [n]the tent peg,
From him the battle bow,
From him every ruler* together.
5 They shall be like mighty men,
Who [o]tread down *their enemies*
In the mire of the streets in the battle.
They shall fight because the LORD is with them,
And the riders on horses shall be put to shame.

6 "I will strengthen the house of Judah,
And I will save the house of Joseph.
[p]I will bring them back,
Because I [q]have mercy on them.
They shall be as though I had not cast them aside;
For I *am* the LORD their God,
And I [r]will hear them.
7 *Those of* Ephraim shall be like a mighty man,
And their [s]heart shall rejoice as if with wine.

* **9:10** Psalm 72:8 * **9:17** Or *His* • Or *His*
* **10:1** That is, spring rain * **10:2** Hebrew *teraphim* * **10:4** Or *despot*

was fulfilled on the day of the triumphal entry, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey (Matt. 21:2–7). The donkey was the mount of princes (Judg. 5:10; 10:4) and kings (2 Sam. 16:1–2).

9:14 *whirlwinds from the south.* This description, patterned after God's appearance at Sinai (Ex. 19), reveals God's sovereignty and power to protect His own.

9:15 *They shall drink.* The people will be filled with drink like sacrificial basins were filled with blood, and they will be filled with meat like the corners of a sacrificial altar (Ps. 110:6).

10:2 *no shepherd.* The metaphor of *shepherd* was often used in the ancient Middle East to represent a king or ruler (Ezek. 34:6–8,23–24). Here the emphasis was on the lack of spiritual leadership.

10:3 *The house of Judah.* God will strengthen Judah so that she can overthrow the oppressors.

10:4–5 *tent peg.* A peg firmly in place suggests permanence and endurance (Is. 22:23). ***battle bow.*** This image pictures the strength necessary for military conquest (2 Kin. 13:17).

10:7 *as if with wine.* What was promised to Judah in verse 5 is here promised to Ephraim. Wine is used here as a symbol of abundant joy (Ps. 104:15; Amos 9:13; John 2:1–11).

9:10 [o] Hos. 1:7 [p] Hos. 2:18 [q] Ps. 72:8 **9:11** [r] Is. 42:7 **9:12** [s] Is. 49:9 [t] Is. 61:7 **9:14** [u] Ps. 18:14 [v] Is. 21:1 **9:15** [w] Zech. 12:8 **9:16** [x] Jer. 31:10, 11 [y] Is. 62:3 [z] Is. 11:12 **9:17** [a] [Ps. 31:19] [b] [Ps. 45:1–16] [c] Joel 3:18 **10:1** [a] [Jer. 14:22] [b] [Deut. 11:13, 14] [c] [Joel 2:23] **10:2** [d] Jer. 10:8 [e] Jer. 27:9 [f] Job 13:4 [g] Jer. 50:6, 17 [h] Ezek. 34:5–8 **10:3** [i] Jer. 25:34–36 [j] Ezek. 34:17 [k] Luke 1:68 [l] Song 1:9 **10:4** [m] Is. 28:16 [n] Is. 22:23 **10:5** [o] Ps. 18:42 **10:6** [p] Jer. 3:18 [q] Hos. 1:7 [r] Zech. 13:9 **10:7** [s] Ps. 104:15

Yes, their children shall see *it* and be glad;
Their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.
8 I will [t]whistle for them and gather them,
For I will redeem them;
[u]And they shall increase as they once increased.

9 "I[v] will sow them among the peoples,
And they shall [w]remember Me in far countries;
They shall live, together with their children,
And they shall return.
10 [x]I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt,
And gather them from Assyria.
I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon,
[y]Until no *more room* is found for them.
11 [z]He shall pass through the sea with affliction,
And strike the waves of the sea:
All the depths of the River* shall dry up.
Then [a]the pride of Assyria shall be brought down,
And [b]the scepter of Egypt shall depart.

12 "So I will strengthen them in the LORD,
And [c]they shall walk up and down in His name,"
Says the LORD.

Desolation of Israel

11 Open [a]your doors, O Lebanon,
That fire may devour your cedars.
2 Wail, O cypress, for the [b]cedar has fallen,
Because the mighty *trees* are ruined.
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,
[c]For the thick forest has come down.
3 *There is* the sound of wailing [d]shepherds!
For their glory is in ruins.
There is the sound of roaring lions!
For the pride* of the Jordan is in ruins.

Prophecy of the Shepherds

4 Thus says the LORD my God, "Feed the flock for slaughter, 5 whose owners slaughter them and [e]feel no guilt; those who sell them [f]say, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich'; and their shepherds do [g]not pity them. 6 For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land," says the LORD. "But indeed I will give everyone into his neighbor's hand and into the hand of his king. They shall attack the land, and I will not deliver *them* from their hand."

7 So I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular [h]the poor of the flock.* I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Beauty,* and the other I called Bonds;* and I fed the flock. 8 I dismissed the three shepherds [i]in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. 9 Then I said, "I will not feed you. [j]Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other's flesh." 10 And I took my staff, Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples. 11 So it was broken on that day. Thus [k]the poor* of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it *was* the word of the LORD. 12 Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give *me* my wages; and if not, refrain." So they [l]weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver.

13 And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the [m]potter"—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty *pieces* of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter. 14 Then I cut in two my other staff, Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

15 And the LORD said to me, [n]"Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish

* **10:11** That is, the Nile * **11:3** Or *floodplain, thicket* * **11:7** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *for the Canaanites.* • Or *Grace,* and so in verse 10 • Or *Unity,* and so in verse 14 * **11:11** Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *the Canaanites.*

10:9 ***they shall remember Me.*** This phrase anticipates their turning to the Lord in repentance. ***shall live.*** This implies more than mere survival. God promises spiritual life and blessing to the repentant.

10:12 ***I will strengthen them.*** The regathering will be accomplished by God's power as He gives strength to His people. ***they shall walk up and down in His name.*** In the last days, Israel will return to the land as a believing nation (v. 8; 12:10—13:1; Rom. 11:26).

11:7 ***Beauty . . . Bonds.*** These were the names of Zechariah's two staffs. The images suggest that he wanted the flock to enjoy God's favor and to experience national unity. According to Canaanite legend, the god Baal was given the two clubs named Driver and Chaser to battle the dark deities of the sea. It is appropriate that God's messenger Zechariah is given shepherd's staffs to guide the people, instead of clubs for fighting.

11:8 ***three shepherds.*** Some have suggested that the three shepherds represent classes of rulers in Israel: kings, priests, and prophets. Others suggest that they refer to the last three kings of Judah or to certain high priests of the Maccabean era.

11:12 ***thirty pieces of silver.*** Zechariah, taking the role of the messianic shepherd, requested his wages for service rendered. This amount was the price of a slave. It was also the price paid to Judas for betraying Jesus (Matt. 27:6–10).

11:15–*16 take for yourself the implements of a*

10:8 [t] Is. 5:26 [u] Ezek. 36:37 **10:9** [v] Hos. 2:23 [w] Deut. 30:1 **10:10** [x] Is. 11:11 [y] Is. 49:19, 20 **10:11** [z] Is. 11:15 [a] Zeph. 2:13 [b] Ezek. 30:13 **10:12** [c] Mic. 4:5 **11:1** [a] Zech. 10:10 **11:2** [b] Ezek. 31:3 [c] Is. 32:19 **11:3** [d] Jer. 25:34–36 **11:5** [e] [Jer. 2:3]; 50:7 [f] Hos. 12:8 [g] Ezek. 34:2, 3 **11:7** [h] Zeph. 3:12 **11:8** [i] Hos. 5:7 **11:9** [j] Jer. 15:2 **11:11** [k] Zeph. 3:12 **11:12** [l] Ex. 21:32; Matt. 26:15; 27:9, 10 **11:13** [m] Matt. 27:3–10 **11:15** [n] Is. 56:11

shepherd. 16For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land *who* will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in [o]pieces.

17 "Woe[p] to the worthless shepherd,
Who leaves the flock!
A sword *shall be* against his arm
And against his right eye;
His arm shall completely wither,
And his right eye shall be totally
blinded."

The Coming Deliverance of Judah

12 The burden* of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, [a]who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and [b]forms the spirit of man within him: 2"Behold, I will make Jerusalem [c]a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. 3[d]And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem [e]a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. 4In that day," says the LORD, [f]"I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem *are* my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.' 6In that day I will make the governors of Judah [g]like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.

7"The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. 8In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. 9It shall be in that day *that* I will seek to [h]destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Mourning for the Pierced One

10[i]"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will [j]look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him [k]as one mourns for *his* only *son,* and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. 11In that day there shall be a great [l]mourning in Jerusalem, [m]like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.* 12[n]And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of [o]Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; 13the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; 14all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.

Idolatry Cut Off

13 "In that [a]day [b]a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for [c]uncleanness.

2"It shall be in that day," says the LORD of hosts, "*that* I will [d]cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause [e]the prophets and the unclean spirit to

* **12:1** Or *oracle* * **12:11** Hebrew *Megiddon*

foolish shepherd. This phrase means to behave like one. ***eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces.*** These phrases express the savagery of a foolish shepherd.

11:17 ***worthless shepherd.*** He will be judged. His "arm," which should have been used to protect the sheep, will wither. His "right eye," which should have watched over the sheep, will be blinded.

12:1 ***The burden.*** As in 9:1, the burden is a weighty judgment that the prophet must discharge. ***heavens . . . the earth . . . the spirit of man.*** Three phrases are used here in describing the greatness of God as Creator.

12:3 ***heavy stone.*** Jerusalem is compared to a heavy stone that brings injury to anyone who tries to remove it from its place.

12:6 ***Judah.*** Here, Judah is likened to (1) "a firepan" used to carry hot coals for the purpose of starting a fire, and (2) "a fiery torch" that could quickly ignite a field of cut grain.

12:10 ***Spirit of grace.*** These words refer to the gracious working of the Holy Spirit that leads to conviction and repentance (John 16:8–11). ***supplication.*** The Spirit will stimulate an attitude of repentance and prayer for God's mercy. There are many significant ministries of the Holy Spirit in the period of the Hebrew kingdom.

12:12–14 ***the house of David . . . the house of Levi . . . their wives by themselves.*** These words are quoted in the Talmud as an argument for separating men and women in worship. But the verse seems to indicate that each mourner will face his or her sorrow alone, without the comfort of companionship.

13:2 ***cut off the names of the idols.*** In ancient times, a person's name reflected his or her reputation.

11:16 [o] Ezek. 34:1–10 **11:17** [p] Jer. 23:1 **12:1** [a] Is. 42:5; 44:24 [b] [Is. 57:16] **12:2** [c] Is. 51:17 **12:3** [d] Zech. 12:4, 6, 8; 13:1 [e] Matt. 21:44 **12:4** [f] Ezek. 38:4 **12:6** [g] Obad. 18 **12:9** [h] Hag. 2:22 **12:10** [i] [Joel 2:28, 29] [j] John 19:34, 37; 20:27; [Rev. 1:7] [k] Jer. 6:26 **12:11** [l] [Rev. 1:7] [m] 2 Kin. 23:29 **12:12** [n] [Matt. 24:30] [o] Luke 3:31 **13:1** [a] [Rev. 21:6, 7] [b] [Heb. 9:14] [c] Ezek. 36:25 **13:2** [d] Ex. 23:13 [e] Jer. 23:14, 15

depart from the land. 3It shall come to pass
that if anyone still prophesies, then his fa-
ther and mother who begot him will say to
him, 'You shall [f]not live, because you have
spoken lies in the name of the LORD.' And
his father and mother who begot him [g]shall
thrust him through when he prophesies.
4"And it shall be in that day *that* [h]every
prophet will be ashamed of his vision when
he prophesies; they will not wear [i]a robe of
coarse hair to deceive. 5[j]But he will say, 'I
am no prophet, I *am* a farmer; for a man
taught me to keep cattle from my youth.'
6And *one* will say to him, 'What are these
wounds between your arms?'* Then he will
answer, '*Those* with which I was wounded
in the house of my friends.'

The Shepherd Savior

7 "Awake, O sword, against [k]My
Shepherd,
Against the Man [l]who is My
Companion,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
[m]"Strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep will be scattered;
Then I will turn My hand against [n]the
little ones.
8 And it shall come to pass in all the
land,"
Says the LORD,
"*That* [o]two-thirds in it shall be cut off
and die,
[p]But *one*-third shall be left in it:
9 I will bring the *one*-third [q]through the
fire,
Will [r]refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
[s]They will call on My name,
And I will answer them.
[t]I will say, 'This *is* My people';
And each one will say, 'The LORD *is*
my God.'"

The Day of the LORD

14 Behold, [a]the day of the LORD is
coming,
And your spoil will be divided in your
midst.
2 For [b]I will gather all the nations to
battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into
captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not
be cut off from the city.
3 Then the LORD will go forth
And fight against those nations,
As He fights in the day of battle.
4 And in that day His feet will stand [c]on
the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split
in two,
From east to west,
[d]*Making* a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move
toward the north
And half of it toward the south.
5 Then you shall flee *through* My
mountain valley,
For the mountain valley shall reach to
Azal.
Yes, you shall flee
As you fled from the [e]earthquake
In the days of Uzziah king of Judah.
[f]Thus the LORD my God will come,
And [g]all the saints with You.*
6 It shall come to pass in that day
That there will be no light;
The lights will diminish.
7 It shall be one day
[h]Which is known to the LORD—
Neither day nor night.
But at [i]evening time it shall
happen
That it will be light.

* **13:6** Or *hands* * **14:5** Or *you;* Septuagint, Targum, and Vulgate read *Him.*

Zechariah anticipated the complete removal of the reputation and acknowledgment of false gods.

13:4 ***a robe of coarse hair.*** This was the traditional clothing of a prophet. False prophets will deny that they are prophets for fear of punishment, and will refuse to wear one (2 Kin. 1:8; Matt. 3:4).

13:6 ***wounds between your arms.*** This is probably a reference to the profession of an ecstatic prophet who slashed himself on the back or breast. Self-inflicted wounds were thought to gain the attention and blessing of the gods (1 Kin. 18:28). Under questioning, the man declares that the wounds were received from friends so that he will not be found out as a false prophet and be put to death (v. 3).

13:7 ***O sword.*** The sword, an instrument of death, is likened to a warrior being roused for action. The Lord commands the sword to strike the Messiah. ***My Shepherd.*** This clearly indicates that the death of Jesus was not accident, but was divinely determined.

13:9 ***refine them.*** The smelting pot uses intense heat to separate the dross from pure metal. ***test them.*** Once refined, precious metal must be analyzed to determine its value.

14:4 ***Mount of Olives.*** This is located east of Jerusalem and the Kidron valley: it is a north-south hill about 2,700 feet in elevation. The Messiah will return to the Mount of Olives, the very mountain from which He will have ascended after His time on earth (Acts 1:10–11). On the day of Messiah's return, the mount will be split by a deep east-west valley.

13:3 [f] Deut. 18:20 [g] Deut. 13:6–11 **13:4** [h] [Mic. 3:6, 7] [i] 2 Kin. 1:8 **13:5** [j] Amos 7:14 **13:7** [k] Is. 40:11 [l] [John 10:30] [m] Matt. 26:31, 56, 67; Mark 14:27; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 7:16, 17 [n] Luke 12:32 **13:8** [o] Ezek. 5:2, 4, 12 [p] [Rom. 11:5] **13:9** [q] Is. 48:10 [r] 1 Pet. 1:6, 7 [s] Ps. 50:15 [t] Hos. 2:23 **14:1** [a] [Is. 13:6, 9] **14:2** [b] Zech. 12:2, 3 **14:4** [c] Ezek. 11:23 [d] Joel 3:12 **14:5** [e] Amos 1:1 [f] Matt. 24:30, 31; 25:31 [g] Joel 3:11 **14:7** [h] Matt. 24:36 [i] Is. 30:26

8 And in that day it shall be
That living [i]waters shall flow from
Jerusalem,
Half of them toward the eastern sea
And half of them toward the western
sea;
In both summer and winter it shall
occur.
9 And the LORD shall be [k]King over all
the earth.
In that day it shall be—
[l]"The LORD *is* one,"*
And His name one.

10 All the land shall be turned into a plain
from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem.
*Jerusalem** shall be raised up and [m]inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, [n]and *from* the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.

11 *The people* shall dwell in it;
And [o]no longer shall there be utter
destruction,
[p]But Jerusalem shall be safely
inhabited.

12 And this shall be the plague with
which the LORD will strike all the people
who fought against Jerusalem:

Their flesh shall dissolve while they
stand on their feet,
Their eyes shall dissolve in their
sockets,
And their tongues shall dissolve in
their mouths.

13 It shall come to pass in that day
That [q]a great panic from the LORD will
be among them.
Everyone will seize the hand of his
neighbor,
And raise [r]his hand against his
neighbor's hand;
14 Judah also will fight at
Jerusalem.
[s]And the wealth of all the surrounding
nations
Shall be gathered together:
Gold, silver, and apparel in great
abundance.

15 [t]Such also shall be the plague
On the horse *and* the mule,
On the camel and the donkey,
And on all the cattle that will be in
those camps.
So *shall* this plague *be*.

The Nations Worship the King

16 And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall [u]go up from year to year to [v]worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep [w]the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 [x]And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of [y]Egypt will not come up and enter in, [z]they *shall have* no *rain;* they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

20 In that day [a]"HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be *engraved* on the bells of the horses. The [b]pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts.* Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a [c]Canaanite [d]in the house of the LORD of hosts.

* **14:9** Compare Deuteronomy 6:4 * **14:10** Literally *She* * **14:21** Or *on every pot … shall be (engraved) "HOLINESS TO THE LORD OF HOSTS"*

14:8 ***living waters.*** This term describes running water from a spring or river, in contrast to the stale and stagnant water of a cistern (Jer. 2:13). The water will flow from Jerusalem toward the eastern sea (the Dead Sea) and the western sea (the Mediterranean). In contrast with the seasonal streams that flow only during the rainy season, these streams will irrigate the land in both summer and winter.

14:11 ***shall be safely inhabited.*** This is a contrast to the time of Nehemiah when the population of Jerusalem was sparse (Neh. 7:4; 11:1). In the Lord's coming kingdom, the city will be inhabited and its citizens secure.

14:18–19 ***Egypt.*** In this passage, Egypt is used as an example of the nations that are unwilling to come to Jerusalem to worship King Messiah and celebrate the feast. It will be subject to divine judgment because it was a traditional enemy of Israel.

14:20–21 ***HOLINESS TO THE LORD.*** These words will be inscribed on the gold headband worn by the high priest (Ex. 28:36). Holiness will so permeate Messiah's kingdom that even the lowly cooking pots will be holy. The name "Canaanite" here refers to the merchants who frequented Jerusalem and the temple courts with their wares (Neh. 13:19–22; Matt. 21:12; John 2:14). None will profiteer in the worship of God in the coming age. God's search for true worshipers will be realized in the company of devoted, holy people.

14:8 [i] Ezek. 47:1–12 **14:9** [k] [Rev. 11:15] [l] Deut. 6:4 **14:10** [m] Zech. 12:6 [n] Jer. 31:38 **14:11** [o] Jer. 31:40 [p] Jer. 23:6 **14:13** [q] 1 Sam. 14:15, 20 [r] Judg. 7:22 **14:14** [s] Ezek. 39:10, 17 **14:15** [t] Zech. 14:12 **14:16** [u] [Is. 2:2, 3; 60:6–9; 66:18–21] [v] Is. 27:13 [w] Lev. 23:34–44 **14:17** [x] Is. 60:12 **14:18** [y] Is. 19:21 [z] Deut. 11:10 **14:20** [a] Is. 23:18 [b] Ezek. 46:20 **14:21** [c] Is. 35:8 [d] [Eph. 2:19–22]

THE BOOK OF
MALACHI

▶ **AUTHOR:** The only Old Testament mention of Malachi is in 1:1. Nothing else is known of Malachi, not even his father's name. But tradition holds that he too, like Zechariah, was a member of the Great Synagogue. He is generally accepted as the author of this book. It is likely that Malachi proclaimed his message when Nehemiah was absent from Judah between 432 B.C. and 425 B.C., almost a century after Haggai and Zechariah began to prophesy. Thus, because of its place in history and the Old Testament, Malachi is a transitional book. Its primary themes are consistent with the rest of the Old Testament, but it also serves as a precursor to the New Testament.

▶ **TIME:** c. 432–425 B.C. ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Mal. 2:17

▶ **THEME:** In Malachi, the days of political upheaval are past, and the country is living in an uneventful waiting period. The people are waiting for Messiah to bring the glorious restoration of their nation to the renewed prominence of the Davidic and Solomonic period. There is a sense the people are losing touch with God during this rather uneventful time. The old problem with idol worship is gone, but other problems have taken its place. Malachi's role is to call the people back to a genuine, enduring faith in God. His dominant admonition is for a personal relationship with the living God, who seeks men to walk with Him (2:6).

1 The burden* of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

Israel Beloved of God

2 "I[a] have loved you," says the LORD.
"Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?'
Was not Esau Jacob's brother?"
Says the LORD.
"Yet [b]Jacob I have loved;
3 But Esau I have hated,
And [c]laid waste his mountains and his heritage
For the jackals of the wilderness."
4 Even though Edom has said,
"We have been impoverished,
But we will return and build the desolate places,"
Thus says the LORD of hosts:
"They may build, but I will [d]throw down;
They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness,
And the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever.
5 Your eyes shall see,
And you shall say,
[e]'The LORD is magnified beyond the border of Israel.'

Polluted Offerings

6 "A son [f]honors *his* father,
And a servant *his* master.
[g]If then I am the Father,
Where *is* My honor?
And if I *am* a Master,
Where *is* My reverence?
Says the LORD of hosts
To you priests who despise My name.
[h]Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?'

* **1:1** Or *oracle*

1:1 ***to Israel.*** In the postexilic period, the use of the word Israel for the people of Judah expresses the hope that the Lord was in the process of reasserting the fullness of His original promises to His people. The name "Malachi" means "My messenger."
1:3 ***Esau I have hated.*** The contrast between the words *love* and *hate* here and in verse 2 seems too strong. But on many occasions in the Old Testament, the verb *hate* has the basic meaning "not to choose." God's love for Jacob was expressed in His electing grace in extending His covenant to Jacob and to his descendants (Gen. 25:21–26; Is. 44:1–5). In His sovereign purpose, God set His love on the one and not the other. The term *hate* may carry the idea of indifference as well.
1:6 ***A son honors his father.*** Here the Lord uses truisms: A father and a master can expect honor from those beneath them, but God was not receiving the honor due Him. ***If then I am the Father.*** The image

1:2 [a] Deut. 4:37; 7:8; 23:5 [b] Rom. 9:13 **1:3** [c] Jer. 49:18 **1:4** [d] Jer. 49:16–18 **1:5** [e] Ps. 35:27 **1:6** [f] [Ex. 20:12] [g] Luke 6:46 [h] Mal. 2:14

7 "You offer [i]defiled food on My altar,
But say,
'In what way have we defiled You?'
By saying,
[j]'The table of the LORD is contemptible.'
8 And [k]when you offer the blind as a sacrifice,
Is it not evil?
And when you offer the lame and sick,
Is it not evil?
Offer it then to your governor!
Would he be pleased with you?
Would he [l]accept you favorably?"
Says the LORD of hosts.

9 "But now entreat God's favor,
That He may be gracious to us.
[m]*While* this is being *done* by your hands,
Will He accept you favorably?"
Says the LORD of hosts.
10 "Who *is there* even among you who would shut the doors,
[n]So that you would not kindle fire *on* My altar in vain?
I have no pleasure in you,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
[o]"Nor will I accept an offering from your hands.
11 For [p]from the rising of the sun, even to its going down,
My name *shall be* great [q]among the Gentiles;
[r]In every place [s]incense *shall be* offered to My name,
And a pure offering;
[t]For My name shall be great among the nations,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

12 "But you profane it,
In that you say,
[u]'The table of the LORD* is defiled;
And its fruit, its food, *is* contemptible.'
13 You also say,
'Oh, what a [v]weariness!'
And you sneer at it,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
"And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick;
Thus you bring an offering!
[w]Should I accept this from your hand?"
Says the LORD.
14 "But cursed *be* [x]the deceiver
Who has in his flock a male,
And takes a vow,
But sacrifices to the Lord [y]what is blemished—
For [z]I *am* a great King,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
"And My name *is to be* feared among the nations.

Corrupt Priests

2 "And now, O [a]priests, this commandment is for you.
2 [b]If you will not hear,
And if you will not take *it* to heart,
To give glory to My name,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
"I will send a curse upon you,
And I will curse your blessings.
Yes, I have cursed them [c]already,
Because you do not take *it* to heart.

3 "Behold, I will rebuke your descendants
And spread [d]refuse on your faces,
The refuse of your solemn feasts;
And *one* will [e]take you away with it.
4 Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you,
That My covenant with Levi may continue,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
5 "My[f] covenant was with him, *one* of life and peace,
And I gave them to him [g]*that he might* fear *Me*;
So he feared Me
And was reverent before My name.
6 [h]The law of truth* was in his mouth,
And injustice was not found on his lips.
He walked with Me in peace and equity,
And [i]turned many away from iniquity.

* **1:12** Following Bomberg; Masoretic Text reads *Lord.* * **2:6** Or *true instruction*

of God as Father is common in the New Testament, but less frequent in the Old Testament (Is. 63:16; 64:8).

1:8 *the blind . . . lame and sick.* The demands of the holy worship of God had been made clear in the law. Only the very best should be presented as an offering to the Lord (Lev. 1:3); no one was to come with an offering that was blemished or unclean (Lev. 7:19–21).

1:11 *great among the Gentiles.* God would one day receive praise from all the nations. Even the despised Gentiles would offer praise, while God's own people were profaning His holy name (Ps. 87; 117).

1:14 *I am a great King.* The reputation of the Lord among His people was to have been the means whereby all the nations would be drawn to worship Him as well.

2:2 *I will send a curse.* At the passage of the people into the Promised Land, the Levites spread before the people the blessings of obedience and the curses on disobedience (Deut. 27; 28). But the priests were not obeying the law that they were supposed to uphold. They would therefore receive the curses.

2:3 *refuse.* This was the refuse in the sacrificed animal that should have been removed when the animal was prepared for sacrifice to the Lord.

2:6 *The law of truth.* The priests of the Old Testament period had a twofold responsibility: they were to represent the people in holy worship before the living God, and they were to teach and apply God's law to the people. ***in peace and equity.*** This refers to complete moral virtue in all things before the Lord.

1:7 [i] Deut. 15:21 [j] Ezek. 41:22 **1:8** [k] Lev. 22:22 [l] Job 42:8] **1:9** [m] Hos. 13:9 **1:10** [n] 1 Cor. 9:13 [o] Is. 1:11 **1:11** [p] Is. 59:19 [q] Is. 60:3, 5 [r] 1 Tim. 2:8 [s] Rev. 8:3 [t] Is. 66:18, 19 **1:12** [u] Mal. 1:7 **1:13** [v] Is. 43:22 [w] Lev. 22:20 **1:14** [x] Mal. 1:8 [y] Lev. 22:18–20 [z] Ps. 47:2 **2:1** [a] Mal. 1:6 **2:2** [b] [Deut. 28:15] [c] Mal. 3:9 **2:3** [d] Ex. 29:14 [e] 1 Kin. 14:10 **2:5** [f] Num. 25:12 [g] Deut. 33:9 **2:6** [h] Deut. 33:10 [i] Jer. 23:22

7 "For[j] the lips of a priest should keep knowledge,
And *people* should seek the law from his mouth;
[k]For he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.
8 But you have departed from the way;
You [l]have caused many to stumble at the law.
[m]You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
9 "Therefore [n]I also have made you contemptible and base
Before all the people,
Because you have not kept My ways
But have shown [o]partiality in the law."

Treachery of Infidelity

10 [p]Have we not all one Father?
[q]Has not one God created us?
Why do we deal treacherously with one another
By profaning the covenant of the fathers?
11 Judah has dealt treacherously,
And an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem,
For Judah has [r]profaned
The LORD's holy *institution* which He loves:
He has married the daughter of a foreign god.
12 May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob
The man who does this, being awake and aware,*
Yet [s]who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!
13 And this is the second thing you do:
You cover the altar of the LORD with tears,
With weeping and crying;
So He does not regard the offering anymore,
Nor receive *it* with goodwill from your hands.
14 Yet you say, "For what reason?"
Because the LORD has been witness
Between you and [t]the wife of your youth,
With whom you have dealt treacherously;
[u]Yet she is your companion
And your wife by covenant.
15 But [v]did He not make *them* one,
Having a remnant of the Spirit?
And why one?

* **2:12** Talmud and Vulgate read *teacher and student.*

2:7 ***messenger.*** In the Old Testaments, prophets were commonly called messengers. But apparently this is the only time in the Old Testament that priests are specifically called the messengers of the Lord (3:1).

2:10 God the Father of All—The Fatherhood of God applies in a general sense to everyone since all men and women are created by God in His image. God is the Father of the human race. Several Scriptures speak of God as "the Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9; Num. 16:22; Eccl. 12:7). Paul even agrees with a heathen poet that all men are God's offspring (Acts 17:28). James 3:9 says that men have been made in God's image.

God is also the Father of all as sustainer of life. Every person is an object of His fatherly care (Matt. 18:10) and a candidate for His Kingdom (Luke 18:16). Furthermore, God is not willing that any should perish (Matt. 18:14; 1 Tim. 2:4). Even when men and women reject God He still provides for them as He does believers with rain, fruitful seasons, food, and gladness (Matt. 5:45; Acts 14:17).

2:11 ***the LORD's holy institution which He loves.*** The text presents the ideas of affection and revulsion which we usually think of in the verbs *to love* and *to hate*. Marriage is something God loves; divorce is something He hates (v. 16). The Lord's people had polluted something in which God takes great pleasure.

2:13 ***the second thing you do.*** The prophets at times spoke of the compounding sins of the people (Jer. 2:13). Here, tears seem to be judged as hypocritical acts of insincere repentance (Is. 1:10–15).

2:14 ***what reason.*** The feigned surprise of the people fooled no one, certainly not the Lord. ***witness.*** There are some whose witness may be challenged, but the Lord is not among them (3:5). ***wife of your youth.*** These men had not only married pagan wives, but they had divorced their first wives to make room for their new ones.

2:15–16 God and Marriage—While couples make the marriage covenant with each other, God is a party in the relationship too. He owns us and makes us one, all at the same time. Going back to Genesis 2:24, He designed man and woman for each other; to be in relationship with each other, out of His wisdom for what was best for them. This design was the culminating action in the creation process. Out of it was to be the future of this race, this species that God created to rule with Him. Marriage is not just an institution for couples, but for society and God. In marriage we fulfill God's plan for the universe. God not only made the couple one, in a way He made Himself one with the couple too. It grieves Him when we cannot or will not follow through with our part of this covenant.

The best way to carry on the faith is through children of functioning covenant marriages. This only confirms what all the statistics are increasingly telling us. When divorce rates started soaring in the mid-twentieth century, many thought children were resilient and handling the dissolution of their families well. Current studies, years later, indicate children of these divorces have significantly greater problems coping with life when compared with children from intact families. While there is enormous complexity involved in a marriage relationship, nothing about it is more important in making it work than the commitment to maintain it.

2:15 ***a remnant of the Spirit.*** This somewhat difficult phrase most likely indicates the work of God's Holy Spirit in the life of the married couple. God has joined

2:7 [j] Deut. 17:8–11 [k] [Gal. 4:14] **2:8** [l] Jer. 18:15 [m] Neh. 13:29 **2:9** [n] 1 Sam. 2:30 [o] Deut. 1:17 **2:10** [p] 1 Cor. 8:6 [q] Job 31:15 **2:11** [r] Ezra 9:1, 2 **2:12** [s] Neh. 13:29 **2:14** [t] Mal. 3:5 [u] Prov. 2:17 **2:15** [v] Matt. 19:4, 5

He seeks [w]godly offspring.
Therefore take heed to your spirit,
And let none deal treacherously with
the wife of his youth.

16 "For [x]the LORD God of Israel says
That He hates divorce,
For it covers one's garment with violence,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
"Therefore take heed to your spirit,
That you do not deal treacherously."

17 [y]You have wearied the LORD with your
words;
Yet you say,
"In what way have we wearied *Him*?"
In that you say,
[z]"Everyone who does evil
Is good in the sight of the LORD,
And He delights in them,"
Or, "Where *is* the God of justice?"

The Coming Messenger

3 "Behold, [a]I send My messenger,
And he will [b]prepare the way
before Me.
And the Lord, whom you seek,
Will suddenly come to His temple,
[c]Even the Messenger of the covenant,
In whom you delight.
Behold, [d]He is coming,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

2 "But who can endure [e]the day of His
coming?
And [f]who can stand when He appears?
For [g]He *is* like a refiner's fire
And like launderers' soap.
3 [h]He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of
silver;
He will purify the sons of Levi,
And purge them as gold and silver,
That they may [i]offer to the LORD
An offering in righteousness.

4 "Then [j]the offering of Judah and
Jerusalem
Will be pleasant to the LORD,
As in the days of old,
As in former years.
5 And I will come near you for judgment;
I will be a swift witness
Against sorcerers,
Against adulterers,
[k]Against perjurers,
Against those who [l]exploit wage earners
and [m]widows and orphans,
And against those who turn away an
alien—
Because they do not fear Me,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

6 "For I *am* the LORD, [n]I do not change;
[o]Therefore you are not consumed,
O sons of Jacob.
7 Yet from the days of [p]your fathers
You have gone away from My ordinances
And have not kept *them*.
[q]Return to Me, and I will return to you,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
[r]"But you said,
'In what way shall we return?'

Do Not Rob God

8 "Will a man rob God?
Yet you have robbed Me!
But you say,
'In what way have we robbed You?'
[s]In tithes and offerings.
9 You are cursed with a curse,
For you have robbed Me,
Even this whole nation.
10 [t]Bring all the tithes into the
[u]storehouse,
That there may be food in My house,
And try Me now in this,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
"If I will not open for you the [v]windows
of heaven
And [w]pour out for you *such* blessing
That *there will* not *be room* enough *to
receive it*.

11 "And I will rebuke [x]the devourer for
your sakes,

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them, and by His Spirit He has worked on their behalf to strengthen them.

2:16 ***treacherously.*** To the Lord, attitudes of indifference to marriage vows and duties are the actions of a traitor.

2:17 ***You have wearied the LORD.*** God is wearied by people who do not submit to Him but who argue their points against His revelation. When justice comes, they will be sorry they asked (3:5).

3:1 ***Messenger of the covenant.*** This is a messianic title, referring to the One who will initiate the new covenant (Jer. 31:33–34; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 12:24). ***He is coming.*** As in Psalm 96:13, this dramatic wording indicates something that was just about to occur. However, it would be 400 years before these words would be fulfilled.

3:2 ***like a refiner's fire and like launderer's soap.*** These two images are vivid illustrations of the purifying process. The Savior King Himself will sift all people to prepare for His reign.

3:3 ***purify the sons of Levi.*** Since the priests had come under such strong censure in this book (1:6—2:9), and since the prophet himself was likely a priest, these words would have had a special significance for him.

3:6 ***For I am the LORD, I do not change.*** We might expect these opening words to ensure the nation's doom. Instead, they give assurance of God's continuing mercy.

3:8 ***tithes.*** These were gifts to the Lord that the law required. There were three: two that were annual and one that came every three years. The tithe supported the priests and Levites, and also widows, orphans, and foreigners (Deut. 14:28–29).

2:15 [w] [1 Cor. 7:14] **2:16** [x] [Matt. 5:31; 19:6–8] **2:17** [y] Is. 43:22, 24 [z] Is. 5:20 **3:1** [a] Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 1:76; 7:27; John 1:23; 2:14, 15 [b] [Is. 40:3] [c] Is. 63:9 [d] Hag. 2:7 **3:2** [e] [Mal. 4:1] [f] Rev. 6:17 [g] [Matt. 3:10–12] **3:3** [h] Is. 1:25 [i] [1 Pet. 2:5] **3:4** [j] Mal. 1:11 **3:5** [k] Zech. 5:4 [l] James 5:4 [m] Ex. 22:22 **3:6** [n] [Rom. 11:29] [o] [Lam. 3:22] **3:7** [p] Acts 7:51 [q] Zech. 1:3 [r] Mal. 1:6 **3:8** [s] Neh. 13:10–12 **3:10** [t] Prov. 3:9, 10 [u] 1 Chr. 26:20 [v] Gen. 7:11 [w] 2 Chr. 31:10 **3:11** [x] Amos 4:9

So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground,
Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,"
Says the LORD of hosts;
12 "And all nations will call you blessed,
For you will be [y]a delightful land,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

The People Complain Harshly

13 "Your[z] words have been harsh against Me,"
Says the LORD,
"Yet you say,
'What have we spoken against You?'
14 [a]You have said,
'It is useless to serve God;
What profit *is it* that we have kept His ordinance,
And that we have walked as mourners
Before the LORD of hosts?
15 So now [b]we call the proud blessed,
For those who do wickedness are raised up;
They even [c]tempt God and go free.'"

A Book of Remembrance

16 Then those [d]who feared the LORD
[e]spoke to one another,
And the LORD listened and heard *them;*
So [f]a book of remembrance was written before Him
For those who fear the LORD
And who meditate on His name.

17 "They[g] shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts,
"On the day that I make them My [h]jewels.*
And [i]I will spare them
As a man spares his own son who serves him."
18 [j]Then you shall again discern
Between the righteous and the wicked,
Between one who serves God
And one who does not serve Him.

The Great Day of God

4 "For behold, [a]the day is coming,
Burning like an oven,
And all [b]the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be [c]stubble.
And the day which is coming shall burn them up,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
"That will [d]leave them neither root nor branch.
2 But to you who [e]fear My name
The [f]Sun of Righteousness shall arise
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed calves.
3 [g]You shall trample the wicked,
For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet
On the day that I do *this*,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
4 "Remember the [h]Law of Moses, My servant,
Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel,
With [i]*the* statutes and judgments.
5 Behold, I will send you [j]Elijah the prophet
[k]Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.
6 And [l]he will turn
The hearts of the fathers to the children,
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and [m]strike the earth with [n]a curse."

* **3:17** Literally *special treasure*

3:12 ***all nations.*** One of the ways in which other countries would be drawn to the worship of the Lord was by seeing how the people of Israel fared with the Lord as their God. ***a delightful land.*** The adjective indicates enjoyment, life that is genuinely pleasurable (1:10).

3:14 ***What profit.*** The people secretly entertained doubts about the value of following the Lord. In fact, they had not really "kept His ordinance." The proper attitude is encouraged in Malachi 4:4.

3:16 ***a book of remembrance.*** God never forgets His promises. God teaches us to remember and value the good that people do (Phil. 4:8); He does the same as He commands us.

3:17 ***They shall be Mine.*** These words are exciting because we can sense in them the pride God has in His children.

3:18 ***one who serves God.*** Serving God means putting Him first, obeying His commands, and finding one's chief joy in life the advancement of the glory of His name.

4:2 ***With healing in His wings.*** The prophet compares the Savior to a bird whose comforting wings bring healing to the chicks that gather underneath (Ps. 91:1–4).

4:5 ***Elijah the prophet.*** There are three ways in which this prophecy might be fulfilled: (1) John the Baptist, whom Malachi had already prophesied (3:1), was the first to fill the promise of the Elijah figure. John, like Elijah, was a minister of the Lord calling the people to repent and prepare for the coming of the Messiah (Matt. 11:14). (2) Elijah appeared in person along with Moses at the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–8). (3) An Elijah-like figure will appear at the end times; he will call fire down from heaven just as Elijah did (1 Kin. 18:36; Rev. 11:1–7).

4:6 ***fathers to the children . . . children to their fathers.*** Malachi ends with a promise and a warning. As in every act of God announcing judgment, there is also an offer of His mercy (Jon. 4:2). ***a curse.*** The term is one of the harshest in Scripture. The Hebrew word suggests complete annihilation. This is the term translated "accursed" in the account of the destruction of Jericho (Josh. 6).

3:12 [y] Dan. 8:9 **3:13** [z] Mal. 2:17 **3:14** [a] Job 21:14 **3:15** [b] Ps. 73:12 [c] Ps. 95:9 **3:16** [d] Ps. 66:16 [e] Heb. 3:13 [f] Ps. 56:8 **3:17** [g] Ex. 19:5 [h] Is. 62:3 [i] Ps. 103:13 **3:18** [j] [Ps. 58:11] **4:1** [a] [2 Pet. 3:7] [b] Mal. 3:18 [c] Obad. 18 [d] Amos 2:9 **4:2** [e] Mal. 3:16 [f] Luke 1:78 **4:3** [g] Mic. 7:10 **4:4** [h] Ex. 20:3 [i] Deut. 4:10 **4:5** [j] [Matt. 11:14; 17:10–13; Mark 9:11–13; Luke 1:17]; John 1:21 [k] Joel 2:31 **4:6** [l] Zech. 1:17 [m] Zech. 14:12 [n] Zech. 5:3

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Words of Christ in Red

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW

▶ **AUTHOR:** The early church uniformly attributed this Gospel to Matthew, and no tradition to the contrary ever emerged. This book was known early and accepted quickly. Matthew occupied the unpopular post of tax collector in Capernaum for the Roman government, and as a result he was no doubt disliked by his Jewish countrymen. He was chosen as one of the twelve apostles, and the last appearance of his name in the Bible is in Acts 1:13. Matthew's life from that point on is veiled in tradition.

▶ **TIME:** c. 4 B.C.–A.D. 33 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Matt. 16:16–19

▶ **THEME:** Matthew is typically described as the story of Jesus written by a Jew for Jewish people. In this context it contains the most references to Jewish culture and the Old Testament of the Gospels. The author's main purpose seems to be proving to his Jewish readers that Jesus is their Messiah. Matthew is also the fullest systematic account of Christ's teachings. These five "blocks" of teaching are one of the key differences with the other Gospels: Chapters 5–7, The Sermon on the Mount; chapter 10, The Mission Charge; chapter 13, The Parables of the Kingdom; chapter 18, The Church; chapters 23–25, Judgment and the End of the Age.

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

1 The book of the [a]genealogy of Jesus Christ, [b]the Son of David, [c]the Son of Abraham:

2 [d]Abraham begot Isaac, [e]Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot [f]Judah and his brothers. **3** [g]Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, [h]Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. **4** Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. **5** Salmon begot [i]Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, **6** and [j]Jesse begot David the king.

[k]David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife** of Uriah. **7** [l]Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot [m]Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa.* **8** Asa begot [n]Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot [o]Uzziah. **9** Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot [p]Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. **10** [q]Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon,* and Amon begot [r]Josiah. **11** [s]Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were [t]carried away to Babylon.

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, [u]Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot [v]Zerubbabel. **13** Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. **14** Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. **15** Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. **16** And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of [w]Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

* **1:6** Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Greek.
* **1:7** NU-Text reads *Asaph.* * **1:10** NU-Text reads *Amos.*

1:1 ***genealogy.*** Jesus' genealogy is crucial to His claim to be the Messiah, as it traces the lineage of Joseph, His recognized father, back to Abraham through David. It shows that from a legal standpoint, Jesus is qualified to rule from the throne of David.

1:3 ***Tamar.*** The mention of women in a Jewish genealogy is unusual. But in addition to Mary, four women are listed in this catalogue of names: Tamar , who was involved in a scandal with Judah (Gen. 38); Rahab, the Canaanite harlot of Jericho (Josh. 2:1–21); Ruth, who was not an Israelite, but a Moabite (Ruth 1:4); and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, who committed adultery with David (2 Sam. 11:1–5). At the beginning of his Gospel, Matthew shows how God's grace forgives the darkest of sins and reaches beyond the nation of Israel to the world. He also points out that God can lift the lowest and place them in royal lineage.

1:16 ***the husband of Mary.*** Matthew was careful not to identify Jesus as the physical son of Joseph. The Greek pronoun translated "of whom" is feminine and refers to Mary. ***called Christ.*** The words "Messiah"

1:1 [a] Luke 3:23 [b] John 7:42 [c] Gen. 12:3; 22:18 **1:2** [d] Gen. 21:2, 12 [e] Gen. 25:26; 28:14 [f] Gen. 29:35 **1:3** [g] Gen. 38:27; 49:10 [h] Ruth 4:18–22 **1:5** [i] Ruth 2:1; 4:1–13 **1:6** [j] 1 Sam. 16:1 [k] 2 Sam. 7:12; 12:24 **1:7** [l] 1 Chr. 3:10 [m] 2 Chr. 11:20 **1:8** [n] 1 Chr. 3:10 [o] 2 Kin. 15:13 **1:9** [p] 2 Kin. 15:38 **1:10** [q] 2 Kin. 20:21 [r] 1 Kin. 13:2 **1:11** [s] 1 Chr. 3:15, 16 [t] 2 Kin. 24:14–16 **1:12** [u] 1 Chr. 3:17 [v] Ezra 3:2 **1:16** [w] Matt. 13:55

17So all the generations from Abraham
to David *are* fourteen generations, from
David until the captivity in Babylon *are*
fourteen generations, and from the captiv-
ity in Babylon until the Christ *are* fourteen
generations.

Christ Born of Mary

18Now the [x]birth of Jesus Christ was
as follows: After His mother Mary was
betrothed to Joseph, before they came to-
gether, she was found with child [y]of the
Holy Spirit. 19Then Joseph her husband,
being a just *man*, and not wanting [z]to make
her a public example, was minded to put
her away secretly. 20But while he thought
about these things, behold, an angel of the
Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying,
"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to
take to you Mary your wife, [a]for that which
is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.
21[b]And she will bring forth a Son, and you
shall call His name JESUS, [c]for He will save
His people from their sins."

22So all this was done that it might be
fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord
through the prophet, saying: 23[d]*"Be-
hold, the virgin shall be with child, and
bear a Son, and they shall call His name
Immanuel,"** which is translated, "God
with us."

24Then Joseph, being aroused from
sleep, did as the angel of the Lord com-
manded him and took to him his wife,
25and did not know her till she had brought
forth [e]her firstborn Son.* And he called His
name JESUS.

Wise Men from the East

2 Now after [a]Jesus was born in Bethle-
hem of Judea in the days of Herod the
king, behold, wise men [b]from the East
came to Jerusalem, 2saying, [c]"Where is He
who has been born King of the Jews? For
we have seen [d]His star in the East and have
come to worship Him."

3When Herod the king heard *this*, he
was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
4And when he had gathered all [e]the chief
priests and [f]scribes of the people together,
[g]he inquired of them where the Christ was
to be born.

5So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of
Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

6 *'But[h] you, Bethlehem, in the land of*
Judah,
Are not the least among the rulers of
Judah;
For out of you shall come a Ruler
[i]*Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"**

7Then Herod, when he had secretly
called the wise men, determined from
them what time the [i]star appeared. 8And
he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go
and search carefully for the young Child,
and when you have found *Him*, bring back
word to me, that I may come and worship
Him also."

9When they heard the king, they de-
parted; and behold, the star which they
had seen in the East went before them, till
it came and stood over where the young
Child was. 10When they saw the star, they
rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. 11And
when they had come into the house, they
saw the young Child with Mary His moth-
er, and fell down and worshiped Him. And
when they had opened their treasures,
[k]they presented gifts to Him: gold, frank-
incense, and myrrh.

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* **1:23** Isaiah 7:14. Words in oblique type in the New Testament are quoted from the Old Testament. * **1:25** NU-Text reads *a Son*. * **2:6** Micah 5:2

(from the Hebrew) and "Christ" (from the Greek) both mean "Anointed One."

1:17 ***Abraham . . . until the Christ.*** The genealogy is broken down into three groups of names with 14 generations in each list. A basic covenant is set forth in each period: the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the new covenant.

1:18 ***betrothed.*** In Jewish culture, this covenant was made about a year before the marriage. Engagement was understood to be as binding as a marriage covenant, therefore a legal divorce was required to withdraw from the agreement.

1:23 ***Behold . . . Immanuel.*** The angel's message to Joseph indicated that Mary would fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah (Is. 7:14). "Jesus," the Greek form of "Joshua," means "salvation."

1:25 ***did not know her till.*** The clear implication is that Mary was a virgin only until the birth of Jesus. The brothers and sisters of Jesus (13:55–56) were probably younger siblings born to Joseph and Mary after Jesus' birth. Joseph could not have had children by a previous marriage, as some suppose, for then Jesus would not have been heir to the Davidic throne as the oldest son of Joseph.

2:1 ***wise men from the East.*** These "wise men" would have been of the same class as the "wise men" of Babylon over whom Daniel was made ruler (Dan. 2:48). ***to Jerusalem.*** Contrary to popular belief, the events of chapter two probably took place some months after Jesus' birth. Herod murdered all the male children age two and under, going by the time the wise men said the star had appeared (and probably leaving a significant margin for error). In addition, it would have been strange for Mary and Joseph to offer the sacrifice of the poor (see Lev. 12:8; Luke 2:24) if the wise men had just given them rich gifts.

2:7 ***Then Herod.*** This is Herod the Great, who reigned over Palestine for over thirty years. A crafty ruler and lavish builder, Herod had a reign marked by cruelty and bloodshed.

1:18 [x] Luke 1:27 [y] Luke 1:35 **1:19** [z] Deut. 24:1
1:20 [a] Luke 1:35 **1:21** [b] Luke 1:31; 2:21 [c] John 1:29
1:23 [d] Is. 7:14 **1:25** [e] Luke 2:7, 21 **2:1** [a] Mic. 5:2; Luke 2:4 [b] Gen. 25:6 **2:2** [c] Luke 2:11 [d] [Num. 24:17]
2:4 [e] 2 Chr. 36:14 [f] 2 Chr. 34:13 [g] Mal. 2:7 **2:6** [h] Mic. 5:2 [i] [Rev. 2:27] **2:7** [j] Num. 24:17 **2:11** [k] Is. 60:6

12 Then, being divinely warned [l]in a
dream that they should not return to
Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

The Flight into Egypt

13 Now when they had departed, behold,
an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph
in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young
Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and
stay there until I bring you word; for Herod
will seek the young Child to destroy Him."
14 When he arose, he took the young
Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the
death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled
which was spoken by the Lord through the
prophet, saying, [m]*"Out of Egypt I called My Son."**

Massacre of the Innocents

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was
deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly
angry; and he sent forth and put to death
all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years
old and under, according to the time which
he had determined from the wise men.
17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by
Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

18 *"A [n]voice was heard in Ramah,*
Lamentation, weeping, and great
mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted,
*Because they are no more."**

The Home in Nazareth

19 Now when Herod was dead, behold,
an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream
to Joseph in Egypt, 20 [o]saying, "Arise, take
the young Child and His mother, and go to
the land of Israel, for those who [p]sought
the young Child's life are dead." 21 Then he
arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.
22 But when he heard that Archelaus was
reigning over Judea instead of his father
Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a [q]dream, he turned
aside [r]into the region of Galilee. 23 And he
came and dwelt in a city called [s]Nazareth,
that it might be fulfilled [t]which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a
Nazarene."

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 In those days [a]John the Baptist came
preaching [b]in the wilderness of Judea,
2 and saying, "Repent, for [c]the kingdom of
heaven is at hand!" 3 For this is he who was
spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

[d]*"The voice of one crying in the*
wilderness:
[e]*'Prepare the way of the LORD;*
*Make His paths straight.'"**

4 Now [f]John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his
waist; and his food was [g]locusts and [h]wild
honey. 5 [i]Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all
the region around the Jordan went out to
him 6 [j]and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.
7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, [k]"Brood of vipers!
Who warned you to flee from [l]the wrath to
come? 8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, 9 and do not think to say to yourselves, [m]'We have Abraham as *our* father.'
For I say to you that God is able to raise

* **2:15** Hosea 11:1 * **2:18** Jeremiah 31:15
* **3:3** Isaiah 40:3

2:15 ***might be fulfilled.*** The prophecy quoted here, from Hosea 11:1, refers to the nation of Israel as God's son coming out of Egypt in the Exodus. Jesus is the genuine Son of God, and, as Israel's Messiah, is the true Israel (John 15:1); therefore He gives fuller meaning to the prophecy of Hosea.

2:18 ***Rachel weeping for her children.*** This prophecy comes from Jeremiah 31:15, in which Rachel, entombed near Bethlehem some 13 centuries before the Babylonian captivity, is seen weeping for her children as they are led away in 586 B.C. In the slaughter of the male infants at the time of Christ's birth, Rachel is again seen weeping for the violent loss of her sons.

2:23 ***Nazareth.*** Those who lived in Nazareth were looked down upon (John 1:46). Perhaps God chose this place for His Son to emphasize His humanness.

3:2 ***Repent.*** The Greek verb translated "repent" indicates a change of attitude. The basic idea is a recognition of sin and a reversal of thinking which changes one's life.

3:3 ***Prepare the way of the LORD.*** As roads were smoothed and straightened for the arrival of a king, so John was preparing a spiritual path for the Messiah. The quotation is from Isaiah 40:3.

3:7 ***Pharisees and Sadducees.*** The Pharisees and Sadducees were two prominent groups in Judaism at the time of Christ. The groups differed considerably in their beliefs. The Pharisees based their beliefs not only on the law of Moses, but also on a large body of oral tradition. They were devout and zealous, concerned with outward righteousness. The Sadducees were associated with a priestly caste, and in doctrine they held primarily to the first five books of Moses. They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and did not adhere to all the detailed laws of the Pharisees. Formerly enemies, the two groups seemed to unite against a common enemy: the long awaited Messiah.

2:12 [l] Matt. 1:20 **2:15** [m] Hos. 11:1 **2:18** [n] Jer. 31:15 **2:20** [o] Luke 2:39 [p] Matt. 2:16 **2:22** [q] Matt. 2:12, 13, 19 [r] Luke 2:39 **2:23** [s] John 1:45, 46 [t] Judg. 13:5 **3:1** [a] Mark 1:3–8 [b] Josh. 14:10 **3:2** [c] Dan. 2:44 **3:3** [d] Is. 40:3 [e] Luke 1:76 **3:4** [f] Mark 1:6 [g] Lev. 11:22 [h] 1 Sam. 14:25, 26 **3:5** [i] Mark 1:5 **3:6** [j] Acts 19:4, 18 **3:7** [k] Matt. 12:34 [l] [1 Thess. 1:10] **3:9** [m] John 8:33

up children to Abraham from these stones.
10And even now the ax is laid to the root
of the trees. [n]Therefore every tree which
does not bear good fruit is cut down and
thrown into the fire. 11[o]I indeed baptize you
with water unto repentance, but He who is
coming after me is mightier than I, whose
sandals I am not worthy to carry. [p]He will
baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*
12[q]His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and
He will thoroughly clean out His thresh-
ing floor, and gather His wheat into the
barn; but He will [r]burn up the chaff with
unquenchable fire."

John Baptizes Jesus

13[s]Then Jesus came [t]from Galilee to
John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.
14And John *tried to* prevent Him, saying,
"I need to be baptized by You, and are You
coming to me?"
15But Jesus answered and said to him,
"Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting
for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he
allowed Him.
16[u]When He had been baptized, Jesus
came up immediately from the water; and
behold, the heavens were opened to Him,
and He* saw [v]the Spirit of God descending
like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17[w]And
suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, say-
ing, [x]"This is My beloved Son, in whom I
am well pleased."

Satan Tempts Jesus

4 Then [a]Jesus was led up by [b]the Spirit
into the wilderness to be tempted by
the devil. 2And when He had fasted forty
days and forty nights, afterward He was
hungry. 3Now when the tempter came to
Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God,
command that these stones become bread."
4But He answered and said, "It is writ-
ten, [c]*'Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that proceeds from the
mouth of God.'* "*
5Then the devil took Him up [d]into the
holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the
temple, 6and said to Him, "If You are the
Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is
written:

> [e]*'He shall give His angels charge over
> you,'*

and,

> [f]*'In their hands they shall bear you up,
> Lest you dash your foot against a
> stone.'* "*

7Jesus said to him, "It is written again,
[g]*'You shall not tempt the* LORD *your God.'* "*
8Again, the devil took Him up on an
exceedingly high mountain, and [h]showed
Him all the kingdoms of the world and
their glory. 9And he said to Him, "All these
things I will give You if You will fall down
and worship me."
10Then Jesus said to him, "Away with
you,* Satan! For it is written, [i]*'You shall
worship the* LORD *your God, and Him only
you shall serve.'* "*
11Then the devil [j]left Him, and behold,
[k]angels came and ministered to Him.

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* **3:11** M-Text omits *and fire.* * **3:16** Or *he*
* **4:4** Deuteronomy 8:3 * **4:6** Psalm 91:11, 12
* **4:7** Deuteronomy 6:16 * **4:10** M-Text reads *Get behind Me.* • Deuteronomy 6:13

3:11 *baptize.* Sometimes fire has connotations of judgment in Scripture, but here the fire of God's Spirit represents the transforming power of His grace and love. The baptism of all Jesus' disciples with water is an outward sign of the inward work of the Holy Spirit. It is the symbol of obedience to the command to believe in Christ's saving work of grace on the cross.
3:15 *to fulfill all righteousness.* This phrase does not suggest that Jesus came for baptism because He had sinned; the Lord Jesus was without sin (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15). His baptism probably served several purposes. By being baptized, He confirmed the ministry of John and fulfilled the Father's will.
3:17 God, the Father of Christ—Most Christians eventually wonder how God may be called the Father of Christ, and Christ the Son of God. First, one must recognize that God is spirit (John 4:24), and Christ was the Son of God before He assumed a human body in Bethlehem (John 3:16; Gal. 4:4). Passages which use terms implying physical origin must be taken in a figurative sense (Heb. 1:5). Second, the title expresses a sonship relationship, unique from that of His disciples (John 20:17). He was begotten of God unlike anyone else (John 1:14; 3:16). The Nicene council in the fourth century used the phrase "very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father" to describe this unique relationship. Third, the title describes equality with God. When Jesus claimed to be "one" with the Father, He was speaking of a unity of "substance" with the Father and thus equality in all the attributes of deity (John 10:30). The Jews understood this claim, because they took up stones to stone Him, protesting that "You . . . make Yourself God" (John 10:33). Fourth, the title emphasizes Christ's role as the revealer of God. He alone possesses the knowledge of the Father (John 14:6–9; 1 John 1:2), and He is the sole mediator of that knowledge (1 Tim. 2:5). Therefore, no one can know the Father except through the Son (John 14:6).
4:1–4 *It is written.* Satan did not lead Jesus into the place of temptation, the Holy Spirit did. Perhaps part of the reason for this was to show us how to deal with temptation. Jesus quoted the Word of God, showing the power of Scripture in battling with the evil one.
4:10 *Satan.* Satan is not dispatched easily by anyone who merely says, "Go." The only way we can be victorious in temptation is through the blood and authority of Jesus Christ.

3:10 [n] Matt. 7:19 **3:11** [o] Luke 3:16 [p] [Acts 2:3, 4]
3:12 [q] Mal. 3:3 [r] Matt. 13:30 **3:13** [s] Mark 1:9–11
[t] Matt. 2:22 **3:16** [u] Mark 1:10 [v] [Is. 11:2]; John 1:32
3:17 [w] John 12:28 [x] Ps. 2:7 **4:1** [a] Mark 1:12 [b] Ezek. 3:14
4:4 [c] Deut. 8:3 **4:5** [d] Neh. 11:1, 18 **4:6** [e] Ps. 91:11
[f] Ps. 91:12 **4:7** [g] Deut. 6:16 **4:8** [h] [1 John 2:15–17]
4:10 [i] Deut. 6:13; 10:20 **4:11** [j] [James 4:7] [k] [Heb. 1:14]

Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry

12 [l]Now when Jesus heard that John had
been put in prison, He departed to Gali-
lee. 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and
dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in
the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that
it might be fulfilled which was spoken by
Isaiah the prophet, saying:

15 *"The[m] land of Zebulun and the land of*
Naphtali,
By the way of the sea, beyond the
Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles:
16 [n]*The people who sat in darkness have*
seen a great light,
And upon those who sat in the region
and shadow of death
*Light has dawned."**

17 [o]From that time Jesus began to preach
and to say, [p]"Repent, for the kingdom of
heaven is at hand."

Four Fishermen Called as Disciples

18 [q]And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Gal-
ilee, saw two brothers, Simon [r]called Peter,
and Andrew his brother, casting a net into
the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 Then He
said to them, "Follow Me, and [s]I will make
you fishers of men." 20 [t]They immediately
left *their* nets and followed Him.
21 [u]Going on from there, He saw two oth-
er brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and
John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee
their father, mending their nets. He called
them, 22 and immediately they left the boat
and their father, and followed Him.

Jesus Heals a Great Multitude

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee,
[v]teaching in their synagogues, preaching
[w]the gospel of the kingdom, [x]and healing
all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease
among the people. 24 Then His fame went
throughout all Syria; and they [y]brought
to Him all sick people who were afflicted
with various diseases and torments, and
those who were demon-possessed, epilep-
tics, and paralytics; and He healed them.
25 [z]Great multitudes followed Him—from
Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, Jerusalem,
Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

The Beatitudes

5 And seeing the multitudes, [a]He went
up on a mountain, and when He was
seated His disciples came to Him. 2 Then
He opened His mouth and [b]taught them,
saying:

3 "Blessed[c] *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4 [d]Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
5 [e]Blessed *are* the meek,
For [f]they shall inherit the earth.
6 Blessed *are* those who [g]hunger and
thirst for righteousness,
[h]For they shall be filled.
7 Blessed *are* the merciful,
[i]For they shall obtain mercy.
8 [j]Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For [k]they shall see God.
9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
10 [l]Blessed *are* those who are persecuted
for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 [m]"Blessed are you when they revile and
persecute you, and say all kinds of [n]evil
against you falsely for My sake. 12 [o]Rejoice
and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your
reward in heaven, for [p]so they persecuted
the prophets who were before you.

Believers Are Salt and Light

13 "You are the salt of the earth; [q]but if
the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be sea-
soned? It is then good for nothing but to
be thrown out and trampled underfoot by
men.
14 [r]"You are the light of the world. A city

* **4:16** Isaiah 9:1, 2

4:15–16 *great light.* The passage quoted here (Is. 9:1–2) foretells the reign of the Messiah in the coming kingdom.

4:18–20 *I will make you fishers of men.* This allusion to Jeremiah 16:16 was used to call Peter and Andrew to a life of ministry.

4:23 *teaching . . . preaching . . . healing.* These words summarize Jesus' early ministry.

5:2 *He . . . taught them.* The Sermon on the Mount wasn't given as the way of salvation for the lost, but as the way of life for the children of the kingdom. It was instruction for those who had responded to Jesus' invitation to repent.

5:3–12 The Beatitudes—In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ succinctly describes the basic character traits of those who will inherit the kingdom. The word *kingdom* usually implies someone who is on top, who rules and has authority over others. They are the privileged. In God's kingdom the people are not privileged because they are on top but because, by being on the bottom, they are in a better position to receive God's grace and favor. These characteristics are the reverse of what man generally values in the world. "Blessed" can also be translated as "Happy." The signs of being blessed aren't power or material wealth. The sign of being blessed is receiving the benefits of God's grace.

4:12 [l] John 4:43 **4:15** [m] Is. 9:1, 2 **4:16** [n] Luke 2:32 **4:17** [o] Mark 1:14, 15 [p] Matt. 3:2; 10:7 **4:18** [q] Mark 1:16–20 [r] John 1:40–42 **4:19** [s] Luke 5:10 **4:20** [t] Mark 10:28 **4:21** [u] Mark 1:19 **4:23** [v] Matt. 9:35 [w] [Matt. 24:14] [x] Mark 1:34 **4:24** [y] Luke 4:40 **4:25** [z] Mark 3:7, 8 **5:1** [a] Mark 3:13 **5:2** [b] [Matt. 7:29] **5:3** [c] Luke 6:20–23 **5:4** [d] Rev. 21:4 **5:5** [e] Ps. 37:11 [f] [Rom. 4:13] **5:6** [g] Luke 1:53 [h] [Is. 55:1; 65:13] **5:7** [i] Ps. 41:1 **5:8** [j] Ps. 15:2; 24:4 [k] 1 Cor. 13:12 **5:10** [l] 1 Pet. 3:14 **5:11** [m] Luke 6:22 [n] 1 Pet. 4:14 **5:12** [o] 1 Pet. 4:13, 14 [p] Acts 7:52 **5:13** [q] Luke 14:34 **5:14** [r] [John 8:12]

that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15Nor do they [s]light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. 16Let your light so shine before men, [t]that they may see your good works and [u]glorify your Father in heaven.

Christ Fulfills the Law

17[v]"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18For assuredly, I say to you, [w]till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19[x]Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them,* he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds [y]*the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder Begins in the Heart

21"You have heard that it was said to those of old, [z]'*You shall not murder,** and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22But I say to you that [a]whoever is angry with his brother without a cause* shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, [b]'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. 23Therefore [c]if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24[d]leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25[e]Agree with your adversary quickly, [f]while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

Adultery in the Heart

27"You have heard that it was said to those of old,* [g]'*You shall not commit adultery.*'* 28But I say to you that whoever [h]looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29[i]If your right eye causes you to sin, [j]pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Marriage Is Sacred and Binding

31"Furthermore it has been said, [k]'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32But I say to you that [l]whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality* causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Jesus Forbids Oaths

33"Again you have heard that [m]it was said to those of old, [n]'You shall not swear falsely, but [o]shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' 34But I say to you, [p]do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is [q]God's throne; 35nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of [r]the great King. 36Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. 37[s]But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Go the Second Mile

38"You have heard that it was said, [t]*'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'**

* **5:21** Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17
* **5:22** NU-Text omits *without a cause.* * **5:27** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to those of old.* • Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18 * **5:32** Or *fornication*
* **5:38** Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21

5:16 *Let your light so shine.* The believer does not have inherent light; rather, we have reflective light. As Christ followers, we must make sure that we do not allow anything to come between us and our Source of light.

5:27 *adultery.* Control of the heart and body begins with control of the eyes. Deeds of shame result from fantasies of shame. Jesus gives the sobering advice "if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you" (v. 29). It should be clear here that Jesus is not advocating mutilating our bodies, but He is using a strong figure of speech to emphasize removing any temptation for evil, whatever the cost.

5:32 *sexual immorality.* This is a general term that includes premarital sex, extramarital infidelity, homosexuality, and bestiality.

5:38 *An eye for an eye.* This important Old Testament law (Ex. 21:24–25; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21), known as the *lex talionis* (law of retaliation), covered what type of punishment should be meted out to transgressors. It limited the retribution the offender would have to bear, preventing the "head for eye, jaw for tooth" vengeance typical of humans.

5:15 [s] Luke 8:16 **5:16** [t] 1 Pet. 2:12 [u] [John 15:8] **5:17** [v] Rom. 10:4 **5:18** [w] Luke 16:17 **5:19** [x] [James 2:10] **5:20** [y] [Rom. 10:3] **5:21** [z] Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17 **5:22** [a] [1 John 3:15] [b] [James 2:20; 3:6] **5:23** [c] Matt. 8:4 **5:24** [d] [Job 42:8] **5:25** [e] Luke 12:58, 59 [f] [Is. 55:6] **5:27** [g] Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18 **5:28** [h] Prov. 6:25 **5:29** [i] Mark 9:43 [j] [Col. 3:5] **5:31** [k] Deut. 24:1 **5:32** [l] [Luke 16:18] **5:33** [m] Matt. 23:16 [n] Lev. 19:12 [o] Deut. 23:23 **5:34** [p] James 5:12 [q] Is. 66:1 **5:35** [r] Ps. 48:2 **5:37** [s] [Col. 4:6] **5:38** [t] Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21

39 [u]But I tell you not to resist an evil person. [v]But whoever slaps you on your right
cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your
tunic, let him have *your* cloak also. 41 And whoever [w]compels you to go one mile, go
with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and [x]from him who wants to borrow from
you do not turn away.

Love Your Enemies

43 "You have heard that it was said, [y]'*You shall love your neighbor** [z]and hate your
enemy.' 44 But I say to you, [a]love your enemies, bless those who curse you, [b]do good
to those who hate you, and pray [c]for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,*
45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for [d]He makes His sun rise on the
evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 [e]For if you love
those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
47 And if you greet your brethren* only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not
even the tax collectors* do so? 48 [f]Therefore you shall be perfect, just [g]as your Father in
heaven is perfect.

Do Good to Please God

6 "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen
by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore,
[a]when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret [b]will Himself reward you openly.*

The Model Prayer

5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray
standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, [c]go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place;* and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.* 7 And when you pray, [d]do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do.* [e]For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father [f]knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. 9 In this [g]manner, therefore, pray:

[h]Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your [i]name.
10 Your kingdom come.
[j]Your will be done
On earth [k]as *it is* in heaven.
11 Give us this day our [l]daily bread.
12 And [m]forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
13 [n]And do not lead us into temptation,
But [o]deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

14 [p]"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But [q]if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Fasting to Be Seen Only by God

16 "Moreover, [r]when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, [s]anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret *place;* and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

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* **5:43** Compare Leviticus 19:18 * **5:44** NU-Text omits three clauses from this verse, leaving, "*But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*" * **5:47** M-Text reads *friends.* • NU-Text reads *Gentiles.* * **6:4** NU-Text omits *openly.* * **6:6** NU-Text omits *openly.* * **6:13** NU-Text omits *For Yours* through *Amen.* * **6:18** NU-Text and M-Text omit *openly.*

5:41 *compels.* The Roman government could press anyone to carry a load as far as one mile.

5:45 *sons of your Father.* In other words, "that you be like your heavenly Father who displays His love without discrimination."

5:48 *be perfect.* God does not lower the standard to accommodate our sinfulness. He gives us the power to keep this righteousness standard.

6:2 *they have their reward.* The only reward the hypocrites will ever receive is to be honored by man.

6:9 *In this manner.* This does not mean to pray only these words, but to pray in this way, remembering the general topics of worship, request for both physical and spiritual needs, confession, and repentance of sins.

5:39 [u] Luke 6:29 [v] Is. 50:6 **5:41** [w] Matt. 27:32 **5:42** [x] Luke 6:30–34 **5:43** [y] Lev. 19:18 [z] Deut. 23:3–6 **5:44** [a] Luke 6:27 [b] [Rom. 12:20] [c] Acts 7:60 **5:45** [d] Job 25:3 **5:46** [e] Luke 6:32 **5:48** [f] [Col. 1:28; 4:12] [g] Eph. 5:1 **6:2** [a] Rom. 12:8 **6:4** [b] Luke 14:12–14 **6:6** [c] 2 Kin. 4:33 **6:7** [d] Eccl. 5:2 [e] 1 Kin. 18:26 **6:8** [f] [Rom. 8:26, 27] **6:9** [g] Luke 11:2–4 [h] [Matt. 5:9, 16] [i] Mal. 1:11 **6:10** [j] Matt. 26:42 [k] Ps. 103:20 **6:11** [l] Prov. 30:8 **6:12** [m] [Matt. 18:21, 22] **6:13** [n] [2 Pet. 2:9] [o] John 17:15 **6:14** [p] Mark 11:25 **6:15** [q] Matt. 18:35 **6:16** [r] Is. 58:3–7 **6:17** [s] Ruth 3:3

Lay Up Treasures in Heaven

19 [t]"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;
20 [u]but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Lamp of the Body

22 [v]"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

You Cannot Serve God and Riches

24 [w]"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. [x]You cannot serve God and mammon.

Do Not Worry

25 "Therefore I say to you, [y]do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 [z]Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?
28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?
31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But [a]seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.

Do Not Judge

7 "Judge [a]not, that you be not judged.
2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; [b]and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 [c]And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.
6 [d]"Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking

7 [e]"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For [f]everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 [g]Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?
10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, [h]being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! 12 Therefore, [i]whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for [j]this is the Law and the Prophets.

The Narrow Way

13 [k]"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because* narrow *is* the gate and

* **7:14** NU-Text and M-Text read *How … !*

6:19 ***Do not lay up . . . on earth.*** In other words, don't give priority to things that only last on earth, but instead put priority and energy into serving God.
6:24 Covetousness—God requires total allegiance and continuous subjection of our wills to Him. He asks for full commitment of our hearts and love for His service. We cannot serve God like that while under the influence of the god of money, urging us to make present, tangible, and worldly things the object of our thoughts and affections.
6:27 ***add one cubit.*** Some translations say, "add a single hour to his life." It seems that Jesus would bring a smile here; the mental picture either of growing taller, or of stretching time by worrying, helps us to see the futility of it.
7:1–2 ***Judge not.*** The point of this verse is that a Christian must not judge or criticize in a way that they themselves would not want to be judged or criticized. Every judgment that a person makes becomes a basis for his or her own judgment (James 3:1–2).
7:6 ***dogs . . . swine.*** These insulting terms refer to people who are enemies of the gospel, as opposed to those who are merely unbelievers.

6:19 [t] Prov. 23:4 **6:20** [u] Matt. 19:21 **6:22** [v] Luke 11:34, 35 **6:24** [w] Luke 16:9, 11, 13 [x] [Gal. 1:10] **6:25** [y] Luke 12:22 **6:26** [z] Luke 12:24 **6:33** [a] [1 Tim. 4:8] **7:1** [a] Rom. 14:3 **7:2** [b] Luke 6:38 **7:3** [c] Luke 6:41 **7:6** [d] Prov. 9:7, 8 **7:7** [e] [Mark 11:24] **7:8** [f] Prov. 8:17 **7:9** [g] Luke 11:11 **7:11** [h] Gen. 6:5; 8:21 **7:12** [i] Luke 6:31 [j] Gal. 5:14 **7:13** [k] Luke 13:24

difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

You Will Know Them by Their Fruits

15 [l]"Beware of false prophets, [m]who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 [n]You will know them by their fruits. [o]Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, [p]every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 [q]Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

I Never Knew You

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, [r]'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who [s]does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we [t]not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And [u]then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; [v]depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Build on the Rock

24 "Therefore [w]whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that [x]the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 [y]for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

8 When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. 2 [a]And behold, a leper came and [b]worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

3 Then Jesus put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy [c]was cleansed.

4 And Jesus said to him, [d]"See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that [e]Moses [f]commanded, as a testimony to them."

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

5 [g]Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a [h]centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, 6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."

7 And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, [i]I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only [j]speak a word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this *one*, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does *it*."

10 When Jesus heard *it*, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! 11 And I say to you that [k]many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But [l]the sons of the kingdom [m]will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, *so* let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

14 [n]Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw [o]his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. 15 So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.*

* **8:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *Him*.

7:15 ***Beware of false prophets.*** Deuteronomy 13:1–11 and 18:20–22 provide information on discerning and responding to false prophets. The way to tell a false teacher from teachers of the truth is by their fruits. Fruit does not only refer to deeds, but also to doctrine (16:12; 1 John 4:1–3).

8:4 ***show yourself to the priest.*** This was no small undertaking. The sacrifice required was long and involved (Lev. 14:4–32). In obeying the law of Moses, the leper also would be a powerful testimony to the religious authorities in Jerusalem that the Messiah had arrived.

8:10 ***I have not found . . . not even in Israel.*** Jesus makes it clear that just being a physical descendant of Abraham does not guarantee entrance into His kingdom. The true children of Abraham are those who share his faith in God (Gal. 5:6–9).

7:15 [l] Jer. 23:16 [m] Mic. 3:5 **7:16** [n] Matt. 7:20; 12:33 [o] Luke 6:43 **7:17** [p] Matt. 12:33 **7:19** [q] [John 15:2, 6] **7:21** [r] Luke 6:46 [s] Rom. 2:13 **7:22** [t] Num. 24:4 **7:23** [u] [2 Tim. 2:19] [v] Ps. 5:5; 6:8 **7:24** [w] Luke 6:47–49 **7:28** [x] Matt. 13:54 **7:29** [y] [John 7:46] **8:2** [a] Mark 1:40–45 [b] John 9:38 **8:3** [c] Luke 4:27 **8:4** [d] Mark 5:43 [e] Luke 5:14 [f] Deut. 24:8 **8:5** [g] Luke 7:1–3 [h] Matt. 27:54 **8:8** [i] Luke 15:19, 21 [j] Ps. 107:20 **8:11** [k] Is. 2:2, 3; Mal. 1:11 **8:12** [l] [Matt. 21:43] [m] Luke 13:28 **8:14** [n] Mark 1:29–31 [o] 1 Cor. 9:5

Many Healed in the Evening

16 [p]When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

> [q]"*He Himself took our infirmities*
> *And bore our sicknesses."**

The Cost of Discipleship

18 And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. 19 [r]Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."

20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head."

21 [s]Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, [t]let me first go and bury my father."

22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 [u]And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then [v]He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Two Demon-Possessed Men Healed

28 [w]When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes,* there met Him two demon-possessed *men,* coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. 29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

30 Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. 31 So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away* into the herd of swine."

32 And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

33 Then those who kept *them* fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what *had happened* to the demon-possessed *men.* 34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, [x]they begged *Him* to depart from their region.

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic

9 So He got into a boat, crossed over, [a]and came to His own city. 2 [b]Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. [c]When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

3 And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!"

4 But Jesus, [d]knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, '*Your* sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 7 And he arose and departed to his house.

8 Now when the multitudes saw *it,* they [e]marveled* and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

Matthew the Tax Collector

9 [f]As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

10 [g]Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, *that* behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. 11 And when

* **8:17** Isaiah 53:4 * **8:28** NU-Text reads *Gadarenes.* * **8:31** NU-Text reads *send us.*
* **9:8** NU-Text reads *were afraid.*

8:17 ***took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.*** This verse quotes Isaiah 53:4. Jesus healed because He had compassion on the people.

8:28–29 ***demon-possessed.*** We learn several things about demons in this passage. They recognize the deity of Christ, they are limited in their knowledge, they know they will ultimately be judged by Christ (25:41; James 2:19; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:7–17), and they cannot act without the permission of higher authority.

9:2 ***their faith.*** This refers to the faith of the paralytic as well as that of the men who were carrying him.

9:10 ***tax collectors.*** Publicans or tax collectors were often despised not only because they were seen as traitors, working for the hated Roman government, but also because they generally collected more than necessary and pocketed the difference.

8:16 [p] Luke 4:40, 41 **8:17** [q] Is. 53:4 **8:19** [r] Luke 9:57, 58 **8:21** [s] Luke 9:59, 60 [t] 1 Kin. 19:20 **8:24** [u] Mark 4:37 **8:26** [v] Ps. 65:7; 89:9; 107:29 **8:28** [w] Mark 5:1–4 **8:34** [x] Luke 5:8; Acts 16:39 **9:1** [a] Matt. 4:13; 11:23 **9:2** [b] Luke 5:18–26 [c] Matt. 8:10 **9:4** [d] Matt. 12:25 **9:8** [e] John 7:15 **9:9** [f] Luke 5:27 **9:10** [g] Mark 2:15

the Pharisees saw *it,* they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with [h]tax collectors and [i]sinners?"

12When Jesus heard *that,* He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13But go and learn what *this* means: [j]'*I desire mercy and not sacrifice.*'* For I did not come to call the righteous, [k]but sinners, to repentance."*

Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting

14Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, [l]"Why do we and the Pharisees fast often,* but Your disciples do not fast?"

15And Jesus said to them, "Can [m]the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and [n]then they will fast. 16No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. 17Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

18[o]While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live." 19So Jesus arose and followed him, and so *did* His [p]disciples.

20[q]And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and [r]touched the hem of His garment. 21For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." 22But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; [s]your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.

23[t]When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw [u]the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, 24He said to them, [v]"Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him. 25But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and [w]took her by the hand, and the girl arose. 26And the [x]report of this went out into all that land.

Two Blind Men Healed

27When Jesus departed from there, [y]two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, [z]"Son of David, have mercy on us!"

28And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

29Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." 30And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, [a]"See *that* no one knows *it.*" 31[b]But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.

A Mute Man Speaks

32[c]As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. 33And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!"

34But the Pharisees said, [d]"He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."

The Compassion of Jesus

35Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, [e]teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.* 36[f]But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary* and scattered, [g]like sheep having no shepherd. 37Then He said to His disciples, [h]"The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. 38[i]Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

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* **9:13** Hosea 6:6 • NU-Text omits *to repentance.* * **9:14** NU-Text brackets *often* as disputed. * **9:35** NU-Text omits *among the people.* * **9:36** NU-Text and M-Text read *harassed.*

9:12–13 ***Those who are well.*** Jesus refers ironically to the Pharisees as "the righteous." They were not righteous; that was only how they perceived themselves because of their pious and scrupulous law keeping (Phil. 3:6). But God is more interested in a person's loyal love than the observance of external rituals.

9:30 ***See that no one knows it.*** Jesus may have wanted to discourage the masses from coming to Him for physical healing alone, because His primary purpose was spiritual healing.

9:37 ***harvest.*** The harvest will mark the beginning of the kingdom age. For the lost it will mean doom, but for the saved it will mean blessing.

9:11 [h] Matt. 11:19 [i] [Gal. 2:15] **9:13** [j] Hos. 6:6 [k] 1 Tim. 1:15 **9:14** [l] Luke 5:33–35; 18:12 **9:15** [m] John 3:29 [n] Acts 13:2, 3; 14:23 **9:18** [o] Luke 8:41–56 **9:19** [p] Matt. 10:2–4 **9:20** [q] Luke 8:43 [r] Matt. 14:36; 23:5 **9:22** [s] Luke 7:50; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42 **9:23** [t] Mark 5:38 [u] 2 Chr. 35:25 **9:24** [v] Acts 20:10 **9:25** [w] Mark 1:31 **9:26** [x] Matt. 4:24 **9:27** [y] Matt. 20:29–34 [z] Luke 18:38, 39 **9:30** [a] Matt. 8:4 **9:31** [b] Mark 7:36 **9:32** [c] Matt. 12:22, 24 **9:34** [d] Luke 11:15 **9:35** [e] Matt. 4:23 **9:36** [f] Mark 6:34 [g] Num. 27:17 **9:37** [h] Luke 10:2 **9:38** [i] 2 Thess. 3:1

The Twelve Apostles

10 And [a]when He had called His twelve disciples to *Him,* He gave them power *over* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. **2**Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, [b]who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; **3**Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was* Thaddaeus; **4**[c]Simon the Cananite,* and Judas [d]Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

Sending Out the Twelve

5These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: [e]"Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of [f]the Samaritans. **6**[g]But go rather to the [h]lost sheep of the house of Israel. **7**[i]And as you go, preach, saying, [j]'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' **8**Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead,* cast out demons. [k]Freely you have received, freely give. **9**[l]Provide neither gold nor silver nor [m]copper in your money belts, **10**nor bag for *your* journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; [n]for a worker is worthy of his food.

11[o]"Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. **12**And when you go into a household, greet it. **13**[p]If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. [q]But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. **14**[r]And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, [s]shake off the dust from your feet. **15**Assuredly, I say to you, [t]it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

Persecutions Are Coming

16[u]"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. [v]Therefore be wise as serpents and [w]harmless as doves. **17**But beware of men, for [x]they will deliver you up to councils and [y]scourge you in their synagogues. **18**[z]You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. **19**[a]But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For [b]it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; **20**[c]for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

21[d]"Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. **22**And [e]you will be hated by all for My name's sake. [f]But he who endures to the end will be saved. **23**[g]When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have [h]gone through the cities of Israel [i]before the Son of Man comes.

24[j]"A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. **25**It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If [k]they have called the master of the house Beelzebub,* how much more *will they call* those of his household! **26**Therefore do not fear them. [l]For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

Jesus Teaches the Fear of God

27"Whatever I tell you in the dark, [m]speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. **28**[n]And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather [o]fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. **29**Are not two [p]sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. **30**[q]But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. **31**Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

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* **10:3** NU-Text omits *Lebbaeus, whose surname was.* * **10:4** NU-Text reads *Cananaean.* * **10:8** NU-Text reads *raise the dead, cleanse the lepers;* M-Text omits *raise the dead.* * **10:25** NU-Text and M-Text read *Beelzebul.*

10:2 *the twelve.* The twelve are called disciples in verse 1; here they are called apostles. The word "apostle" emphasizes delegated authority (1 Thess. 2:6).

10:15 *more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah.* This verse, together with 11:22–24, implies that there will be different degrees of judgment and torment for those who reject Christ.

10:18 *for My sake.* God would use Jewish rejection and persecution of the messengers to bring the gospel message to the Gentiles.

10:25 Persecution—Believers must know that what the world has called our Lord, it will call us. The world has hated Jesus without cause, and they will hate those who bear His name in the same way.

10:1 [a] Luke 6:13 **10:2** [b] John 1:42 **10:4** [c] Acts 1:13 [d] John 13:2, 26 **10:5** [e] Matt. 4:15 [f] John 4:9 **10:6** [g] Matt. 15:24 [h] Jer. 50:6 **10:7** [i] Luke 9:2 [j] Matt. 3:2 **10:8** [k] [Acts 8:18] **10:9** [l] 1 Sam. 9:7 [m] Mark 6:8 **10:10** [n] 1 Tim. 5:18 **10:11** [o] Luke 10:8 **10:13** [p] Luke 10:5 [q] Ps. 35:13 **10:14** [r] Mark 6:11 [s] Acts 13:51 **10:15** [t] Matt. 11:22, 24 **10:16** [u] Luke 10:3 [v] Eph. 5:15 [w] [Phil. 2:14–16] **10:17** [x] Mark 13:9 [y] Acts 5:40; 22:19; 26:11 **10:18** [z] 2 Tim. 4:16 **10:19** [a] Luke 12:11, 12; 21:14, 15 [b] Ex. 4:12 **10:20** [c] 2 Sam. 23:2 **10:21** [d] Mic. 7:6 **10:22** [e] Luke 21:17 [f] Mark 13:13 **10:23** [g] Acts 8:1 [h] [Mark 13:10] [i] Matt. 16:28 **10:24** [j] John 15:20 **10:25** [k] John 8:48, 52 **10:26** [l] Mark 4:22 **10:27** [m] Acts 5:20 **10:28** [n] Luke 12:4 [o] Luke 12:5 **10:29** [p] Luke 12:6, 7 **10:30** [q] Luke 21:18

Confess Christ Before Men

32 [r]"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, [s]him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 [t]But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Christ Brings Division

34 [u]"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to [v]*'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'*; 36 and [w]*'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'** 37 [x]He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 [y]And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 [z]He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

A Cup of Cold Water

40 [a]"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. 41 [b]He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 [c]And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold *water* in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

John the Baptist Sends Messengers to Jesus

11 Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to [a]teach and to preach in their cities.

2 [b]And when John had heard [c]in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of* his disciples 3 and said to Him, "Are You [d]the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 [e]*The* blind see and *the* lame walk; *the* lepers are cleansed and *the* deaf hear; *the* dead are raised up and [f]*the* poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he who is not [g]offended because of Me."

7 [h]As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? [i]A reed shaken by the wind? 8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses. 9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, [j]and more than a prophet. 10 For this is *he* of whom it is written:

> [k]*'Behold, I send My messenger before*
> *Your face,*
> *Who will prepare Your way before*
> *You.'**

11 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 [l]And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. 13 [m]For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is [n]Elijah who is to come. 15 [o]He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

16 [p]"But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, 17 and saying:

> 'We played the flute for you,
> And you did not dance;
> We mourned to you,
> And you did not lament.'

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, [q]a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' [r]But wisdom is justified by her children."*

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* **10:36** Micah 7:6 * **11:2** NU-Text reads *by* for *two of.* * **11:10** Malachi 3:1 * **11:19** NU-Text reads *works.*

10:32 *whoever confesses.* Every act of our lives will be evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). To refuse to speak up for Christ because of intimidation or persecution will result in the believer's loss of reward and consequent loss of glory in the kingdom (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

10:38 *does not take his cross.* "Taking up a cross" stands for commitment to the extent of being willing to die for something.

11:3 *do we look.* John probably expected the Messiah to immediately judge Israel and establish His kingdom (3:2–12). Jesus' failure to do what John anticipated may have planted seeds of doubt in John's mind about whether Jesus was the Messiah. But doubt that inquires and does not weaken faith is not evil. John went to the right person for answers, and Jesus reassured him by pointing out the fulfillment of prophecy.

11:12 *violent take it by force.* This probably means that violent people forcibly oppose the kingdom with their hostility (23:13).

10:32 [r] Luke 12:8 [s] [Rev. 3:5] **10:33** [t] 2 Tim. 2:12 **10:34** [u] [Luke 12:49] **10:35** [v] Mic. 7:6 **10:36** [w] John 13:18 **10:37** [x] Luke 14:26 **10:38** [y] [Mark 8:34] **10:39** [z] John 12:25 **10:40** [a] Luke 9:48 **10:41** [b] 1 Kin. 17:10 **10:42** [c] Mark 9:41 **11:1** [a] Luke 23:5 **11:2** [b] Luke 7:18–35 [c] Matt. 4:12; 14:3 **11:3** [d] John 6:14 **11:5** [e] Is. 29:18; 35:4–6 [f] Ps. 22:26; Is. 61:1 **11:6** [g] [Rom. 9:32] **11:7** [h] Luke 7:24 [i] [Eph. 4:14] **11:9** [j] Luke 1:76; 20:6 **11:10** [k] Mal. 3:1 **11:12** [l] Luke 16:16 **11:13** [m] Mal. 4:4–6 **11:14** [n] Luke 1:17 **11:15** [o] Luke 8:8 **11:16** [p] Luke 7:31 **11:19** [q] Matt. 9:10 [r] Luke 7:35

Woe to the Impenitent Cities

20 [s]Then He began to rebuke the cities in
which most of His mighty works had been
done, because they did not repent: 21 "Woe
to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!
For if the mighty works which were done in
you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they
would have repented long ago [t]in sackcloth
and ashes. 22 But I say to you, [u]it will be more
tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of
judgment than for you. 23 And you, Caper-
naum, [v]who are exalted to heaven, will be*
brought down to Hades; for if the mighty
works which were done in you had been
done in Sodom, it would have remained un-
til this day. 24 But I say to you [w]that it shall be
more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the
day of judgment than for you."

Jesus Gives True Rest

25 [x]At that time Jesus answered and said,
"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and
earth, that [y]You have hidden these things
from *the* wise and prudent [z]and have re-
vealed them to babes. 26 Even so, Father,
for so it seemed good in Your sight. 27 [a]All
things have been delivered to Me by My Fa-
ther, and no one knows the Son except the
Father. [b]Nor does anyone know the Father
except the Son, and *the one* to whom the
Son wills to reveal *Him*. 28 Come to [c]Me, all
you who labor and are heavy laden, and I
will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon
you [d]and learn from Me, for I am gentle
and [e]lowly in heart, [f]and you will find rest
for your souls. 30 [g]For My yoke *is* easy and
My burden is light."

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

12 At that time [a]Jesus went through the
grainfields on the Sabbath. And His
disciples were hungry, and began to [b]pluck
heads of grain and to eat. 2 And when the
Pharisees saw *it*, they said to Him, "Look,
Your disciples are doing what is not lawful
to do on the Sabbath!"

3 But He said to them, "Have you not read
[c]what David did when he was hungry, he
and those who were with him: 4 how he
entered the house of God and ate [d]the
showbread which was not lawful for him to
eat, nor for those who were with him, [e]but
only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read
in the [f]law that on the Sabbath the priests
in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are
blameless? 6 Yet I say to you that in this
place there is [g]*One* greater than the temple.
7 But if you had known what *this* means, [h]*'I
desire mercy and not sacrifice,'** you would
not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the
Son of Man is Lord even* of the Sabbath."

Healing on the Sabbath

9 [i]Now when He had departed from there,
He went into their synagogue. 10 And be-
hold, there was a man who had a withered
hand. And they asked Him, saying, [j]"Is it
lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—that they
might accuse Him.

11 Then He said to them, "What man is
there among you who has one sheep, and
if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not
lay hold of it and lift *it* out? 12 Of how much
more value then is a man than a sheep?
Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sab-
bath." 13 Then He said to the man, "Stretch
out your hand." And he stretched *it* out,
and it was restored as whole as the other.
14 Then [k]the Pharisees went out and plotted
against Him, how they might destroy Him.

Behold, My Servant

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, [l]He withdrew
from there. [m]And great multitudes* fol-
lowed Him, and He healed them all. 16 Yet
He [n]warned them not to make Him known,
17 that it might be fulfilled which was spo-
ken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

18 *"Behold! [o]My Servant whom I have*
chosen,
My Beloved [p]in whom My soul is well
pleased!
I will put My Spirit upon Him,
And He will declare justice to the
Gentiles.

* **11:23** NU-Text reads *will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be.* * **12:7** Hosea 6:6 * **12:8** NU-Text and M-Text omit *even.*
* **12:15** NU-Text brackets *multitudes* as disputed.

11:21 ***Woe.*** Jesus pronounced a direct judgment on Israel. They would be judged for seeing the Messiah and then rejecting Him.

11:23 ***Capernaum.*** Capernaum, which is on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, was called "His own city" (9:1).

12:2 ***is not lawful.*** To desecrate the Sabbath was flagrant disobedience to the law of Moses (Num. 15:30–36). The Pharisees were trying to make Jesus into a lawbreaker and accuse Him of wrongdoing.

12:14 ***how they might destroy Him.*** Because of Jesus' view of the Sabbath, the Pharisees concluded that He was trying to overthrow the entire Mosaic system, and therefore had to be destroyed. Their antagonism toward Jesus was growing.

12:17–21 ***spoken by Isaiah the prophet.*** This quotation of Isaiah 42:1–4 shows that the Messiah's gentleness was just as had been prophesied, and also that the Gentiles would be included in His blessing.

11:20 [s] Luke 10:13–15, 18 **11:21** [t] Jon. 3:6–8
11:22 [u] Matt. 10:15; 11:24 **11:23** [v] Is. 14:13
11:24 [w] Matt. 10:15 **11:25** [x] Luke 10:21, 22 [y] Ps. 8:2
[z] Matt. 16:17 **11:27** [a] Matt. 28:18 [b] John 1:18; 6:46; 10:15 **11:28** [c] [John 6:35–37] **11:29** [d] [Phil. 2:5]
[e] Zech. 9:9 [f] Jer. 6:16 **11:30** [g] [1 John 5:3] **12:1** [a] Luke 6:1–5 [b] Deut. 23:25 **12:3** [c] 1 Sam. 21:6 **12:4** [d] Lev. 24:5 [e] Ex. 29:32 **12:5** [f] Num. 28:9 **12:6** [g] [Is. 66:1, 2]
12:7 [h] [Hos. 6:6] **12:9** [i] Mark 3:1–6 **12:10** [j] John 9:16 **12:14** [k] Mark 3:6 **12:15** [l] Mark 3:7 [m] Matt. 19:2
12:16 [n] Matt. 8:4; 9:30; 17:9 **12:18** [o] Is. 42:1–4; 49:3
[p] Matt. 3:17; 17:5

19 *He will not quarrel nor cry out,*
Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.
20 *A bruised reed He will not break,*
And smoking flax He will not quench,
Till He sends forth justice to victory;
21 *And in His name Gentiles will trust."**

A House Divided Cannot Stand

22 [q]Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and* mute man both spoke and saw. 23 And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the [r]Son of David?"

24 [s]Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, "This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub,* the ruler of the demons."

25 But Jesus [t]knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, [u]surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 [v]Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. 30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

The Unpardonable Sin

31 "Therefore I say to you, [w]every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, [x]but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. 32 Anyone who [y]speaks a word against the Son of Man, [z]it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.

A Tree Known by Its Fruit

33 "Either make the tree good and [a]its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. 34 [b]Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? [c]For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart* brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

The Scribes and Pharisees Ask for a Sign

38 [d]Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and [e]adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 [f]For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 [g]The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and [h]condemn it, [i]because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here. 42 [j]The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here.

An Unclean Spirit Returns

43 [k]"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, [l]he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 Then he says,

* **12:21** Isaiah 42:1–4 * **12:22** NU-Text omits *blind and.* * **12:24** NU-Text and M-Text read *Beelzebul.* * **12:35** NU-Text and M-Text omit *of his heart.*

12:31–32 *blasphemy.* The sin that shall not be forgiven is the stubborn refusal to heed the Holy Spirit's conviction and accept the salvation that Christ offers. Particularly in reference to the leaders of Israel, Jesus had offered them all the proof that could be expected, such as the ministry of John, the testimony of the Father, the prophecies of the Old Testament, His own testimony, and the substantiation of the Holy Spirit. Because the leaders rejected all proofs regarding Jesus as Messiah, nothing else would be given.

12:39 *the sign of the prophet Jonah.* The demand for signs was evidence of unbelief. The "sign of the prophet Jonah" is explained in verse 40 as the resurrection.

12:41–42 *The men of Nineveh . . . The queen of the South.* These terms represent Gentiles who come to faith because of the words of God's prophets and kings, lesser messengers than God's only Son.

12:43 *an unclean spirit.* This analogy seems to be describing the moral reformation that took place in Israel as a result of the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus. The reformation, however, was not genuine, and therefore Israel's unbelief and hardness of heart was worse than before. In the same way, a person who decides to try religion without being born again, and then decides "it's not for me," is worse off than if they had never tried, because their hearts are hardened to God's voice.

12:22 [q] Luke 11:14, 15 **12:23** [r] Matt. 9:27; 21:9 **12:24** [s] Matt. 9:34 **12:25** [t] Matt. 9:4 **12:28** [u] [Dan. 2:44; 7:14] **12:29** [v] Is. 49:24 **12:31** [w] Mark 3:28–30 [x] Acts 7:51 **12:32** [y] John 7:12, 52 [z] 1 Tim. 1:13 **12:33** [a] Matt. 7:16–18 **12:34** [b] Matt. 3:7; 23:33 [c] Luke 6:45 **12:38** [d] Mark 8:11 **12:39** [e] Matt. 16:4 **12:40** [f] Jon. 1:17 **12:41** [g] Luke 11:32 [h] Jer. 3:11 [i] Jon. 3:5 **12:42** [j] 1 Kin. 10:1–13 **12:43** [k] Luke 11:24–26 [l] [1 Pet. 5:8]

'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds *it* empty, swept, and put in order. 45Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; [m]and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

Jesus' Mother and Brothers Send for Him

46While He was still talking to the multitudes, [n]behold, His mother and [o]brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. 47Then one said to Him, "Look, [p]Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

48But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My [q]brothers! 50For [r]whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

The Parable of the Sower

13 On the same day Jesus went out of the house [a]and sat by the sea. 2[b]And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that [c]He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: [d]"Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. 5Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. 6But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. 7And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. 8But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some [e]a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9[f]He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

The Purpose of Parables

10And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

11He answered and said to them, "Because [g]it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12[h]For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

> [i]'*Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,*
> *And seeing you will see and not [j]perceive;*
> 15 *For the hearts of this people have grown dull.*
> *Their ears [k]are hard of hearing,*
> *And their eyes they have [l]closed,*
> *Lest they should see with their eyes*
> *and hear with their ears,*
> *Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,*
> *So that I should* [m]heal them.'**

16But [n]blessed *are* your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; 17for assuredly, I say to you [o]that many prophets and righteous *men* desired to see what you see, and did not see *it*, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear *it*.

The Parable of the Sower Explained

18[p]"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19When anyone hears the word [q]of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. 20But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately [r]receives it with joy; 21yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when [s]tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately [t]he stumbles. 22Now [u]he who received seed [v]among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word,

* **13:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *would.* • Isaiah 6:9, 10

13:11 ***it has been given to you.*** The purpose of this parable was to both reveal and conceal the truth. This hiding of the truth was a judgment for unbelief, as happened during Isaiah's ministry (Is. 6:9–10).

13:14–15 Spiritual Death—Genesis 3 teaches us that, through sin, man died spiritually. Here, Christ quotes from Isaiah 6 to detail the meaning of spiritual death: Our ability to perceive spiritual reality is absent. Key spiritual senses don't work as they were originally designed to work. We can't see the implications of spiritual events. We can't understand the meaning of spiritual words. It is as if our senses are dead. In order to have our spiritual senses restored, we need someone to heal us. Only Christ can provide the necessary healing to open our spiritual eyes and ears.

12:45 [m] [2 Pet. 2:20–22] **12:46** [n] Luke 8:19–21 [o] John 2:12; 7:3, 5 **12:47** [p] Matt. 13:55, 56 **12:49** [q] John 20:17 **12:50** [r] John 15:14 **13:1** [a] Mark 4:1–12 **13:2** [b] Luke 8:4 [c] Luke 5:3 **13:3** [d] Luke 8:5 **13:8** [e] Gen. 26:12 **13:9** [f] Matt. 11:15 **13:11** [g] Mark 4:10, 11 **13:12** [h] Matt. 25:29 **13:14** [i] Is. 6:9, 10; Ezek. 12:2 [j] [John 3:36] **13:15** [k] Heb. 5:11 [l] Luke 19:42 [m] Acts 28:26, 27 **13:16** [n] Luke 10:23, 24 **13:17** [o] Heb. 11:13 **13:18** [p] Mark 4:13–20 **13:19** [q] Matt. 4:23 **13:20** [r] Is. 58:2 **13:21** [s] [Acts 14:22] [t] Matt. 11:6 **13:22** [u] 1 Tim. 6:9 [v] Jer. 4:3

and he becomes unfruitful. 23But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears [w]fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

24Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' 29But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but [x]gather the wheat into my barn."'"

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

31Another parable He put forth to them, saying: [y]"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, 32which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a [z]tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

The Parable of the Leaven

33[a]Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures* of meal till [b]it was all leavened."

Prophecy and the Parables

34[c]All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, 35that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

> [d]*"I will open My mouth in parables;*
> *[e]I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."**

The Parable of the Tares Explained

36Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38[f]The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are [g]the sons of the wicked *one*. 39The enemy who sowed them is the devil, [h]the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. 40Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41The Son of Man will send out His angels, [i]and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42[j]and will cast them into the furnace of fire. [k]There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43[l]Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. [m]He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

44"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and [n]sells all that he has and [o]buys that field.

* **13:33** Greek *sata*, approximately two pecks in all
* **13:35** Psalm 78:2

13:25 ***his enemy came and sowed tares.*** Tares are weeds which closely resemble wheat, but which do not produce good food. They are indistinguishable from the real wheat until the fruit appears. Just like the tares among the wheat, genuine believers and counterfeits will be allowed to remain together.
13:31 ***like a mustard seed.*** The parable of the mustard seed shows that the number of people who will inherit the kingdom will be very small at first, but it will grow to be completely out of proportion to its initial size.
13:33 ***like leaven.*** Although leaven is sometimes used in Scripture to symbolize evil, here the kingdom of heaven is being compared to the dynamic character of yeast. When yeast is mixed with the dough, it expands from within, causing the dough to grow. Rather than being powered by outward armies or organizations, the kingdom of God will grow by the internal power of the Holy Spirit.
13:42 Hell—This verse describes the separation that comes between the righteous and the wicked at the end of the age. The place of their eternal dwelling is described as a "furnace of fire," perhaps because fire is one of man's most vivid concepts of suffering. Some think that there is no real, actual hell of fire, and that instead the wicked simply cease to exist, but this is difficult to support. The Scriptures consistently speak of hell as a real place of torment and anguish for all who do not receive the salvation that Jesus offers.
13:44 ***like treasure.*** The main point here is the immense value of the kingdom, which far outweighs any sacrifice or inconvenience one might encounter on earth.

13:23 [w] Col. 1:6 **13:30** [x] Matt. 3:12 **13:31** [y] Luke 13:18, 19 **13:32** [z] Ezek. 17:22–24; 31:3–9 **13:33** [a] Luke 13:20, 21 [b] [1 Cor. 5:6] **13:34** [c] Ps. 78:2; Mark 4:33, 34 **13:35** [d] Ps. 78:2 [e] Eph. 3:9 **13:38** [f] Rom. 10:18 [g] John 8:44 **13:39** [h] Rev. 14:15 **13:41** [i] Matt. 18:7 **13:42** [j] Rev. 19:20; 20:10 [k] Matt. 8:12; 13:50 **13:43** [l] [Dan. 12:3] [m] Matt. 13:9 **13:44** [n] Phil. 3:7, 8 [o] [Is. 55:1]

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a
merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 who,
when he had found [p]one pearl of great
price, went and sold all that he had and
bought it.

The Parable of the Dragnet

47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like
a dragnet that was cast into the sea and
[q]gathered some of every kind, 48 which,
when it was full, they drew to shore; and
they sat down and gathered the good into
vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 So it
will be at the end of the age. The angels
will come forth, [r]separate the wicked from
among the just, 50 and cast them into the
furnace of fire. There will be wailing and
gnashing of teeth."

51 Jesus said to them,* "Have you under-
stood all these things?"

They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."*

52 Then He said to them, "Therefore every
scribe instructed concerning* the kingdom
of heaven is like a householder who brings
out of his treasure [s]*things* new and old."

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

53 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had
finished these parables, that He departed
from there. 54 [t]When He had come to His
own country, He taught them in their syn-
agogue, so that they were astonished and
said, "Where did this *Man* get this wisdom
and *these* mighty works? 55 [u]Is this not the
carpenter's son? Is not His mother called
Mary? And [v]His brothers [w]James, Joses,*
Simon, and Judas? 56 And His sisters, are
they not all with us? Where then did this
Man get all these things?" 57 So they [x]were
offended at Him.

But Jesus said to them, [y]"A prophet is not
without honor except in his own country
and in his own house." 58 Now [z]He did not
do many mighty works there because of
their unbelief.

John the Baptist Beheaded

14 At that time [a]Herod the tetrarch
heard the report about Jesus 2 and
said to his servants, "This is John the Bap-
tist; he is risen from the dead, and there-
fore these powers are at work in him."
3 [b]For Herod had laid hold of John and
bound him, and put *him* in prison for the
sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.
4 Because John had said to him, [c]"It is not
lawful for you to have her." 5 And although
he wanted to put him to death, he feared
the multitude, [d]because they counted him
as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday was cele-
brated, the daughter of Herodias danced
before them and pleased Herod. 7 Therefore
he promised with an oath to give her what-
ever she might ask.

8 So she, having been prompted by her
mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's
head here on a platter."

9 And the king was sorry; nevertheless,
because of the oaths and because of those
who sat with him, he commanded *it* to be
given to *her.* 10 So he sent and had John
beheaded in prison. 11 And his head was
brought on a platter and given to the girl,
and she brought *it* to her mother. 12 Then
his disciples came and took away the body
and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

Feeding the Five Thousand

13 [e]When Jesus heard *it,* He departed
from there by boat to a deserted place by
Himself. But when the multitudes heard
it, they followed Him on foot from the cit-
ies. 14 And when Jesus went out He saw a
great multitude; and He [f]was moved with
compassion for them, and healed their
sick. 15 [g]When it was evening, His disciples
came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted
place, and the hour is already late. Send the
multitudes away, that they may go into the
villages and buy themselves food."

16 But Jesus said to them, "They do not
need to go away. You give them something
to eat."

17 And they said to Him, "We have here
only five loaves and two fish."

18 He said, "Bring them here to Me."
19 Then He commanded the multitudes to
sit down on the grass. And He took the
five loaves and the two fish, and looking
up to heaven, [h]He blessed and broke and
gave the loaves to the disciples; and the
disciples gave to the multitudes. 20 So they
all ate and were filled, and they took up
twelve baskets full of the fragments that
remained. 21 Now those who had eaten were

* **13:51** NU-Text omits *Jesus said to them.* • NU-Text omits *Lord.* * **13:52** Or *for* * **13:55** NU-Text reads *Joseph.*

13:47 *of every kind.* The responsibility of the disciples would be to catch as many "fish" of every kind as possible. The work of judging or sorting out the false catch, however, is a job that disciples are neither called nor equipped to do. That work is assigned to angels at Christ's return.

14:3 *for the sake of Herodias.* Herod had gone to Rome, where he met Herodias, the wife of his half brother Philip. After seducing Herodias, Herod divorced his own wife and married his sister-in-law. John had rebuked the king for his moral transgressions.

13:46 [p] Prov. 2:4; 3:14, 15; 8:10, 19 **13:47** [q] Matt. 22:9, 10 **13:49** [r] Matt. 25:32 **13:52** [s] Song 7:13 **13:54** [t] Luke 4:16 **13:55** [u] John 6:42 [v] Matt. 12:46 [w] Mark 15:40 **13:57** [x] Matt. 11:6 [y] Luke 4:24 **13:58** [z] Mark 6:5, 6 **14:1** [a] Mark 6:14–29 **14:3** [b] Luke 3:19, 20 **14:4** [c] Lev. 18:16; 20:21 **14:5** [d] Luke 20:6 **14:13** [e] John 6:1, 2 **14:14** [f] Mark 6:34 **14:15** [g] Luke 9:12 **14:19** [h] Matt. 15:36; 26:26

about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Sea

22 Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. 23 [i]And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. [j]Now when evening came, He was alone there. 24 But the boat was now in the middle of the sea,* tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw Him [k]walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good [l]cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind *was* boisterous,* he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

31 And immediately Jesus stretched out *His* hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of [m]little faith, why did you doubt?"

32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

33 Then those who were in the boat came and* worshiped Him, saying, "Truly [n]You are the Son of God."

Many Touch Him and Are Made Well

34 [o]When they had crossed over, they came to the land of* Gennesaret. 35 And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, 36 and begged Him that they might only [p]touch the hem of His garment. And [q]as many as touched *it* were made perfectly well.

Defilement Comes from Within

15 Then [a]the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, 2 [b]"Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, [c]*'Honor your father and your mother'*;* and, [d]*'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'** 5 But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, [e]"Whatever profit you might have received from me *is a* gift *to God*"— 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.'* Thus you have made the commandment* of God of no effect by your tradition. 7 [f]Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

8 *'These[g] people draw near to Me with their mouth,*
And honor Me with their lips,*
But their heart is far from Me.
9 *And in vain they worship Me,*
*[h]Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"**

10 [i]When He had called the multitude to *Himself*, He said to them, "Hear and understand: 11 [j]Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

12 Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?"

13 But He answered and said, [k]"Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 14 Let them alone. [l]They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

* **14:24** NU-Text reads *many furlongs away from the land.* * **14:30** NU-Text brackets *that* and *boisterous* as disputed. * **14:33** NU-Text omits *came and.* * **14:34** NU-Text reads *came to land at.* * **15:4** Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16 • Exodus 21:17 * **15:6** NU-Text omits *or mother.* • NU-Text reads *word.* * **15:8** NU-Text omits *draw near to Me with their mouth, And.* * **15:9** Isaiah 29:13

14:25 ***the fourth watch.*** This would be between 3:00 and 6:00 A.M.

15:2 ***the tradition of the elders.*** This was not the law of Moses, but oral tradition, based on interpretations of the law.

15:3 ***tradition.*** The scribes and Pharisees were placing their own views above the revelation of God, and yet claimed to be following Him.

15:7 ***Hypocrites.*** The Pharisees had laid down many rigid and inflexible laws concerning diet, Sabbath day activities, ceremonial washings, and many other traditions. Not only did this reduce spiritual service to a harsh system of dos and don'ts, it also caused everyone, Pharisees included, to look for loopholes of escape from the burden of so many laws and rules. The ultimate outcome was religious hypocrisy. Christ came both to fulfill the law (5:17–18) and also to free us from its penalty (Gal. 3:13).

14:23 [i] Mark 6:46 [j] John 6:16 **14:26** [k] Job 9:8 **14:27** [l] Acts 23:11; 27:22, 25, 36 **14:31** [m] Matt. 6:30; 8:26 **14:33** [n] Ps. 2:7 **14:34** [o] Mark 6:53 **14:36** [p] [Mark 5:24–34] [q] [Luke 6:19] **15:1** [a] Mark 7:1 **15:2** [b] Mark 7:5 **15:4** [c] [Deut. 5:16] [d] Ex. 21:17 **15:5** [e] Mark 7:11, 12 **15:7** [f] Mark 7:6 **15:8** [g] Ps. 78:36; Is. 29:13 **15:9** [h] (Col. 2:18–22] **15:10** [i] Mark 7:14 **15:11** [j] [Acts 10:15] **15:13** [k] [John 15:2] **15:14** [l] Luke 6:39

15 [m]Then Peter answered and said to
Him, "Explain this parable to us."
16 So Jesus said, [n]"Are you also still
without understanding? 17 Do you not
yet understand that [o]whatever enters
the mouth goes into the stomach and is
eliminated? 18 But [p]those things which
proceed out of the mouth come from
the heart, and they defile a man. 19 [q]For
out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,
murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts,
false witness, blasphemies. 20 These are
the things which defile a man, but to
eat with unwashed hands does not defile
a man."

A Gentile Shows Her Faith

21 [r]Then Jesus went out from there and
departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.
22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came
from that region and cried out to Him,
saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, [s]Son
of David! My daughter is severely demon-
possessed."
23 But He answered her not a word.
And His disciples came and urged Him,
saying, "Send her away, for she cries out
after us."
24 But He answered and said, [t]"I was not
sent except to the lost sheep of the house
of Israel."
25 Then she came and worshiped Him,
saying, "Lord, help me!"
26 But He answered and said, "It is not
good to take the children's bread and throw
it to the little [u]dogs."
27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the
little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from
their masters' table."
28 Then Jesus answered and said to her,
"O woman, [v]great *is* your faith! Let it be to
you as you desire." And her daughter was
healed from that very hour.

Jesus Heals Great Multitudes

29 [w]Jesus departed from there, [x]skirted
the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the
mountain and sat down there. 30 [y]Then
great multitudes came to Him, hav-
ing with them *the* lame, blind, mute,
maimed, and many others; and they laid
them down at Jesus' [z]feet, and He healed
them. 31 So the multitude marveled when
they saw *the* mute speaking, *the* maimed
made whole, *the* lame walking, and *the*
blind seeing; and they [a]glorified the God
of Israel.

Feeding the Four Thousand

32 [b]Now Jesus called His disciples to
Himself and said, "I have compassion on
the multitude, because they have now
continued with Me three days and have
nothing to eat. And I do not want to send
them away hungry, lest they faint on the
way."
33 [c]Then His disciples said to Him,
"Where could we get enough bread in
the wilderness to fill such a great multi-
tude?"
34 Jesus said to them, "How many loaves
do you have?"
And they said, "Seven, and a few little
fish."
35 So He commanded the multitude to
sit down on the ground. 36 And [d]He took
the seven loaves and the fish and [e]gave
thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His
disciples; and the disciples *gave* to the mul-
titude. 37 So they all ate and were filled, and
they took up seven large baskets full of the
fragments that were left. 38 Now those who
ate were four thousand men, besides wom-
en and children. 39 [f]And He sent away the
multitude, got into the boat, and came to
the region of Magdala.*

The Pharisees and Sadducees Seek a Sign

16 Then the [a]Pharisees and Sadducees
came, and testing Him asked that
He would show them a sign from heaven.
2 He answered and said to them, "When it
is evening you say, 'It *will be* fair weather,
for the sky is red'; 3 and in the morning, 'It
will be foul weather today, for the sky is red
and threatening.' Hypocrites!* You know
how to discern the face of the sky, but you
cannot *discern* the signs of the times. 4 [b]A
wicked and adulterous generation seeks
after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it
except the sign of the prophet* Jonah." And
He left them and departed.

* **15:39** NU-Text reads *Magadan*. * **16:3** NU-Text omits *Hypocrites*. * **16:4** NU-Text omits *the prophet*.

15:18 ***come from the heart.*** As we think in our hearts, or inner beings, so we are. The raw material of our actions is what we take into our minds and allow to settle in our hearts. David put it this way: "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (Ps. 119:11). The other side is seen in Psalm 101:3 "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes." Paul says the believer must bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

15:22 ***Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David.*** The woman was a Gentile who would have had no natural claim on the Jewish Messiah.

15:31 ***glorified the God of Israel.*** The Gentiles believed and glorified Israel's God, while many in Israel remained blind to their Messiah.

15:15 [m] Mark 7:17 **15:16** [n] Matt. 16:9 **15:17** [o] [1 Cor. 6:13] **15:18** [p] [James 3:6] **15:19** [q] Prov. 6:14 **15:21** [r] Mark 7:24–30 **15:22** [s] Matt. 1:1; 22:41, 42 **15:24** [t] Matt. 10:5, 6 **15:26** [u] Matt. 7:6 **15:28** [v] Luke 7:9 **15:29** [w] Mark 7:31–37 [x] Matt. 4:18 **15:30** [y] Is. 35:5, 6 [z] Luke 7:38; 8:41; 10:39 **15:31** [a] Luke 5:25, 26; 19:37, 38 **15:32** [b] Mark 8:1–10 **15:33** [c] 2 Kin. 4:43 **15:36** [d] Matt. 14:19; 26:27 [e] Luke 22:19 **15:39** [f] Mark 8:10 **16:1** [a] Mark 8:11 **16:4** [b] Matt. 12:39

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees

5Now [c]when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. 6Then Jesus said to them, [d]"Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."

7And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "*It is* because we have taken no bread."

8But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, "O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread?* 9[e]Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? 10[f]Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? 11How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—*but* to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 12Then they understood that He did not tell *them* to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

13When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, [g]"Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

14So they said, [h]"Some *say* John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or [i]one of the prophets."

15He said to them, "But who do [j]you say that I am?"

16Simon Peter answered and said, [k]"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, [l]for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but [m]My Father who is in heaven. 18And I also say to you that [n]you are Peter, and [o]on this rock I will build My church, and [p]the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19[q]And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed* in heaven."

20[r]Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

21From that time Jesus began [s]to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

22Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

23But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, [t]Satan! [u]You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

Take Up the Cross and Follow Him

24[v]Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and [w]follow Me. 25For [x]whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26For what [y]profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or [z]what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27For [a]the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father [b]with His angels, [c]and then He will reward each according to his works. 28Assuredly, I say to you, [d]there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

* **16:8** NU-Text reads *you have no bread.*
* **16:19** Or *will have been bound … will have been loosed*

16:11–12 *leaven.* In Scripture, leaven is often used as a symbol of evil. The doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees was hypocrisy and legalism, political opportunism, and spiritual hardness.

16:16 Church—Peter's confession "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" is the foundation on which the church is built. Never mind how small the apostolic band may be, the church is indestructible, and with unsurpassed power overcomes Satan and cannot be overcome. The power comes from God, the Creator of the universe, Owner and Master of the church. All the church has is derived from and dependent on the Almighty Son of God.

16:18 The Origin of the Church—The church was a mystery (not clearly revealed) in the Old Testament. Christ prophesied in these words spoken to Peter, "on this rock I will build My church." There is a play here on the word *rock,* which also happens to be Peter's name. Jesus said, "you are Peter" (masculine, *petros*) and "on this rock" (feminine, *petra*) "I will build My church." The Holy Spirit came upon the church on the Day of Pentecost in response to Peter's sermon when "three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:41). This group, along with the original disciples, became "the church."

16:28 *not taste death.* In the transfiguration, Peter, James, and John saw a preview of the kingdom. Jesus was explaining that very soon those three disciples would see Him glorified as He will be in the kingdom.

16:5 [c] Mark 8:14 **16:6** [d] Luke 12:1 **16:9** [e] Matt. 14:15–21 **16:10** [f] Matt. 15:32–38 **16:13** [g] Luke 9:18 **16:14** [h] Matt. 14:2 [i] Matt. 21:11 **16:15** [j] John 6:67 **16:16** [k] Acts 8:37; 9:20 **16:17** [l] [Eph. 2:8] [m] Gal. 1:16 **16:18** [n] John 1:42 [o] [Eph. 2:20] [p] Is. 38:10 **16:19** [q] Matt. 18:18 **16:20** [r] Luke 9:21 **16:21** [s] Luke 9:22; 18:31; 24:46 **16:23** [t] Matt. 4:10 [u] [Rom. 8:7] **16:24** [v] [2 Tim. 3:12] [w] [1 Pet. 2:21] **16:25** [x] John 12:25 **16:26** [y] Luke 12:20, 21 [z] Ps. 49:7, 8 **16:27** [a] Mark 8:38 [b] [Dan. 7:10] [c] Rom. 2:6 **16:28** [d] Luke 9:27

Jesus Transfigured on the Mount

17 Now [a]after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; **2**and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. **3**And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. **4**Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us* make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

5*b*While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, [c]"This is My beloved Son, [d]in whom I am well pleased. [e]Hear Him!" **6***f*And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. **7**But Jesus came and [g]touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." **8**When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

9Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

10And His disciples asked Him, saying, [h]"Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

11Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first* and will [i]restore all things. **12***j*But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they [k]did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise [l]the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." **13***m*Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

A Boy Is Healed

14*n*And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, **15**"Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic* and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. **16**So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

17Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and [o]perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." **18**And Jesus [p]rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

19Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"

20So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief;* for assuredly, I say to you, [q]if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. **21**However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*

Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection

22*r*Now while they were staying* in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, **23**and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And they were exceedingly [s]sorrowful.

Peter and His Master Pay Their Taxes

24*t*When they had come to Capernaum,* those who received the *temple* tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the *temple* tax?"

25He said, "Yes."

And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from [u]strangers?"

26Peter said to Him, "From strangers."

Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. **27**Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money;* take that and give it to them for Me and you."

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* **17:4** NU-Text reads *I will.* * **17:11** NU-Text omits *first.* * **17:15** Literally *moonstruck* * **17:20** NU-Text reads *little faith.* * **17:21** NU-Text omits this verse. * **17:22** NU-Text reads *gathering together.* * **17:24** NU-Text reads *Capharnaum* (here and elsewhere). * **17:27** Greek *stater*, the exact amount to pay the temple tax (didrachma) for two

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17:3 *Moses and Elijah.* This amazing experience was not only to show the disciples that Jesus was God's Son, but also to show them that He supersedes the law and the prophets and that they were subordinate to Him. It also explained that what Jesus was doing was no mystery to the Old Testament. The Old Testament people had been long looking forward to the Messiah and His kingdom.

17:11–13 *Elijah.* Jesus indicates that the prophecies concerning Elijah had their fulfillment in John the Baptist, yet because the restoration is not complete, many conclude that the role of Elijah will be taken up by one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3–6.

17:24 *temple tax.* This was a tax given annually by every adult Jewish male over 20 years of age for maintaining the temple. It was based on Exodus 30:13, and amounted to two days' wages for a common laborer.

17:25 *strangers.* Most likely this means the king taxed the common people and not the imperial family.

17:1 [a] Mark 9:2–8 **17:5** [b] 2 Pet. 1:17 [c] Mark 1:11 [d] Matt. 3:17; 12:18 [e] [Deut. 18:15, 19] **17:6** [f] 2 Pet. 1:18 **17:7** [g] Dan. 8:18 **17:10** [h] Mal. 4:5 **17:11** [i] [Mal. 4:6] **17:12** [j] Mark 9:12, 13 [k] Matt. 14:3, 10 [l] Matt. 16:21 **17:13** [m] Matt. 11:14 **17:14** [n] Mark 9:14–28 **17:17** [o] Phil. 2:15 **17:18** [p] Luke 4:41 **17:20** [q] Luke 17:6 **17:22** [r] Mark 8:31 **17:23** [s] John 16:6; 19:30 **17:24** [t] Mark 9:33 **17:25** [u] [Is. 60:10–17]

Who Is the Greatest?

18 At [a]that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2 Then Jesus called a little [b]child to Him, set him in the midst of them, **3** and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, [c]unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. **4** [d]Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. **5** [e]Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

Jesus Warns of Offenses

6 [f]"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. **7** Woe to the world because of offenses! For [g]offenses must come, but [h]woe to that man by whom the offense comes!

8 [i]"If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. **9** And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

10 "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven [j]their angels always [k]see the face of My Father who is in heaven. **11** [l]For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.*

12 [m]"What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? **13** And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that *sheep* than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. **14** Even so it is not the [n]will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

Dealing with a Sinning Brother

15 "Moreover [o]if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, [p]you have gained your brother. **16** But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that [q]'*by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.*'* **17** And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a [r]heathen and a tax collector.

18 "Assuredly, I say to you, [s]whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

19 [t]"Again I say* to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, [u]it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered [v]together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? [w]Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, [x]up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. **23** Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. **25** But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded [y]that he be sold, with

* **18:11** NU-Text omits this verse. * **18:16** Deuteronomy 19:15 * **18:19** NU-Text and M-Text read *Again, assuredly, I say.*

18:3 ***converted.*** To be "converted" means to turn around, to take a different course (Luke 22:32).

18:10 ***their angels.*** This verse seems to imply that angels watch over and serve His followers on earth (Heb. 1:14).

18:16 ***two or three witnesses.*** The principle of witnesses is taken from Deuteronomy 19:15. Evidently, in this case they are to witness that the offended brother is acting in good faith and the right spirit in attempting to work towards reconciliation. They would also be witnesses to any agreement.

18:17 ***church.*** Unfortunately "discipline" has sometimes been reduced to a merely negative concept. To be sure, discipline includes the notion of punishment and correction, but church discipline in this context clearly has the restoration of the offender in view. Severe measures may sometimes need to be taken with an erring brother or sister, but restoration and reconciliation should always be the goal.

18:22 ***seventy times seven.*** Some translations say "seventy-seven times." Whichever number is used, the point is the same: be ready to forgive over and over again, past counting. This verse does not only apply to forgiveness for seventy times seven different sins. Sometimes, we may have to consciously decide to forgive and let go of an old hurt again and again, "seventy times seven."

18:1 [a] Luke 9:46–48; 22:24–27 **18:2** [b] Matt. 19:14 **18:3** [c] Luke 18:16 **18:4** [d] Matt. 20:27; 23:11] **18:5** [e] [Matt. 10:42] **18:6** [f] Mark 9:42 **18:7** [g] [1 Cor. 11:19] [h] Matt. 26:24; 27:4, 5 **18:8** [i] Matt. 5:29, 30 **18:10** [j] [Heb. 1:14] [k] Luke 1:19 **18:11** [l] Luke 9:56 **18:12** [m] Luke 15:4–7 **18:14** [n] [1 Tim. 2:4] **18:15** [o] Lev. 19:17 [p] [James 5:20] **18:16** [q] Deut. 17:6; 19:15 **18:17** [r] [2 Thess. 3:6, 14] **18:18** [s] [John 20:22, 23] **18:19** [t] [1 Cor. 1:10] [u] [1 John 3:22; 5:14] **18:20** [v] Acts 20:7 **18:21** [w] Luke 17:4 **18:22** [x] Col. 3:13 **18:25** [y] 2 Kin. 4:1

his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

28"But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' 29So his fellow servant fell down at his feet* and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'* 30And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. 32Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you [z]all that debt because you begged me. 33Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

35[a]"So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."*

Marriage and Divorce

19 Now it came to pass, [a]when Jesus had finished these sayings, *that* He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. 2[b]And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

3The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?"

4And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made* *them* at the beginning [c]'*made them male and female*,'* 5and said, [d]'*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and* [e]*the two shall become one flesh*'?* 6So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

7They said to Him, [f]"Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

8He said to them, "Moses, because of the [g]hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your [h]wives, but from the beginning it was not so. 9[i]And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,* and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

10His disciples said to Him, [j]"If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry."

Jesus Teaches on Celibacy

11But He said to them, [k]"All cannot accept this saying, but only *those* to whom it has been given: 12For there are eunuchs who were born thus from *their* mother's womb, and [l]there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept *it*, let him accept *it*."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

13[m]Then little children were brought to Him that He might put *His* hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. 14But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for [n]of such is the kingdom of heaven." 15And He laid *His* hands on them and departed from there.

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

16[o]Now behold, one came and said to Him, [p]"Good* Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

17So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good?* No one *is* [q]good but One, *that is*, God.* But if you want to enter into life, [r]keep the commandments."

18He said to Him, "Which ones?"

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* **18:29** NU-Text omits *at his feet*. • NU-Text and M-Text omit *all*. * **18:35** NU-Text omits *his trespasses*. * **19:4** NU-Text reads *created*. • Genesis 1:27; 5:2 * **19:5** Genesis 2:24 * **19:9** Or *fornication* * **19:16** NU-Text omits *Good*. * **19:17** NU-Text reads *Why do you ask Me about what is good?* • NU-Text reads *There is One who is good.*

18:35 *forgive.* This verse is a serious warning (1 John 4:20).

19:9 *divorces his wife.* When the Pharisees asked Jesus if divorce could ever be considered lawful, He did not fall into their trap. He took them back to Genesis and God's original intent in marriage, one man and one woman for life (vv. 4–5; Gen. 1:27; 2:24). In spite of the "exception clause," one thing is surely clear: God hates divorce (Mal. 2:15–16). Marriage is a divine arrangement that is intended to be permanent and inviolable. Straying from God's path always has tragic consequences.

19:12 *eunuchs.* The term eunuch refers to a castrated man, whether by surgery, accident, or birth. In the ancient world, eunuchs were put in charge of harems, because they had the physical strength and endurance of a man, but would not be a sexual threat to the women of the harem.

18:32 [z] Luke 7:41–43 **18:35** [a] James 2:13 **19:1** [a] Mark 10:1–12 **19:2** [b] Matt. 12:15 **19:4** [c] Gen. 1:27; 5:2 **19:5** [d] Gen. 2:24 [e] [1 Cor. 6:16; 7:2] **19:7** [f] Deut. 24:1–4 **19:8** [g] Heb. 3:15 [h] Mal. 2:16 **19:9** [i] [Matt. 5:32] **19:10** [j] [Prov. 21:19] **19:11** [k] [1 Cor. 7:2, 7, 9, 17] **19:12** [l] [1 Cor. 7:32] **19:13** [m] Luke 18:15 **19:14** [n] Matt. 18:3, 4 **19:16** [o] Mark 10:17–30 [p] Luke 10:25 **19:17** [q] Nah. 1:7 [r] Lev. 18:5

Jesus said, [s]"'*You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'* 19[t]*'Honor your father and your mother,'** and, [u]*'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"**

20The young man said to Him, "All these things I have [v]kept from my youth.* What do I still lack?"

21Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, [w]go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

22But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

With God All Things Are Possible

23Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that [x]it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

25When His disciples heard *it*, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"

26But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but [y]with God all things are possible."

27Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, [z]we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"

28So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, [a]you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29[b]And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife* or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. 30[c]But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first.

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. 5Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. 6And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle,* and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' 7They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.'*

8"So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.' 9And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. 10But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. 11And when they had received *it*, they complained against the landowner, 12saying, 'These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' 13But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14Take *what is* yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you. 15[a]Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or [b]is your eye evil because I am good?' 16[c]So the last will be first, and the first last. [d]For many are called, but few chosen."*

* **19:19** Exodus 20:12–16; Deuteronomy 5:16–20 • Leviticus 19:18 * **19:20** NU-Text omits *from my youth.* * **19:29** NU-Text omits *or wife.* * **20:6** NU-Text omits *idle.* * **20:7** NU-Text omits the last clause of this verse. * **20:16** NU-Text omits the last sentence of this verse.

19:21 *sell what you have.* This verse does not teach salvation by works (Rom. 3:23–24; Eph. 2:8–9). Rather, Jesus was proving that the rich young man could not have truly fulfilled all of the law of Moses. If he really loved his neighbor as the law required (Lev. 19:18), he would not have had any difficulty in giving away his wealth to the poor.

19:23–24 *it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom.* The point of this seems to be that fear of losing one's wealth can hold a person back to the extent that they will never become saved at all. One of the things that goes with being saved is saying, "God's way, not my way."

20:3 *third hour.* This was about 9:00 A.M.

20:5 *the sixth and the ninth hour.* This was about noon and about 3:00 P.M.

20:6 *the eleventh hour.* This was about 5:00 P.M. There would be only an hour or so left in the working day.

20:16 *the last will be first.* The workers who were collected without an agreement represent the Gentiles who are made equal with the Jewish people when salvation became available to all through Jesus Christ (Rom. 11:15; Eph. 2:13–15; 3:6).

19:18 [s] Ex. 20:13–16 **19:19** [t] Ex. 20:12–16; Deut. 5:16–20 [u] Lev. 19:18 **19:20** [v] [Phil. 3:6, 7] **19:21** [w] Acts 2:45; 4:34, 35 **19:23** [x] [1 Tim. 6:9] **19:26** [y] Jer. 32:17 **19:27** [z] Deut. 33:9 **19:28** [a] Luke 22:28–30 **19:29** [b] Mark 10:29, 30 **19:30** [c] Luke 13:30 **20:15** [a] [Rom. 9:20, 21] [b] Deut. 15:9 **20:16** [c] Matt. 19:30 [d] Matt. 22:14

Jesus a Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection

17 [e]Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem,
took the twelve disciples aside on the road
and said to them, 18 [f]"Behold, we are going
up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will
be betrayed to the chief priests and to the
scribes; and they will condemn Him to
death, 19 [g]and deliver Him to the Gentiles to
[h]mock and to [i]scourge and to [j]crucify. And
the third day He will [k]rise again."

Greatness Is Serving

20 [l]Then the mother of [m]Zebedee's sons
came to Him with her sons, kneeling down
and asking something from Him.
21 And He said to her, "What do you
wish?"
She said to Him, "Grant that these two
sons of mine [n]may sit, one on Your right
hand and the other on the left, in Your
kingdom."
22 But Jesus answered and said, "You
do not know what you ask. Are you able
to drink [o]the cup that I am about to drink,
and be baptized with [p]the baptism that I
am baptized with?"*
They said to Him, "We are able."
23 So He said to them, [q]"You will indeed
drink My cup, and be baptized with the
baptism that I am baptized with;* but to
sit on My right hand and on My left is not
Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it
is prepared by My Father."
24 [r]And when the ten heard *it*, they were
greatly displeased with the two brothers.
25 But Jesus called them to *Himself* and
said, "You know that the rulers of the Gen-
tiles lord it over them, and those who are
great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet
[s]it shall not be so among you; but [t]whoever
desires to become great among you, let him
be your servant. 27 [u]And whoever desires to
be first among you, let him be your slave—
28 [v]just as the [w]Son of Man did not come to
be served, [x]but to serve, and [y]to give His
life a ransom [z]for many."

Two Blind Men Receive Their Sight

29 [a]Now as they went out of Jericho, a
great multitude followed Him. 30 And be-
hold, [b]two blind men sitting by the road,
when they heard that Jesus was passing
by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O
Lord, [c]Son of David!"
31 Then the multitude [d]warned them that
they should be quiet; but they cried out all
the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O
Lord, Son of David!"
32 So Jesus stood still and called them,
and said, "What do you want Me to do for
you?"
33 They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes
may be opened." 34 So Jesus had [e]compas-
sion and touched their eyes. And immedi-
ately their eyes received sight, and they
followed Him.

The Triumphal Entry

21 Now [a]when they drew near Jerusa-
lem, and came to Bethphage,* at [b]the
Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disci-
ples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village
opposite you, and immediately you will
find a donkey tied, and a colt with her.
Loose *them* and bring *them* to Me. 3 And if
anyone says anything to you, you shall say,
'The Lord has need of them,' and immedi-
ately he will send them."
4 All* this was done that it might be ful-
filled which was spoken by the prophet,
saying:

5 *"Tell[c] the daughter of Zion,*
'Behold, your King is coming to you,
Lowly, and sitting on a donkey,
*A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"**

6 [d]So the disciples went and did as Jesus
commanded them. 7 They brought the
donkey and the colt, [e]laid their clothes on
them, and set *Him** on them. 8 And a very
great multitude spread their clothes on the
road; [f]others cut down branches from the
trees and spread *them* on the road. 9 Then
the multitudes who went before and those
who followed cried out, saying:

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
[g]*'Blessed is He who comes in the name*
*of the LORD!'**
Hosanna in the highest!"

* **20:22** NU-Text omits *and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.* * **20:23** NU-Text omits *and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.* * **21:1** M-Text reads *Bethsphage.* * **21:4** NU-Text omits *All.* * **21:5** Zechariah 9:9 * **21:7** NU-Text reads *and He sat.* * **21:9** Psalm 118:26

20:26–27 *whosoever desires to become great.* The measure of greatness is not position, power, or prestige. It is service.
21:2 *a donkey tied.* This was prophesied in Zechariah 9:9.
21:9 *Hosanna.* Hosanna literally means "save now." The people were using it as an exclamation of joyous praise, but also they expected the Messiah to save them from the oppression of the Romans.

20:17 [e] Mark 10:32–34 **20:18** [f] Matt. 16:21; 26:47–57 **20:19** [g] Matt. 27:2 [h] Matt. 26:67, 68; 27:29, 41 [i] Matt. 27:26 [j] Acts 3:13–15 [k] Matt. 28:5, 6 **20:20** [l] Mark 10:35–45 [m] Matt. 4:21; 10:2 **20:21** [n] [Matt. 19:28] **20:22** [o] Luke 22:42 [p] Luke 12:50 **20:23** [q] [Acts 12:2] **20:24** [r] Mark 10:41 **20:26** [s] [1 Pet. 5:3] [t] Matt. 23:11 **20:27** [u] [Matt. 18:4] **20:28** [v] John 13:4 [w] [Phil. 2:6, 7] [x] Luke 22:27 [y] [Is. 53:10, 11] [z] [Rom. 5:15, 19] **20:29** [a] Mark 10:46–52 **20:30** [b] Matt. 9:27 [c] [Ezek. 37:21–25] **20:31** [d] Matt. 19:13 **20:34** [e] Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 18:27 **21:1** [a] Luke 19:29–38 [b] [Zech. 14:4] **21:5** [c] Zech. 9:9 **21:6** [d] Mark 11:4 **21:7** [e] 2 Kin. 9:13 **21:8** [f] Lev. 23:40 **21:9** [g] Ps. 118:26; Matt. 23:39

10 [h]And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"
11 So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, [i]the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

12 [j]Then Jesus went into the temple of God* and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the [k]money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13 And He said to them, "It is written, [l]'*My house shall be called a house of prayer,*'* but you have made it a [m]'*den of thieves.*'"*
14 Then *the* blind and *the* lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the [n]Son of David!" they were indignant 16 and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?"
And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read,

> [o]'*Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants*
> *You have perfected praise*'?"*

17 Then He left them and [p]went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

The Fig Tree Withered

18 [q]Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. 19 [r]And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.

The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree

20 [s]And when the disciples saw *it*, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?"
21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, [t]if you have faith and [u]do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, [v]but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. 22 And [w]whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Jesus' Authority Questioned

23 [x]Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and [y]said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"
24 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: 25 The [z]baptism of [a]John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?"
And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 26 But if we say, 'From men,' we [b]fear the multitude, [c]for all count John as a prophet." 27 So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."
And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

28 "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my [d]vineyard.' 29 He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. 30 Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of *his* father?"
They said to Him, "The first."
Jesus said to them, "[e]Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. 32 For [f]John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; [g]but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw *it*, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers

33 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner [h]who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and [i]went into

*21:12 NU-Text omits *of God*. *21:13 Isaiah 56:7 • Jeremiah 7:11 *21:16 Psalm 8:2

21:19 *Immediately.* This does not necessarily mean instantly; it may have the idea of "very soon" as in Luke 19:11. (The account of this miracle in Mark 11:12–14,20–21 indicates some time passing.)
21:21 *faith.* Few if any besides our Savior will reach this kind of faith in its fullness. However, as each believer approaches such faith in prayer, his effort will be rewarded. Answers are always given, even to the feeblest prayers of faith.
21:33 *planted a vineyard.* The owner of the vineyard was God; the vinedressers were the people of Israel. The servants represent God's messengers, and the son is Jesus the Messiah.

21:10 [h] John 2:13, 15 **21:11** [i] John 6:14; 7:40; 9:17 **21:12** [j] Mark 11:15–18 [k] Deut. 14:25 **21:13** [l] Is. 56:7 [m] Jer. 7:11 **21:15** [n] John 7:42 **21:16** [o] Ps. 8:2 **21:17** [p] John 11:1, 18; 12:1 **21:18** [q] Mark 11:12–14, 20–24 **21:19** [r] Mark 11:13 **21:20** [s] Mark 11:20 **21:21** [t] Matt. 17:20 [u] James 1:6 [v] 1 Cor. 13:2 **21:22** [w] Matt. 7:7–11 **21:23** [x] Luke 20:1–8 [y] Ex. 2:14 **21:25** [z] [John 1:29–34] [a] John 1:15–28 **21:26** [b] Matt. 14:5; 21:46 [c] Mark 6:20 **21:28** [d] Matt. 20:1; 21:33 **21:31** [e] Luke 7:29, 37–50 **21:32** [f] Luke 3:1–12; 7:29 [g] Luke 3:12, 13 **21:33** [h] Luke 20:9–19 [i] Matt. 25:14

a far country. 34Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35[j]And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37Then last of all he sent his [k]son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, [l]'This is the heir. [m]Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39[n]So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*.

40"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

41[o]They said to Him, [p]"He will destroy those wicked men miserably, [q]and lease *his* vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

42Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

> [r]*'The stone which the builders rejected*
> *Has become the chief cornerstone.*
> *This was the* LORD*'s doing,*
> *And it is marvelous in our eyes'*?*

43"Therefore I say to you, [s]the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44And [t]whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, [u]it will grind him to powder."

45Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. 46But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they [v]feared the multitudes, because [w]they took Him for a prophet.

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

22 And Jesus answered [q]and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; [b]my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding."' 5But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*. 7But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out [c]his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not [d]worthy. 9Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10So those servants went out into the highways and [e]gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

11"But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there [f]who did not have on a wedding garment. 12So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was [g]speechless. 13Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and* cast *him* [h]into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

14[i]"For many are called, but few *are* chosen."

The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar?

15[j]Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in *His* talk. 16And they sent to Him their disciples with the [k]Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. 17Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

18But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, *you* hypocrites? 19Show Me the tax money."

So they brought Him a denarius.

20And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription *is* this?"

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* **21:42** Psalm 118:22, 23 * **22:13** NU-Text omits *take him away, and.*

21:42 ***cornerstone.*** The rejected stone was the Messiah, who became the head cornerstone, the one holding the whole building together (Ps. 118:22–23).

21:11 ***did not have on a wedding garment.*** Like the others, this visitor had been invited to the wedding, but he failed to prepare himself for it. In Revelation, the garment of fine linen worn by the bride of the Lamb is said to be the righteous deeds of the saints (Rev. 19:8). In this parable the garment may refer to the righteousness of Christ, graciously provided for us through His death. To refuse to put it on would mean a refusal of Christ's sacrifice.

22:14 ***many are called, but few are chosen.*** All Israel has been invited, but only a few will accept and follow Jesus. Not all those invited will be among the chosen of God, for not all will believe.

21:35 *j* [1 Thess. 2:15] **21:37** *k* [John 3:16] **21:38** *l* [Heb. 1:2] *m* John 11:53 **21:39** *n* [Acts 2:23] **21:41** *o* Luke 20:16 *p* [Luke 21:24] *q* [Acts 13:46] **21:42** *r* Ps. 118:22, 23 **21:43** *s* [Matt. 8:12] **21:44** *t* Is. 8:14, 15 *u* [Dan. 2:44] **21:46** *v* Matt. 21:26 *w* Matt. 21:11 **22:1** *a* [Rev. 19:7–9] **22:4** *b* Prov. 9:2 **22:7** *c* [Dan. 9:26] **22:8** *d* Matt. 10:11 **22:10** *e* Matt. 13:38, 47, 48 **22:11** *f* [Col. 3:10, 12] **22:12** *g* [Rom. 3:19] **22:13** *h* Matt. 8:12; 25:30 **22:14** *i* Matt. 20:16 **22:15** *j* Mark 12:13–17 **22:16** *k* Mark 3:6; 8:15; 12:13

21 They said to Him, "Caesar's."
And He said to them, [l]"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are [m]Caesar's, and to God the things that are [n]God's." 22 When they had heard *these words,* they marveled, and left Him and went their way.

The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?

23 [o]The same day the Sadducees, [p]who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, 24 saying: "Teacher, [q]Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 25 Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. 26 Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. 27 Last of all the woman died also. 28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her."
29 Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, [r]not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but [s]are like angels of God* in heaven. 31 But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 [t]*'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'*?* God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." 33 And when the multitudes heard *this,* [u]they were astonished at His teaching.

The Scribes: Which Is the First Commandment of All?

34 [v]But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 Then one of them, [w]a lawyer, asked *Him a question,* testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?"
37 Jesus said to him, [x]"*'You shall love the* LORD *your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'** 38 This is *the* first and great commandment. 39 And *the* second *is* like it: [y]*'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'** 40 [z]On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord?

41 [a]While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"
They said to Him, "*The* [b]*Son* of David."
43 He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him *'Lord,'* saying:

44 *'The*[c] LORD *said to my Lord,*
"Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"'?*

45 If David then calls Him *'Lord,'* how is He his Son?" 46 [d]And no one was able to answer Him a word, [e]nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Woe to the Scribes and Pharisees

23 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, 2 saying: [a]"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe,* *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for [b]they say, and do not do. 4 [c]For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 But all their works they do to [d]be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 6 [e]They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' 8 [f]But you, do not be

* **22:30** NU-Text omits *of God.* * **22:32** Exodus 3:6, 15 * **22:37** Deuteronomy 6:5 * **22:39** Leviticus 19:18 * **22:44** Psalm 110:1 * **23:3** NU-Text omits *to observe.*

22:21 ***things that are Caesar's.*** When one subjects oneself to the state and accepts its protection and benefits, one is obligated to support it and obey its laws until it becomes sinful to do so (Rom. 13:1–7; 1 Pet. 2:13–17). But giving back to God what is His reaches far deeper than obedience to the state. Man has a duty to give himself to God, with all he is and all that he has.
22:42–45 ***Christ . . . Whose Son is He?*** The Old Testament foretold that the Messiah would come from David's royal line (2 Sam. 7:12–16; Ps. 89:3–4,34–36; Is. 9:7; 16:5; 55:3–4).
22:44 ***The LORD said to my Lord.*** The Hebrew text of Psalm 110:1 uses two different Hebrew words for "Lord." The first, translated "LORD," is the name Yahweh, the proper name of Israel's God. The second "Lord" means "master." David, the great king of Israel, calls one of his offspring "Lord" or "master." The implication is that Jesus, the Son of David, is divine.

23:5 ***phylacteries.*** Phylacteries were small boxes containing specific Scripture passages, in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 6:8 (Ex. 13:9,16; Prov. 3:3; 6:21; 7:3). They were worn on the forehead or arm. In order to be seen as especially righteous, some Pharisees wore conspicuously large phylacteries.
23:7 ***Rabbi.*** The title "rabbi" means "teacher."

22:21 [l] Matt. 17:25 [m] [Rom. 13:1–7] [n] [1 Cor. 3:23; 6:19, 20; 12:27] **22:23** [o] Luke 20:27–40 [p] Acts 23:8 **22:24** [q] Deut. 25:5 **22:29** [r] John 20:9 **22:30** [s] [1 John 3:2] **22:32** [t] Ex. 3:6, 15 **22:33** [u] Matt. 7:28 **22:34** [v] Mark 12:28–31 **22:35** [w] Luke 7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3 **22:37** [x] Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 30:6 **22:39** [y] Lev. 19:18 **22:40** [z] [Matt. 7:12] **22:41** [a] Luke 20:41–44 **22:42** [b] Matt. 1:1; 21:9 **22:44** [c] Ps. 110:1 **22:46** [d] Luke 14:6 [e] Mark 12:34 **23:2** [a] Neh. 8:4, 8 **23:3** [b] [Rom. 2:19] **23:4** [c] Luke 11:46 **23:5** [d] [Matt. 6:1–6, 16–18] **23:6** [e] Luke 11:43; 20:46 **23:8** [f] [James 3:1]

called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ,* and you are all brethren. 9Do not call anyone on earth your father; [g]for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11But [h]he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12[i]And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

13"But [j]woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in *yourselves,* nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. 14Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [k]For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.*

15"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

16"Woe to you, [l]blind guides, who say, [m]'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged *to perform it.*' 17Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold [n]or the temple that sanctifies* the gold? 18And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged *to perform it.*' 19Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift [o]or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. 21He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by [p]Him who dwells* in it. 22And he who swears by heaven, swears by [q]the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

23"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [r]For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and [s]have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

25"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [t]For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.* 26Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [u]For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men's* bones and all uncleanness. 28Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29[v]"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'

31"Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that [w]you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32[x]Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' *guilt.* 33Serpents, [y]brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 34[z]Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: [a]*some* of them you will kill and crucify, and [b]*some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35[c]that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, [d]from the blood of righteous Abel to [e]the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Jesus Laments over Jerusalem

37[f]"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets [g]and stones those who are sent to her! How often [h]I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks [i]under *her* wings, but you were not willing! 38See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say,

* **23:8** NU-Text omits *the Christ.* * **23:14** NU-Text omits this verse. * **23:17** NU-Text reads *sanctified.* * **23:21** M-Text reads *dwelt.* * **23:25** M-Text reads *unrighteousness.*

23:10 ***do not be called teachers.*** This verse is a warning against the human tendency to replace a personal relationship with God with following an earthly leader. No matter how dynamic or even how godly such a leader is, as soon as people start looking to that person rather than to God, they have created an idol.

23:24 ***swallow a camel.*** The Pharisees would literally "strain out a gnat" in order not to violate Leviticus 11:41–43, but they swallowed "a camel" by neglecting mercy, justice, and faith.

23:25–26 ***but inside.*** The inside of the cup represents a person's character. Sometimes those who most loudly protest the sins of others are secretly guilty of those or worse sins themselves.

23:35 ***Abel . . . Zechariah.*** Abel was the first person murdered in the Old Testament (Gen. 4:8); Zechariah was the last. His death is recorded in 2 Chronicles 24:20–22, the last book of the Hebrew canon.

23:9 [g] [Mal. 1:6] **23:11** [h] Matt. 20:26, 27 **23:12** [i] Luke 14:11; 18:14 **23:13** [j] Luke 11:52 **23:14** [k] Mark 12:40 **23:16** [l] Matt. 15:14; 23:24 [m] [Matt. 5:33, 34] **23:17** [n] Ex. 30:29 **23:19** [o] Ex. 29:37 **23:21** [p] 1 Kin. 8:13 **23:22** [q] Matt. 5:34 **23:23** [r] Luke 11:42; 18:12 [s] [Hos. 6:6] **23:25** [t] Luke 11:39 **23:27** [u] Acts 23:3 **23:29** [v] Luke 11:47, 48 **23:31** [w] [Acts 7:51, 52] **23:32** [x] [1 Thess. 2:16] **23:33** [y] Matt. 3:7; 12:34 **23:34** [z] Luke 11:49 [a] Acts 7:54–60; 22:19 [b] 2 Cor. 11:24, 25 **23:35** [c] Rev. 18:24 [d] Gen. 4:8 [e] 2 Chr. 24:20, 21 **23:37** [f] Luke 13:34, 35 [g] 2 Chr. 24:20, 21; 36:15, 16 [h] Deut. 32:11, 12 [i] Ps. 17:8; 91:4

[j]*'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"**

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple

24 Then [a]Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. **2**And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, [b]not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age

3Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, [c]the disciples came to Him privately, saying, [d]"Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

4And Jesus answered and said to them: [e]"Take heed that no one deceives you. **5**For [f]many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' [g]and will deceive many. **6**And you will hear of [h]wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all* *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. **7**For [i]nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be [j]famines, pestilences,* and earthquakes in various places. **8**All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9[k]"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. **10**And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. **11**Then [l]many false prophets will rise up and [m]deceive many. **12**And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow [n]cold. **13**[o]But he who endures to the end shall be saved. **14**And this [p]gospel of the kingdom [q]will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

The Great Tribulation

15[r]"Therefore when you see the [s]*'abomination of desolation,'** spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" [t](whoever reads, let him understand), **16**"then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. **17**Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. **18**And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. **19**But [u]woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! **20**And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. **21**For [v]then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall

* **23:39** Psalm 118:26 * **24:6** NU-Text omits *all.* * **24:7** NU-Text omits *pestilences.* * **24:15** Daniel 11:31; 12:11

24:1 *temple.* The first temple, built by Solomon, was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. The second temple, built under the encouragement of Haggai and Zechariah, and the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua (Hag. 1:1), was completed after considerable delay in 516 B.C. This second temple was lavishly restored by Herod the Great, but not completed until A.D. 64. It stood completed for only six years before it was reduced to rubble by the Romans. The devastation in A.D. 70 was so complete that the precise location is still unknown today.

24:4 *Take heed that no one deceives you.* Jesus' warning about being deceived was especially appropriate for the disciples. The destruction of Jerusalem did not necessarily mean the nearness of the end of the age. This principle was a point of confusion for them (Luke 19:11–27; Acts 1:6–7).

24:6 *must come to pass.* This indicates a divine or logical necessity. Such things will happen because of the people's sin. False messiahs had existed before (Acts 5:36–38) and false preachers would come in the future (Acts 20:29; 2 Cor. 11:13–15). Verses 4–6 may describe the first part of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:25–27), but possibly they present a general picture of the present age.

24:7 *famines . . . and earthquakes.* These disasters are more fully described in Revelation 6:1–8; 8:5–23; 9:13–21; and 16:2–21.

24:10 Apostasy—Satan is a subtle adversary who works as an angel of light through false religious teachers (2 Cor. 11:14–15), and many will be misled. Apostasy is also the result of persecution. Jesus speaks of temporary faith, and says that a falling away often occurs when "tribulation or persecution arises because of the word" (13:21). Perseverance in faith and in the accompanying results of faith are positive evidence of a genuine Christian profession.

24:15 *abomination of desolation.* The abomination of desolation literally means "the abomination that makes desolate." This prophecy comes from Daniel, specifically Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. Many believe that Daniel 11:31 refers to Antiochus IV, who desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on its altar and setting up an idol to Zeus in it. His actions were certainly a prelude to what the ultimate "man of sin" will do. In A.D. 70, Titus destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and set up an idol to mock the Jews. Significantly, Paul speaks of the Antichrist at the end times also setting himself up as a god (2 Thess. 2:3–4; Rev. 13:14–15).

24:16 *flee.* At the time of the war ending in the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, many of the Christians did flee, hiding in the clefts of Petra. Some believe that the final fulfillment of this prophecy will occur in the future desecration of the temple (Dan. 9:27) and the subsequent setting up of an image of the "man of sin" in the Most Holy Place.

23:39 [j] Ps. 118:26 **24:1** [a] Mark 13:1 **24:2** [b] Luke 19:44 **24:3** [c] Mark 13:3 [d] [1 Thess. 5:1–3] **24:4** [e] [Col. 2:8, 18] **24:5** [f] John 5:43 [g] Matt. 24:11 **24:6** [h] [Rev. 6:2–4] **24:7** [i] Hag. 2:22 [j] Rev. 6:5, 6 **24:9** [k] Matt. 10:17 **24:11** [l] 2 Pet. 2:1 [m] [1 Tim. 4:1] **24:12** [n] [2 Thess. 2:3] **24:13** [o] Matt. 10:22 **24:14** [p] Matt. 4:23 [q] Rom. 10:18 **24:15** [r] Mark 13:14 [s] Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 [t] Dan. 9:23 **24:19** [u] Luke 23:29 **24:21** [v] Dan. 9:26

be. 22And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; [w]but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

23[x]"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe *it*. 24For [y]false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, [z]if possible, even the elect. 25See, I have told you beforehand.

26"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; *or* 'Look, *He is* in the inner rooms!' do not believe *it*. 27[a]For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28[b]For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

The Coming of the Son of Man

29[c]"Immediately after the tribulation of those days [d]the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30[e]Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, [f]and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31[g]And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The Parable of the Fig Tree

32"Now learn [h]this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near. 33So you also, when you see all these things, know [i]that it* is near—at the doors! 34Assuredly, I say to you, [j]this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 35[k]Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

No One Knows the Day or Hour

36[l]"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven,* [m]but My Father only. 37But as the days of Noah *were,* so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38[n]For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40[o]Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42[p]Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour* your Lord is coming. 43[q]But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44[r]Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant

45[s]"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46[t]Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47Assuredly, I say to you that [u]he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master [v]is delaying his coming,'* 49and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is [w]not aware of, 51and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. [x]There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

*24:33 Or *He* *24:36 NU-Text adds *nor the Son.* *24:42 NU-Text reads *day.* *24:48 NU-Text omits *his coming.*

24:24 *signs and wonders.* Miracles by themselves do not prove that something is of God (7:21–23; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13–15). The teaching of those who perform signs and wonders must be tested against correct doctrine (Deut. 13:1–5; 1 John 4:1–3), and by the witness of God's Spirit (John 10:3–5,27).

24:29 *Immediately after.* This verse moves chronologically to the close of the tribulation, a period that will be marked by monumental cosmic disturbances (Is. 13:10; 34:4; Ezek. 32:7–8; Joel 2:30–31; 3:15; Hag. 2:6; Zech. 14:6; Rev. 6:12–14).

24:34 *this generation.* "Generation" may mean "race," indicating that Israel as a people will not cease to exist before God fulfills His promises to them. Another possibility is that the word describes a particular era in which people will see the end times. That is, the events will occur so rapidly that all will happen within one generation. Perhaps both interpretations are true.

24:36 *that day and hour no one knows.* Mark 13:32 indicates that even Jesus Himself did not know the exact time of His return. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He voluntarily limited His use of His divine attributes (John 17:4–5; Phil. 2:5–8). Therefore He became hungry, thirsty, and tired. In this instance, Jesus surrendered the use of His divine omniscience.

24:22 [w] Is. 65:8, 9 **24:23** [x] Luke 17:23
24:24 [y] [2 Thess. 2:9] [z] [2 Tim. 2:19] **24:27** [a] Luke 17:24
24:28 [b] Luke 17:37 **24:29** [c] [Dan. 7:11] [d] Ezek. 32:7
24:30 [e] [Dan. 7:13, 14] [f] Zech. 12:12 **24:31** [g] [1 Cor. 15:52] **24:32** [h] Luke 21:29 **24:33** [i] [James 5:9]
24:34 [j] [Matt. 10:23; 16:28; 23:36] **24:35** [k] Luke 21:33 **24:36** [l] Acts 1:7 [m] Zech. 14:7 **24:38** [n] [Gen. 6:3–5] **24:40** [o] Luke 17:34 **24:42** [p] Matt. 25:13
24:43 [q] Luke 12:39 **24:44** [r] [1 Thess. 5:6] **24:45** [s] Luke 12:42–46 **24:46** [t] Rev. 16:15 **24:47** [u] Matt. 25:21, 23 **24:48** [v] [2 Pet. 3:4–9] **24:50** [w] Mark 13:32
24:51 [x] Matt. 8:12; 25:30

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins

25 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet [a]the bridegroom. 2[b]Now five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. 3Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5But while the bridegroom was delayed, [c]they all slumbered and slept.

6"And at midnight [d]a cry was *heard:* 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming;* go out to meet him!' 7Then all those virgins arose and [e]trimmed their lamps. 8And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9But the wise answered, saying, '*No,* lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and [f]the door was shut.

11"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, [g]'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, [h]I do not know you.'

13[i]"Watch therefore, for you [j]know neither the day nor the hour* in which the Son of Man is coming.

The Parable of the Talents

14[k]"For *the kingdom of heaven is* [l]like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, [m]to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17And likewise he who *had received* two gained two more also. 18But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

20"So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21His lord said to him, 'Well *done,* good and faithful servant; you were [n]faithful over a few things, [o]I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into [p]the joy of your lord.' 22He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23His lord said to him, [q]'Well *done,* good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into [r]the joy of your lord.'

24"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what is* yours.'

26"But his lord answered and said to him, 'You [s]wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28So take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents.

29[t]'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30And cast the unprofitable servant [u]into the outer darkness. [v]There will be weeping and [w]gnashing of teeth.'

The Son of Man Will Judge the Nations

31[x]"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy* angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32[y]All the nations will be gathered before Him, and [z]He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his*

* **25:6** NU-Text omits *is coming.* * **25:13** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **25:31** NU-Text omits *holy.*

25:10 ***the bridegroom came.*** Christ's return is often compared to a wedding (22:1–14; Rev. 19:7–8).

25:14 ***delivered his goods to them.*** The parable of the talents illustrates the faith required of God's servants.

25:15 ***talents.*** A talent was a large sum of money, about six thousand denarii.

25:23 ***I will make you ruler over many things.*** The first two servants received the same reward, based on their faithfulness, not on the size of their responsibilities. The smallest task in God's work may receive a great reward if we are faithful in performing it (10:42).

25:32–40 Judgment—The Final Judgment will be according to the evidence, not according to what was professed but what was practiced. It will be not according to what was said, but what was done. These works cannot earn salvation, but they are works of love which reflect a life redeemed by the saving work of Christ through the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:6). Love for God is demonstrated by love for man (1 John 4:20).

25:1 [a] [Eph. 5:29, 30] **25:2** [b] Matt. 13:47; 22:10 **25:5** [c] 1 Thess. 5:6 **25:6** [d] [1 Thess. 4:16] **25:7** [e] Luke 12:35 **25:10** [f] Luke 13:25 **25:11** [g] [Matt. 7:21–23] **25:12** [h] [Hab. 1:13] **25:13** [i] Mark 13:35 [j] Matt. 24:36, 42 **25:14** [k] Luke 19:12–27 [l] Matt. 21:33 **25:15** [m] [Rom. 12:6] **25:21** [n] [1 Cor. 4:2] [o] [Luke 12:44; 22:29, 30] [p] [Heb. 12:2] **25:23** [q] Matt. 24:45, 47; 25:21 [r] [Ps. 16:11] **25:26** [s] Matt. 18:32 **25:29** [t] Matt. 13:12 **25:30** [u] Matt. 8:12; 22:13 [v] Matt. 7:23; 8:12; 24:51 [w] Ps. 112:10 **25:31** [x] [1 Thess. 4:16] **25:32** [y] [2 Cor. 5:10] [z] Ezek. 20:38

sheep from the goats. 33And He will set the [a]sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, [b]inherit the kingdom [c]prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35[d]for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; [e]I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36I *was* [f]naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; [g]I was in prison and you came to Me.'

37"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You,* or thirsty and give *You* drink? 38When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You?* 39Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, [h]inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'

41"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, [i]'Depart from Me, you cursed, [j]into the everlasting fire prepared for [k]the devil and his angels: 42for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

44"Then they also will answer Him,* saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' 45Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, [l]inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.' 46And [m]these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The Plot to Kill Jesus

26 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, *that* He said to His disciples, 2[a]"You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."

3[b]Then the chief priests, the scribes,* and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4and [c]plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill *Him.* 5But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the [d]people."

The Anointing at Bethany

6And when Jesus was in [e]Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, 7a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured *it* on His head as He sat *at the table.* 8[f]But when His disciples saw *it,* they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? 9For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to *the* poor."

10But when Jesus was aware of *it,* He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. 11[g]For you have the poor with you always, but [h]Me you do not have always. 12For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did *it* for My [i]burial. 13Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

14[j]Then one of the twelve, called [k]Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15and said, [l]"What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. 16So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

Jesus Celebrates Passover with His Disciples

17[m]Now on the first *day of the Feast* of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

18And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, [n]"My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."'"

19So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

20[o]When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. 21Now as they were eating, He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will [p]betray Me."

22And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?"

23He answered and said, [q]"He who dipped *his* hand with Me in the dish will

* **25:44** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Him.*
* **26:3** NU-Text omits *the scribes.*

26:14 ***one of the twelve.*** The enormity of Judas' sin is seen in these words: Jesus was betrayed by one of His own best friends.

26:15 ***thirty pieces of silver.*** Thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32). Zechariah prophesied this sum (Zech. 11:12–13).

26:21 ***one of you will betray Me.*** This statement indicates the Lord's omniscience. Repeatedly, Christ unveiled evidence of His deity to His disciples.

25:33 [a] [John 10:11, 27, 28] **25:34** [b] [Rom. 8:17] [c] Mark 10:40 **25:35** [d] Is. 58:7 [e] [Heb. 13:2] **25:36** [f] [James 2:15, 16] [g] 2 Tim. 1:16 **25:40** [h] Mark 9:41 **25:41** [i] Matt. 7:23 [j] Matt. 13:40, 42 [k] [2 Pet. 2:4] **25:45** [l] Prov. 14:31 **25:46** [m] [Dan. 12:2] **26:2** [a] Luke 22:1, 2 **26:3** [b] John 11:47 **26:4** [c] Acts 4:25–28 **26:5** [d] Matt. 21:26 **26:6** [e] Mark 14:3–9 **26:8** [f] John 12:4 **26:11** [g] [Deut. 15:11] [h] [John 13:33; 14:19; 16:5, 28; 17:11] **26:12** [i] John 19:38–42 **26:14** [j] Mark 14:10, 11; Luke 22:3–6 [k] Matt. 10:4 **26:15** [l] Zech. 11:12 **26:17** [m] Ex. 12:6, 18–20 **26:18** [n] Luke 9:51 **26:20** [o] Mark 14:17–21 **26:21** [p] John 6:70, 71; 13:21 **26:23** [q] Ps. 41:9

betray Me. 24 [r]The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but [s]woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! [t]It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

25 Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?"

He said to him, "You have said it."

Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper

26 [u]And as they were eating, [v]Jesus took bread, blessed* and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; [w]this is My body."

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, [x]"Drink from it, all of you. 28 For [y]this is My blood [z]of the new* covenant, which is shed [a]for many for the remission of sins. 29 But [b]I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on [c]until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

30 [d]And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

31 Then Jesus said to them, [e]"All of you will [f]be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written:

> [g]'I will strike the Shepherd,
> And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'*

32 But after I have been raised, [h]I will go before you to Galilee."

33 Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble."

34 Jesus said to him, [i]"Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

35 Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!"

And so said all the disciples.

The Prayer in the Garden

36 [j]Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." 37 And He took with Him Peter and [k]the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, [l]"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and [m]prayed, saying, [n]"O My Father, if it is possible, [o]let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, [p]not as I will, but as You *will*."

40 Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 [q]Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. [r]The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless* I drink it, Your will be done." 43 And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.

44 So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are *you* still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being [s]betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

47 And [t]while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." 49 Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" [u]and kissed Him.

50 But Jesus said to him, [v]"Friend, why have you come?"

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. 51 And suddenly, [w]one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out

* **26:26** M-Text reads *gave thanks for.*
* **26:28** NU-Text omits *new.* * **26:31** Zechariah 13:7 * **26:42** NU-Text reads *if this may not pass away unless.*

26:26–28 ***My body . . . My blood.*** The Lord Jesus, at this last meal with His disciples before He went to the cross, instituted this ordinance for His church throughout this age. It is called "the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11:20). Using common everyday items, the bread and wine that could be found on any table, no matter how poor, He gave us a "remembrance" so that we would never forget that His broken body and shed blood bought salvation for us.

26:28 ***My blood of the new covenant.*** This refers to the new covenant promised in the Old Testament (Jer. 31:31–34; 32:37–44; Ezek. 34:25–31; 37:26–28).

26:36 ***Gethsemane.*** The name "Gethsemane" means "oil press." This garden was east of Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. In the place where olives were crushed and ground, the Anointed One was crushed.

26:51 ***one of those.*** John 18:10 informs us that the impetuous swordsman was Peter. This action was performed with one of the two swords that the disciples had (Luke 22:38).

26:24 [r] 1 Cor. 15:3 [s] Luke 17:1 [t] John 17:12 **26:26** [u] Mark 14:22–25 [v] 1 Cor. 11:23–25 [w] [1 Pet. 2:24] **26:27** [x] Mark 14:23 **26:28** [y] [Ex. 24:8] [z] Jer. 31:31 [a] Matt. 20:28 **26:29** [b] Mark 14:25 [c] Acts 10:41 **26:30** [d] Mark 14:26–31 **26:31** [e] John 16:32 [f] [Matt. 11:6] [g] Zech. 13:7 **26:32** [h] Matt. 28:7, 10, 16 **26:34** [i] John 13:38 **26:36** [j] Mark 14:32–35 **26:37** [k] Matt. 4:21; 17:1 **26:38** [l] John 12:27 **26:39** [m] [Heb. 5:7–9] [n] John 12:27 [o] Matt. 20:22 [p] John 5:30; 6:38 **26:41** [q] Luke 22:40, 46 [r] [Gal. 5:17] **26:45** [s] Matt. 17:22, 23; 20:18, 19 **26:47** [t] Acts 1:16 **26:49** [u] 2 Sam. 20:9 **26:50** [v] Ps. 41:9; 55:13 **26:51** [w] John 18:10

his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

52But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, [x]for all who take the sword will perish* by the sword. 53Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with [y]more than twelve legions of angels? 54How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, [z]that it must happen thus?"

55In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. 56But all this was done that the [a]Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Then [b]all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin

57[c]And those who had laid hold of Jesus led *Him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. 58But [d]Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.

59Now the chief priests, the elders,* and all the council sought [e]false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, 60but found none. Even though [f]many false witnesses came forward, they found none.* But at last [g]two false witnesses* came forward 61and said, "This *fellow* said, [h]'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'"

62[i]And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?" 63But [j]Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, [k]"I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

64Jesus said to him, "*It is as* you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, [l]hereafter you will see the Son of Man [m]sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

65[n]Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His [o]blasphemy! 66What do you think?"

They answered and said, [p]"He is deserving of death."

67[q]Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and [r]others struck *Him* with the palms of their hands, 68saying, [s]"Prophesy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?"

Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps Bitterly

69[t]Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee."

70But he denied it before *them* all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying."

71And when he had gone out to the gateway, another *girl* saw him and said to those *who were* there, "This *fellow* also was with Jesus of Nazareth."

72But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!"

73And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are *one* of them, for your [u]speech betrays you."

74Then [v]he began to curse and swear, *saying*, "I do not know the Man!"

Immediately a rooster crowed. 75And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, [w]"Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.

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* **26:52** M-Text reads *die.* * **26:59** NU-Text omits *the elders.* * **26:60** NU-Text puts a comma after *but found none*, does not capitalize *Even*, and omits *they found none.* • NU-Text omits *false witnesses.*

26:53 ***twelve legions of angels.*** A legion in the Roman army was about six thousand men. When one considers the power of one angel (Ex. 32:23; 2 Sam. 24:15–17; 2 Kin. 19:35) the power of more than 72,000 angels is beyond comprehension. Jesus had all of heaven's power at His disposal, yet He refused to use it. His Father's will was for Him to go to the cross.

26:62 ***Do You answer nothing?*** In maintaining His silence, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7.

26:64 Second Coming—Throughout His ministry, Jesus had applied to Himself the Old Testament prophecies that were acknowledged as messianic by the Jewish teachers. Here, Jesus answers Caiaphas the high priest by combining two well-known messianic prophecies from Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13. The first describes His enthronement and the other His second coming. The final word spoken by Christ to the Jews was about the certainty of His future return. About His first coming Jesus said, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world" (John 3:17). But the time will come when all the world will see Him enthroned at the right hand of God and given all power and majesty as the judge of the ages.

26:74 ***Immediately a rooster crowed.*** Some have detected a contradiction between this passage and the account in Mark 14:72. Others believe that seeing a contradiction is a forced reading of the text. Matthew, Luke, and John make the simple statement that a rooster would crow (Luke 22:61; John 18:27), whereas Mark, which is believed to be based on Peter's memories, would include more exact details.

26:52 [x] Rev. 13:10 **26:53** [y] Dan. 7:10 **26:54** [z] Is. 50:6; 53:2–11 **26:56** [a] Lam. 4:20 [b] John 18:15 **26:57** [c] John 18:12, 19–24 **26:58** [d] John 18:15, 16 **26:59** [e] Ps. 35:11 **26:60** [f] Mark 14:55 [g] Deut. 19:15 **26:61** [h] John 2:19 **26:62** [i] Mark 14:60 **26:63** [j] Is. 53:7 [k] Lev. 5:1 **26:64** [l] Dan. 7:13 [m] [Acts 7:55] **26:65** [n] 2 Kin. 18:37 [o] John 10:30–36 **26:66** [p] Lev. 24:16 **26:67** [q] Is. 50:6; 53:3 [r] Luke 22:63–65 **26:68** [s] Mark 14:65 **26:69** [t] John 18:16–18, 25–27 **26:73** [u] Luke 22:59 **26:74** [v] Mark 14:71 **26:75** [w] Matt. 26:34

Jesus Handed Over to Pontius Pilate

27 When morning came, [a]all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. **2**And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and [b]delivered Him to Pontius* Pilate the governor.

Judas Hangs Himself

3[c]Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty [d]pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, **4**saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."

And they said, "What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*"

5Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and [e]departed, and went and hanged himself.

6But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." **7**And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. **8**Therefore that field has been called [f]the Field of Blood to this day.

9Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, [g]*"And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced,* whom they of the children of Israel priced, **10***and* [h]*gave them for the potter's field, as the* LORD *directed me."**

Jesus Faces Pilate

11Now Jesus stood before the governor. [i]And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

Jesus said to him, [j]*"It is as* you say." **12**And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, [k]He answered nothing.

13Then Pilate said to Him, [l]"Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" **14**But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

Taking the Place of Barabbas

15[m]Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. **16**And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.* **17**Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" **18**For he knew that they had handed Him over because of [n]envy.

19While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

20[o]But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. **21**The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, [p]"Barabbas!"

22Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

23Then the governor said, [q]"Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

24When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he [r]took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person.* You see *to it.*"

25And all the people answered and said, [s]"His blood *be* on us and on our children."

26Then he released Barabbas to them; and when [t]he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

27[u]Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. **28**And they [v]stripped Him and [w]put a scarlet robe on Him. **29**[x]When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" **30**Then [y]they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.

* **27:2** NU-Text omits *Pontius.* * **27:10** Jeremiah 32:6–9 * **27:16** NU-Text reads *Jesus Barabbas.* * **27:24** NU-Text omits *just.*

27:2 *Pilate.* Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea from A.D. 26 to 36. Because the Jews did not have authority to execute Jesus, they brought Him to Pilate.

27:25 *His blood be on us and on our children.* The sins of the fathers are visited on their children for those who hate God. But if anyone turns to Jesus and repents, He never fails to show His lovingkindness.

27:27 *the Praetorium.* This was the official residence of the governor when he was in Jerusalem.

27:1 [a] John 18:28 **27:2** [b] Acts 3:13 **27:3** [c] Matt. 26:14 [d] Matt. 26:15 **27:5** [e] Acts 1:18 **27:8** [f] Acts 1:19 **27:9** [g] Zech. 11:12 **27:10** [h] Jer. 32:6–9; Zech. 11:12, 13 **27:11** [i] Mark 15:2–5 [j] John 18:37 **27:12** [k] John 19:9 **27:13** [l] Matt. 26:62 **27:15** [m] Luke 23:17–25 **27:18** [n] Matt. 21:38 **27:20** [o] Acts 3:14 **27:21** [p] Acts 3:14 **27:23** [q] Acts 3:13 **27:24** [r] Deut. 21:6–8 **27:25** [s] Josh. 2:19 **27:26** [t] Is. 50:6; 53:5] **27:27** [u] Mark 15:16–20 **27:28** [v] John 19:2 [w] Luke 23:11 **27:29** [x] Is. 53:3 **27:30** [y] Matt. 26:67

31 And when they had mocked Him, they
took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes
on Him, [z]and led Him away to be crucified.

The King on a Cross

32 [a]Now as they came out, [b]they found a
man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they
compelled to bear His cross. 33 [c]And when
they had come to a place called Golgotha,
that is to say, Place of a Skull, 34 [d]they gave
Him sour* wine mingled with gall to drink.
But when He had tasted *it*, He would not
drink.

35 [e]Then they crucified Him, and di-
vided His garments, casting lots,* that it
might be fulfilled which was spoken by the
prophet:

> [f]*"They divided My garments among them,*
> *And for My clothing they cast lots."**

36 [g]Sitting down, they kept watch over Him
there. 37 And they [h]put up over His head the
accusation written against Him:

THIS IS JESUS THE KING
OF THE JEWS.

38 [i]Then two robbers were crucified with
Him, one on the right and another on the
left.

39 And [j]those who passed by blasphemed
Him, wagging their heads 40 and saying,
[k]"You who destroy the temple and build *it*
in three days, save Yourself! [l]If You are the
Son of God, come down from the cross."

41 Likewise the chief priests also, mock-
ing with the scribes and elders,* said, 42 "He
[m]saved others; Himself He cannot save. If
He is the King of Israel,* let Him now come
down from the cross, and we will believe
Him.* 43 [n]He trusted in God; let Him deliver
Him now if He will have Him; for He said,
'I am the Son of God.'"

44 [o]Even the robbers who were cruci-
fied with Him reviled Him with the same
thing.

Jesus Dies on the Cross

45 [p]Now from the sixth hour until the
ninth hour there was darkness over all the
land. 46 And about the ninth hour [q]Jesus
cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli,
lama sabachthani?" that is, [r]*"My God, My*
*God, why have You forsaken Me?"**

47 Some of those who stood there, when
they heard *that*, said, "This Man is calling
for Elijah!" 48 Immediately one of them ran
and took a sponge, [s]filled *it* with sour wine
and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him
to drink.

49 The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us
see if Elijah will come to save Him."

50 And Jesus [t]cried out again with a loud
voice, and [u]yielded up His spirit.

51 Then, behold, [v]the veil of the temple
was torn in two from top to bottom; and
the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

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* **27:34** NU-Text omits *sour.* * **27:35** NU-Text and M-Text omit the rest of this verse. • Psalm 22:18
* **27:41** M-Text reads *with the scribes, the Pharisees, and the elders.* * **27:42** NU-Text reads *He is the King of Israel!* • NU-Text and M-Text read *we will believe in Him.* * **27:46** Psalm 22:1

27:31 ***crucified.*** Crucifixion, a practice probably adopted from Persia, was considered by the Romans to be the cruelest form of execution. This punishment was reserved for the worst criminals. The offender usually died after two or three days of agonizing suffering, enduring not only incomprehensible pain, but also hunger, thirst, and exposure. The offender's arms were nailed to a beam that was hoisted up and fixed to a post, to which his feet were nailed.

27:32 ***Simon by name.*** Simon probably was (or later became) a follower of Christ; it is unlikely that he would be referred to by name if he were a stranger to the Christian community (Mark 15:21).

27:34 ***sour wine mingled with gall.*** It is believed that this mixture was meant to dull the victim's pain. The prophetic words of Psalm 69:21 were fulfilled here.

27:35 ***casting lots.*** The soldiers fulfilled the prophetic words of Psalm 22:18.

27:38 ***two robbers.*** This is the fulfillment of Isaiah 53:12, "He was numbered with the transgressors." Psalm 22:6 predicted the insults that would be directed at the Messiah.

27:45 ***the sixth hour.*** This would have been noon. The first hour began at sunrise (approximately 6:00 A.M.). ***darkness.*** The darkness could not have been due to a natural cause, such as an eclipse of the sun, since the Passover occurred during a full moon. This was a supernatural occurrence.

27:46–50 Atonement—Because God cannot tolerate sin, as Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the whole human race, God had to turn away. Jesus felt this separation, and many believe it was as much for the dread of this as for the physical pain that Jesus wept in the garden. Jesus' cry to God is a quote from Psalm 22:1, a messianic verse that the Jews should have understood.

27:50 ***cried out again with a loud voice.*** The cry referred to here by Matthew was, "It is finished" (John 19:30). This was not a cry of exhaustion, but a cry of victory. The purpose for which Jesus came into the world had been accomplished. Redemption from sin had been purchased for all mankind.

27:51 ***the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.*** The temple had two veils or curtains, one in front of the holy place and the other separating the holy place from the Most Holy Place. These curtains were heavy and very strong and thick. It was the second of these that was torn, demonstrating that through the death of Jesus, there was now open access to God. Jesus' blood covered our sins from God's sight.

27:31 [z] Is. 53:7 **27:32** [a] Heb. 13:12 [b] Mark 15:21
27:33 [c] John 19:17 **27:34** [d] Ps. 69:21 **27:35** [e] Luke 23:34 [f] Ps. 22:18 **27:36** [g] Matt. 27:54 **27:37** [h] John 19:19 **27:38** [i] Is. 53:9, 12 **27:39** [j] Mark 15:29
27:40 [k] John 2:19 [l] Matt. 26:63 **27:42** [m] [John 3:14, 15]
27:43 [n] Ps. 22:8 **27:44** [o] Luke 23:39–43 **27:45** [p] Mark 15:33–41 **27:46** [q] [Heb. 5:7] [r] Ps. 22:1 **27:48** [s] Ps. 69:21 **27:50** [t] Luke 23:46 [u] [John 10:18] **27:51** [v] Ex. 26:31

52and the graves were opened; and many
bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep
were raised; 53and coming out of the graves
after His resurrection, they went into the
holy city and appeared to many.

54[w]So when the centurion and those with
him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the
earthquake and the things that had hap-
pened, they feared greatly, saying, [x]"Truly
this was the Son of God!"

55And many women [y]who followed
Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him,
were there looking on from afar, 56[z]among
whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the
mother of James and Joses,* and the moth-
er of Zebedee's sons.

Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb

57Now [a]when evening had come, there
came a rich man from Arimathea, named
Joseph, who himself had also become a
disciple of Jesus. 58This man went to Pi-
late and asked for the body of Jesus. Then
Pilate commanded the body to be given to
him. 59When Joseph had taken the body,
he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60and
[b]laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn
out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone
against the door of the tomb, and departed.
61And Mary Magdalene was there, and the
other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

Pilate Sets a Guard

62On the next day, which followed the
Day of Preparation, the chief priests and
Pharisees gathered together to Pilate,
63saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was
still alive, how that deceiver said, [c]'After
three days I will rise.' 64Therefore com-
mand that the tomb be made secure until
the third day, lest His disciples come by
night* and steal Him *away*, and say to the
people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the
last deception will be worse than the first."

65Pilate said to them, "You have a guard;
go your way, make *it* as secure as you
know how." 66So they went and made the
tomb secure, [d]sealing the stone and setting
the guard.

He Is Risen

28 Now [a]after the Sabbath, as the first
day of the week began to dawn, Mary
Magdalene [b]and the other Mary came to
see the tomb. 2And behold, there was a
great earthquake; for [c]an angel of the Lord
descended from heaven, and came and
rolled back the stone from the door,* and
sat on it. 3[d]His countenance was like light-
ning, and his clothing as white as snow.
4And the guards shook for fear of him, and
became like [e]dead *men*.

5But the angel answered and said to the
women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that
you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6He is
not here; for He is risen, [f]as He said. Come,
see the place where the Lord lay. 7And go
quickly and tell His disciples that He is ris-
en from the dead, and indeed [g]He is going
before you into Galilee; there you will see
Him. Behold, I have told you."

8So they went out quickly from the tomb
with fear and great joy, and ran to bring
His disciples word.

The Women Worship the Risen Lord

9And as they went to tell His disciples,*
behold, [h]Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!"
So they came and held Him by the feet and
worshiped Him. 10Then Jesus said to them,
"Do not be afraid. Go *and* tell [i]My brethren
to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

The Soldiers Are Bribed

11Now while they were going, behold,
some of the guard came into the city and
reported to the chief priests all the things
that had happened. 12When they had as-
sembled with the elders and consulted to-
gether, they gave a large sum of money to
the soldiers, 13saying, "Tell them, 'His dis-
ciples came at night and stole Him *away*
while we slept.' 14And if this comes to the
governor's ears, we will appease him and
make you secure." 15So they took the mon-
ey and did as they were instructed; and
this saying is commonly reported among
the Jews until this day.

The Great Commission

16Then the eleven disciples went away
into Galilee, to the mountain [j]which Jesus
had appointed for them. 17When they
saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some
[k]doubted.

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* **27:56** NU-Text reads *Joseph*. * **27:64** NU-Text omits *by night*. * **28:2** NU-Text omits *from the door*. * **28:9** NU-Text omits the first clause of this verse.

27:57 *a rich man of Arimathea.* Joseph's actions fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, "they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death" (Is. 53:9).

28:2 *rolled back the stone.* The tomb was not opened to allow Christ to come out; it was opened to allow others to go in and see for themselves that it was empty.

28:6 *He is risen, as He said.* Jesus predicted His resurrection to His disciples, even though they did not understand Him (12:40; 16:21; 17:9,23; 26:32).

28:7 *go quickly and tell.* This is always the divine order: to tell others the good news that Jesus is alive (v. 19).

27:54 [w] Mark 15:39 [x] Matt. 14:33 **27:55** [y] Luke 8:2, 3 **27:56** [z] Mark 15:40, 47; 16:9 **27:57** [a] John 19:38–42 **27:60** [b] Is. 53:9 **27:63** [c] Mark 8:31; 10:34 **27:66** [d] Dan. 6:17 **28:1** [a] Luke 24:1–10 [b] Matt. 27:56, 61 **28:2** [c] Mark 16:5 **28:3** [d] Dan. 7:9; 10:6 **28:4** [e] Rev. 1:17 **28:6** [f] Matt. 12:40; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19 **28:7** [g] Mark 16:7 **28:9** [h] John 20:14 **28:10** [i] John 20:17 **28:16** [j] Matt. 26:32; 28:7, 10 **28:17** [k] John 20:24–29

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them,
saying, [l]"All authority has been given to
Me in heaven and on earth. 19 [m]Go there-
fore* and [n]make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
20 [o]teaching them to observe all things that
I have commanded you; and lo, I am [p]with
you always, *even* to the end of the age."
Amen.*

*28:19 M-Text omits *therefore*. *28:20 NU-Text omits *Amen*.

28:19 Why Share Our Faith—There are at least six compelling reasons for sharing our faith in Christ with those who have not experienced new life in Christ:

1. Because God has commanded us to do so (Acts 1:8).
2. Because it demonstrates our love for God. If we truly love Him we will keep His commandments (John 14:15).
3. Because all are lost without Christ (Rom. 3:10,23).
4. Because this is God's chosen method: He could use angels, but He only uses redeemed sinners to tell lost sinners about Christ (Rom. 10:14–17; 1 Tim. 1:15).
5. Because God desires to save all people (Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).
6. Because faith grows best when each generation conscientiously strives to pass it on to the next.

28:20 *I am with you always.* Jesus is the true Immanuel, "God with us" (1:23; Heb. 13:5–6; Rev. 21:3).

28:18 [l] [Dan. 7:13, 14] **28:19** [m] Mark 16:15 [n] Luke 24:47
28:20 [o] [Acts 2:42] [p] [Acts 4:31; 18:10; 23:11]

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MARK

▶ **AUTHOR:** According to Acts 12:12, Mark's mother Mary had a large house that was used as a meeting place for believers in Jerusalem. Barnabas was Mark's cousin (Col. 4:10), but Peter may have been the person that led him to Christ (Peter called him "Mark my son" in 1 Pet. 5:13). It was this close association with Peter that lent apostolic authority to Mark's Gospel, since Peter was evidently Mark's primary source of information. It has been suggested that Mark was referring to himself in his account of a "certain young man" in Gethsemane (14:51). Since all the disciples had abandoned Jesus (14:50), this little incident may have been a firsthand account.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 29–33 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Mark 8:34–37

▶ **THEME:** Mark is the shortest and simplest of the Gospels. He doesn't seem to be telling the story in a way that appeals to a particular audience the way Matthew does. He also does not use the well-developed thematic structure that characterizes John. One of the most common terms in the book is one that is translated "immediately" or "at once." He uses this frequently as he moves from one anecdote to another. Mark's quickly paced Gospel is often confrontational, as he tells the story of the gospel as clearly as possible. He wants the reader to respond, and almost seems to be saying, "Here is the truth, believe it, and let's get on with following Jesus."

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 The [a]beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, [b]the Son of God. **2**As it is written in the Prophets:*

[c]*"Behold, I send My messenger before*
Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before
*You."**
3 *"The*[d] *voice of one crying in the*
wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the
LORD;
*Make His paths straight.'"**

4[e]John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. **5**[f]Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

6Now John was [g]clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. **7**And he preached, saying, [h]"There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. **8**[i]I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you [j]with the Holy Spirit."

* **1:2** NU-Text reads *Isaiah the prophet.* • Malachi 3:1 * **1:3** Isaiah 40:3

1:1 ***The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*** Writing three decades after the resurrection of Christ, Mark starts his narrative with a simple declaration of the good news about God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The *gospel* refers to the basic story of the good news to be found in Christ's life, ministry, death, and resurrection.
1:2–3 ***As it is written.*** Other than by quoting Jesus, Mark makes only one reference to the Old Testament.
1:4 ***John came baptizing.*** The mention of John without any introduction presupposes some knowledge of the Christian faith on the part of Mark's readers.
the remission of sins. This phrase does not mean that one is baptized in order to receive forgiveness of sins. The Greek preposition translated "of" in English probably means "with a view to," signifying that baptism looks to the forgiveness that God gives through the gift of repentance.
1:5 ***were all baptized by him.*** John's baptizing was a recurring popular event that attracted large crowds. Mark vividly portrays the continuous stream of followers who flocked to John. As each person was baptized by John, he or she would admit to his or her individual sin and need for the Messiah.
1:7 ***And he preached, saying.*** The tense of these verbs indicates continuous action in past time. John's characteristic message was to promote expectancy and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ.
1:8 ***I indeed baptized you with water.*** The water is a physical representation of the future life in the Spirit that people who followed the Messiah would have.

1:1 [a] Luke 3:22 [b] Matt. 14:33 **1:2** [c] Mal. 3:1 **1:3** [d] Is. 40:3 **1:4** [e] Matt. 3:1 **1:5** [f] Matt. 3:5 **1:6** [g] Matt. 3:4 **1:7** [h] John 1:27 **1:8** [i] Acts 1:5; 11:16 [j] Is. 44:3

John Baptizes Jesus

9 [k]It came to pass in those days *that* Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee,
and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
10 [l]And immediately, coming up from* the
water, He saw the heavens parting and the
Spirit [m]descending upon Him like a dove.
11 Then a voice came from heaven, [n]"You
are My beloved Son, in whom I am well
pleased."

Satan Tempts Jesus

12 [o]Immediately the Spirit drove Him into
the wilderness. 13 And He was there in the
wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan,
and was with the wild beasts; [p]and the angels ministered to Him.

Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry

14 [q]Now after John was put in prison,
Jesus came to Galilee, [r]preaching the gospel of the kingdom* of God, 15 and saying,
[s]"The time is fulfilled, and [t]the kingdom of
God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the
gospel."

Four Fishermen Called as Disciples

16 [u]And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were
fishermen. 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become [v]fishers of men." 18 [w]They immediately left their
nets and followed Him.
19 When He had gone a little farther from
there, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee,
and John his brother, who also *were* in
the boat mending their nets. 20 And immediately He called them, and they left their
father Zebedee in the boat with the hired
servants, and went after Him.

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit

21 [x]Then they went into Capernaum, and
immediately on the Sabbath He entered the
[y]synagogue and taught. 22 [z]And they were
astonished at His teaching, for He taught
them as one having authority, and not as
the scribes.
23 Now there was a man in their synagogue with an [a]unclean spirit. And he cried
out, 24 saying, "Let *us* alone! [b]What have we
to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You
come to destroy us? I [c]know who You are—
the [d]Holy One of God!"
25 But Jesus [e]rebuked him, saying, "Be
quiet, and come out of him!" 26 And when
the unclean spirit [f]had convulsed him and
cried out with a loud voice, he came out
of him. 27 Then they were all amazed, so
that they questioned among themselves,
saying, "What is this? What new doctrine
is this? For with authority* He commands
even the unclean spirits, and they obey
Him." 28 And immediately His [g]fame spread
throughout all the region around Galilee.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

29 [h]Now as soon as they had come out of
the synagogue, they entered the house of
Simon and Andrew, with James and John.
30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a
fever, and they told Him about her at once.
31 So He came and took her by the hand and
lifted her up, and immediately the fever left
her. And she served them.

Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset

32 [i]At evening, when the sun had set,
they brought to Him all who were sick and

* **1:10** NU-Text reads *out of.* * **1:14** NU-Text omits *of the kingdom.* * **1:27** NU-Text reads *What is this? A new doctrine with authority.*

1:9 ***Jesus . . . was baptized by John.*** Because He had no sins to repent of, Jesus' baptism was unique. It showed His identity with John's work and with the sinner for whom He would die. It also foreshadowed His own death, burial, and resurrection for sinners.
1:11 ***a voice came from heaven.*** Three times during Christ's earthly ministry a voice came from heaven. Here it was the Father's testimony to Christ's unique and divine Sonship. The other two confirming incidents were at the transfiguration (9:7) and on the day of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:28).
1:13 ***angels ministered to Him.*** Mark is the only Gospel that mentions these angels.
1:15 ***kingdom of God.*** The kingdom was the subject of much Old Testament prophecy, and the theme was familiar to Jesus' listeners. ***Repent, and believe.*** These are both acts of faith. When a person accepts the only true and worthy object of faith, that person readily turns from inferior substitutes.
1:19 ***James . . . John.*** The scenes of verses 16–20 are very colorful. Simon and Andrew are fishing when we encounter them. James and John are mending their nets. Such details indicate the testimony of an eyewitness, probably Peter.
1:21 ***Capernaum.*** This city is now in ruins, and sits beside the northern edge of the Sea of Galilee. It is mentioned 22 times in the Gospels. By contrast, only one recorded event during Christ's ministry occurred at Nazareth (Luke 4:16).
1:22 ***they were astonished at His teaching.*** Christ's teaching differed from that of scribes and Pharisees because He did not lean on the wisdom of other teachers and rabbis. His authority came from Himself.
1:28 ***His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.*** Mark notes the extent of recognition this great miracle brought Jesus. He also creates suspense by contrasting the people who received Christ with the Pharisees and rulers who worked to bring about His death.

1:9 [k] Matt. 3:13–17 **1:10** [l] Matt. 3:16 [m] Acts 10:38 **1:11** [n] Matt. 3:17; 12:18 **1:12** [o] Matt. 4:1–11 **1:13** [p] Matt. 4:10, 11 **1:14** [q] Matt. 4:12 [r] Matt. 4:23 **1:15** [s] [Gal. 4:4] [t] Matt. 3:2; 4:17 **1:16** [u] Luke 5:2–11 **1:17** [v] Matt. 13:47, 48 **1:18** [w] [Luke 14:26] **1:21** [x] Luke 4:31–37 [y] Matt. 4:23 **1:22** [z] Matt. 7:28, 29; 13:54 **1:23** [a] [Matt. 12:43] **1:24** [b] Matt. 8:28, 29 [c] James 2:19 [d] Ps. 16:10 **1:25** [e] [Luke 4:39] **1:26** [f] Mark 9:20 **1:28** [g] Matt. 4:24; 9:31 **1:29** [h] Luke 4:38, 39 **1:32** [i] Matt. 8:16, 17

those who were demon-possessed. 33And the whole city was gathered together at the door. 34Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and [j]cast out many demons; and He [k]did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

Preaching in Galilee

35Now [l]in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He [m]prayed. 36And Simon and those *who were* with Him searched for Him. 37When they found Him, they said to Him, [n]"Everyone [o]is looking for You."

38But He said to them, [p]"Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because [q]for this purpose I have come forth."

39[r]And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and [s]casting out demons.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

40[t]Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

41Then Jesus, moved with [u]compassion, stretched out *His* hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." 42As soon as He had spoken, [v]immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. 43And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, 44and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things [w]which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

45[x]However, he went out and began to proclaim *it* freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; [y]and they came to Him from every direction.

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic

2 And again [a]He entered Capernaum after *some* days, and it was heard that He was in the house. 2Immediately* many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive *them*, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. 3Then they came to Him, bringing a [b]paralytic who was carried by four *men*. 4And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

5When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

6And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7"Why does this *Man* speak blasphemies like this? [c]Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

8But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? 9[d]Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, '*Your* sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? 10But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, 11"I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 12Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and [e]glorified God, saying, "We never saw *anything* like this!"

Matthew the Tax Collector

13[f]Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. 14[g]As He passed by, He saw Levi the *son* of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, [h]"Follow Me." So he arose and [i]followed Him.

* **2:2** NU-Text omits *Immediately.*

1:35 *there He prayed.* The verb tense indicates Jesus prayed continuously. Jesus' prayer life was successful because it was planned, private, and prolonged. He got up early enough, got far enough away, and stayed at it long enough.

1:44 *say nothing to anyone.* Jesus' demand has several plausible explanations: (1) The report of Jesus' healing the man may have prejudiced the priest who needed to pronounce him clean; (2) Jesus did not want to be known primarily as a miracle worker, so He often commanded those who received His healing to remain quiet; and (3) the man's testimony would possibly have hastened the confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders.

2:5 *saw their faith.* Not only did the four men have faith, but the paralytic himself had it too. When Jesus announced to him, "your sins are forgiven you," He was implicitly acknowledging the paralytic's trust that He was the Messiah.

2:6–7 *some of the scribes.* Mark notes the opposition of the scribes, who under their breath accused Jesus of blasphemy. In Christ's day the scribes were commonly called lawyers.

2:11 *arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.* By healing the paralytic, Jesus made His pronouncement of forgiveness far more credible.

2:13 *He taught them.* Jesus regularly taught the multitudes in retreat settings. This is indicated by the continuous tense of the verbs used here. They kept on coming and Jesus kept on teaching.

1:34 [j] Luke 13:32 [k] Acts 16:17, 18 **1:35** [l] Luke 4:42, 43 [m] Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28, 29 **1:37** [n] John 3:26; 12:19 [o] [Heb. 11:6] **1:38** [p] Luke 4:43 [q] [Is. 61:1, 2] **1:39** [r] Matt. 4:23; 9:35 [s] Mark 5:8, 13; 7:29, 30 **1:40** [t] Luke 5:12–14 **1:41** [u] Luke 7:13 **1:42** [v] Matt. 15:28 **1:44** [w] Lev. 14:1–32 **1:45** [x] Luke 5:15 [y] Mark 2:2, 13; 3:7 **2:1** [a] Matt. 9:1 **2:3** [b] Matt. 4:24; 8:6 **2:7** [c] Is. 43:25 **2:9** [d] Matt. 9:5 **2:12** [e] [Phil. 2:11] **2:13** [f] Matt. 9:9 **2:14** [g] Luke 5:27–32 [h] John 1:43; 12:26; 21:22 [i] Luke 18:28

15 [j]Now it happened, as He was dining
in *Levi's* house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with
Jesus and His disciples; for there were
many, and they followed Him. 16 And when
the scribes and* Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners,
they said to His disciples, "How *is it* that
He eats and drinks with tax collectors and
sinners?"
17 When Jesus heard *it*, He said to them,
[k]"Those who are well have no need of a
physician, but those who are sick. I did not
come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to
repentance."*

Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting

18 [l]The disciples of John and of the
Pharisees were fasting. Then they came
and said to Him, "Why do the disciples of
John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your
disciples do not fast?"
19 And Jesus said to them, "Can the
friends of the bridegroom fast while the
bridegroom is with them? As long as they
have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come when
the bridegroom will be [m]taken away from
them, and then they will fast in those
days. 21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk
cloth on an old garment; or else the new
piece pulls away from the old, and the
tear is made worse. 22 And no one puts
new wine into old wineskins; or else the
new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine
is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined.
But new wine must be put into new wineskins."

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

23 [n]Now it happened that He went
through the grainfields on the Sabbath;
and as they went His disciples began [o]to
pluck the heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do
what is [p]not lawful on the Sabbath?"
25 But He said to them, "Have you never read [q]what David did when he was in
need and hungry, he and those with him:
26 [r]how he went into the house of God *in the days* of Abiathar the high priest, and ate
the showbread, [r]which is not lawful to eat
except for the priests, and also gave some
to those who were with him?"
27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath
was made for man, and not man for the
[s]Sabbath. 28 Therefore [t]the Son of Man is
also Lord of the Sabbath."

Healing on the Sabbath

3 And [a]He entered the synagogue again,
and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2 So they [b]watched Him closely,
whether He would [c]heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. 3 And
He said to the man who had the withered
hand, "Step forward." 4 Then He said to
them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do
good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But
they kept silent. 5 And when He had looked
around at them with anger, being grieved
by the [d]hardness of their hearts, He said
to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And
he stretched *it* out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.* 6 [e]Then the
Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with [f]the Herodians against Him, how
they might destroy Him.

A Great Multitude Follows Jesus

7 But Jesus withdrew with His disciples
to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, [g]and from Judea 8 and
Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the
Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon,
a great multitude, when they heard how
[h]many things He was doing, came to Him.
9 So He told His disciples that a small boat

* **2:16** NU-Text reads *of the*. * **2:17** NU-Text omits *to repentance*. * **3:5** NU-Text omits *as whole as the other*.

2:18 *fast.* Jesus was not against fasting, if properly observed. He gave guidelines for fasting in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 6:16–18). Here, the Pharisees' fasting, perhaps twice each week (Luke 18:12), is contrasted with Jesus' feasting probably at Levi's house.

2:21–22 *No one sews . . . no one puts.* Mark records only four of Jesus' parables—two of which he includes here. The comparison implies that the newness of His message, and of the new covenant to follow, cannot fit into the old molds of Judaism. The Old Testament was preparation for the New Testament (Gal. 3:19–25).

2:24 *what is not lawful on the Sabbath.* The point to the Pharisees' accusation against Jesus and His disciples was that they had performed work on the Sabbath, but their charge was dubious. The act of plucking grain should not be confused with Sabbath work condemned by the law (Ex. 31:15). This incident is further proof of rising opposition to Jesus' ministry.

3:5 *when He had looked around at them with anger.* It is possible, as Paul exhorts, to be angry and not sin (Eph. 4:26). Jesus demonstrated this righteous anger. He was grieved with sin but did not sin Himself by retaliating or losing control of His emotions.

3:6 *Herodians.* The Pharisees were religious experts who should have led the people in righteousness. Instead they plotted Jesus' death with the Herodians, their bitter enemies. They were willing to set aside differences to destroy a common foe. The Herodians were Jews who supported Rome and the Herods in particular. Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great, ruled Galilee during the same time that Pilate served as Roman governor over Judea and Samaria.

2:15 [j] Matt. 9:10 **2:17** [k] Matt. 9:12, 13; 18:11
2:18 [l] Luke 5:33–38 **2:20** [m] Acts 1:9; 13:2, 3; 14:23
2:23 [n] Luke 6:1–5 [o] Deut. 23:25 **2:24** [p] Ex. 20:10; 31:15
2:25 [q] 1 Sam. 21:1–6 **2:26** [r] Lev. 24:5–9 **2:27** [s] Deut. 5:14 **2:28** [t] Matt. 12:8 **3:1** [a] Luke 6:6–11 **3:2** [b] Luke 14:1; 20:20 [c] Luke 13:14 **3:5** [d] Zech. 7:12 **3:6** [e] Mark 12:13 [f] Matt. 22:16 **3:7** [g] Luke 6:17 **3:8** [h] Mark 5:19

should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him. 10For He healed [i]many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to [j]touch Him. 11[k]And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, [l]"You are the Son of God." 12But [m]He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.

The Twelve Apostles

13[n]And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. 14Then He appointed twelve,* that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, 15and to have power to heal sicknesses and* to cast out demons: 16Simon,* [o]to whom He gave the name Peter; 17James the *son* of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"; 18Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the *son* of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; 19and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

A House Divided Cannot Stand

20Then the multitude came together again, [p]so that they could not so much as eat bread. 21But when His [q]own people heard *about this,* they went out to lay hold of Him, [r]for they said, "He is out of His mind."

22And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, [s]"He has Beelzebub," and, "By the [t]ruler of the demons He casts out demons."

23[u]So He called them to *Himself* and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan? 24If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. 26And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. 27[v]No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

The Unpardonable Sin

28[w]"Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"— 30because they [x]said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Jesus' Mother and Brothers Send for Him

31[y]Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. 32And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers* are outside seeking You."

33But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" 34And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 35For whoever does the [z]will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

The Parable of the Sower

4 And [a]again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat *in it* on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. 2Then He taught them many things by parables, [b]and said to them in His teaching:

* **3:14** NU-Text adds *whom He also named apostles.* * **3:15** NU-Text omits *to heal sicknesses and.* * **3:16** NU-Text reads *and He appointed the twelve: Simon ….* * **3:32** NU-Text and M-Text add *and Your sisters.*

3:11–12 ***He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.*** Jesus rebuked the demons who proclaimed, "You are the Son of God." This was not because the demons incorrectly identified Jesus, but because their testimony was untrustworthy.

3:16–19 ***gave the name Peter.*** Jesus gave Peter a new name because it was the Jewish custom to rename someone who had experienced a life-changing event. This renaming of the disciples has similarities to the renaming of Abram (Gen. 17:3–5) and of Saul (Acts 9).

3:27 ***strong man.*** Whoever defeats Satan must be stronger than he. Jesus implies that He Himself has come to enter the house of the strong man, Satan, to seize his goods (1 John 3:8).

3:28–30 ***he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit.*** This person places himself or herself outside the redeeming grace of God. It is apparently not a single act of defiant behavior, but a continued state of opposition entered into willingly. The tense of "they said" indicates a continued action, not a one-time event. The words and works of Christ were spoken and performed by the power of the Holy Spirit. To attribute them to Satan is to call the work of heaven a work of hell. For such perverse belief there is no remedy. How someone can commit this sin today is a difficult question to answer, but those who persist in denigrating Christ by insulting His work or by attributing it to Satan may drive themselves past a point of no return (Matt. 12:31–32).

3:31 ***His brothers and His mother.*** Opposition arose from Jesus' own immediate family. We are not told precisely what they wanted to say, but it likely involved a concern for Jesus' safety or reputation, since He was becoming widely known as a preaching prophet and a worker of miracles.

3:10 [i] Luke 7:21 [j] Matt. 9:21; 14:36 **3:11** [k] Luke 4:41 [l] Matt. 8:29; 14:33 **3:12** [m] Mark 1:25, 34 **3:13** [n] Luke 9:1 **3:16** [o] John 1:42 **3:20** [p] Mark 6:31 **3:21** [q] Mark 6:3 [r] John 7:5; 10:20 **3:22** [s] Matt. 9:34; 10:25 [t] [John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11] **3:23** [u] Matt. 12:25–29 **3:27** [v] [Is. 49:24, 25] **3:28** [w] Luke 12:10 **3:30** [x] Matt. 9:34 **3:31** [y] Matt. 12:46–50 **3:35** [z] Eph. 6:6 **4:1** [a] Luke 8:4–10 **4:2** [b] Mark 12:38

3 "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to
sow. 4 And it happened, as he sowed, *that*
some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the
birds of the air* came and devoured it.
5 Some fell on stony ground, where it did
not have much earth; and immediately
it sprang up because it had no depth of
earth. 6 But when the sun was up it was
scorched, and because it had no root
it withered away. 7 And some *seed* fell
among thorns; and the thorns grew up
and choked it, and it yielded no crop. 8 But
other *seed* fell on good ground and yielded
a crop that sprang up, increased and pro-
duced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and
some a hundred."

9 And He said to them,* "He who has ears
to hear, let him hear!"

The Purpose of Parables

10 [c]But when He was alone, those around
Him with the twelve asked Him about the
parable. 11 And He said to them, "To you
it has been given to [d]know the mystery
of the kingdom of God; but to [e]those who
are outside, all things come in parables,
12 so that

> [f]'*Seeing they may see and not perceive,*
> *And hearing they may hear and not*
> *understand;*
> *Lest they should turn,*
> *And their sins be forgiven them.*' "*

The Parable of the Sower Explained

13 And He said to them, "Do you not
understand this parable? How then will you
understand all the parables? 14 [g]The sower
sows the word. 15 And these are the ones
by the wayside where the word is sown. When
they hear, Satan comes immediately and
takes away the word that was sown in their
hearts. 16 These likewise are the ones sown
on stony ground who, when they hear the
word, immediately receive it with gladness;
17 and they have no root in themselves,
and so endure only for a time. Afterward,
when tribulation or persecution arises for
the word's sake, immediately they stum-
ble. 18 Now these are the ones sown among
thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the
word, 19 and the [h]cares of this world, [i]the de-
ceitfulness of riches, and the desires for oth-
er things entering in choke the word, and it
becomes unfruitful. 20 But these are the ones
sown on good ground, those who hear the
word, accept *it*, and bear [j]fruit: some thirty-
fold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

Light Under a Basket

21 [k]Also He said to them, "Is a lamp
brought to be put under a basket or under
a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?
22 [l]For there is nothing hidden which will
not be revealed, nor has anything been
kept secret but that it should come to light.
23 [m]If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

24 Then He said to them, "Take heed what
you hear. [n]With the same measure you use,
it will be measured to you; and to you who
hear, more will be given. 25 [o]For whoever
has, to him more will be given; but whoev-
er does not have, even what he has will be
taken away from him."

The Parable of the Growing Seed

26 And He said, [p]"The kingdom of God
is as if a man should scatter seed on the
ground, 27 and should sleep by night and
rise by day, and the seed should sprout
and [q]grow, he himself does not know how.
28 For the earth [r]yields crops by itself: first
the blade, then the head, after that the full
grain in the head. 29 But when the grain
ripens, immediately [s]he puts in the sickle,
because the harvest has come."

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* **4:4** NU-Text and M-Text omit *of the air.* * **4:9** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to them.*
* **4:12** Isaiah 6:9, 10

4:3–8 ***a sower went out to sow.*** The point of the parable is that the condition of the soil determines the potential for growth. The principle is true for Christians and non-Christians alike. Those who have become complacent and lackadaisical are not likely to receive the Word with benefit (James 1:2–25).

4:11 ***To you it has been given to know the mystery.*** In Scripture, a mystery is a truth God has revealed or will reveal at the proper time (Rom. 16:25–26). Jesus apparently used parables for several reasons. First, they are interesting and grab the listener's attention. Second, such stories are easily remembered. Third, they reveal truth to those who are ready spiritually to receive it. Fourth, they conceal truth from those who oppose Christ's message. Frequently Jesus' opponents failed to understand the lessons because of their own spiritual blindness (Matt. 21:45–46).

4:20 ***hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit.*** Only one soil produces fruit. Such a person recognizes God's call, determines to follow it, and experiences a profound transformation.

4:21–23 ***a lamp.*** These were small clay vessels that burned a wick set in olive oil. Like the lamp, Jesus' teachings reveal the motives of the human heart.

4:26–29 ***The kingdom of God is as if.*** Plants develop in a complex, intricate process that humans still do not fully understand even two thousand years after Jesus spoke these words. Yet plants grow and bear fruit and seeds just the same. God's kingdom likewise is growing, although we do not understand all that is happening. This parable, which appears only in Mark's Gospel, presents God's kingdom in brief, from first sowing to final reaping.

4:10 [c] Luke 8:9 **4:11** [d] [1 Cor. 2:10–16] [e] [Col. 4:5] **4:12** [f] Is. 6:9, 10; 43:8 **4:14** [g] Matt. 13:18–23 **4:19** [h] Luke 21:34 [i] 1 Tim. 6:9, 10, 17 **4:20** [j] [Rom. 7:4] **4:21** [k] Matt. 5:15 **4:22** [l] Matt. 10:26, 27 **4:23** [m] Matt. 11:15; 13:9, 43 **4:24** [n] Matt. 7:2 **4:25** [o] Luke 8:18; 19:26 **4:26** [p] [Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43] **4:27** [q] [2 Pet. 3:18] **4:28** [r] [John 12:24] **4:29** [s] Rev. 14:15

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

30 Then He said, [t]"To what shall we liken
the kingdom of God? Or with what parable
shall we picture it? 31 *It is* like a mustard
seed which, when it is sown on the ground,
is smaller than all the seeds on earth; 32 but
when it is sown, it grows up and becomes
greater than all herbs, and shoots out large
branches, so that the birds of the air may
nest under its shade."

Jesus' Use of Parables

33 [u]And with many such parables He
spoke the word to them as they were able to
hear *it*. 34 But without a parable He did not
speak to them. And when they were alone,
[v]He explained all things to His disciples.

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

35 [w]On the same day, when evening had
come, He said to them, "Let us cross over
to the other side." 36 Now when they had left
the multitude, they took Him along in the
boat as He was. And other little boats were
also with Him. 37 And a great windstorm
arose, and the waves beat into the boat,
so that it was already filling. 38 But He was
in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they
awoke Him and said to Him, [x]"Teacher, [y]do
You not care that we are perishing?"
39 Then He arose and [z]rebuked the wind,
and said to the sea, [a]"Peace, be still!" And
the wind ceased and there was a great
calm. 40 But He said to them, "Why are
you so fearful? [b]How *is it* that you have
no faith?"* 41 And they feared exceedingly,
and said to one another, "Who can this be,
that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

A Demon-Possessed Man Healed

5 Then [a]they came to the other side of the
sea, to the country of the Gadarenes.*
2 And when He had come out of the boat,
immediately there met Him out of the
tombs a man with an [b]unclean spirit, 3 who
had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no
one could bind him,* not even with chains,
4 because he had often been bound with
shackles and chains. And the chains had
been pulled apart by him, and the shack-
les broken in pieces; neither could anyone
tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he
was in the mountains and in the tombs,
crying out and cutting himself with stones.
6 When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran
and worshiped Him. 7 And he cried out
with a loud voice and said, "What have I to
do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High
God? I [c]implore You by God that You do not
torment me."
8 For He said to him, [d]"Come out of the
man, unclean spirit!" 9 Then He asked him,
"What *is* your name?"
And he answered, saying, "My name *is*
Legion; for we are many." 10 Also he begged
Him earnestly that He would not send them
out of the country.
11 Now a large herd of [e]swine was feed-
ing there near the mountains. 12 So all the
demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to
the swine, that we may enter them." 13 And
at once Jesus* gave them permission. Then
the unclean spirits went out and entered
the swine (there were about two thousand);
and the herd ran violently down the steep
place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.
14 So those who fed the swine fled, and
they told *it* in the city and in the country.
And they went out to see what it was that
had happened. 15 Then they came to Jesus,
and saw the one *who had been* [f]demon-
possessed and had the legion, [g]sitting and
[h]clothed and in his right mind. And they
were afraid. 16 And those who saw it told
them how it happened to him *who had been*
demon-possessed, and about the swine.
17 Then [i]they began to plead with Him to
depart from their region.
18 And when He got into the boat, [j]he
who had been demon-possessed begged
Him that he might be with Him. 19 How-
ever, Jesus did not permit him, but said
to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell
them what great things the Lord has done
for you, and how He has had compassion
on you." 20 And he departed and began to
[k]proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had
done for him; and all [l]marveled.

* **4:40** NU-Text reads *Have you still no faith?* * **5:1** NU-Text reads *Gerasenes.* * **5:3** NU-Text adds *anymore.* * **5:13** NU-Text reads *And He gave.*

4:35 *cross over to the other side.* The Sea of Galilee is about eight miles wide and twelve miles long. Its unique geography produces a greatly varying climate. It is 700 feet below sea level with mountains that rise 3,000–4,000 feet around it. It is not unusual for sudden windstorms to appear during the evening hours. The warm tropical air from the lake's surface rises and meets the colder air from the nearby hills. The resulting turbulences and winds can be treacherous.

4:41 *Who can this be.* Mark uses the disciples' question to evoke a similar response in the minds of his readers. Mark relates the works and words of the one he calls "Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1).

5:1 *the country of the Gadarenes.* This area is on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The form of the name varies (Matt. 8:28; Luke 8:26,37).

5:17–20 *they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.* Jesus was not well received in this region. His presence had cost financial loss to some, although it meant liberation to the demoniac. Jesus could have healed and saved in that region, but He was turned away by its fearful citizens. ***Decapolis.***

4:30 [t] Matt. 13:31, 32 **4:33** [u] Matt. 13:34, 35 **4:34** [v] Luke 24:27, 45 **4:35** [w] Luke 8:22, 25 **4:38** [x] [Matt. 23:8–10] [y] Ps. 44:23 **4:39** [z] Luke 4:39 [a] Ps. 65:7; 89:9; 93:4; 104:6, 7 **4:40** [b] Matt. 14:31, 32 **5:1** [a] Matt. 8:28–34 **5:2** [b] Mark 1:23; 7:25 **5:7** [c] Acts 19:13 **5:8** [d] Mark 1:25; 9:25 **5:11** [e] Deut. 14:8 **5:15** [f] Matt. 4:24; 8:16 [g] Luke 10:39 [h] [Is. 61:10] **5:17** [i] Acts 16:39 **5:18** [j] Luke 8:38, 39 **5:20** [k] Ps. 66:16 [l] Matt. 9:8, 33

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

21 [m]Now when Jesus had crossed over
again by boat to the other side, a great
multitude gathered to Him; and He was
by the sea. 22 [n]And behold, one of the
rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by
name. And when he saw Him, he fell at
His feet 23 and begged Him earnestly, say-
ing, "My little daughter lies at the point of
death. Come and [o]lay Your hands on her,
that she may be healed, and she will live."
24 So *Jesus* went with him, and a great
multitude followed Him and thronged
Him.
25 Now a certain woman [p]had a flow of
blood for twelve years, 26 and had suffered
many things from many physicians. She
had spent all that she had and was no bet-
ter, but rather grew worse. 27 When she
heard about Jesus, she came behind *Him* in
the crowd and [q]touched His garment. 28 For
she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I
shall be made well."
29 Immediately the fountain of her blood
was dried up, and she felt in *her* body that
she was healed of the affliction. 30 And
Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself
that [r]power had gone out of Him, turned
around in the crowd and said, "Who
touched My clothes?"
31 But His disciples said to Him, "You see
the multitude thronging You, and You say,
'Who touched Me?' "
32 And He looked around to see her who
had done this thing. 33 But the woman,
[s]fearing and trembling, knowing what had
happened to her, came and fell down before
Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And
He said to her, "Daughter, [t]your faith has
made you well. [u]Go in peace, and be healed
of your affliction."
35 [v]While He was still speaking, *some*
came from the ruler of the synagogue's
house who said, "Your daughter is dead.
Why trouble the Teacher any further?"
36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that
was spoken, He said to the ruler of the syn-
agogue, "Do not be afraid; only [w]believe."
37 And He permitted no one to follow Him
except Peter, James, and John the brother
of James. 38 Then He came to the house of
the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tu-
mult and those who [x]wept and wailed loud-
ly. 39 When He came in, He said to them,
"Why make this commotion and weep?
The child is not dead, but [y]sleeping."
40 And they ridiculed Him. [z]But when He
had put them all outside, He took the fa-
ther and the mother of the child, and those
who were with Him, and entered where
the child was lying. 41 Then He took the
child by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha,
cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say
to you, arise." 42 Immediately the girl arose
and walked, for she was twelve years *of*
age. And they were [a]overcome with great
amazement. 43 But [b]He commanded them
strictly that no one should know it, and said
that *something* should be given her to eat.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

6 Then [a]He went out from there and came
to His own country, and His disciples
followed Him. 2 And when the Sabbath had
come, He began to teach in the synagogue.
And many hearing *Him* were [b]astonished,
saying, [c]"Where *did* this Man *get* these
things? And what wisdom *is* this which is
given to Him, that such mighty works are
performed by His hands! 3 Is this not the
carpenter, the Son of Mary, and [d]brother of
James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are
not His sisters here with us?" So they [e]were
offended at Him.
4 But Jesus said to them, [f]"A prophet is
not without honor except in his own coun-
try, among his own relatives, and in his

This literally means "ten cities." This largely Gentile, Greek-speaking area was an important strategic link in Rome's military defense.

5:22 ***one of the rulers of the synagogue.*** Jairus was a lay leader charged with supervising services at the synagogue.

5:26 ***suffered many things from many physicians.*** Mark is not complimentary toward the physicians who had treated this woman.

5:29–30 ***Immediately.*** This word is used twice in this context. Both the woman and Jesus simultaneously knew what had happened. ***Who touched My clothes?*** Jesus turned when He was touched and confronted the woman before she disappeared. He wanted to correct any mistaken notion she may have had about her healing. It was not any magical quality of His clothing but His divine will that had made her well.

5:33 ***told Him the whole truth.*** Jesus' kind manner and tender words must have eased the fear this woman had of being revealed. Naturally, the time that Jesus took to care for the woman must have worried the already tense disciples.

5:34 ***Daughter.*** Jesus used this tender word to address this woman, and He noted that her faith made the difference, for it was correctly placed in Him. Faith itself does not heal—it is the proper object of that faith, Jesus, who heals.

5:43 ***He commanded them strictly.*** The command to keep the miracle a secret was a temporary measure, for certainly the girl's appearance could not be hidden very long. Such orders would, however, allow Jesus to exit quietly. Jesus did not want to be known primarily as a miracle worker, lest people seek Him for the wrong reasons.

6:4 ***A prophet is not without honor except in his own country.*** This maxim is still repeated and is still

5:21 [m] Luke 8:40 **5:22** [n] Matt. 9:18–26 **5:23** [o] Acts 9:17; 28:8 **5:25** [p] Lev. 15:19, 25 **5:27** [q] Matt. 14:35, 36 **5:30** [r] Luke 6:19; 8:46 **5:33** [s] [Ps. 89:7] **5:34** [t] Matt. 9:22 [u] Luke 7:50; 8:48 **5:35** [v] Luke 8:49 **5:36** [w] [John 11:40] **5:38** [x] Acts 9:39 **5:39** [y] John 11:4, 11 **5:40** [z] Acts 9:40 **5:42** [a] Mark 1:27; 7:37 **5:43** [b] [Matt. 8:4; 12:16–19; 17:9] **6:1** [a] Matt. 13:54 **6:2** [b] Matt. 7:28 [c] John 6:42 **6:3** [d] Matt. 12:46 [e] [Matt. 11:6] **6:4** [f] John 4:44

own house." 5[g]Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed *them.* 6And [h]He marveled because of their unbelief. [i]Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

Sending Out the Twelve

7[j]And He called the twelve to *Himself,* and began to send them out [k]two *by* two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. 8He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in *their* money belts—9but [l]to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.

10[m]Also He said to them, "In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. 11[n]And whoever* will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, [o]shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them.* Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!"

12So they went out and preached that *people* should repent. 13And they cast out many demons, [p]and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed *them.*

John the Baptist Beheaded

14[q]Now King Herod heard *of Him,* for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore [r]these powers are at work in him."

15[s]Others said, "It is Elijah."

And others said, "It is the Prophet, [t]or* like one of the prophets."

16[u]But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!" 17For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. 18Because John had said to Herod, [v]"It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

19Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; 20for Herod [w]feared John, knowing that he *was* a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21[x]Then an opportune day came when Herod [y]on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief *men* of Galilee. 22And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give *it* to you." 23He also swore to her, [z]"Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

24So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?"

And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!"

25Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

26[a]And the king was exceedingly sorry; *yet,* because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. 27Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, 28brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. 29When his disciples heard *of it,* they came and [b]took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Feeding the Five Thousand

30[c]Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. 31[d]And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For [e]there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. 32[f]So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

33But the multitudes* saw them departing, and many [g]knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him.

* **6:11** NU-Text reads *whatever place.* • NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **6:15** NU-Text and M-Text omit *or.* * **6:33** NU-Text and M-Text read *they.*

true today. Perhaps others were jealous of Jesus' popularity and huge following. Their envy even took the form of violence against Christ (Luke 4:29).

6:14 *King Herod.* This is Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great, the king who tried to kill the baby Jesus (Matt. 2:1–18). After Herod the Great's death in 4 B.C. his kingdom was divided between Archelaus, who received Judea and Samaria; Philip, who ruled Iturea and Trachonitis, north and east of Galilee; and Antipas, who controlled Galilee and Perea from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. Jesus ministered largely in the territory ruled by Antipas.

6:18 *not lawful.* John's message to Herod was that his divorce was not lawful as grounds for remarriage. John's declaration could be based on Jesus' stern words about divorce (10:11–12) or on Leviticus 20:21, which prohibits a man from taking his brother's wife.

6:23 *up to half my kingdom.* This is an expression meaning a large amount but with some limits.

6:5 [g] Gen. 19:22; 32:25 **6:6** [h] Is. 59:16 [i] Matt. 9:35 **6:7** [j] Mark 3:13, 14 [k] [Eccl. 4:9, 10] **6:9** [l] [Eph. 6:15] **6:10** [m] Matt. 10:11 **6:11** [n] Matt. 10:14 [o] Acts 13:51; 18:6 **6:13** [p] [James 5:14] **6:14** [q] Luke 9:7–9 [r] Luke 19:37 **6:15** [s] Mark 8:28 [t] Matt. 21:11 **6:16** [u] Luke 3:19 **6:18** [v] Lev. 18:16; 20:21 **6:20** [w] Matt. 14:5; 21:26 **6:21** [x] Matt. 14:6 [y] Gen. 40:20 **6:23** [z] Esth. 5:3, 6, 7:2 **6:26** [a] Matt. 14:9 **6:29** [b] 1 Kin. 13:29, 30 **6:30** [c] Luke 9:10 **6:31** [d] Matt. 14:13 [e] Mark 3:20 **6:32** [f] Matt. 14:13–21 **6:33** [g] [Col. 1:6]

34 [h]And Jesus, when He came out, saw a
great multitude and was moved with com-
passion for them, because they were like
[i]sheep not having a shepherd. So [j]He be-
gan to teach them many things. 35 [k]When
the day was now far spent, His disciples
came to Him and said, "This is a deserted
place, and already the hour *is* late. 36 Send
them away, that they may go into the sur-
rounding country and villages and buy
themselves bread;* for they have nothing
to eat."
37 But He answered and said to them,
"You give them something to eat."
And they said to Him, [l]"Shall we go and
buy two hundred denarii worth of bread
and give them *something* to eat?"
38 But He said to them, "How many loaves
do you have? Go and see."
And when they found out they said,
[m]"Five, and two fish."
39 Then He [n]commanded them to make
them all sit down in groups on the green
grass. 40 So they sat down in ranks, in hun-
dreds and in fifties. 41 And when He had
taken the five loaves and the two fish, He
[o]looked up to heaven, [p]blessed and broke
the loaves, and gave *them* to His disciples
to set before them; and the two fish He
divided among *them* all. 42 So they all ate
and were filled. 43 And they took up twelve
baskets full of fragments and of the fish.
44 Now those who had eaten the loaves were
about* five thousand men.

Jesus Walks on the Sea

45 [q]Immediately He made His disciples
get into the boat and go before Him to the
other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the
multitude away. 46 And when He had sent
them away, He [r]departed to the moun-
tain to pray. 47 Now when evening came,
the boat was in the middle of the sea; and
He *was* alone on the land. 48 Then He saw
them straining at rowing, for the wind was
against them. Now about the fourth watch
of the night He came to them, walking
on the sea, and [s]would have passed them
by. 49 And when they saw Him walking
on the sea, they supposed it was a [t]ghost,
and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and
were troubled. But immediately He talked
with them and said to them, [u]"Be of good
cheer! It is I; do not be [v]afraid." 51 Then
He went up into the boat to them, and
the wind [w]ceased. And they were greatly
[x]amazed in themselves beyond measure,
and marveled. 52 For [y]they had not under-
stood about the loaves, because their
[z]heart was hardened.

Many Touch Him and Are Made Well

53 [a]When they had crossed over, they
came to the land of Gennesaret and an-
chored there. 54 And when they came out
of the boat, immediately the people recog-
nized Him, 55 ran through that whole sur-
rounding region, and began to carry about
on beds those who were sick to wherever
they heard He was. 56 Wherever He en-
tered, into villages, cities, or the country,
they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and
begged Him that [b]they might just touch
the [c]hem of His garment. And as many as
touched Him were made well.

Defilement Comes from Within

7 Then [a]the Pharisees and some of the
scribes came together to Him, having
come from Jerusalem. 2 Now when* they
saw some of His disciples eat bread with
defiled, that is, with [b]unwashed hands,
they found fault. 3 For the Pharisees and
all the Jews do not eat unless they wash
their hands in a special way, holding the
[c]tradition of the elders. 4 *When they come*
from the marketplace, they do not eat un-
less they wash. And there are many other
things which they have received and hold,

* **6:36** NU-Text reads *something to eat* and omits the rest of this verse. * **6:44** NU-Text and M-Text omit *about*. * **7:2** NU-Text omits *when* and *they found fault*.

6:34 ***moved with compassion.*** The Gospels record several times that when Jesus saw a need He responded compassionately (1:41). That compassion led to action, despite an obvious lack of food in this instance.

6:36–37 ***Send them away.*** The disciples sought to avoid responsibility for the hungry multitude.

6:39–40 ***in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties.*** Details such as sitting on the green grass, which is possible only in late winter and early spring, and the fact that the groups were counted are indications that an eyewitness, probably Peter, recounted this story to Mark.

6:43 ***twelve baskets full of fragments.*** These were small baskets commonly carried by travelers. It is possible to conclude that the leftovers gave each disciple enough food for his own use.

6:51 ***He went up into the boat to them.*** Three miracles are contained in this brief account (vv. 47–51): (1) In the darkness Jesus saw the disciples out in the storm miles away, (2) Jesus walked on the water, and (3) Jesus showed complete control over His creation when the wind ceased.

6:56 ***Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country.*** Mark summarizes Jesus' healing ministry, noting how widespread it was.

7:3–4 ***For the Pharisees.*** These two verses explain the tradition of handwashing and various kinds of

6:34 [h] Matt. 9:36; 14:14 [i] Num. 27:17 [j] Luke 9:11
6:35 [k] Matt. 14:15 **6:37** [l] 2 Kin. 4:43 **6:38** [m] John 6:9 **6:39** [n] Matt. 15:35 **6:41** [o] John 11:41, 42 [p] Matt. 15:36; 26:26 **6:45** [q] John 6:15–21 **6:46** [r] Luke 5:16
6:48 [s] Luke 24:28 **6:49** [t] Matt. 14:26 **6:50** [u] Matt. 9:2 [v] Is. 41:10 **6:51** [w] Ps. 107:29 [x] Mark 1:27; 2:12; 5:42; 7:37
6:52 [y] Mark 8:17, 18 [z] Mark 3:5; 16:14 **6:53** [a] Matt. 14:34–36 **6:56** [b] Matt. 9:20 [c] Num. 15:38, 39
7:1 [a] Matt. 15:1–20 **7:2** [b] Matt. 15:20 **7:3** [c] Gal. 1:14

like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

5[d]Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?"

6He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you [e]hypocrites, as it is written:

> [f]'*This people honors Me with their lips,*
> *But their heart is far from Me.*
> 7 *And in vain they worship Me,*
> *Teaching as doctrines the*
> *commandments of men.*'*

8For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men* —the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do."

9He said to them, "*All too* well [g]you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. 10For Moses said, [h]'*Honor your father and your mother*';* and, [i]'*He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.*'* 11But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, [j]"Whatever profit you might have received from me *is* Corban"—' (that is, a gift *to God*), 12then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, 13making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."

14[k]When He had called all the multitude to *Himself,* He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and [l]understand: 15There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that [m]defile a man. 16[n]If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

17[o]When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. 18So He said to them, [p]"Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, 19because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, *thus* purifying all foods?"* 20And He said, [q]"What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21[r]For from within, out of the heart of men, [s]proceed evil thoughts, [t]adulteries, [u]fornications, murders, 22thefts, [v]covetousness, wickedness, [w]deceit, [x]lewdness, an evil eye, [y]blasphemy, [z]pride, foolishness. 23All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

A Gentile Shows Her Faith

24[a]From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon.* And He entered a house and wanted no one to know *it,* but He could not be [b]hidden. 25For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and [c]fell at His feet. 26The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little dogs."

28And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."

29Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

30And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.

Jesus Heals a Deaf-Mute

31[d]Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea

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* **7:7** Isaiah 29:13 * **7:8** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **7:10** Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16 • Exodus 21:17 * **7:16** NU-Text omits this verse. * **7:19** NU-Text ends quotation with *eliminated,* setting off the final clause as Mark's comment that Jesus has declared all foods clean. * **7:24** NU-Text omits *and Sidon.*

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ceremonial uncleanness. Mark's intended readers in Rome likely needed more background on the Jewish faith to understand this controversy.

7:5 *the tradition of the elders.* This phrase refers to a series of rules meant to bolster the ceremonial law of the Jews. Its authority was not supported by Scripture. The question indirectly challenged Jesus, for as the disciples' teacher He was judged responsible for their actions.

7:6–7 *hypocrites.* The term originally referred to actors who wore masks on stage as they played different characters. Thus the Pharisees were not genuinely religious; they were merely playing a part for all to see.

7:11–13 *But you say.* This shows the absolute contrast between God's will and man's empty tradition. ***Corban.*** This was evidently a pious-sounding evasion of the requirement of honoring one's parents by supporting them financially.

7:24 *the region of Tyre.* This city is the farthest Jesus traveled from Israel during His public ministry.

7:27 *to the little dogs.* Jesus is not attempting to insult the woman by using this metaphor. In fact, He is testing her faith. Matthew records Jesus' reaction to her reply, "O woman, great is your faith" (Matt. 15:28).

7:28 *And she answered.* The woman understood Jesus' test and persistently replied that even during the meal the dogs consume the children's crumbs that fall from the table.

7:5 [d] Matt. 15:2 **7:6** [e] Matt. 23:13–29 [f] Is. 29:13 **7:9** [g] Prov. 1:25 **7:10** [h] Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16 [i] Ex. 21:17 **7:11** [j] Matt. 15:5; 23:18 **7:14** [k] Matt. 15:10 [l] Matt. 16:9, 11, 12 **7:15** [m] Is. 59:3 **7:16** [n] Matt. 11:15 **7:17** [o] Matt. 15:15 **7:18** [p] [Heb. 5:11–14] **7:20** [q] Ps. 39:1 **7:21** [r] Gen. 6:5; 8:21 [s] [Gal. 5:19–21] [t] 2 Pet. 2:14 [u] 1 Thess. 4:3 **7:22** [v] Luke 12:15 [w] Rom. 1:28, 29 [x] 1 Pet. 4:3 [y] Rev. 2:9 [z] 1 John 2:16 **7:24** [a] Matt. 15:21 [b] Mark 2:1, 2 **7:25** [c] John 11:32 **7:31** [d] Matt. 15:29

of Galilee. 32Then [e]they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. 33And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and [f]He spat and touched his tongue. 34Then, [g]looking up to heaven, [h]He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

35[i]Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. 36Then [j]He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed *it*. 37And they were [k]astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He [l]makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

Feeding the Four Thousand

8 In those days, [a]the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples *to Him* and said to them, 2"I have [b]compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. 3And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."

4Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

5[c]He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"

And they said, "Seven."

6So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples to set before *them;* and they set *them* before the multitude. 7They also had a few small fish; and [d]having blessed them, He said to set them also before *them*. 8So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments. 9Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away, 10[e]immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.

The Pharisees Seek a Sign

11[f]Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him. 12But He [g]sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, [h]no sign shall be given to this generation."

Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod

13And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side. 14[i]Now the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat. 15[j]Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

16And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "*It is* because we have no bread."

17But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, "Why do you reason because you have no bread? [k]Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still* hardened? 18Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19[l]When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?"

They said to Him, "Twelve."

20"Also, [m]when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?"

And they said, "Seven."

21So He said to them, "How *is it* [n]you do not understand?"

A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida

22Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a [o]blind man to Him, and begged Him to [p]touch him. 23So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when [q]He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.

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*8:14 NU-Text and M-Text read *they*. *8:17 NU-Text omits *still*.

7:32–35 *one who was deaf.* The healing of this deaf man (who also had a speech impediment) is one of the two miracles recorded by Mark only. (The other is the healing of the blind man in 8:22–26.)

8:8 *seven large baskets.* There was one basket for each original loaf. These baskets were much larger than the 12 small personal baskets mentioned in 6:43. It was the kind of larger basket that was used to lower Paul over the wall of Damascus (Acts 9:25).

8:10 *Dalmanutha.* This was probably on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, about three miles north of modern Tiberias and about five miles southwest of Capernaum. This is the only time it is mentioned in the New Testament.

8:11 *the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him.* The Pharisees' testing of Jesus was crafty and devious. Obviously these men did not heed the many signs and wonders that Jesus had already performed. John 20:30–31 indicates that the signs were meant to produce faith. It is doubtful that the Pharisees would have changed their minds even if they had seen another miracle.

8:17–21 *How is it you do not understand?* The disciples continued to show a lack of spiritual discernment despite the miracles they had witnessed. Jesus' rebuke was intended to make them recall what God had done for them.

7:32 [e] Luke 11:14 **7:33** [f] Mark 8:23 **7:34** [g] Mark 6:41 [h] John 11:33, 38 **7:35** [i] Is. 35:5, 6 **7:36** [j] Mark 5:43 **7:37** [k] Mark 6:51; 10:26 [l] Matt. 12:22 **8:1** [a] Matt. 15:32–39 **8:2** [b] Mark 1:41; 6:34 **8:5** [c] Mark 6:38 **8:7** [d] Matt. 14:19 **8:10** [e] Matt. 15:39 **8:11** [f] Matt. 12:38; 16:1 **8:12** [g] Mark 7:34 [h] Matt. 12:39 **8:14** [i] Matt. 16:5 **8:15** [j] Luke 12:1 **8:17** [k] Mark 6:52; 16:14 **8:19** [l] Matt. 14:20 **8:20** [m] Matt. 15:37 **8:21** [n] [Mark 6:52] **8:22** [o] John 9:1 [p] Luke 18:15 **8:23** [q] Mark 7:33

24 And he looked up and said, "I see men
like trees, walking."
25 Then He put *His* hands on his eyes
again and made him look up. And he was
restored and saw everyone clearly. 26 Then
He sent him away to his house, saying,
"Neither go into the town, [r]nor tell anyone
in the town."*

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

27 [s]Now Jesus and His disciples went out
to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on
the road He asked His disciples, saying to
them, "Who do men say that I am?"
28 So they answered, [t]"John the Baptist;
but some *say,* [u]Elijah; and others, one of
the prophets."
29 He said to them, "But who do you say
that I am?"
Peter answered and said to Him, [v]"You
are the Christ."
30 [w]Then He strictly warned them that
they should tell no one about Him.

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

31 And [x]He began to teach them that the
Son of Man must suffer many things, and
be [y]rejected by the elders and chief priests
and scribes, and be [z]killed, and after three
days rise again. 32 He spoke this word open-
ly. Then Peter took Him aside and began
to rebuke Him. 33 But when He had turned
around and looked at His disciples, He [a]re-
buked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Sa-
tan! For you are not mindful of the things
of God, but the things of men."

Take Up the Cross and Follow Him

34 Whe He had called the people to
Himself, with His disciples also, He said
to them, [b]"Whoever desires to come after
Me, let him deny himself, and take up his
cross, and follow Me. 35 For [c]whoever de-
sires to save his life will lose it, but whoever
loses his life for My sake and the gospel's
will save it. 36 For what will it profit a man
if he gains the whole world, and loses his
own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in
exchange for his soul? 38 [d]For whoever [e]is
ashamed of Me and My words in this adul-
terous and sinful generation, of him the
Son of Man also will be ashamed when He
comes in the glory of His Father with the
holy angels."

9 And He said to them, [a]"Assuredly, I say
to you that there are some standing here
who will not taste death till they see [b]the
kingdom of God present with power."

Jesus Transfigured on the Mount

2 [c]Now after six days Jesus took Peter,
James, and John, and led them up on a high
mountain apart by themselves; and He was
transfigured before them. 3 His clothes be-
came shining, exceedingly [d]white, like
snow, such as no launderer on earth can
whiten them. 4 And Elijah appeared to them
with Moses, and they were talking with
Jesus. 5 Then Peter answered and said to
Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here;
and let us make three tabernacles: one for
You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—
6 because he did not know what to say, for
they were greatly afraid.
7 And a [e]cloud came and overshadowed
them; and a voice came out of the cloud,
saying, "This is [f]My beloved Son. [g]Hear
Him!" 8 Suddenly, when they had looked
around, they saw no one anymore, but only
Jesus with themselves.
9 [h]Now as they came down from the
mountain, He commanded them that they
should tell no one the things they had seen,

* **8:26** NU-Text reads *"Do not even go into the town."*

8:27 ***Caesarea Philippi.*** This city is about 25 miles north of Bethsaida and the Sea of Galilee. It stands on the southern edge of Mount Hermon. One of the sources of the Jordan River springs forth from under a large rocky cliff that rises a hundred or more feet above the village. The name Philippi distinguishes this town from Caesarea by the sea.

8:29 ***But who do you say that I am?*** Jesus emphatically asks His disciples for their understanding. ***you.*** Prominent in Jesus' question is the word "you." ***You are the Christ.*** Peter answers for the group. Jesus wants His disciples to grasp firmly His true identity before He reveals to them the necessity of His coming death and resurrection. In Mark's Gospel, only the disciples come to understand who Jesus is.

8:30 ***tell no one about Him.*** Jesus' warning may seem strange. Its explanation lies in the fact that the Jews expected the Messiah to be a political liberator. Jesus' first coming was meant to accomplish another kind of liberation—release from sin. Hence Jesus was careful not to use the name Messiah publicly, for it was misunderstood by the Jewish people, their leaders, and the Roman authorities.

8:38 ***when He comes in the glory.*** This is the first glimpse of the fulfillment of all history (1 Cor. 15:24–28). Those who will reign with Christ invest their lives in that which will last (v. 35). Those who are willing to confess Him today will be rewarded before the Father in heaven (Matt. 5:10–12; 2 Tim. 2:11–13; Rev. 2:26–28).

9:4 ***Elijah.*** Elijah is mentioned in Malachi 4:5–6 in connection with the future coming of Christ. This is why people asked John the Baptist if he were Elijah (John 1:21). Moses was the lawgiver and liberator, while Elijah was the first of the great prophets. Their presence confirmed the reality that Jesus is the Messiah of Peter's confession.

8:26 [r] Mark 5:43; 7:36 **8:27** [s] Luke 9:18–20 **8:28** [t] Matt. 14:2 [u] Luke 9:7, 8 **8:29** [v] John 1:41; 4:42; 6:69; 11:27 **8:30** [w] Matt. 8:4; 16:20 **8:31** [x] Matt. 16:21; 20:19 [y] Mark 10:33 [z] Mark 9:31; 10:34 **8:33** [a] [Rev. 3:19] **8:34** [b] Luke 14:27 **8:35** [c] John 12:25 **8:38** [d] Matt. 10:33 [e] 2 Tim. 1:8, 9; 2:12 **9:1** [a] Luke 9:27 [b] [Matt. 24:30] **9:2** [c] Matt. 17:1–8 **9:3** [d] Dan. 7:9 **9:7** [e] Ex. 40:34 [f] Mark 1:11 [g] Acts 3:22 **9:9** [h] Matt. 17:9–13

till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.
10So they kept this word to themselves,
questioning [i]what the rising from the dead
meant.
11And they asked Him, saying, "Why
do the scribes say [j]that Elijah must come
first?"
12Then He answered and told them, "In-
deed, Elijah is coming first and restores all
things. And [k]how is it written concerning
the Son of Man, that He must suffer many
things and [l]be treated with contempt? 13But
I say to you that [m]Elijah has also come, and
they did to him whatever they wished, as it
is written of him."

A Boy Is Healed

14[n]And when He came to the disciples,
He saw a great multitude around them,
and scribes disputing with them. 15Imme-
diately, when they saw Him, all the people
were greatly amazed, and running to *Him*,
greeted Him. 16And He asked the scribes,
"What are you discussing with them?"
17Then [o]one of the crowd answered and
said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who
has a mute spirit. 18And wherever it seizes
him, it throws him down; he foams at the
mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rig-
id. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they
should cast it out, but they could not."
19He answered him and said, "O [p]faith-
less generation, how long shall I be with
you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring
him to Me." 20Then they brought him to
Him. And [q]when he saw Him, immediate-
ly the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on
the ground and wallowed, foaming at the
mouth.
21So He asked his father, "How long has
this been happening to him?"
And he said, "From childhood. 22And
often he has thrown him both into the fire
and into the water to destroy him. But if
You can do anything, have compassion on
us and help us."
23Jesus said to him, [r]"If you can believe,*
all things *are* possible to him who believes."
24Immediately the father of the child
cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I be-
lieve; [s]help my unbelief!"
25When Jesus saw that the people came
running together, He [t]rebuked the unclean
spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I
command you, come out of him and enter
him no more!" 26Then *the spirit* cried out,
convulsed him greatly, and came out of
him. And he became as one dead, so that
many said, "He is dead." 27But Jesus took
him by the hand and lifted him up, and he
arose.
28[u]And when He had come into the
house, His disciples asked Him privately,
"Why could we not cast it out?"
29So He said to them, "This kind can
come out by nothing but [v]prayer and fast-
ing."*

Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection

30Then they departed from there and
passed through Galilee, and He did not
want anyone to know *it*. 31[w]For He taught
His disciples and said to them, "The Son
of Man is being betrayed into the hands of
men, and they will [x]kill Him. And after He
is killed, He will [y]rise the third day." 32[z]But
they did not understand this saying, and
were afraid to ask Him.

Who Is the Greatest?

33[a]Then He came to Capernaum. And
when He was in the house He asked them,
"What was it you disputed among your-
selves on the road?" 34But they kept silent,
for on the road they had [b]disputed among
themselves who *would be the* [c]greatest.
35And He sat down, called the twelve, and
said to them, [d]"If anyone desires to be first,
he shall be last of all and servant of all."
36Then [e]He took a little child and set him in
the midst of them. And when He had taken
him in His arms, He said to them, 37"Who-
ever receives one of these little children in
My name receives Me; and [f]whoever re-
ceives Me, receives not Me but Him who
sent Me."

Jesus Forbids Sectarianism

38[g]Now John answered Him, saying,
"Teacher, we saw someone who does not
follow us casting out demons in Your
name, and we forbade him because he does
not follow us."
39But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, [h]for
no one who works a miracle in My name
can soon afterward speak evil of Me. 40For
[i]he who is not against us is on our* side.
41[j]For whoever gives you a cup of water to

* **9:23** NU-Text reads "*If You can!' All things*…."
* **9:29** NU-Text omits *and fasting*. * **9:40** M-Text reads *against you is on your side*.

9:24 ***I believe; help my unbelief.*** These words express the dilemma that even those who believe can be nagged by doubt and hopelessness. This man took the correct course by appealing to Jesus for help.

9:40 ***For he who is not against us is on our side.*** Jesus is not endorsing all who claim to follow Him. Rather, this statement was meant to remind the disciples that God's work was not necessarily restricted to their small group.

9:10 [i] John 2:19–22 **9:11** [j] Mal. 4:5 **9:12** [k] Is. 53:3 [l] Phil. 2:7 **9:13** [m] Luke 1:17 **9:14** [n] Matt. 17:14–19 **9:17** [o] Luke 9:38 **9:19** [p] John 4:48 **9:20** [q] Mark 1:26 **9:23** [r] John 11:40 **9:24** [s] Luke 17:5 **9:25** [t] Mark 1:25 **9:28** [u] Matt. 17:19 **9:29** [v] James 5:16] **9:31** [w] Luke 9:44 [x] Matt. 16:21; 27:50 [y] 1 Cor. 15:4 **9:32** [z] Luke 2:50; 18:34 **9:33** [a] Matt. 18:1–5 **9:34** [b] Prov. 13:10] [c] Luke 22:24; 23:46; 24:46 **9:35** [d] Luke 22:26, 27 **9:36** [e] Mark 10:13–16 **9:37** [f] Matt. 10:40 **9:38** [g] Num. 11:27–29 **9:39** [h] 1 Cor. 12:3 **9:40** [i] [Matt. 12:30] **9:41** [j] Matt. 10:42

drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

Jesus Warns of Offenses

42 [k]"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. 43 [l]If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 44 where

[m]'*Their worm does not die*
And the fire is not quenched.'*

45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 46 where

[n]'*Their worm does not die*
And the fire is not quenched.'*

47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire— 48 where

[o]'*Their worm does not die*
And the [p]*fire is not quenched.*'*

Tasteless Salt Is Worthless

49 "For everyone will be [q]seasoned with fire,* [r]and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. 50 [s]Salt *is* good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? [t]Have salt in yourselves, and [u]have peace with one another."

Marriage and Divorce

10 Then [a]He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And multitudes gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again.

2 [b]The Pharisees came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce *his* wife?" testing Him.

3 And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?"

4 They said, [c]"Moses permitted *a man* to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss *her*."

5 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. 6 But from the beginning of the creation, God [d]'*made them male and female.*'* 7 [e]'*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,* 8 *and the two shall become one flesh*';* so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same *matter.* 11 So He said to them, [f]"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. 12 And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

13 [g]Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought *them.* 14 But when Jesus saw *it,* He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for [h]of such is the kingdom of God. 15 Assuredly, I say to you, [i]whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will [j]by no means enter it." 16 And He took them up in His arms, laid *His* hands on them, and blessed them.

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

17 [k]Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I [l]do that I may inherit eternal life?"

18 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is,* [m]God. 19 You know the commandments:

* **9:44** NU-Text omits this verse. * **9:46** NU-Text omits the last clause of verse 45 and all of verse 46. * **9:48** Isaiah 66:24 * **9:49** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **10:6** Genesis 1:27; 5:2 * **10:8** Genesis 2:24

9:49 ***Everyone will be seasoned with fire.*** This phrase may refer to the trials and judgments that all will face—believers with trials that purify faith, unbelievers with the eternal fire of God's judgment.

10:4 ***a certificate of divorce.*** This was a document signed before witnesses. Its intent was to limit frivolous divorces. In Jesus' day, the interpretation of this custom varied widely. The disciples of Hillel allowed divorce for almost any reason, but the followers of Shammai permitted divorce only for sexual impurity.

10:11 ***Whosoever divorces his wife.*** Mark includes no exception to Christ's prohibition of divorce, nor is any exception listed in Luke 16:18, Romans 7:1–2, or 1 Corinthians 7:10–11. Compare Matthew 5:32 where the exception is made.

10:18 ***No one is good but One, that is, God.*** This reply is a claim to deity, which Jesus asks the young ruler to recognize.

10:19 ***Do not.*** Jesus recounts the Seventh, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, and Fifth Commandments. ***Do not defraud.*** Jesus inserts this phrase just before the Fifth Commandment. All of these commands concern

9:42 [k] Luke 17:1, 2 **9:43** [l] Matt. 5:29, 30; 18:8, 9 **9:44** [m] Is. 66:24 **9:46** [n] Is. 66:24 **9:48** [o] Is. 66:24 [p] Jer. 7:20 **9:49** [q] [Matt. 3:11] [r] Lev. 2:13 **9:50** [s] Matt. 5:13 [t] Col. 4:6 [u] Rom. 12:18; 14:19 **10:1** [a] Matt. 19:1–9 **10:2** [b] Matt. 19:3 **10:4** [c] Deut. 24:1–4 **10:6** [d] Gen. 1:27; 5:2 **10:7** [e] Gen. 2:24 **10:11** [f] [Matt. 5:32; 19:9] **10:13** [g] Luke 18:15–17 **10:14** [h] [1 Pet. 2:2] **10:15** [i] Matt. 18:3, 4; 19:14 [j] Luke 13:28 **10:17** [k] Matt. 19:16–30 [l] John 6:28 **10:18** [m] 1 Sam. 2:2

[n]'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"*

20 And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have [o]kept from my youth."

21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, [p]sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have [q]treasure in heaven; and come, [r]take up the cross, and follow Me."

22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

With God All Things Are Possible

23 [s]Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those [t]who trust in riches* to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a [u]rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"

27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men *it is* impossible, but not [v]with God; for with God all things are possible."

28 [w]Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You."

29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife* or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 [x]who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with [y]persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. 31 [z]But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first."

Jesus a Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection

32 [a]Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. [b]Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: 33 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; 34 and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Greatness Is Serving

35 [c]Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask."

36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

37 They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the [d]cup that I drink, and be baptized with the [e]baptism that I am baptized with?"

39 They said to Him, "We are able."

So Jesus said to them, [f]"You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; 40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* [g]for whom it is prepared."

41 [h]And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. 42 But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, [i]"You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 [j]Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become

* **10:19** Exodus 20:12–16; Deuteronomy 5:16–20
* **10:24** NU-Text omits *for those who trust in riches.* * **10:29** NU-Text omits *or wife.*

the fair and ethical treatment of other people (Ex. 20:12–17).

10:25–27 ***It is easier.*** This comparison of a camel going through a needle is a literal one. In human terms, it is not just difficult, but totally impossible, for a rich man to be saved. But it is also impossible for anyone at all to be saved apart from God's grace and power. God provides the means of salvation, enlightens the sinner's understanding, and regenerates the believing soul.

10:30 ***in this time.*** This is the time between Christ's first and second comings. Mark alone mentions that persecutions will follow as well—a point his Roman readers may have already known.

10:37 ***one on Your right hand and the other on Your left.*** To be seated at a king's right hand was to take the position of the most prominence; the person seated at the left hand ranked just below that (Luke 22:24–30). Jesus had to remind the disciples again about the price of greatness in God's kingdom.

10:38 ***drink the cup that I drink . . . be baptized with the baptism.*** These phrases are references to the suffering and death that awaited Jesus (14:36). Jesus wanted His disciples to understand the mocking, scourging, beating, and torture He would have to endure.

10:19 [n] Ex. 20:12–16; Deut. 5:16–20 **10:20** [o] Phil. 3:6 **10:21** [p] [Luke 12:33; 16:9] [q] Matt. 6:19, 20; 19:21 [r] [Mark 8:34] **10:23** [s] Matt. 19:23 **10:24** [t] [1 Tim. 6:17] **10:25** [u] [Matt. 13:22; 19:24] **10:27** [v] Jer. 32:17 **10:28** [w] Luke 18:28 **10:30** [x] Luke 18:29, 30 [y] [1 Pet. 4:12, 13] **10:31** [z] Luke 13:30 **10:32** [a] Matt. 20:17–19 [b] Mark 8:31; 9:31 **10:35** [c] [James 4:3] **10:38** [d] John 18:11 [e] Luke 12:50 **10:39** [f] Acts 12:2 **10:40** [g] [Heb. 11:16] **10:41** [h] Matt. 20:24 **10:42** [i] Luke 22:25 **10:43** [j] Mark 9:35

great among you shall be your servant.
44And whoever of you desires to be first
shall be slave of all. 45For even [k]the Son of
Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
and [l]to give His life a ransom for many."

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

46[m]Now they came to Jericho. As He
went out of Jericho with His disciples and a
great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son
of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. 47And
when he heard that it was Jesus of Naza-
reth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus,
[n]Son of David, [o]have mercy on me!"
48Then many warned him to be quiet;
but he cried out all the more, "Son of David,
have mercy on me!"
49So Jesus stood still and commanded
him to be called.
Then they called the blind man, saying
to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is call-
ing you."
50And throwing aside his garment, he
rose and came to Jesus.
51So Jesus answered and said to him,
"What do you want Me to do for you?"
The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni,
that I may receive my sight."
52Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way;
[p]your faith has made you well." And imme-
diately he received his sight and followed
Jesus on the road.

The Triumphal Entry

11 Now [a]when they drew near Jerusa-
lem, to Bethphage* and Bethany, at
the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His
disciples; 2and He said to them, "Go into
the village opposite you; and as soon as you
have entered it you will find a colt tied, on
which no one has sat. Loose it and bring *it*.
3And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you
doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,'
and immediately he will send it here."

4So they went their way, and found the*
colt tied by the door outside on the street,
and they loosed it. 5But some of those who
stood there said to them, "What are you do-
ing, loosing the colt?"
6And they spoke to them just as Jesus
had commanded. So they let them go.
7Then they brought the colt to Jesus
and threw their clothes on it, and He sat
on it. 8[b]And many spread their clothes
on the road, and others cut down leafy
branches from the trees and spread
them on the road. 9Then those who went
before and those who followed cried out,
saying:

"Hosanna!
[c]'*Blessed is He who comes in the name*
of the LORD*!'**
10 Blessed *is* the kingdom of our father
David
That comes in the name of the
Lord!*
[d]Hosanna in the highest!"

11[e]And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into
the temple. So when He had looked around
at all things, as the hour was already late,
He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The Fig Tree Withered

12[f]Now the next day, when they had
come out from Bethany, He was hungry.
13[g]And seeing from afar a fig tree having
leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would
find something on it. When He came to it,
He found nothing but leaves, for it was not
the season for figs. 14In response Jesus said
to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever
again."
And His disciples heard *it*.

* **11:1** M-Text reads *Bethsphage*. * **11:4** NU-Text and M-Text read *a*. * **11:9** Psalm 118:26 * **11:10** NU-Text omits *in the name of the Lord*.

10:45 The Ministry of Christ—

1. *He is Savior.* Sinful men to be saved (1 Tim. 1:15); Christ's qualifications to be Savior (John 10:18–38); His humiliating death (John 19:18); bodily resurrection to guarantee our salvation (1 Cor. 15:13–22); and results of salvation (John 5:24). It is no wonder that, in light of these realities, Paul speaks of Christ as "our great God and Savior" (Titus 2:13).
2. *He is High Priest.* The high priest brought the people before God on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:32–33). Jesus is eminently qualified to be our High Priest: appointed by God (Heb. 5:5), eternal (Heb. 7:24–25), sinless (Heb. 7:26), His offering was final (Heb. 9:28), and His mediation is effective (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1). As the only qualified High Priest for men and women, Jesus Christ thus constitutes the only way to God (1 Tim. 2:5).
3. *He is King.* King implies sovereign authority and rule over all. This right belongs only to Jesus Christ who is called "Lord of lords and King of kings" (Rev. 17:14; 19:16). He is destined to rule as king and every knee must ultimately bow and acknowledge His authority (Phil. 2:10). Those who acknowledge Christ as King and Lord in this life will reign with Him; those who do not will be judged by Him (Rev. 20:11–15).

11:8–11 *Bethany.* Jesus retired there each night, perhaps staying in a friend's home. But in view of the fact that Jesus appears to have had no breakfast the next day (v. 12), He and the twelve may have camped outside this night.

11:13 *it was not the season for figs.* Passover always comes in March or April, and fig season is not until May or June. However, fig trees generally produce a number of buds in March, leaves in April, and ripe fruit later on. Jesus was looking for the edible buds, the lack of which indicated that the tree would be fruitless that year.

10:45 [k] [Phil. 2:7, 8] [l] [Titus 2:14] **10:46** [m] Luke 18:35–43 **10:47** [n] Rev. 22:16 [o] Matt. 15:22 **10:52** [p] Matt. 9:22 **11:1** [a] Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:1–9 **11:8** [b] Matt. 21:8 **11:9** [c] Ps. 118:25, 26 **11:10** [d] Ps. 148:1 **11:11** [e] Matt. 21:12 **11:12** [f] Matt. 21:18–22 **11:13** [g] Matt. 21:19

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

15 [h]So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold [i]doves. 16 And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. 17 Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, [j]*'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'*?* But you have made it a [k]*'den of thieves.'*"*

18 And [l]the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because [m]all the people were astonished at His teaching. 19 When evening had come, He went out of the city.

The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree

20 [n]Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."

22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 For [o]assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 Therefore I say to you, [p]whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.

Forgiveness and Prayer

25 "And whenever you stand praying, [q]if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. 26 But [r]if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."*

Jesus' Authority Questioned

27 Then they came again to Jerusalem. [s]And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to Him. 28 And they said to Him, "By what [t]authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority to do these things?"

29 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one question; then answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things: 30 The [u]baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me."

31 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 32 But if we say, 'From men'"—they feared the people, for [v]all counted John to have been a prophet indeed. 33 So they answered and said to Jesus, "We do not know."

And Jesus answered and said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers

12 Then [a]He began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around *it*, dug *a place for* the wine vat and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 2 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers. 3 And they took *him* and beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. 4 Again he sent them another servant, and at him they threw stones,* wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully treated. 5 And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, [b]beating some and killing some. 6 Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 7 But those vinedressers said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 8 So they took him and [c]killed *him* and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

* **11:17** Isaiah 56:7 • Jeremiah 7:11 * **11:26** NU-Text omits this verse. * **12:4** NU-Text omits *and at him they threw stones.*

11:17 ***den of thieves.*** Jesus was referring to the practice of cheating people, both Israelites and those of other nations, either through a crooked exchange of money or by selling inferior products.

11:21 ***The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.*** The passage emphasizes the power of true faith. Some have suggested that the fig tree represented Israel, which bore no fruit and would soon face the judgment of God.

11:29–30 ***answer Me.*** The intent of Jesus' question was to expose once again the insincerity of His detractors. ***baptism of John.*** This refers to the authority of John's baptism. ***from heaven.*** Was it ordained by God and worthy of obedience? ***from men.*** Or was it of human contrivance and void of any spiritual authority and reality?

12:1 ***He began to speak to them in parables.*** Parables usually get across a significant truth, but the details are not meant to correspond exactly with particular spiritual realities. In this parable, the owner of the vineyard represents God, but God Himself was never so mistaken as to assume they would respect His Son. God is omniscient, whereas the vineyard owner in the parable is not. This story illustrates the immense patience God had with Israel.

11:15 [h] John 2:13–16 [i] Lev. 14:22 **11:17** [j] Is. 56:7 [k] Jer. 7:11 **11:18** [l] Matt. 21:45, 46 [m] Matt. 7:28 **11:20** [n] Matt. 21:19–22 **11:23** [o] Matt. 17:20; 21:21 **11:24** [p] Matt. 7:7 **11:25** [q] [Col. 3:13] **11:26** [r] Matt. 6:15; 18:35 **11:27** [s] Luke 20:1–8 **11:28** [t] John 5:27 **11:30** [u] Luke 7:29, 30 **11:32** [v] Matt. 3:5; 14:5 **12:1** [a] Luke 20:9–19 **12:5** [b] 2 Chr. 36:16 **12:8** [c] [Acts 2:23]

9"Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others. 10Have you not even read this Scripture:

[d]*'The stone which the builders rejected*
Has become the chief cornerstone.
11 *This was the LORD's doing,*
And it is marvelous in our eyes'?"*

12[e]And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar?

13[f]Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in *His* words. 14When they had come, they said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the [g]way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? 15Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?"

But He, knowing their [h]hypocrisy, said to them, "Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see *it*." 16So they brought *it*.

And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription *is* this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's."

17And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to [i]God the things that are God's."

And they marveled at Him.

The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?

18[j]Then *some* Sadducees, [k]who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: 19"Teacher, [l]Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves *his* wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 20Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. 21And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. 22So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. 23Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife."

24Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but [m]are like angels in heaven. 26But concerning the dead, that they [n]rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the *burning* bush *passage*, how God spoke to him, saying, [o]*'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'*?* 27He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."

The Scribes: Which Is the First Commandment of All?

28[p]Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving* that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

29Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments *is:* [q]*'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.* 30*And*

* **12:11** Psalm 118:22, 23 * **12:26** Exodus 3:6, 15
* **12:28** NU-Text reads *seeing.*

12:12 ***they sought to lay hands on Him.*** Only as the final points of the parable were made did these evil men realize that Jesus was speaking of them.

12:14 ***You are true, and care about no one.*** This comment was intended as a compliment. The teachers recognized that Jesus was partial to no one. The question, however, was a lose-lose proposition: a *yes* answer would alienate Jews who opposed Rome, while a *no* answer could be taken as treason against the state.

12:18 ***Sadducees*** were an elite group of religious leaders who denied the existence of angels, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection. They rejected the oral traditions and accepted only the validity of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament.

12:19–22 ***Moses wrote to us.*** The custom of marrying the widow of one's brother was supported by Deuteronomy 25:5–6, but it was not absolutely binding (Deut. 25:7–10).

12:26–27 ***I am the God of Abraham . . . Isaac . . . Jacob.*** Jesus quotes from the law—the Book of Exodus—to make His point. God said I am the God of the three patriarchs mentioned, not "I was their God, but now they are dead." He still is their God because they are still alive. Their souls not only live after death, but their bodies will be raised anew as well.

12:29 ***Hear, O Israel.*** In Judaism, these words (quoted from Deut. 6:4–5) are known as the *Shema*. It is described by Jews as the most important words a Jew can know. Jesus quotes these words at the beginning of answering the question, "Which is the first commandment of all?" We should be driven to the cross. There, we understand His love for us and are constantly motivated to seek to love Him better because of what He has done. We can only be thankful at the comprehensiveness of His love. Even though we sin every day of our lives, He forgives. We just need to keep coming to Him for that forgiveness.

12:10 [d] Ps. 118:22, 23 **12:12** [e] John 7:25, 30, 44 **12:13** [f] Luke 20:20–26 **12:14** [g] Acts 18:26 **12:15** [h] Luke 12:1 **12:17** [i] [Eccl. 5:4, 5] **12:18** [j] Luke 20:27–38 [k] Acts 23:8 **12:19** [l] Deut. 25:5 **12:25** [m] [1 Cor. 15:42, 49, 52] **12:26** [n] [Rev. 20:12, 13] [o] Ex. 3:6, 15 **12:28** [p] Matt. 22:34–40 **12:29** [q] Deut. 6:4, 5

you shall [r]*love the* LORD *your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'** This *is* the first commandment.* 31And the second, like *it, is* this: [s]*'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'** There is no other commandment greater than [t]these."

32So the scribe said to Him, "Well *said,* Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, [u]and there is no other but He. 33And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul,* and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, [v]is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

34Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

[w]But after that no one dared question Him.

Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord?

35[x]Then Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, "How *is it* that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David? 36For David himself said [y]by the Holy Spirit:

> [z]*'The* LORD *said to my Lord,*
> *"Sit at My right hand,*
> *Till I make Your enemies Your*
> *footstool."'**

37Therefore David himself calls Him *'Lord';* how is He *then* his [a]Son?"

And the common people heard Him gladly.

Beware of the Scribes

38Then [b]He said to them in His teaching, [c]"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, [d]*love* greetings in the marketplaces, 39the [e]best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, 40[f]who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

The Widow's Two Mites

41[g]Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money [h]into the treasury. And many *who were* rich put in much. 42Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites,* which make a quadrans. 43So He called His disciples to *Himself* and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that [i]this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; 44for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, [j]her whole livelihood."

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple

13 Then [a]as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*"

2And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? [b]Not *one* stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age

3Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, [c]Peter, [d]James, [e]John, and [f]Andrew asked Him privately, 4[g]"Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?"

5And Jesus, answering them, began to say: [h]"Take heed that no one deceives you. 6For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He,*' and will deceive many. 7But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do

* **12:30** Deuteronomy 6:4, 5 • NU-Text omits this sentence. * **12:31** Leviticus 19:18 * **12:33** NU-Text omits *with all the soul.* * **12:36** Psalm 110:1 * **12:42** Greek *lepta,* very small copper coins worth a fraction of a penny

12:35 *in the temple.* This does not refer to the sanctuary itself, where only the priests were allowed to minister. The temple environs included a number of porticos and courts. One was designated especially for women, another for men. Gentiles could view the temple from an outer area.

12:43–44 *this poor widow hath put it more than all those who have given to the treasury.* Jesus' comparison of the percentages contributed by the rich and the poor reminds us that God measures not how much we give, but how much we retain. Those with greater income have an obligation to return a larger percentage of it to God's work.

13:1–2 *what manner of stones and what buildings are here.* The disciples' excitement over the temple's tremendous construction was a natural reaction to splendid and majestic architecture; each stone weighed several tons. Josephus described its magnificence. There was nothing like it in all the world. Begun by Herod the Great in 20 B.C., the temple was later completed by Herod's descendants some time before A.D. 66. Its beautiful white marble stones with gold ornamentation reached 100 feet high. Surrounding it were colonnaded walkways, courtyards, and stairways that filled 20 acres of the most prominent landscape in all Jerusalem.

12:30 [r] [Deut. 10:12; 30:6] **12:31** [s] Lev. 19:18 [t] [Rom. 13:9] **12:32** [u] Deut. 4:39 **12:33** [v] [Hos. 6:6] **12:34** [w] Matt. 22:46 **12:35** [x] Luke 20:41–44 **12:36** [y] 2 Sam. 23:2 [z] Ps. 110:1 **12:37** [a] [Acts 2:29–31] **12:38** [b] Mark 4:2 [c] Matt. 23:1–7 [d] Matt. 23:7 **12:39** [e] Luke 14:7 **12:40** [f] Matt. 23:14 **12:41** [g] Luke 21:1–4 [h] 2 Kin. 12:9 **12:43** [i] [2 Cor. 8:12] **12:44** [j] Deut. 24:6 **13:1** [a] Luke 21:5–36 **13:2** [b] Luke 19:44 **13:3** [c] Matt. 16:18 [d] Mark 1:19 [e] Mark 1:19 [f] John 1:40 **13:4** [g] Matt. 24:3 **13:5** [h] Eph. 5:6

not be troubled; for *such things* must happen, but the end *is* not yet. 8For nation will rise against nation, and [i]kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles.* [j]These *are* the beginnings of sorrows.

9"But [k]watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought* before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. 10And [l]the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. 11[m]But when they arrest *you* and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate* what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, [n]but the Holy Spirit. 12Now [o]brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 13[p]And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But [q]he who endures to the end shall be saved.

The Great Tribulation

14[r]"So when you see the [s]'*abomination of desolation,*'* spoken of by Daniel the prophet,* standing where it ought not" (let the reader understand), "then [t]let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 17[u]But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18And pray that your flight may not be in winter. 19[v]For *in* those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. 20And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

21[w]"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or, 'Look, *He is* there!' do not believe it. 22For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and [x]wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23But [y]take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

The Coming of the Son of Man

24[z]"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be [a]shaken. 26[b]Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.

The Parable of the Fig Tree

28[c]"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 29So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it* is near—at the doors! 30Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 31Heaven and earth will pass away, but [d]My words will by no means pass away.

No One Knows the Day or Hour

32"But of that day and hour [e]no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the [f]Father. 33[g]Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when

* **13:8** NU-Text omits *and troubles.* * **13:9** NU-Text and M-Text read *will stand.* * **13:11** NU-Text omits *or premeditate.* * **13:14** Daniel 11:31; 12:11 • NU-Text omits *spoken of by Daniel the prophet.* * **13:29** Or *He*

13:11–12 ***the Holy Spirit.*** The promise given that the Holy Spirit will guide one's speech in the hour of trial applies first to the twelve and only secondarily to others who will experience persecution. But this promise does not assure escape from persecution or even freedom from being put to death.

13:13 ***he who endures to the end shall be saved.*** This is not referring to regeneration or justification but to physical deliverance from affliction (vv. 19–20). The ones who physically endure will be delivered into Christ's messianic kingdom.

13:14 ***standing where it ought not.*** This phrase refers to the presence of an idol standing in the temple. Daniel's prediction primarily referred to placement of sacrifices to Zeus on the temple's altar by Antiochus Epiphanes. Some believe that the destruction of the Herodian temple in A.D. 70 fulfilled Jesus' prediction. Others still await its fulfillment in the blasphemous actions of the antichrist in the last days (2 Thess. 2:3–4).

13:28–29 ***when you see these things happening.*** Jesus likened the signs of His second coming to the sprouts of growth and leaves on a fig tree. Both point to the glories to come—the full flowering of the earth and return of Christ.

13:32 ***But of that day and hour no one knows.*** As one who was fully God and at the same time fully man, Jesus possessed all the attributes of deity, including omnipotence and omniscience. He knew what was in people's hearts (2:8), and He could still the waves (4:39). When Jesus became a man, however, He voluntarily placed certain knowledge in the hands of the

13:8 [i] Hag. 2:22 [j] Matt. 24:8 **13:9** [k] Matt. 10:17, 18; 24:9 **13:10** [l] Matt. 24:14 **13:11** [m] Luke 12:11; 21:12–17 [n] Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31 **13:12** [o] Mic. 7:6 **13:13** [p] Luke 21:17 [q] Matt. 10:22; 24:13 **13:14** [r] Matt. 24:15 [s] Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 [t] Luke 21:21 **13:17** [u] Luke 21:23 **13:19** [v] Dan. 9:26; 12:1 **13:21** [w] Luke 17:23; 21:8 **13:22** [x] Rev. 13:13, 14 **13:23** [y] [2 Pet. 3:17] **13:24** [z] Zeph. 1:15 **13:25** [a] Is. 13:10; 34:4 **13:26** [b] [Dan. 7:13, 14] **13:28** [c] Luke 21:29 **13:31** [d] Is. 40:8 **13:32** [e] Matt. 25:13 [f] Acts 1:7 **13:33** [g] 1 Thess. 5:6

the time is. 34[h]*It is* like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave [i]authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35[j]Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning— 36lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

The Plot to Kill Jesus

14 After [a]two days it was the Passover and [b]*the Feast* of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put *Him* to death. 2But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people."

The Anointing at Bethany

3[c]And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured *it* on His head. 4But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? 5For it might have been sold for more than three hundred [d]denarii and given to the poor." And they [e]criticized her sharply.

6But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. 7[f]For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; [g]but Me you do not have always. 8She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. 9Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is [h]preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

10[i]Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. 11And when they heard *it,* they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

Jesus Celebrates the Passover with His Disciples

12[j]Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover *lamb,* His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"

13And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. 14Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' 15Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished *and* prepared; there make ready for us."

16So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

17[k]In the evening He came with the twelve. 18Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, [l]one of you who eats with Me will betray Me."

19And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, "*Is* it I?" And another *said,* "*Is* it I?"*

20He answered and said to them, "*It is* one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. 21[m]The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It

* **14:19** NU-Text omits this sentence.

Father. Of course today, glorified in heaven, Jesus now knows the day and hour of His return.

13:34–36 ***like a man going to a far country.*** Jesus' parable of the absent master of the house is unique to Mark. The point of the parable is that the master could return at any time so all servants must be vigilant and watchful (Luke 19:11–27).

14:3 ***alabaster.*** Alabaster is a translucent stone still used to make ornamented jewelry boxes and other items of value. ***spikenard.*** Spikenard was a precious perfume imported from India, made from plants that grow in the high elevations of the Himalayas. This perfume is mentioned in the Song of Solomon (1:12; 4:13–14).

14:7 ***For you have the poor with you always.*** Jesus' statement does not show callousness towards the poor (Deut. 15:7–11). His compassion for those overwhelmed by sickness and poverty appears frequently in the Gospels, and He encouraged others to meet their needs (10:21). But He also wanted people to give freely and of their own volition. No one can coerce a gift from another; no one should criticize another's gift; and no one can read the heart of a giver. A giver's motive is known only to God.

14:14–15 ***a large upper room.*** There is reason to suspect that the master of the house may have been Mark's father. Mark himself may have been the young man of verses 51 and 52. Acts 12:12 indicates that this house was later used as a gathering place for many believers who prayed together. Tradition has it that this was also the "upper room" of Acts 1:13 where over 100 believers met on Pentecost.

14:19 ***Is it I?*** In Greek this is actually a negative question that implies a negative answer. The phrase means "It is not I, is it?" Matthew and John both identify the culprit as Judas, even though Mark does not (Matt. 26:25; John 13:26).

13:34 [h] Matt. 24:45; 25:14 [i] [Matt. 16:19] **13:35** [j] Matt. 24:42, 44 **14:1** [a] Luke 22:1, 2 [b] Ex. 12:1–27 **14:3** [c] Luke 7:37 **14:5** [d] Matt. 18:28 [e] John 6:61 **14:7** [f] Deut. 15:11 [g] [John 7:33; 8:21; 14:2, 12; 16:10, 17, 28] **14:9** [h] Luke 24:47 **14:10** [i] Matt. 10:2–4 **14:12** [j] Matt. 26:17–19 **14:17** [k] Matt. 26:20–24 **14:18** [l] John 6:70, 71; 13:18 **14:21** [m] Luke 22:22

would have been good for that man if he had never been born."

Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper

22 [n]And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them and said, "Take, eat;* this is My [o]body."

23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it. 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new* covenant, which is shed for many. 25 Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

26 [p]And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

27 [q]Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night,* for it is written:

> [r]'*I will strike the Shepherd,*
> *And the sheep will be scattered.*'*

28 "But [s]after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

29 [t]Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I *will* not *be*."

30 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, *even* this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times."

31 But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!"

And they all said likewise.

The Prayer in the Garden

32 [u]Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And He [v]took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. 34 Then He said to them, [w]"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, *even* to death. Stay here and watch."

35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said, [x]"Abba, Father, [y]all things *are* possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; [z]nevertheless, not what I will, but what You *will*."

37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? 38 [a]Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. [b]The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. 40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.

41 Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! [c]The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 [d]Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

* **14:22** NU-Text omits *eat*. * **14:24** NU-Text omits *new*. * **14:27** NU-Text omits *because of Me this night*. • Zechariah 13:7

14:24 ***This is My blood.*** This means that the contents of this cup represented Jesus' blood that would be shed for our sins. The sprinkling of blood was required to institute the Mosaic covenant in Exodus 29:12 (Heb. 9:18–22). In the same way, Jesus' blood shed on the cross initiated the new covenant. His blood was shed for many. He died on the cross in the place of many sinners from every nation. He paid the price for all of their sins. All those who believe in Him will receive eternal life.

14:26 ***And when they had sung a hymn.*** What they sang was no doubt from the Psalms. Frequently Psalms 113–118 were used in connection with the Passover.

14:30 ***before the rooster crows twice.*** Only Mark mentions Christ's prediction of Peter's denial. The incident would have remained vivid in Peter's mind when he related the story to Mark.

14:34 ***My soul is exceeding sorrowful.*** The crushing realization of having to bear the sin of the world and to lose, even temporarily, the fellowship of God the Father was nearly more than Jesus' soul could bear.

14:35 ***the hour might pass from Him.*** This is a reference to the time Jesus would bear the punishment for the sin of the world in His own body, becoming, as it were, sin for all.

14:38 Temptation by the Flesh—*Flesh* in the Bible often means something other than the substance of the human body. It is used constantly to refer to the carnal, sinful principle within man that is opposed to God (Rom. 8:7). The actions produced by the flesh are given in detail in Galatians 5:19–21. Among these are all types of sexual immorality, impurity, hatred, anger, envy, and drunkenness. A person whose life is characterized by these sins cannot be a true Christian and is under the wrath of God (Gal. 5:21; Eph. 2:3). Though the flesh is not eradicated for the Christian, he does have the power to deny it (Rom. 7:15–25). He possesses a new nature empowered by the Holy Spirit. The solution to the urges of the flesh lies in acknowledging that the power of sin was nullified by Jesus' death (Rom. 6:11) and in living under the control of the Spirit's power (Gal. 5:16). The latter is a moment-by-moment dependence in faith on the Spirit's power. The believer must choose by an act of his will to benefit from the Spirit's enablement.

14:39–41 ***Again He went away.*** The three apostles were exhorted to watch and pray several times, and no doubt truly desired to uphold their Lord in His deepest hour of need. Yet physical fatigue overcame spiritual alertness.

14:22 [n] 1 Cor. 11:23–25 [o] [1 Pet. 2:24] **14:26** [p] Matt. 26:30 **14:27** [q] Matt. 26:31–35 [r] Zech. 13:7 **14:28** [s] Mark 16:7 **14:29** [t] John 13:37, 38 **14:32** [u] Luke 22:40–46 **14:33** [v] Mark 5:37; 9:2; 13:3 **14:34** [w] John 12:27 **14:36** [x] Gal. 4:6 [y] [Heb. 5:7] [z] John 5:30; 6:38 **14:38** [a] Luke 21:36 [b] [Rom. 7:18, 21–24] **14:41** [c] John 13:1; 17:1 **14:42** [d] John 13:21; 18:1, 2

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

43 [e]And immediately, while He was still
speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with
a great multitude with swords and clubs,
came from the chief priests and the scribes
and the elders. 44 Now His betrayer had
given them a signal, saying, "Whomever
I [f]kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead
Him away safely."
45 As soon as he had come, immediately
he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi,
Rabbi!" and kissed Him.
46 Then they laid their hands on Him and
took Him. 47 And one of those who stood by
drew his sword and struck the servant of
the high priest, and cut off his ear.
48 [g]Then Jesus answered and said to
them, "Have you come out, as against
a robber, with swords and clubs to take
Me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple
[h]teaching, and you did not seize Me. But
[i]the Scriptures must be fulfilled."
50 [j]Then they all forsook Him and fled.

A Young Man Flees Naked

51 Now a certain young man followed
Him, having a linen cloth thrown around
his naked *body.* And the young men laid
hold of him, 52 and he left the linen cloth
and fled from them naked.

Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin

53 [k]And they led Jesus away to the high
priest; and with him were [l]assembled
all the [m]chief priests, the elders, and the
scribes. 54 But [n]Peter followed Him at a dis-
tance, right into the courtyard of the high
priest. And he sat with the servants and
warmed himself at the fire.
55 [o]Now the chief priests and all the coun-
cil sought testimony against Jesus to put
Him to death, but found none. 56 For many
bore [p]false witness against Him, but their
testimonies did not agree.
57 Then some rose up and bore false
witness against Him, saying, 58 "We heard
Him say, [q]'I will destroy this temple made
with hands, and within three days I will
build another made without hands.'" 59 But
not even then did their testimony agree.
60 [r]And the high priest stood up in the
midst and asked Jesus, saying, "Do You
answer nothing? What *is it* these men tes-
tify against You?" 61 But [s]He kept silent and
answered nothing.
[t]Again the high priest asked Him, say-
ing to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of
the Blessed?"
62 Jesus said, "I am. [u]And you will see
the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of
the Power, and coming with the clouds of
heaven."
63 Then the high priest tore his clothes
and said, "What further need do we have
of witnesses? 64 You have heard the [v]blas-
phemy! What do you think?"
And they all condemned Him to be de-
serving of [w]death.
65 Then some began to [x]spit on Him, and
to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to
say to Him, "Prophesy!" And the officers
struck Him with the palms of their hands.*

Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps

66 [y]Now as Peter was below in the court-
yard, one of the servant girls of the high
priest came. 67 And when she saw Peter
warming himself, she looked at him and said,
"You also were with [z]Jesus of Nazareth."
68 But he denied it, saying, "I neither
know nor understand what you are say-
ing." And he went out on the porch, and a
rooster crowed.
69 [a]And the servant girl saw him again,
and began to say to those who stood by,
"This is *one* of them." 70 But he denied it
again.
[b]And a little later those who stood by
said to Peter again, "Surely you are *one*
of them; [c]for you are a Galilean, and your
speech shows *it*."*
71 Then he began to curse and swear, "I
do not know this Man of whom you speak!"
72 [d]A second time *the* rooster crowed.
Then Peter called to mind the word that
Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster
crows twice, you will deny Me three times."
And when he thought about it, he wept.

* **14:65** NU-Text reads *received Him with slaps.*
* **14:70** NU-Text omits *and your speech shows it.*

14:43 ***with a great multitude.*** Judas came with a detachment of troops (John 18:3). It was one-tenth of a Roman legion or roughly 600 men.

14:50–52 ***young man.*** Only Mark tells of this incident and many believe that this young man was Mark himself. How else would he have known this story, and why else should he have included it? If it was Mark, and if the Last Supper was at his home that evening, he could easily have risen from bed, pulled on a linen sheet, and followed the disciples.

14:61 ***He kept silent.*** Jesus remained silent before Pilate and Herod Antipas. Finally they could find nothing substantial with which to charge Him. ***the Christ, the Son of the Blessed.*** The trial was over, and Jesus stood falsely condemned for blasphemy, which in this context means laying claim to deity. Naturally, this is the boast of a liar or a lunatic—unless He is the Almighty God in human flesh, as Jesus was (Phil. 2:5–8; 1 John 1:1–3).

14:71–72 ***the rooster crowed.*** We are not told that Peter thought at all about Jesus' words. If he did,

14:43 [e] Luke 22:47–53 **14:44** [f] [Prov. 27:6]
14:48 [g] Matt. 26:55 **14:49** [h] Matt. 21:23 [i] Is. 53:7 **14:50** [j] Ps. 88:8 **14:53** [k] Matt. 26:57–68 [l] Mark 15:1 [m] John 7:32; 18:3; 19:6 **14:54** [n] John 18:15 **14:55** [o] Matt. 26:59 **14:56** [p] Ex. 20:16
14:58 [q] John 2:19 **14:60** [r] Matt. 26:62 **14:61** [s] Is. 53:7 [t] Luke 22:67–71 **14:62** [u] Luke 22:69 **14:64** [v] John 10:33, 36 [w] John 19:7 **14:65** [x] Is. 50:6; 52:14
14:66 [y] John 18:16–18, 25–27 **14:67** [z] John 1:45
14:69 [a] Matt. 26:71 **14:70** [b] Luke 22:59 [c] Acts 2:7
14:72 [d] Matt. 26:75

Jesus Faces Pilate

15 Immediately, [a]in the morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council; and they bound Jesus, led *Him* away, and [b]delivered *Him* to Pilate. **2**[c]Then Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

He answered and said to him, "*It is as* you say."

3And the chief priests accused Him of many things, but He [d]answered nothing. **4**[e]Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You!"* **5**[f]But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled.

Taking the Place of Barabbas

6Now [g]at the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whomever they requested. **7**And there was one named Barabbas, *who was* chained with his fellow rebels; they had committed murder in the rebellion. **8**Then the multitude, crying aloud,* began to ask *him to do* just as he had always done for them. **9**But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" **10**For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.

11But [h]the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them. **12**Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do *with Him* whom you call the [i]King of the Jews?"

13So they cried out again, "Crucify Him!"

14Then Pilate said to them, "Why, [j]what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!"

15[k]So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged *Him*, to be [l]crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

16[m]Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. **17**And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His *head*, **18**and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" **19**Then they [n]struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. **20**And when they had [o]mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

The King on a Cross

21[p]Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. **22**[q]And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. **23**[r]Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take *it*. **24**And when they crucified Him, [s]they divided His garments, casting lots for them *to determine* what every man should take.

25Now [t]it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. **26**And [u]the inscription of His accusation was written above:

THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27[v]With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. **28**So the Scripture was fulfilled* which says, [w]*"And He was numbered with the transgressors."**

29And [x]those who passed by blasphemed Him, [y]wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! [z]*You* who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, **30**save Yourself, and come down from the cross!"

* **15:4** NU-Text reads *of which they accuse You.*
* **15:8** NU-Text reads *going up.* * **15:28** Isaiah 53:12 • NU-Text omits this verse.

maybe he tried to conceal his identity more carefully, but to no avail. Each of the other Gospel writers tells us that the cock crowed immediately upon Peter's final denial (Matt. 26:74; Luke 22:60; John 18:27). This time he thought about it, and he wept.

15:1–3 *held a consultation.* Rather than murdering Jesus privately, the Jewish politicians decided to seek Pilate's approval so they could execute the "blasphemer" legally. Their charges included many things but apparently centered on treason. Jesus claimed to be a king, thus defying Caesar (Luke 23:2). This crime was punishable in the Roman Empire by death. Pilate must have concluded that the charges against Jesus were groundless, for Mark tells us he desired to release Him.

15:15 *after he had scourged Him.* This word, used only twice in the New Testament (Matt. 27:26 and here), describes a punishment more severe than flogging or beating. The prisoner was beaten with a whip fashioned of numerous strips of leather attached to a handle. To the leather strips were tied sharp pieces of bone and metal, which could rip and tear one's skin to shreds.

15:22 *Golgotha* is an Aramaic word. The hill may have resembled the bony features of a skull or was called this because it was a place of death. The name Calvary comes from the Latin word for skull.

15:25 *the third hour.* This was 9 A.M., using a common Jewish system of marking the day. Jesus suffered on the cross until at least 3 P.M., the ninth hour of verse 34.

15:1 [a] Ps. 2:2 [b] Acts 3:13 **15:2** [c] Matt. 27:11–14 **15:3** [d] John 19:9 **15:4** [e] Matt. 27:13 **15:5** [f] Is. 53:7 **15:6** [g] Matt. 27:15–26 **15:11** [h] Acts 3:14 **15:12** [i] Mic. 5:2 **15:14** [j] 1 Pet. 2:21–23 **15:15** [k] Matt. 27:26 [l] [Is. 53:8] **15:16** [m] Matt. 27:27–31 **15:19** [n] [Is. 50:6; 52:14; 53:5] **15:20** [o] Luke 22:63; 23:11 **15:21** [p] Matt. 27:32 **15:22** [q] John 19:17–24 **15:23** [r] Matt. 27:34 **15:24** [s] Ps. 22:18 **15:25** [t] John 19:14 **15:26** [u] Matt. 27:37 **15:27** [v] Luke 22:37 **15:28** [w] Is. 53:12 **15:29** [x] Ps. 22:6, 7; 69:7 [y] Ps. 109:25 [z] John 2:19–21

31 Likewise the chief priests also, [a]mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved [b]others; Himself He cannot save. 32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe."*

Even [c]those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

Jesus Dies on the Cross

33 Now [d]when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, [e]*"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"**

35 Some of those who stood by, when they heard *that*, said, "Look, He is calling for Elijah!" 36 Then [f]someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put *it* on a reed, and [g]offered *it* to Him to drink, saying, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down."

37 [h]And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.

38 Then [i]the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. 39 So [j]when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last,* he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!"

40 [k]There were also women looking on [l]from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, 41 who also [m]followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb

42 [n]Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who [o]was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 44 Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. 45 So when he found out from the centurion, [p]he granted the body to Joseph. 46 [q]Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. 47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses observed where He was laid.

He Is Risen

16 Now [a]when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome [b]bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 [c]Very early in the morning, on the first *day* of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. 5 [d]And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

6 [e]But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7 But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, [f]as He said to you."

* **15:32** M-Text reads *believe Him.* * **15:34** Psalm 22:1 * **15:39** NU-Text reads *that He thus breathed His last.*

15:32 ***Let the Christ.*** Jesus was mockingly called the Christ or Messiah by the chief priests and scribes. Their offer to believe in Christ if He would descend from the cross was not believable.

15:37 ***Jesus cried out with a loud voice.*** Frequently, crucifixion produced a coma or unconsciousness prior to death, but Jesus was in control of all His faculties until the moment when He voluntarily gave up His life (John 10:17–18).

15:38 ***the veil of the temple.*** The significance of this event is that access to God is now open to all. No longer through priests and the blood of bulls and goats do we approach God, but through the torn veil, which also symbolizes Jesus' broken and torn body (Heb. 10:20).

15:40–41 ***There were also women looking on.*** These women were true disciples of Christ. They had ministered to Jesus' needs and would be the first witnesses of His resurrection. Mark does not name Jesus' mother here but includes other prominent women. Three Marys were present along with many other women and Salome. She was the mother of the disciples James and John (Matt. 27:56).

15:43 ***Joseph of Arimathea.*** He is identified as a prominent member of the Sanhedrin. To ask Pilate for the body of Jesus was not just a gesture of kindness. It was an act of bravery, which placed Joseph in opposition to the Sanhedrin and identified him as a follower of Jesus.

16:5–6 ***a young man . . . sitting on the right side.*** Mark does not identify the young man with the robe as an angel, but he is there to explain the mystery

15:31 [a] Luke 18:32 [b] John 11:43, 44 **15:32** [c] Matt. 27:44 **15:33** [d] Luke 23:44–49 **15:34** [e] Ps. 22:1 **15:36** [f] John 19:29 [g] Ps. 69:21 **15:37** [h] Matt. 27:50 **15:38** [i] Ex. 26:31–33 **15:39** [j] Luke 23:47 **15:40** [k] Matt. 27:55 [l] Ps. 38:11 **15:41** [m] Luke 8:2, 3 **15:42** [n] John 19:38–42 **15:43** [o] Luke 2:25, 38; 23:51 **15:45** [p] Is. 53:9, 12 **15:46** [q] Matt. 27:59, 60 **16:1** [a] John 20:1–8 [b] Luke 23:56 **16:2** [c] Luke 24:1 **16:5** [d] John 20:11, 12 **16:6** [e] Matt. 28:6 **16:7** [f] Matt. 26:32; 28:16, 17

8So they went out quickly* and fled
from the tomb, for they trembled and were
amazed. [g]And they said nothing to anyone,
for they were afraid.

Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord

9Now when *He* rose early on the first
day of the week, He appeared first to Mary
Magdalene, [h]out of whom He had cast sev-
en demons. 10[i]She went and told those who
had been with Him, as they mourned and
wept. 11[j]And when they heard that He was
alive and had been seen by her, they did
not believe.

Jesus Appears to Two Disciples

12After that, He appeared in another
form [k]to two of them as they walked and
went into the country. 13And they went and
told *it* to the rest, *but* they did not believe
them either.

The Great Commission

14[l]Later He appeared to the eleven as
they sat at the table; and He rebuked their
unbelief and hardness of heart, because
they did not believe those who had seen
Him after He had risen. 15[m]And He said to
them, "Go into all the world [n]and preach
the gospel to every creature. 16[o]He who
believes and is baptized will be saved;
[p]but he who does not believe will be con-
demned. 17And these [q]signs will follow
those who believe: [r]In My name they will
cast out demons; [s]they will speak with
new tongues; 18[t]they* will take up ser-
pents; and if they drink anything dead-
ly, it will by no means hurt them; [u]they
will lay hands on the sick, and they will
recover."

Christ Ascends to God's Right Hand

19So then, [v]after the Lord had spoken
to them, He was [w]received up into heaven,
and [x]sat down at the right hand of God.
20And they went out and preached every-
where, the Lord working with *them* [y]and
confirming the word through the accom-
panying signs. Amen.*

* **16:8** NU-Text and M-Text omit *quickly.*
* **16:18** NU-Text reads *and in their hands they will.*
* **16:20** Verses 9–20 are bracketed in NU-Text as not original. They are lacking in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, although nearly all other manuscripts of Mark contain them.

that confronts the women. ***He is risen.*** In the passive voice, this indicates that an act of God accomplished the raising up of Jesus.

16:9–20 ***Now when He rose.*** The authenticity of these last twelve verses has been disputed. Those who doubt Mark's authorship of this passage point to two fourth-century manuscripts that omit these verses. Others believe that they should be included because even these two manuscripts leave space for all or some of these verses, indicating that their copyists knew of their existence. The difficulty is in knowing whether the space is for this longer version of Mark's ending or for one of the alternate endings found in the manuscripts. Important early church fathers endorsed this passage, and it does not seem likely that Mark would end his story on a note of fear (v. 8).

16:14 ***to the eleven.*** After Judas' demise (Matt. 27:3–5; Acts 1:16–18), the disciples were known for a while as the eleven. Jesus upbraided these disciples for not believing the accounts of eyewitnesses, but He pronounced a blessing on "those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

16:19 ***He was received up into heaven.*** This was the final sign that Jesus was the Son of God.

16:8 [g] Matt. 28:8 **16:9** [h] Luke 8:2 **16:10** [i] Luke 24:10 **16:11** [j] Luke 24:11, 41 **16:12** [k] Luke 24:13–35 **16:14** [l] 1 Cor. 15:5 **16:15** [m] Matt. 28:19 [n] [Col. 1:23] **16:16** [o] [John 3:18, 36] [p] [John 12:48] **16:17** [q] Acts 5:12 [r] Luke 10:17 [s] [Acts 2:4] **16:18** [t] Acts 28:3–6 [u] James 5:14 **16:19** [v] Acts 1:2, 3 [w] Luke 9:51; 24:51 [x] [Ps. 110:1] **16:20** [y] [Heb. 2:4]

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
LUKE

▶ **AUTHOR:** It is evident from the prologues to Luke and Acts (1:1–4; Acts 1:1–5) that both books were addressed to a man called Theophilus as a two-volume work. Acts begins with a summary of Luke and continues the story from where the Gospel of Luke concludes. Luke may have been a Hellenistic Jew, but it is more likely that he was a Gentile (this would make him the only Gentile contributor to the New Testament). It has been suggested that Luke may have been a Greek physician to a Roman family who at some point was set free and given Roman citizenship. Luke was not an eyewitness of the events in his Gospel, but he relied on the testimony of apostolic eyewitnesses and reliable written sources.

▶ **TIME:** c. 4 B.C.–A.D. 33 ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Luke 19:10

▶ **THEME:** The beginning of Luke makes reference to the fact that there was a great deal of oral tradition concerning Jesus circulating during the first century. The rapid growth of the church (over 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost alone) meant that there would have been potential for significant variety in stories about Jesus. Luke's stated agenda is reliability. Where Matthew goes to great lengths to tie Jesus' story to the history of the Jews, Luke is more interested in where the story fits in the history of the human race. Throughout the book, Christ reaches out to people from a variety of social strata, nationalities, and cultures. Luke sees Jesus as the Savior of the whole world.

Dedication to Theophilus

1 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those [a]things which have been fulfilled* among us, **2**just as those who [b]from the beginning were [c]eyewitnesses and ministers of the word [d]delivered them to us, **3**it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, [e]most excellent Theophilus, **4**[f]that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

John's Birth Announced to Zacharias

5There was [g]in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, [h]of the division of [i]Abijah. His [j]wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. **6**And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. **7**But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

* **1:1** Or *are most surely believed*

1:1 ***many have taken in hand to set in order.*** Luke makes it clear that he was not the first to write a narrative of the ministry of Jesus.

1:2 ***eyewitnesses.*** These verses suggest that Luke was not an eyewitness to the events of Jesus' ministry, but that he had access to statements of those who were.

1:3 ***orderly account.*** Luke gave his narrative a basic structure. Not every part is in chronological sequence, but the broad sequence is Christ's ministry in Galilee, His travel to Jerusalem, and His struggles in Jerusalem. The order of events shows how Jesus gradually revealed Himself and how opposition to Him grew.

1:4 ***the certainty.*** Theophilus was likely a young Gentile believer. He not only needed to know the truth and accuracy of what the church taught, but he also needed to be reassured. He might well have been wondering what he as a Gentile was doing in a movement which was originally Jewish.

1:5 ***Herod.*** He was appointed by the Roman emperor and reigned over Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Perea, and Syria from 37 to 4 B.C.

1:7 ***Elizabeth was barren.*** Being childless was a grave disappointment in ancient Israel (1 Sam. 1). The Scriptures record a number of times when God blessed a barren woman by giving her a son (Gen. 18:11; 21:2).

1:1 [a] John 20:31 **1:2** [b] Acts 1:21, 22 [c] Acts 1:2 [d] Heb. 2:3 **1:3** [e] Acts 1:1 **1:4** [f] [John 20:31] **1:5** [g] Matt. 2:1 [h] 1 Chr. 24:1, 10 [i] Neh. 12:4 [j] Lev. 21:13, 14

8So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell [k]to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10[l]And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. 11Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of [m]the altar of incense. 12And when Zacharias saw *him,* [n]he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and [o]you shall call his name John. 14And you will have joy and gladness, and [p]many will rejoice at his birth. 15For he will be [q]great in the sight of the Lord, and [r]shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, [s]even from his mother's womb. 16And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17[t]He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, *'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,'** and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

18And Zacharias said to the angel, [u]"How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

19And the angel answered and said to him, "I am [v]Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad [w]tidings. 20But behold, [x]you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

21And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. 22But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

23So it was, as soon as [y]the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. 24Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, 25"Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on *me,* to [z]take away my reproach among people."

Christ's Birth Announced to Mary

26Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27to a virgin [a]betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name *was* Mary. 28And having come in, the angel said to her, [b]"Rejoice, highly favored *one,* [c]the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!"*

29But when she saw *him,** [d]she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found [e]favor with God. 31[f]And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and [g]shall call His name JESUS. 32He will be great, [h]and will be called the Son of the Highest; and [i]the Lord God will give Him the [j]throne of His [k]father David. 33[l]And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

34Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

* **1:17** Malachi 4:5, 6 * **1:28** NU-Text omits *blessed are you among women.* * **1:29** NU-Text omits *when she saw him.*

1:8–9 *the custom of the priesthood.* Zacharias served for one week twice a year at the temple, one of perhaps 18,000 priests who served in a year.

1:13 *Do not be afraid.* Angels often calmed the fears of those to whom they appeared (v. 30; 2:10; Gen. 15:1; Dan. 10:12; Matt. 1:20; Acts 18:9; Rev. 1:17).

1:14 *joy and gladness.* Joy is a major theme throughout the writings of Luke (vv. 44,47,58; 2:10; 10:20; 13:17; 15:5–7; Acts 5:41).

1:15 *shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.* As with Samuel and Samson, a vow was imposed on the child that indicated his special consecration to the Lord. ***filled with the Holy Spirit.*** Being filled with the Spirit means being directed by Him and obedient to Him (Eph. 5:18).

1:17 *in the spirit and power of Elijah.* John was the forerunner of the Messiah. This description recalls Matthew 3:1–6. John's ministry paralleled Elijah, for both prophets called Israel to repentance (1 Kin. 17:18).

1:19 *Gabriel.* Two angels are named in the Bible who function as messengers. Michael is the other one (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; 10:13,21; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7).

1:25 *my reproach.* In ancient Israel barrenness was seen as a cause for shame. The "opening of the womb" indicated God's grace (Gen. 21:6; 30:23; 1 Sam. 1:2). In this verse, Elizabeth praises the Lord for mercifully blessing her even as He moved His plan for all of human history forward.

1:32 *the Highest.* This phrase is another way of referring to the majesty of God. ***David.*** Jesus fulfilled God's promise to David concerning an unending dynasty.

1:34 *How can this be.* Mary did not ask for a sign, so this remark does not reflect unbelief. She accepts her role without question in verse 38, and thus is a model of faith, even though she does not fully understand everything. The work of God in Mary introduces something unknown before or after; the birth into the human race of One who is both God and man.

1:9 [k] Ex. 30:7, 8 **1:10** [l] Lev. 16:17 **1:11** [m] Ex. 30:1 **1:12** [n] Luke 2:9 **1:13** [o] Luke 1:57, 60, 63 **1:14** [p] Luke 1:58 **1:15** [q] [Luke 7:24–28] [r] Num. 6:3 [s] Jer. 1:5 **1:17** [t] Mal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 3:2; 11:14 **1:18** [u] Gen. 17:17 **1:19** [v] Dan. 8:16 [w] Luke 2:10 **1:20** [x] Ezek. 3:26; 24:27 **1:23** [y] 2 Kin. 11:5 **1:25** [z] Gen. 30:23 **1:27** [a] Matt. 1:18 **1:28** [b] Dan. 9:23 [c] Judg. 6:12 **1:29** [d] Luke 1:12 **1:30** [e] Luke 2:52 **1:31** [f] Is. 7:14 [g] Luke 2:21 **1:32** [h] Mark 5:7 [i] 2 Sam. 7:12, 13, 16 [j] 2 Sam. 7:14–17 [k] Matt. 1:1 **1:33** [l] [Dan. 2:44]

35 And the angel answered and said to
her, [m]"*The* Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Highest will over-
shadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One
who is to be born will be called [n]the Son of
God. 36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative
has also conceived a son in her old age; and
this is now the sixth month for her who was
called barren. 37 For [o]with God nothing will
be impossible."

38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidser-
vant of the Lord! Let it be to me accord-
ing to your word." And the angel departed
from her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

39 Now Mary arose in those days and
went into the hill country with haste, [p]to
a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of
Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And
it happened, when Elizabeth heard the
greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in
her womb; and Elizabeth was [q]filled with
the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she spoke out with
a loud voice and said, [r]"Blessed *are* you
among women, and blessed *is* the fruit
of your womb! 43 But why *is* this *granted*
to me, that the mother of my Lord should
come to me? 44 For indeed, as soon as the
voice of your greeting sounded in my
ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.
45 [s]Blessed *is* she who believed, for there
will be a fulfillment of those things which
were told her from the Lord."

The Song of Mary

46 And Mary said:

[t]"My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 And my spirit has [u]rejoiced in [v]God
my Savior.
48 For [w]He has regarded the lowly state
of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth [x]all generations
will call me blessed.
49 For He who is mighty [y]has done great
things for me,
And [z]holy *is* His name.
50 And [a]His mercy *is* on those who fear
Him
From generation to generation.
51 [b]He has shown strength with His arm;
[c]He has scattered *the* proud in the
imagination of their hearts.
52 [d]He has put down the mighty from
their thrones,
And exalted *the* lowly.
53 He has [e]filled *the* hungry with good
things,
And *the* rich He has sent away empty.
54 He has helped His [f]servant Israel,
[g]In remembrance of *His* mercy,
55 [h]As He spoke to our [i]fathers,
To Abraham and to his [j]seed forever."

56 And Mary remained with her about
three months, and returned to her house.

Birth of John the Baptist

57 Now Elizabeth's full time came for her
to be delivered, and she brought forth a
son. 58 When her neighbors and relatives
heard how the Lord had shown great mer-
cy to her, they [k]rejoiced with her.

Circumcision of John the Baptist

59 So it was, [l]on the eighth day, that they
came to circumcise the child; and they
would have called him by the name of his
father, Zacharias. 60 His mother answered
and said, [m]"No; he shall be called John."

61 But they said to her, "There is no one
among your relatives who is called by this
name." 62 So they made signs to his father—
what he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and
wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they
all marveled. 64 Immediately his mouth
was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he
spoke, praising God. 65 Then fear came on
all who dwelt around them; and all these
sayings were discussed throughout all the
hill country of Judea. 66 And all those who
heard *them* [n]kept *them* in their hearts, say-
ing, "What kind of child will this be?" And
[o]the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zacharias' Prophecy

67 Now his father Zacharias [p]was filled
with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, say-
ing:

1:35 ***The Holy Spirit will come upon you.*** This is a direct declaration of Jesus' divine conception. The child's conception means He is uniquely set apart.

1:38 ***maidservant.*** This term suggests humility before the Lord and a readiness for faithful and obedient service, which should characterize every believer. Paul uses the masculine form of this word to describe himself (Rom. 1:1).

1:46 ***My soul magnifies the Lord.*** The following hymn gets its name, the "Magnificat," from the Latin word for *magnifies*. Mary's hymn is a recital of what God had done for her and for others in the past.

1:48 ***all generations will call me blessed.*** Mary went from being a poor unknown Hebrew girl to the most honored woman in the history of the world.

1:50 ***mercy.*** This term expresses the Old Testament concept of God's loyal, gracious, faithful love (Ps. 103).

1:51–53 ***He has put down the mighty.*** These verses portray a "reversal" in the end times, when those who have abused power will be judged and those who have suffered persecution will be exalted.

1:67 ***Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied.*** The presence of the Holy Spirit enabled

1:35 [m] Matt. 1:20 [n] [Heb. 1:2, 8] **1:37** [o] Jer. 32:17
1:39 [p] Josh. 21:9 **1:41** [q] Acts 6:3 **1:42** [r] Judg. 5:24
1:45 [s] John 20:29 **1:46** [t] 1 Sam. 2:1–10 **1:47** [u] Hab. 3:18 [v] 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3 **1:48** [w] Ps. 138:6 [x] Luke 11:27
1:49 [y] Ps. 71:19; 126:2, 3 [z] Ps. 111:9 **1:50** [a] Ps. 103:17
1:51 [b] Ps. 98:1; 118:15 [c] [1 Pet. 5:5] **1:52** [d] 1 Sam. 2:7, 8 **1:53** [e] [Matt. 5:6] **1:54** [f] Is. 41:8 [g] [Jer. 31:3]
1:55 [h] Gen. 17:19 [i] [Rom. 11:28] [j] Gen. 17:7 **1:58** [k] [Rom. 12:15] **1:59** [l] Gen. 17:12 **1:60** [m] Luke 1:13, 63
1:66 [n] Luke 2:19 [o] Acts 11:21 **1:67** [p] Joel 2:28

68 "Blessed[q] *is* the Lord God of Israel,
For [r]He has visited and redeemed His people,
69 [s]And has raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of His servant David,
70 [t]As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,
Who *have been* [u]since the world began,
71 That we should be saved from our enemies
And from the hand of all who hate us,
72 [v]To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers
And to remember His holy covenant,
73 [w]The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:
74 To grant us that we,
Being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
Might [x]serve Him without fear,
75 [y]In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.
76 "And you, child, will be called the [z]prophet of the Highest;
For [a]you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,
77 To give [b]knowledge of salvation to His people
By the remission of their sins,
78 Through the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Dayspring from on high has visited* us;
79 [c]To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
To [d]guide our feet into the way of peace."

80 So [e]the child grew and became strong in spirit, and [f]was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Christ Born of Mary

2 And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2[a]This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

4Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to [b]the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, [c]because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5to be registered with Mary, [d]his betrothed wife,* who was with child. 6So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. 7And [e]she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Glory in the Highest

8Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9And behold,* an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, [f]and they were greatly afraid. 10Then the angel said to them, [g]"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy [h]which will be to all people. 11[i]For there is born to you this day in the city of David [j]a Savior, [k]who is Christ the Lord. 12And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

13[l]And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

* **1:78** NU-Text reads *shall visit*. * **2:5** NU-Text omits *wife*. * **2:9** NU-Text omits *behold*.

Zacharias to announce God's promise. Zacharias's hymn is called the "Benedictus" from its first word in the Latin Vulgate translation. There are three types of prophecy in the Bible: foretelling future events, forth-telling the Word of God, and praising God. Zacharias's prophecy includes all three.

1:69 *horn of salvation.* The horn of an ox is a symbol of power (Deut. 33:17; 1 Sam. 2:10; 2 Sam. 22:3; Ps. 75:4–5,10; 132:17; Ezek. 29:21).

1:77 *knowledge of salvation.* John's task was to prepare the people by informing them of their need to repent (3:1–14) and of the One who was coming (3:15–18).

1:78 *the Dayspring from on high has visited us.* This phrase is a reference to the coming of Messiah (Num. 24:17; Mal. 4:2).

2:1–2 *Augustus.* This was the Roman emperor from 31 B.C. to A.D. 14. ***Quirinius.*** Quirinius was the governor or administrator of a major census organized to facilitate the collection of taxes.

2:3–4 *to be registered.* The registration, following Jewish custom, took place at a person's ancestral home (2 Sam. 24). The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was about 90 miles, at least a three-day trip.

2:9 *glory.* This word refers to evidence of God's majestic presence, later associated with Jesus (Acts 7:55). In this scene, the glory is the appearance of light in the midst of darkness.

2:11 *Savior, who is Christ the Lord.* These three titles together summarize the saving work of Jesus and His sovereign position. What God was called in 1:47, Jesus is called here. The word Christ means "Anointed," referring to Jesus' royal, messianic position. The word Lord was the title of a ruler.

1:68 [q] 1 Kin. 1:48 [r] Ex. 3:16 **1:69** [s] Ps. 132:17 **1:70** [t] Rom. 1:2 [u] Acts 3:21 **1:72** [v] Lev. 26:42 **1:73** [w] Gen. 12:3; 22:16–18 **1:74** [x] [Heb. 9:14] **1:75** [y] [Eph. 4:24] **1:76** [z] Matt. 3:3; 11:9 [a] Is. 40:3 **1:77** [b] [Mark 1:4] **1:79** [c] Is. 9:2 [d] [John 10:4; 14:27; 16:33] **1:80** [e] Luke 2:40 [f] Matt. 3:1 **2:2** [a] Acts 5:37 **2:4** [b] 1 Sam. 16:1 [c] Matt. 1:16 **2:5** [d] [Matt. 1:18] **2:7** [e] Matt. 1:25 **2:9** [f] Luke 1:12 **2:10** [g] Luke 1:13, 30 [h] Gen. 12:3 **2:11** [i] Is. 9:6 [j] Matt. 1:21 [k] Acts 2:36 **2:13** [l] Dan. 7:10

14 "Glory[m] to God in the highest,
And on earth [n]peace, [o]goodwill toward men!"*

15So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." 16And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17Now when they had seen *Him,* they made widely* known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19[p]But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. 20Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and [q]praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Circumcision of Jesus

21[r]And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child,* His name was called [s]JESUS, the name given by the angel [t]before He was conceived in the womb.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

22Now when [u]the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord 23[v](as it is written in the law of the Lord, [w]*"Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"*),* 24and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, [x]*"A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."**

Simeon Sees God's Salvation

25And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon, and this man *was* just and devout, [y]waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not [z]see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27So he came [a]by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

29 "Lord, [b]now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
30 For my eyes [c]have seen Your salvation
31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
32 [d]A light to *bring* revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel."

33And Joseph and His mother* marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. 34Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this *Child* is destined for the [e]fall and rising of many in Israel, and for [f]a sign which will be spoken against 35(yes, [g]a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Anna Bears Witness to the Redeemer

36Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of [h]Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; 37and this woman *was* a widow of about eighty-four years,* who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers [i]night and day. 38And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord,* and spoke of Him to all those who [j]looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

The Family Returns to Nazareth

39So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city,

* **2:14** NU-Text reads *toward men of goodwill.*
* **2:17** NU-Text omits *widely.* * **2:21** NU-Text reads *for His circumcision.* * **2:23** Exodus 13:2, 12, 15 * **2:24** Leviticus 12:8 * **2:33** NU-Text reads *And His father and mother.* * **2:37** NU-Text reads *a widow until she was eighty-four.*
* **2:38** NU-Text reads *to God.*

2:14 ***peace, goodwill toward men.*** Peace is not for everyone, but for those who please God.
2:21 ***when eight days.*** According to the law, a Jewish boy was to be circumcised on his eighth day (Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3).
2:25 ***Consolation of Israel.*** Simeon was waiting for the comforter of Israel, a hope that parallels the hope of national deliverance expressed in the two hymns of chapter one. This deliverance would involve the work of Messiah, as verse 26 suggests.
2:32 ***A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles.*** This is the first explicit statement in Luke that includes both Jew and Gentile. Salvation is portrayed as light (1:79). It would be a revelation to Gentiles because they would be able to participate in God's blessing with a fullness that had not been revealed in the Old Testament (Eph. 2:11—3:7).
2:36 ***there was one, Anna, a prophetess.*** Anna's work as a prophetess in the temple court suggests that she addressed all who would listen to her, as did Miriam (Ex. 15:20), Deborah (Judg. 4:4), and Huldah (2 Kin. 22:14).

2:14 [m] Luke 19:38 [n] Is. 57:19 [o] [Eph. 2:4, 7] **2:19** [p] Gen. 37:11 **2:20** [q] Luke 19:37 **2:21** [r] Lev. 12:3 [s] [Matt. 1:21] [t] Luke 1:31 **2:22** [u] Lev. 12:2–8 **2:23** [v] Deut. 18:4 [w] Ex. 13:2, 12, 15 **2:24** [x] Lev. 12:2, 8 **2:25** [y] Mark 15:43 **2:26** [z] [Heb. 11:5] **2:27** [a] Matt. 4:1 **2:29** [b] Gen. 46:30 **2:30** [c] [Is. 52:10] **2:32** [d] Acts 10:45; 13:47; 28:28 **2:34** [e] [1 Pet. 2:7, 8] [f] Acts 4:2; 17:32; 28:22 **2:35** [g] Ps. 42:10 **2:36** [h] Josh. 19:24 **2:37** [i] 1 Tim. 5:5 **2:38** [j] Mark 15:43

Nazareth. 40[k]And the Child grew and became strong in spirit,* filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

The Boy Jesus Amazes the Scholars

41His parents went to [l]Jerusalem [m]every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the [n]custom of the feast. 43When they had finished the [o]days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother* did not know *it;* 44but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances. 45So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. 46Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47And [p]all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. 48So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."

49And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be [q]about [r]My Father's business?" 50But [s]they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Jesus Advances in Wisdom and Favor

51Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother [t]kept all these things in her heart. 52And Jesus [u]increased in wisdom and stature, [v]and in favor with God and men.

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, [a]Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2while [b]Annas and Caiaphas were high priests,* the word of God came to [c]John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3[d]And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance [e]for the remission of sins, 4as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying:

[f]"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.
5 Every valley shall be filled
And every mountain and hill brought low;
The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough ways smooth;
6 And [g]all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"*

John Preaches to the People

7Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, [h]"Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8Therefore bear fruits [i]worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 9And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore [j]every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10So the people asked him, saying, [k]"What shall we do then?"

11He answered and said to them, [l]"He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, [m]let him do likewise."

* **2:40** NU-Text omits *in spirit.* * **2:43** NU-Text reads *And His parents.* * **3:2** NU-Text and M-Text read *in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas.* * **3:6** Isaiah 40:3–5

2:41 ***to Jerusalem every year.*** The annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem was customary for many who lived outside the city. The laws commanded three pilgrimages for the men each year: Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Ex. 23:14–17; Deut. 16:16).

2:49 ***I must be about My Father's business.*** This is the first indication in Luke's Gospel that Jesus knew He had a unique mission and a unique relationship to the Father.

3:1–2 ***Tiberius Caesar . . . Pontius Pilate . . . Herod . . . Annas . . . Caiaphas.*** The various rulers that Luke lists show the complexity of the historical and political situation in Israel during Jesus' day. A first-century Israelite had to deal with the edicts of the Roman emperor, the regulations of the governor over Israel, and the judgments of the religious leaders of Israel.

3:4–6 ***Prepare the way of the LORD.*** This citation from Isaiah 40:3–5 declares the coming of God's deliverance. Luke cites the text more fully than Matthew or Mark. He carries the passage through to its mention of salvation being seen by all flesh (v. 6), thus highlighting that the gospel is for all people. The preparation for the arrival of a king typically meant that a road was prepared for his journey. This is what Isaiah compares to the arrival of God's salvation.

3:8 ***Therefore bear fruits.*** John the Baptist warned that the fruits of repentance are necessary, not the claim of an ancestral connection to Abraham. External genealogical connections would not change one's attitude to God.

3:11 ***two tunics.*** One was an undergarment, and the

2:40 [k] Luke 1:80; 2:52 **2:41** [l] John 4:20 [m] Deut. 16:1, 16 **2:42** [n] Ex. 23:14, 15 **2:43** [o] Ex. 12:15 **2:47** [p] Matt. 7:28; 13:54; 22:33 **2:49** [q] John 9:4 [r] [Luke 4:22, 32] **2:50** [s] John 7:15, 46 **2:51** [t] Dan. 7:28 **2:52** [u] [Col. 2:2, 3] [v] 1 Sam. 2:26 **3:1** [a] Matt. 27:2 **3:2** [b] Acts 4:6 [c] Luke 1:13 **3:3** [d] Mark 1:4 [e] Luke 1:77 **3:4** [f] Is. 40:3–5 **3:6** [g] Is. 52:10 **3:7** [h] Matt. 3:7; 12:34; 23:33 **3:8** [i] [2 Cor. 7:9–11] **3:9** [j] Matt. 7:19 **3:10** [k] [Acts 2:37, 38; 16:30, 31] **3:11** [l] 2 Cor. 8:14 [m] Is. 58:7

12 Then [n]tax collectors also came to be
baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what
shall we do?"
13 And he said to them, [o]"Collect no more
than what is appointed for you."
14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, say-
ing, "And what shall we do?"
So he said to them, "Do not intimidate
anyone [p]or accuse falsely, and be content
with your wages."
15 Now as the people were in expectation,
and all reasoned in their hearts about John,
whether he was the Christ *or* not, 16 John
answered, saying to all, [q]"I indeed baptize
you with water; but One mightier than I is
coming, whose sandal strap I am not wor-
thy to loose. He will [r]baptize you with the
Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fan *is*
in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean
out His threshing floor, and [s]gather the
wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will
burn with unquenchable fire."
18 And with many other exhortations he
preached to the people. 19 [t]But Herod the
tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning
Herodias, his brother Philip's wife,* and for
all the evils which Herod had done, 20 also
added this, above all, that he shut John up
in prison.

John Baptizes Jesus

21 When all the people were baptized,
[u]it came to pass that Jesus also was bap-
tized; and while He prayed, the heaven was
opened. 22 And the Holy Spirit descended
in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a
voice came from heaven which said, "You
are My beloved Son; in You I am [v]well
pleased."

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

23 Now Jesus Himself began *His min-
istry at* [w]about thirty years of age, being (as
was supposed) [x]*the* son of Joseph, *the son*
of Heli, 24 *the son* of Matthat,* *the son* of
Levi, *the son* of Melchi, *the son* of Janna,
the son of Joseph, 25 *the son* of Mattathiah,
the son of Amos, *the son* of Nahum, *the
son* of Esli, *the son* of Naggai, 26 *the son* of
Maath, *the son* of Mattathiah, *the son* of
Semei, *the son* of Joseph, *the son* of Judah,
27 *the son* of Joannas, *the son* of Rhesa, *the
son* of [y]Zerubbabel, *the son* of Shealtiel,
the son of Neri, 28 *the son* of Melchi, *the son*
of Addi, *the son* of Cosam, *the son* of Elmo-
dam, *the son* of Er, 29 *the son* of Jose, *the
son* of Eliezer, *the son* of Jorim, *the son* of
Matthat, *the son* of Levi, 30 *the son* of Sim-
eon, *the son* of Judah, *the son* of Joseph,
the son of Jonan, *the son* of Eliakim, 31 *the
son* of Melea, *the son* of Menan, *the son* of
Mattathah, *the son* of [z]Nathan, [a]*the son* of
David, 32 [b]*the son* of Jesse, *the son* of Obed,
the son of Boaz, *the son* of Salmon, *the son*
of Nahshon, 33 *the son* of Amminadab, *the
son* of Ram, *the son* of Hezron, *the son* of
Perez, *the son* of Judah, 34 *the son* of Jacob,
the son of Isaac, *the son* of Abraham, [c]*the
son* of Terah, *the son* of Nahor, 35 *the son* of
Serug, *the son* of Reu, *the son* of Peleg, *the
son* of Eber, *the son* of Shelah, 36 [d]*the son* of
Cainan, *the son* of [e]Arphaxad, [f]*the son* of
Shem, *the son* of Noah, *the son* of Lamech,
37 *the son* of Methuselah, *the son* of Enoch,
the son of Jared, *the son* of Mahalalel, *the
son* of Cainan, 38 *the son* of Enosh, *the son*
of Seth, *the son* of Adam, [g]*the son* of God.

Satan Tempts Jesus

4 Then [a]Jesus, being filled with the Holy
Spirit, returned from the Jordan and
[b]was led by the Spirit into* the wilderness,

* **3:19** NU-Text reads *his brother's wife.*
* **3:24** This and several other names in the genealogy are spelled somewhat differently in the NU-Text. Since the New King James Version uses the Old Testament spelling for persons mentioned in the New Testament, these variations, which come from the Greek, have not been footnoted.
* **4:1** NU-Text reads *in.*

other was an outer garment. A person did not need two when another person had none.

3:12 ***tax collectors.*** These men were Jewish agents employed by those who had purchased the right to collect taxes for the Roman state. They often added interest to cover their own expenses and to pad their income. They were disliked both for their business practices and for their support of the occupying state.

3:16–17 ***the Holy Spirit and fire.*** These two facets of Christ's work relate to His first and second comings. As a result of Christ's work at His first coming, believers are placed into one family (1 Cor. 12:13) and commended to the care of the Holy Spirit. When Christ comes a second time, He will come with the fire of judgment. ***winnowing fan.*** This tool was a wooden forklike shovel that lifted the grain in the air so that the wind could separate it from the chaff.

3:19–20 ***all the evils which Herod had done.*** Herod had divorced his wife to marry his own niece Herodias, who already had been the wife of his brother Philip. Not only was the divorce a problem, so was marrying such a close relative (Lev. 18:16; 20:21).

3:22 ***You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.*** This statement combines two ideas. The idea of God's Son comes from Psalm 2:7, a psalm about God's chosen King. The idea of pleasure comes from the image of the Servant in Isaiah 42:1. The fact that Jesus is both King and Servant is fundamental to Jesus' identity.

4:1–13 Temptation of Christ—Hebrews 2:18 makes the point that, because Christ was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted. We can see two

3:12 [n] Luke 7:29 **3:13** [o] Luke 19:8 **3:14** [p] Ex. 20:16; 23:1 **3:16** [q] Matt. 3:11, 12 [r] John 7:39; 20:22 **3:17** [s] Matt. 13:24–30 **3:19** [t] Mark 6:17 **3:21** [u] Matt. 3:13–17 **3:22** [v] 2 Pet. 1:17 **3:23** [w] [Num. 4:3, 35, 39, 43, 47] [x] John 6:42 **3:27** [y] Ezra 2:2; 3:8 **3:31** [z] Zech. 12:12 [a] 2 Sam. 5:14; 7:12 **3:32** [b] Ruth 4:18–22 **3:34** [c] Gen. 11:24, 26–30; 12:3 **3:36** [d] Gen. 11:12 [e] Gen. 10:22, 24; 11:10–13 [f] Gen. 5:6–32; 9:27; 11:10 **3:38** [g] Gen. 5:1, 2 **4:1** [a] Matt. 4:1–11 [b] Luke 2:27

2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And [c]in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are [d]the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

4 But Jesus answered him, saying,* "It is written, [e]*'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'*"*

5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him* all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for [f]*this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan!* For* it is written, [g]*'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'*"*

9 [h]Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. 10 For it is written:

> [i]*'He shall give His angels charge over you,*
> *To keep you,'*

11 and,

> [j]*'In their hands they shall bear you up,*
> *Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'*"*

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, [k]*'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'*"*

13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him [l]until an opportune time.

Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry

14 [m]Then Jesus returned [n]in the power of the Spirit to [o]Galilee, and [p]news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15 And He [q]taught in their synagogues, [r]being glorified by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

16 So He came to [s]Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, [t]He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

> 18 *"The[u] Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,*
> *Because He has anointed Me*
> *To preach the gospel to the poor;*
> *He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,**
> *To proclaim liberty to the captives*
> *And recovery of sight to the blind,*
> *To [v]set at liberty those who are oppressed;*
> 19 *To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."**

* **4:4** Deuteronomy 8:3 • NU-Text omits *but by every word of God.* * **4:5** NU-Text reads *And taking Him up, he showed Him.* * **4:8** NU-Text omits *Get behind Me, Satan.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *For.* • Deuteronomy 6:13 * **4:11** Psalm 91:11, 12 * **4:12** Deuteronomy 6:16 * **4:18** NU-Text omits *to heal the brokenhearted.* * **4:19** Isaiah 61:1, 2

examples of this quite plainly. The temptations are about security and power. In becoming man, Jesus gave up both (Phil. 2:5–11). Jesus didn't cling to any of what was by nature and identity rightfully His. In doing so, He had to trust fully in the Father for His life and very being. He can truly identify with our temptations. His experience wasn't just like ours are. No one ever gave up more power. No one of greater stature has ever been in such an insecure position. He can be there for us because He has been there before us.

4:3 *If You are the Son of God.* This is a conditional statement. In other words, Satan was saying: "Let's assume for the sake of argument that You are the Son of God." In fact, Satan was challenging Jesus' identity and authority.

4:4 *It is written.* Jesus responded to Satan's temptation by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3. Jesus refused to operate independently of God. The Spirit had led Him into the wilderness to prepare Him for His ministry, so eating at Satan's instruction would have shown a lack of dependence on the Father.

4:5 *all the kingdoms of the world.* This temptation was an attempt to offer Jesus power by the wrong means. Satan's method involved a detour around the cross, an inducement to "take the easy way" to power.

4:10–11 *He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you.* Satan cited Psalm 91:11–12, reminding Jesus of God's promise of protection. However, the mere use of biblical words does not always reveal God's will, particularly if they are placed in the wrong context.

4:12 *You shall not tempt the LORD your God.* In response to Satan's third temptation, Jesus cited Deuteronomy 6:16. God is to be trusted, not tested. The Deuteronomy passage refers to Israel's attempt to test God at Meribah (Ex. 17:1–7). Jesus would not repeat the nation's error of unfaithfulness to God.

4:16–17 *stood up to read.* Most synagogue services had a reading from the Law and one from the Prophets, with an exposition that tied the texts together. Jesus expounded Isaiah 61.

4:18–19 *He has sent Me.* By citing Isaiah 61, Jesus was claiming to be a royal figure and to have a prophetic mission (v. 24). ***liberty to the captives.*** In the Old Testament, captivity refers to Israel's exile (1:68–74); here captivity refers to sin (1:77; 7:47; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). ***those who are oppressed.*** This was originally the call of Israel, but

4:2 [c] Ex. 34:28 **4:3** [d] John 20:31 **4:4** [e] Deut. 8:3 **4:6** [f] [Rev. 13:2, 7] **4:8** [g] Deut. 6:13; 10:20 **4:9** [h] Matt. 4:5–7 **4:10** [i] Ps. 91:11 **4:11** [j] Ps. 91:12 **4:12** [k] Deut. 6:16 **4:13** [l] [Heb. 4:15] **4:14** [m] Matt. 4:12 [n] John 4:43 [o] Acts 10:37 [p] Matt. 4:24 **4:15** [q] Matt. 4:23 [r] Is. 52:13 **4:16** [s] Mark 6:1 [t] Acts 13:14–16; 17:2 **4:18** [u] Is. 49:8, 9; 61:1, 2 [v] [Dan. 9:24]

20 Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is [w]fulfilled in your hearing." 22 So all bore witness to Him, and [x]marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, [y]"Is this not Joseph's son?"

23 He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in [z]Capernaum,* do also here in [a]Your country.'" 24 Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no [b]prophet is accepted in his own country. 25 But I tell you truly, [c]many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; 26 but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath,* *in the region* of Sidon, to a woman *who was* a widow. 27 [d]And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

28 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were [e]filled with wrath, 29 [f]and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. 30 Then [g]passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit

31 Then [h]He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. 32 And they were [i]astonished at His teaching, [j]for His word was with authority. 33 [k]Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, 34 saying, "Let *us* alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? [l]I know who You are—[m]the Holy One of God!"

35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in *their* midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. 36 Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word this *is!* For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." 37 And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

38 [n]Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they [o]made request of Him concerning her. 39 So He stood over her and [p]rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset

40 [q]When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 [r]And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, [s]"You are the Christ,* the Son of God!"

And He, [t]rebuking *them,* did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

42 [u]Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; 43 but He said to them, "I must [v]preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." 44 [w]And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.*

* **4:23** Here and elsewhere the NU-Text spelling is *Capharnaum.* * **4:26** Greek *Sarepta* * **4:41** NU-Text omits *the Christ.* * **4:44** NU-Text reads *Judea.*

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the nation had failed in its assignment (Is. 58:6). ***the acceptable year of the Lord.*** This phrase is an allusion to the year of Jubilee when every 50th year all debt was forgiven and slaves were given their freedom (Lev. 25:10).

4:20 ***He closed the book.*** Jesus closed the book in the middle of the sentence. He did not continue because the next phrase—"the day of vengeance of our God"—was not being fulfilled then.

4:34 ***What have we to do with You.*** The demon knew that Jesus possessed divine authority, and he wanted nothing to do with Him.

4:35–36 ***rebuked.*** This term in Aramaic was a technical term for calling evil into submission. Jesus' authority over evil forces is clear.

4:41 ***You are the Christ, the Son of God.*** This confession, unique to the Gospel of Luke, shows the close connection Luke makes between Jesus' sonship and messiahship.

4:43 ***kingdom of God.*** In Luke, the kingdom is referred to thirty times and six times in Acts. Jesus announced the rule of God through His person, in dealing with sin (24:47), in distributing the Spirit as He mediates blessing from God's side (24:49), and in reigning with His followers according to the Old Testament promise (Ps. 2:7–12; Acts 3:18–22).

4:21 [w] Acts 13:29 **4:22** [x] [Ps. 45:2] [y] John 6:42 **4:23** [z] Matt. 4:13; 11:23 [a] Matt. 13:54 **4:24** [b] John 4:44 **4:25** [c] 1 Kin. 17:9 **4:27** [d] 2 Kin. 5:1–14 **4:28** [e] Luke 6:11 **4:29** [f] John 8:37; 10:31 **4:30** [g] John 8:59; 10:39 **4:31** [h] Matt. 4:13 **4:32** [i] Matt. 7:28, 29 [j] [John 6:63; 7:46; 8:26, 28, 38, 47; 12:49, 50] **4:33** [k] Mark 1:23 **4:34** [l] Luke 4:41 [m] Ps. 16:10 **4:38** [n] Mark 1:29–31 [o] Mark 5:23 **4:39** [p] Luke 8:24 **4:40** [q] Matt. 8:16, 17 **4:41** [r] Mark 1:34; 3:11 [s] Mark 8:29 [t] Mark 1:25, 34; 3:11 **4:42** [u] Mark 1:35–38 **4:43** [v] [John 9:4] **4:44** [w] Matt. 4:23; 9:35

Four Fishermen Called as Disciples

5 So [a]it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to [b]hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, **2**and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. **3**Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He [c]sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

4When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, [d]"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

5But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught [e]nothing; nevertheless [f]at Your word I will let down the net." **6**And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. **7**So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. **8**When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, [g]"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

9For he and all who were with him were [h]astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; **10**and so also *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. [i]From now on you will catch men." **11**So when they had brought their boats to land, [j]they forsook all and followed Him.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

12[k]And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of [l]leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on *his* face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

13Then He put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." [m]Immediately the leprosy left him. **14**[n]And He charged him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, [o]just as Moses commanded."

15However, [p]the report went around concerning Him all the more; and [q]great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. **16**[r]So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and [s]prayed.

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic

17Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.* **18**[t]Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. **19**And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst [u]before Jesus.

20When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

21[v]And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? [w]Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

22But when Jesus [x]perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? **23**Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? **24**But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the man who was paralyzed, [y]"I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

* **5:17** NU-Text reads *present with Him to heal.*

5:1 ***Gennesaret.*** This is another name for the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias.

5:5 ***at Your word I will let down the net.*** This is Peter's statement of faith. The fisherman noted that he and his companions had just failed to make a catch at the best time for fishing, the evening. The circumstances were not good for a catch at the time of Jesus' command, but Peter chose to obey His word and let down his nets anyway.

5:12 ***leprosy.*** This term was used broadly in the ancient world. It included psoriasis, lupus, and ringworm. Lepers were isolated from the rest of society (Lev. 13:45–46), but could be restored to the community when they recovered (Lev. 14).

5:14 ***show yourself to the priest.*** Jesus commanded that the regulation of Leviticus 14 be followed in silencing the healed leper. Jesus sought to avoid drawing excessive attention to His healing ministry.

5:21 ***blasphemies.*** The charge of the scribes and the Pharisees was that Jesus' claim dishonored God. This was a serious charge; the conviction of blasphemy would eventually lead to Jesus' death (22:70–71).

5:23 ***Which is easier.*** Jesus posed a riddle to His audience. From an external point of view, it would seem easier to declare sins forgiven than to actually heal a person. In reality, however, one has to possess more authority to forgive sin. Jesus linked the healing to what it represented, the forgiveness of sin. Jesus forgave the man's sins and healed him at the same time.

5:24 ***Son of Man.*** This is an Aramaic idiom that refers to a human being, meaning "someone" or "I." Jesus used this idiom as a title, taken from Daniel 7:13. In the Book of Daniel, the phrase "Son of Man" describes a figure who shares authority with the Ancient of Days.

5:1 [a] Mark 1:16–20 [b] Acts 13:44 **5:3** [c] John 8:2 **5:4** [d] John 21:6 **5:5** [e] John 21:3 [f] Ps. 33:9 **5:8** [g] 1 Kin. 17:18 **5:9** [h] Mark 5:42; 10:24, 26 **5:10** [i] Matt. 4:19 **5:11** [j] Matt. 4:20; 19:27 **5:12** [k] Mark 1:40–44 [l] Lev. 13:14 **5:13** [m] John 5:9 **5:14** [n] Matt. 8:4 [o] Lev. 13:1–3; 14:2–32 **5:15** [p] Mark 1:45 [q] John 6:2 **5:16** [r] Luke 9:10 [s] Matt. 14:23 **5:18** [t] Mark 2:3–12 **5:19** [u] Matt. 15:30 **5:21** [v] Mark 2:6, 7 [w] Is. 43:25 **5:22** [x] John 2:25 **5:24** [y] Luke 7:14

25 Immediately he rose up before them,
took up what he had been lying on, and de-
parted to his own house, [z]glorifying God.
26 And they were all amazed, and they [a]glo-
rified God and were filled with fear, say-
ing, "We have seen strange things today!"

Matthew the Tax Collector

27 [b]After these things He went out and
saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at
the tax office. And He said to him, [c]"Follow
Me." 28 So he left all, rose up, and [d]followed
Him.
29 [e]Then Levi gave Him a great feast in
his own house. And [f]there were a great
number of tax collectors and others who
sat down with them. 30 And their scribes
and the Pharisees* complained against
His disciples, saying, [g]"Why do You eat
and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"
31 Jesus answered and said to them,
"Those who are well have no need of a phy-
sician, but those who are sick. 32 [h]I have not
come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to
repentance."

Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting

33 Then they said to Him, [i]"Why do*
the disciples of John fast often and make
prayers, and likewise those of the Phari-
sees, but Yours eat and drink?"
34 And He said to them, "Can you make
the friends of the bridegroom fast while the
[j]bridegroom is with them? 35 But the days
will come when the bridegroom will be
taken away from them; then they will fast
in those days."
36 [k]Then He spoke a parable to them: "No
one puts a piece from a new garment on an
old one;* otherwise the new makes a tear,
and also the piece that was *taken* out of
the new does not match the old. 37 And no
one puts new wine into old wineskins; or
else the new wine will burst the wineskins
and be spilled, and the wineskins will be
ruined. 38 But new wine must be put into
new wineskins, and both are preserved.*
39 And no one, having drunk old *wine,* im-
mediately* desires new; for he says, 'The
old is better.'"*

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

6 Now [a]it happened on the second Sab-
bath after the first* that He went
through the grainfields. And His disciples
plucked the heads of grain and ate *them,*
rubbing *them* in *their* hands. 2 And some
of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are
you doing [b]what is not lawful to do on the
Sabbath?"
3 But Jesus answering them said, "Have
you not even read this, [c]what David did
when he was hungry, he and those who
were with him: 4 how he went into the house
of God, took and ate the showbread, and
also gave some to those with him, [d]which
is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?"
5 And He said to them, "The Son of Man is
also Lord of the Sabbath."

Healing on the Sabbath

6 [e]Now it happened on another Sabbath,
also, that He entered the synagogue and
taught. And a man was there whose right
hand was withered. 7 So the scribes and
Pharisees watched Him closely, whether
He would [f]heal on the Sabbath, that they
might find an [g]accusation against Him.
8 But He [h]knew their thoughts, and said to
the man who had the withered hand, "Arise
and stand here." And he arose and stood.

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* **5:30** NU-Text reads *But the Pharisees and their scribes.* * **5:33** NU-Text omits *Why do,* making the verse a statement. * **5:36** NU-Text reads *No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old one.* * **5:38** NU-Text omits *and both are preserved.* * **5:39** NU-Text omits *immediately.* • NU-Text reads *good.* * **6:1** NU-Text reads *on a Sabbath.*

5:29 *with them.* In ancient Israel the table was a place where spiritual points were taught and where fellowship occurred.

5:33 *fast.* The Pharisees fasted twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays (18:12), as well as on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:29). They also fasted as an act of penitence (Is. 58:1–9) and to recall four times a year the destruction of Jerusalem (Zech. 7:3,5; 8:19). The goal of fasting was to dedicate oneself to prayer and to focus on God. John led an ascetic life, which his followers also imitated (7:24–28; Matt. 11:1–19).

5:35 *the days will come.* The image of the removal of the bridegroom is the first hint in Jesus' ministry of His fast-approaching death.

5:37 *puts new wine into old wineskins.* This would not work because as the new wine fermented, it would stretch the old skin and break it, ruining the wineskin and wasting the wine.

6:1 *plucked . . . ate . . . rubbing.* According to Jewish tradition, the disciples were reaping, threshing, and preparing food, and so were violating the commandment not to work on the Sabbath. It is clear that at this point the Pharisees were watching Jesus carefully (v. 7).

6:3–4 *showbread.* This was bread that was taken from the twelve loaves placed on a table in the holy place and changed once a week (Ex. 25:30; 39:36; Lev. 24:5–9). Jesus pointed out that if David and his men could violate the law to satisfy their hunger, His disciples could do the same.

6:5 *also Lord of the Sabbath.* Regardless of the laws and customs that the Pharisees cited, Jesus has authority over the Sabbath. Jesus' claim of divine authority here is similar to His claim of authority to forgive sins in 5:21, 24.

5:25 [z] Acts 3:8 **5:26** [a] Luke 1:65; 7:16 **5:27** [b] Matt. 9:9–17 [c] John 12:26; 21:19, 22 **5:28** [d] Mark 10:28
5:29 [e] Matt. 9:9, 10 [f] Luke 15:1 **5:30** [g] Luke 15:2
5:32 [h] 1 Tim. 1:15 **5:33** [i] Matt. 9:14 **5:34** [j] John 3:29
5:36 [k] Mark 2:21, 22 **6:1** [a] Matt. 12:1–8 **6:2** [b] Ex. 20:10
6:3 [c] 1 Sam. 21:6 **6:4** [d] Lev. 24:9 **6:6** [e] Mark 3:1–6
6:7 [f] Luke 13:14; 14:1–6 [g] Luke 20:20 **6:8** [h] Matt. 9:4

9 Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you
one thing: [i]Is it lawful on the Sabbath to
do good or to do evil, to save life or to de-
stroy?"* 10 And when He had looked around
at them all, He said to the man,* "Stretch
out your hand." And he did so, and his
hand was restored as whole as the other.*
11 But they were filled with rage, and dis-
cussed with one another what they might
do to Jesus.

The Twelve Apostles

12 Now it came to pass in those days
that He went out to the mountain to pray,
and continued all night in [j]prayer to God.
13 And when it was day, He called His disci-
ples to *Himself;* [k]and from them He chose
[l]twelve whom He also named apostles:
14 Simon, [m]whom He also named Peter,
and Andrew his brother; James and John;
Philip and Bartholomew; 15 Matthew and
Thomas; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and
Simon called the Zealot; 16 Judas [n]*the son*
of James, and [o]Judas Iscariot who also be-
came a traitor.

Jesus Heals a Great Multitude

17 And He came down with them and
stood on a level place with a crowd of His
disciples [p]and a great multitude of people
from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from
the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came
to hear Him and be healed of their diseas-
es, 18 as well as those who were tormented
with unclean spirits. And they were healed.
19 And the whole multitude [q]sought to
[r]touch Him, for [s]power went out from Him
and healed *them* all.

The Beatitudes

20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His
disciples, and said:

[t]"Blessed *are you* poor,
For yours is the kingdom of God.

21 [u]Blessed *are you* who hunger now,
For you shall be [v]filled.
[w]Blessed *are you* who weep now,
For you shall [x]laugh.
22 [y]Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they [z]exclude you,
And revile *you,* and cast out your
name as evil,
For the Son of Man's sake.
23 [a]Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward *is* great in
heaven,
For [b]in like manner their fathers did
to the prophets.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

24 "But[c] woe to you [d]who are rich,
For [e]you have received your
consolation.
25 [f]Woe to you who are full,
For you shall hunger.
[g]Woe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and [h]weep.
26 [i]Woe to you* when all* men speak well
of you,
For so did their fathers to the false
prophets.

Love Your Enemies

27 [j]"But I say to you who hear: Love your
enemies, do good to those who hate you,
28 [k]bless those who curse you, and [l]pray for
those who spitefully use you. 29 [m]To him
who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the
other also. [n]And from him who takes away
your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic ei-
ther. 30 [o]Give to everyone who asks of you.
And from him who takes away your goods
do not ask *them* back. 31 [p]And just as you
want men to do to you, you also do to them
likewise.

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* **6:9** M-Text reads *to kill.* * **6:10** NU-Text and M-Text read *to him.* • NU-Text omits *as whole as the other.* * **6:26** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to you.* • M-Text omits *all.*

6:11 *rage.* The term here means irrational or mindless anger. The parallels in Matthew 12:14 and Mark 3:6 make it clear that the Pharisees started to plot against Jesus in earnest after this confrontation.

6:17 *level place.* This probably refers to a plateau on a mountain. The setting and the contents of the sermon that follows suggest that Luke is providing a shorter version of the Sermon on the Mount, omitting those portions that have to do with the law.

6:20 *Blessed are you.* Blessed means "happy," referring to the special joy and favor that comes upon those who experience God's grace.

6:22 *For the Son of Man's sake.* Identification with Jesus usually leads to rejection and hardship, but the disciple who has left all to follow Jesus understands what placing Jesus first means. He or she also recognizes that God is aware of all suffering.

6:24 *woe.* A woe is a cry of pain that results from misfortune. Just as God presented blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience in Deuteronomy 28, Jesus presented blessings and woes to His disciples who were anticipating the kingdom. The same blessings and woes apply to believers today when their works are evaluated (1 Cor. 3:12–15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 2:28; Rev. 22:12).

6:27–28 *Love your enemies.* The threat of religious persecution was very real when Jesus presented His command for extraordinary love. The reference to a cursing enemy suggests a context of religious persecution.

6:30 *do not ask them back.* The commands of verses 29 and 30 are expressed in such absolute terms that

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6:9 [i] John 7:23 **6:12** [j] Mark 1:35 **6:13** [k] John 6:70 [l] Matt. 10:1 **6:14** [m] John 1:42 **6:16** [n] Jude 1 [o] Luke 22:3–6 **6:17** [p] Mark 3:7, 8 **6:19** [q] Matt. 9:21; 14:36 [r] Mark 5:27, 28 [s] Luke 8:46 **6:20** [t] Matt. 5:3–12; [11:5] **6:21** [u] Is. 55:1; 65:13 [v] [Rev. 7:16] [w] [Is. 61:3] [x] Ps. 126:5 **6:22** [y] 1 Pet. 2:19; 3:14; 4:14 [z] [John 16:2] **6:23** [a] James 1:2 [b] Acts 7:51 **6:24** [c] James 5:1–6 [d] Luke 12:21 [e] Luke 16:25 **6:25** [f] [Is. 65:13] [g] [Prov. 14:13] [h] James 4:9 **6:26** [i] John 15:19] **6:27** [j] Rom. 12:20 **6:28** [k] Rom. 12:14 [l] Acts 7:60 **6:29** [m] Matt. 5:39–42 [n] [1 Cor. 6:7] **6:30** [o] Deut. 15:7, 8 **6:31** [p] Matt. 7:12

32 [q]"But if you love those who love you,
what credit is that to you? For even sinners
love those who love them. 33 And if you do
good to those who do good to you, what
credit is that to you? For even sinners do
the same. 34 [r]And if you lend *to those* from
whom you hope to receive back, what cred-
it is that to you? For even sinners lend to
sinners to receive as much back. 35 But [s]love
your enemies, [t]do good, and [u]lend, hoping
for nothing in return; and your reward will
be great, and [v]you will be sons of the Most
High. For He is kind to the unthankful and
evil. 36 [w]Therefore be merciful, just as your
Father also is merciful.

Do Not Judge

37 [x]"Judge not, and you shall not be judged.
Condemn not, and you shall not be con-
demned. [y]Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
38 [z]Give, and it will be given to you: good
measure, pressed down, shaken together,
and running over will be put into your [a]bo-
som. For [b]with the same measure that you
use, it will be measured back to you."

39 And He spoke a parable to them: [c]"Can
the blind lead the blind? Will they not both
fall into the ditch? 40 [d]A disciple is not above
his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly
trained will be like his teacher. 41 [e]And why
do you look at the speck in your brother's
eye, but do not perceive the plank in your
own eye? 42 Or how can you say to your
brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck
that *is* in your eye,' when you yourself do
not see the plank that *is* in your own eye?
Hypocrite! First remove the plank from
your own eye, and then you will see clearly
to remove the speck that is in your broth-
er's eye.

A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

43 [f]"For a good tree does not bear bad
fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.
44 For [g]every tree is known by its own fruit.
For *men* do not gather figs from thorns,
nor do they gather grapes from a bram-
ble bush. 45 [h]A good man out of the good
treasure of his heart brings forth good;
and an evil man out of the evil treasure of
his heart* brings forth evil. For out [i]of the
abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Build on the Rock

46 [j]"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,'
and not do the things which I say? 47 [k]Who-
ever comes to Me, and hears My sayings
and does them, I will show you whom he
is like: 48 He is like a man building a house,
who dug deep and laid the foundation
on the rock. And when the flood arose,
the stream beat vehemently against that
house, and could not shake it, for it was
founded on the rock.* 49 But he who heard
and did nothing is like a man who built a
house on the earth without a foundation,
against which the stream beat vehement-
ly; and immediately it fell.* And the ruin of
that house was great."

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

7 Now when He concluded all His say-
ings in the hearing of the people, He
[a]entered Capernaum. 2 And a certain cen-
turion's servant, who was dear to him, was
sick and ready to die. 3 So when he heard
about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to
Him, pleading with Him to come and heal
his servant. 4 And when they came to Jesus,
they begged Him earnestly, saying that the
one for whom He should do this was de-
serving, 5 "for he loves our nation, and has
built us a synagogue."

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when
He was already not far from the house, the
centurion sent friends to Him, saying to
Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I
am not worthy that You should enter un-
der my roof. 7 Therefore I did not even think
myself worthy to come to You. But [b]say the
word, and my servant will be healed. 8 For
I also am a man placed under [c]authority,
having soldiers under me. And I say to one,
'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,'
and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,'
and he does *it*."

* **6:45** NU-Text omits *treasure of his heart*.
* **6:48** NU-Text reads *for it was well built*.
* **6:49** NU-Text reads *collapsed*.

they force the listener to reflect on them by contrasting them with the normal responses people would have to such injustices.

6:35 ***He is kind to the unthankful and evil.*** The practice of loving one's enemies is modeled by God Himself.

6:38 ***good measure.*** This illustration comes from the marketplace where grain was poured out, shaken down, and then filled to overflowing so the buyer received the full amount purchased. Such is the full measure that will be returned to one who has been generous.

6:46 ***Lord, Lord.*** Jesus pointed out that those who called Him by this title of respect acknowledged submission to Him. However when these same people ignored His teaching, they were guilty of hypocrisy.

7:1 ***Capernaum.*** This city was on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was an important town in northern Galilee with an economy centered on fishing and agriculture. Heavily Jewish, it was the center for Jesus' Galilean ministry (4:31–44).

7:5 ***built us a synagogue.*** The Roman government regarded synagogues as valuable because their moral emphasis helped maintain order.

6:32 [q] Matt. 5:46 **6:34** [r] Matt. 5:42 **6:35** [s] [Rom. 13:10] [t] Heb. 13:16 [u] Ps. 37:26 [v] Matt. 5:46 **6:36** [w] Matt. 5:48 **6:37** [x] Matt. 7:1–5 [y] Matt. 18:21–35 **6:38** [z] [Prov. 19:17; 28:27] [a] Ps. 79:12 [b] James 2:13 **6:39** [c] Matt. 15:14; 23:16 **6:40** [d] [John 13:16; 15:20] **6:41** [e] Matt. 7:3 **6:43** [f] Matt. 7:16–18, 20 **6:44** [g] Matt. 12:33 **6:45** [h] Matt. 12:35 [i] Matt. 12:34 **6:46** [j] Mal. 1:6 **6:47** [k] James 1:22–25 **7:1** [a] Matt. 8:5–13 **7:7** [b] Ps. 33:9; 107:20 **7:8** [c] [Mark 13:34]

9When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" 10And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.*

Jesus Raises the Son of the Widow of Nain

11Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. 12And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. 13When the Lord saw her, He had [d]compassion on her and said to her, [e]"Do not weep." 14Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, [f]arise." 15So he who was dead [g]sat up and began to speak. And He [h]presented him to his mother.

16[i]Then fear came upon all, and they [j]glorified God, saying, [k]"A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, [l]"God has visited His people." 17And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

John the Baptist Sends Messengers to Jesus

18[m]Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. 19And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to Jesus,* saying, "Are You [n]the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

20When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" 21And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

22[o]Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: [p]that *the* blind [q]see, *the* lame [r]walk, *the* lepers are [s]cleansed, *the* deaf [t]hear, *the* dead are raised, [u]*the* poor have the gospel preached to them. 23And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me."

24[v]When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 25But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. 26But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 27This is *he* of whom it is written:

> [w]'*Behold, I send My messenger before*
> *Your face,*
> *Who will prepare Your way before*
> *You.*'*

28For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a [x]greater prophet than John the Baptist;* but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

29And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors justified God, [y]having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected [z]the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

31And the Lord said,* [a]"To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? 32They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

> 'We played the flute for you,
> And you did not dance;
> We mourned to you,
> And you did not weep.'

33For [b]John the Baptist came [c]neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' 34The Son of Man has come [d]eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35[e]But wisdom is justified by all her children."

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* **7:10** NU-Text omits *who had been sick.*
* **7:19** NU-Text reads *the Lord.* * **7:27** Malachi 3:1 * **7:28** NU-Text reads *there is none greater than John.* * **7:31** NU-Text and M-Text omit *And the Lord said.*

7:9 ***not even in Israel.*** The centurion's example of faith came from outside the nation of Israel. This is one of only two cases where Jesus "marveled" (Mark 6:6).

7:12 ***a dead man . . . carried out.*** This was a funeral procession. The cemetery was located outside the city gates. Funerals were normally held the day of death because keeping a body overnight rendered a house unclean.

7:24–26 ***He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John.*** The questions that Jesus asked were designed to emphasize that John the Baptist played a special role in God's plan. The crowds did not go out to the wilderness to see scenery or a man dressed in special clothes, but to see a prophet.

7:28 ***he who is least in the kingdom of God.*** Jesus emphasizes the contrast between the old and new eras. John was the greatest prophet ever born. But the lowest person in the new era of God's kingdom is higher than the greatest prophet of the old era.

7:31–34 ***To what then shall I liken.*** Jesus made a comparison between children playing a game in the

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7:13 [d] John 11:35 [e] Luke 8:52 **7:14** [f] Acts 9:40
7:15 [g] John 11:44 [h] 2 Kin. 4:36 **7:16** [i] Luke 1:65 [j] Luke 5:26 [k] Luke 24:19 [l] Luke 1:68 **7:18** [m] Matt. 11:2–19
7:19 [n] [Zech. 9:9] **7:22** [o] Matt. 11:4 [p] Is. 35:5 [q] John 9:7 [r] Matt. 15:31 [s] Luke 17:12–14 [t] Mark 7:37 [u] [Is. 61:1–3]
7:24 [v] Matt. 11:7 **7:27** [w] Mal. 3:1 **7:28** [x] [Luke 1:15]
7:29 [y] Luke 3:12 **7:30** [z] Acts 20:27 **7:31** [a] Matt. 11:16 **7:33** [b] Matt. 3:1 [c] Luke 1:15 **7:34** [d] Luke 15:2
7:35 [e] Matt. 11:19

A Sinful Woman Forgiven

36 [f]Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. 37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, [g]"This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

So he said, "Teacher, say it."

41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred [h]denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more."

And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." 44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no [i]water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no [j]kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 [k]You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. 47 [l]Therefore I say to you, her sins, which *are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little."

48 Then He said to her, [m]"Your sins are forgiven."

49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, [n]"Who is this who even forgives sins?"

50 Then He said to the woman, [o]"Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Many Women Minister to Jesus

8 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve *were* with Him, 2 and [a]certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, [b]out of whom had come seven demons, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him* from their substance.

The Parable of the Sower

4 [c]And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: 5 "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. 6 Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. 8 But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, [d]"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

The Purpose of Parables

9 [e]Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?"

10 And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that

> [f]*'Seeing they may not see,*
> *And hearing they may not understand.'**

* **8:3** NU-Text and M-Text read *them*. * **8:10** Isaiah 6:9

marketplace and the present generation of Israel, referring especially to the Jewish religious leaders. The leaders were like the children in that they complained no matter what tune was played. John the Baptist refused to eat bread or drink wine, and the religious leaders dismissed him as demon-possessed. In contrast, Jesus, the Son of Man was accused of living loosely and associating with sinners. No matter what the style of God's messenger was, the religious leaders complained and rejected him.

7:36 *one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him.* This event is not the same as the one in Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; and John 12:1–8. The event described in those passages occurred in the house of a leper, a place where no Pharisee would ever have gone.

7:37 *alabaster flask.* This was made of soft stone to preserve the quality of the precious and expensive perfume. There is humility and devotion in the woman's act of service, as well as a great deal of courage, as she performed the deed in front of a crowd that knew her as a sinner.

7:44–46 *Do you see this woman?* Jesus contrasted the actions of the woman with the actions of the Pharisee Simon, implying that the woman knew more about forgiveness than Simon (v. 47).

8:1–3 *Mary called Magdalene.* Because she is introduced here, it is unlikely that she was the sinful woman of 7:36–50. ***Joanna.*** This is an example of how some women of means used their wealth to benefit the work of God.

8:10 *kingdom . . . parables.* Jesus' parables both concealed and revealed truths. The disciples were

7:36 [f] John 11:2 **7:39** [g] Luke 15:2 **7:41** [h] Matt. 18:28 **7:44** [i] Gen. 18:4; 19:2; 43:24 **7:45** [j] Rom. 16:16 **7:46** [k] Ps. 23:5 **7:47** [l] [1 Tim. 1:14] **7:48** [m] Matt. 9:2 **7:49** [n] Luke 5:21 **7:50** [o] Matt. 9:22 **8:2** [a] Matt. 27:55 [b] Mark 16:9 **8:4** [c] Mark 4:1–9 **8:8** [d] Luke 14:35 **8:9** [e] Matt. 13:10–23 **8:10** [f] Is. 6:9

The Parable of the Sower Explained

11 [g]"Now the parable is this: The seed
is the [h]word of God. 12 Those by the way-
side are the ones who hear; then the dev-
il comes and takes away the word out of
their hearts, lest they should believe and be
saved. 13 But the ones on the rock *are those*
who, when they hear, receive the word with
joy; and these have no root, who believe for
a while and in time of temptation fall away.
14 Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are
those who, when they have heard, go out
and are choked with cares, [i]riches, and
pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to ma-
turity. 15 But the ones *that* fell on the good
ground are those who, having heard the
word with a noble and good heart, keep *it*
and bear fruit with [j]patience.

The Parable of the Revealed Light

16 [k]"No one, when he has lit a lamp, cov-
ers it with a vessel or puts *it* under a bed,
but sets *it* on a lampstand, that those who
enter may see the [l]light. 17 [m]For nothing is
secret that will not be [n]revealed, nor *any-
thing* hidden that will not be known and
come to light. 18 Therefore take heed how
you hear. [o]For whoever has, to him *more*
will be given; and whoever does not have,
even what he seems to [p]have will be taken
from him."

Jesus' Mother and Brothers Come to Him

19 [q]Then His mother and brothers came
to Him, and could not approach Him be-
cause of the crowd. 20 And it was told Him
by some, who said, "Your mother and Your
brothers are standing outside, desiring to
see You."

21 But He answered and said to them,
"My mother and My brothers are these
who hear the word of God and do it."

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

22 [r]Now it happened, on a certain day,
that He got into a boat with His disciples.
And He said to them, "Let us cross over
to the other side of the lake." And they
launched out. 23 But as they sailed He fell
asleep. And a windstorm came down on
the lake, and they were filling *with water,*
and were in jeopardy. 24 And they came
to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master,
Master, we are perishing!"

Then He arose and rebuked the wind
and the raging of the water. And they
ceased, and there was a calm. 25 But He said
to them, [s]"Where is your faith?"

And they were afraid, and marveled,
saying to one another, [t]"Who can this be?
For He commands even the winds and wa-
ter, and they obey Him!"

A Demon-Possessed Man Healed

26 [u]Then they sailed to the country of
the Gadarenes,* which is opposite Galilee.
27 And when He stepped out on the land,
there met Him a certain man from the city
who had demons for a long time. And he
wore no clothes,* nor did he live in a house
but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus,
he [v]cried out, fell down before Him, and
with a loud voice said, [w]"What have I to
do with [x]You, Jesus, Son of the Most High
God? I beg You, do not torment me!" 29 For
He had commanded the unclean spirit to
come out of the man. For it had often seized
him, and he was kept under guard, bound

* **8:26** NU-Text reads *Gerasenes.* * **8:27** NU-Text reads *who had demons and for a long time wore no clothes.*

privileged to learn the truths of parables. For other listeners, the parables served as judgments that concealed truth, as the reference to Isaiah 6:9 indicates. On occasion, a parable was understood by an outsider but was not accepted, thus still functioning as a message of judgment (20:9–19).

8:13 ***who believe for a while . . . fall away.*** Brief and superficial encounters with the Word of God will not stand times of testing. A person needs to meditate on the truths in Scripture and establish them as principles for living in order to withstand the trials and temptations that will inevitably come.

8:14 ***cares, riches, and pleasures of life.*** According to this parable, these three are the great obstacles to spiritual fruitfulness. The concerns of life can squelch spiritual growth. This type of "soil" is viewed as tragically unsuccessful (2 Tim. 2:4; 4:10).

8:19–20 ***Then his mother and brothers came to Him.*** Jesus' family was concerned about the direction of His ministry (Mark 3:31–35). Though some have suggested that the brothers here were sons of Joseph by a previous marriage or cousins of Jesus, most likely they were the sons of Joseph and Mary. Joseph's absence here may mean that he had died by this time.

8:23 ***a windstorm.*** The calming of the wind is the first of four miracles in verses 22–56 that demonstrate Jesus' authority over a variety of phenomena—nature, demons, disease, and death. This miracle took place on the Sea of Galilee. Cool air rushing down the ravines and hills of the area collides with warm air from the Sea of Galilee, causing sudden and strong storms.

8:25 ***Where is your faith?*** Jesus' question was a rebuke of His disciples. Because God was aware of their situation, they could trust in His protection, for He was powerful enough to control the winds and waves.

8:28 ***Son of the Most High God.*** The demon's confession recalls the angel's announcement to Mary in 1:31–32 and the demonic confessions of 4:34, 41.

8:11 *g* [1 Pet. 1:23] *h* Luke 5:1; 11:28 **8:14** *i* 1 Tim. 6:9, 10 **8:15** *j* [Heb. 10:36–39] **8:16** *k* Luke 11:33 *l* Matt. 5:14 **8:17** *m* Luke 12:2 *n* [2 Cor. 5:10] **8:18** *o* Matt. 25:29 *p* Matt. 13:12 **8:19** *q* Mark 3:31–35 **8:22** *r* Matt. 8:23–27 **8:25** *s* Luke 9:41 *t* Luke 4:36; 5:26 **8:26** *u* Mark 5:1–17 **8:28** *v* Mark 1:26; 9:26 *w* Mark 1:23, 24 *x* Luke 4:41

with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?"

And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out [y]into the abyss.

32 Now a herd of many [z]swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. 33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

34 When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and told *it* in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, [a]sitting at the [b]feet of Jesus, clothed and in his [c]right mind. And they were afraid. 36 They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. 37 [d]Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes* [e]asked Him to [f]depart from them, for they were seized with great [g]fear. And He got into the boat and returned.

38 Now [h]the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

40 So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. 41 [i]And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, 42 for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she [j]was dying.

But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. 43 [k]Now a woman, having a [l]flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44 came from behind and [m]touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

45 And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?"

When all denied it, Peter and those with him* said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' "*

46 But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived [n]power going out from Me." 47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

48 And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer;* [o]your faith has made you well. [p]Go in peace."

49 [q]While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher."*

50 But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; [r]only believe, and she will be made well." 51 When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in* except Peter, James, and John,* and the father and mother of the girl. 52 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, [s]"Do not weep; she is not dead, [t]but sleeping." 53 And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.

54 But He put them all outside,* took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, [u]arise." 55 Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat. 56 And her parents were astonished, but [v]He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

Sending Out the Twelve

9 Then [a]He called His twelve disciples together and [b]gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure

* **8:37** NU-Text reads *Gerasenes*. * **8:45** NU-Text omits *and those with him*. • NU-Text omits *and You say, 'Who touched Me?'* * **8:48** NU-Text omits *be of good cheer*. * **8:49** NU-Text adds *anymore*. * **8:51** NU-Text adds *with Him*. • NU-Text and M-Text read *Peter, John, and James*. * **8:54** NU-Text omits *put them all outside*.

8:30 ***Legion.*** This name reflects the fact that the man was possessed by multiple demons. A legion was a Roman military unit of about 6,000 soldiers.

8:31 ***the abyss.*** This is an allusion to the underworld and the destruction of judgment (Rom. 10:7).

8:44 ***her flow of blood stopped.*** This condition not only would have been embarrassing, it would have made the woman unclean (Lev. 15:25–31). It took great courage for her to seek out Jesus. Note that her action was not criticized, but commended (v. 48).

8:52 ***but sleeping.*** Sleeping was a common metaphor for death. Here it indicates that the girl's death was not permanent.

8:31 [y] [Rev. 20:1, 3] **8:32** [z] Lev. 11:7 **8:35** [a] [Matt. 11:28] [b] Luke 10:39; 17:16 [c] [2 Tim. 1:7] **8:37** [d] Matt. 8:34 [e] Luke 4:34 [f] Acts 16:39 [g] Luke 5:26 **8:38** [h] Mark 5:18–20 **8:41** [i] Mark 5:22–43 **8:42** [j] Luke 7:2 **8:43** [k] Matt. 9:20 [l] Luke 15:19–22 **8:44** [m] Mark 6:56 **8:46** [n] Mark 5:30 **8:48** [o] Luke 7:50 [p] John 8:11 **8:49** [q] Mark 5:35 **8:50** [r] [Mark 11:22–24] **8:52** [s] Luke 7:13 [t] [John 11:11, 13] **8:54** [u] John 11:43 **8:56** [v] Matt. 8:4; 9:30 **9:1** [a] Matt. 10:1, 2 [b] [John 14:12]

diseases. 2[c]He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. 3[d]And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.
4[e]"Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. 5[f]And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, [g]shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them."
6[h]So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Herod Seeks to See Jesus

7[i]Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, 8and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again. 9Herod said, "John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" [i]So he sought to see Him.

Feeding the Five Thousand

10[k]And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. [l]Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. 11But when the multitudes knew *it,* they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. 12[m]When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."
13But He said to them, "You give them something to eat."
And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people." 14For there were about five thousand men.
Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty." 15And they did so, and made them all sit down.
16Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He [n]blessed and broke them, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude. 17So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

18[o]And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"
19So they answered and said, [p]"John the Baptist, but some *say* Elijah; and others *say* that one of the old prophets has risen again."
20He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
[q]Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

21[r]And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22saying, [s]"The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."

Take Up the Cross and Follow Him

23[t]Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily,* and follow Me. 24[u]For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life

* **9:23** M-Text omits *daily.*

9:2 ***to preach . . . to heal the sick.*** The entire nation of Israel needed to see the evidence of the kingdom of God and make a decision concerning the King. Jesus commissioned His disciples to spread the word about God's kingdom through preaching and healing.
9:11 ***spoke . . . healing.*** Jesus had the same two-pronged ministry that the twelve disciples had: preaching and healing (v. 2). The topic of Jesus' preaching was always the kingdom of God.
9:13–17 ***about five thousand men.*** This is the only miracle of Jesus' ministry that appears in all four Gospels. The feeding of the 5,000 demonstrated Jesus' ability to provide.
9:20 ***The Christ of God.*** The emphasis here is on the messianic role of Jesus. He is the Promised One who was ushering in a new era. However, Jesus would soon reveal to the disciples that His messiahship would have elements of suffering that the disciples did not expect (vv. 22–23).
9:22 ***must suffer . . . be rejected . . . be killed . . . be raised.*** This is the first of several predictions in Luke of Jesus' suffering and vindication (v. 44; 12:50; 13:31–33; 17:25; 18:31–33). The disciples struggled to understand what Jesus was saying (v. 45; 18:34). They could not comprehend how Jesus' predictions fit into God's plan. Only after Jesus' resurrection and His explanation of the Scriptures to them did they begin to understand (24:25–27,44–49).
9:23 ***take up his cross daily.*** Although Jesus offered salvation as a free gift (John 1:12; 3:16–18), He also warned that following Him would entail suffering and hardship (Matt. 5:10–12; Rom. 8:17; 2 Thess. 1:5).
9:24–25 ***For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world.*** It makes no sense to attempt to save our lives on earth only to lose everything when

9:2 [c] Matt. 10:7, 8 **9:3** [d] Luke 10:4–12; 22:35 **9:4** [e] Mark 6:10 **9:5** [f] Matt. 10:14 [g] Acts 13:51 **9:6** [h] Mark 6:12 **9:7** [i] Matt. 14:1, 2 **9:9** [j] Luke 23:8 **9:10** [k] Mark 6:30 [l] Matt. 14:13 **9:12** [m] John 6:1, 5 **9:16** [n] Luke 22:19; 24:30 **9:18** [o] Matt. 16:13–16 **9:19** [p] Matt. 14:2 **9:20** [q] John 6:68, 69 **9:21** [r] Matt. 8:4; 16:20 **9:22** [s] Matt. 16:21; 17:22 **9:23** [t] Matt. 10:38; 16:24 **9:24** [u] [John 12:25]

for My sake will save it. 25[v]For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? 26[w]For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be [x]ashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and *in His* Father's, and of the holy angels. 27[y]But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."

Jesus Transfigured on the Mount

28[z]Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. 29As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe *became* white *and* glistening. 30And behold, two men talked with Him, who were [a]Moses and [b]Elijah, 31who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32But Peter and those with him [c]were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. 33Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that* Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said.

34While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the [d]cloud. 35And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, [e]"This is My beloved Son.* [f]Hear Him!" 36When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. [g]But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

A Boy Is Healed

37[h]Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. 38Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, "Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. 39And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams *at the mouth;* and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. 40So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."

41Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed *him.* Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

43And they were all amazed at the majesty of God.

But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, 44[i]"Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men." 45[j]But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

Who Is the Greatest?

46[k]Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. 47And Jesus, [l]perceiving the thought of their heart, took a [m]little child and set him by Him, 48and said to them, [n]"Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and [o]whoever receives Me [p]receives Him who sent Me. [q]For he who is least among you all will be great."

Jesus Forbids Sectarianism

49[r]Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us."

50But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid *him,* for [s]he who is not against us* is on our* side."

* **9:35** NU-Text reads *This is My Son, the Chosen One.* * **9:50** NU-Text reads *you.* • NU-Text reads *your.*

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our lives quickly and inevitably pass away. The wise course is to invest our earthly resources—our time, talents, and wealth—in what is eternal.

9:31 *spoke of His decease.* This important allusion to the central Old Testament event of salvation is unique to Luke's account of the transfiguration. The comparison is made between Jesus' death and the journey to salvation that the nation of Israel experienced under Moses.

9:34 *cloud.* This is an allusion to the presence of God (Ex. 40:35).

9:41 *O faithless and perverse generation.* This rebuke suggests that the disciples lacked the faith to cast out the spirit described in verses 38–40. There is also a hint of a competitive spirit among the disciples (v. 46).

9:45 *they were afraid to ask.* The indication here is that the disciples still had much to learn. Their fear shows that they understood something about what Jesus said, but they did not understand how and why Jesus could say such things about Himself, since He was the Messiah. The suffering of the Messiah was something the disciples did not yet understand. They would continue to be confused in their understanding of how such suffering fit into God's plan until Jesus' death and resurrection (24:25–26,43–49).

9:25 [v] Mark 8:36 **9:26** [w] [Rom. 1:16] [x] Matt. 10:33 **9:27** [y] Matt. 16:28 **9:28** [z] Mark 9:2–8 **9:30** [a] Heb. 11:23–29 [b] 2 Kin. 2:1–11 **9:32** [c] Dan. 8:18; 10:9 **9:34** [d] Ex. 13:21 **9:35** [e] [Matt. 3:17; 12:18] [f] Acts 3:22 **9:36** [g] Matt. 17:9 **9:37** [h] Mark 9:14–27 **9:44** [i] Matt. 17:22 **9:45** [j] Mark 9:32 **9:46** [k] Matt. 18:1–5 **9:47** [l] Matt. 9:4 [m] Luke 18:17 **9:48** [n] Matt. 18:5 [o] John 12:44 [p] John 13:20 [q] Eph. 3:8 **9:49** [r] Mark 9:38–40 **9:50** [s] Luke 11:23

A Samaritan Village Rejects the Savior

51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for [t]Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. 53 But [u]they did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples [v]James and John saw *this,* they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as [w]Elijah did?"*

55 But He turned and rebuked them,* and said, "You do not know what manner of [x]spirit you are of. 56 For [y]the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*."* And they went to another village.

The Cost of Discipleship

57 [z]Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, *that* someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go."

58 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man [a]has nowhere to lay *His* head."

59 [b]Then He said to another, "Follow Me."

But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."

61 And another also said, "Lord, [c]I will follow You, but let me first go *and* bid them farewell who are at my house."

62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is [d]fit for the kingdom of God."

The Seventy Sent Out

10 After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also,* and [a]sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. 2 Then He said to them, [b]"The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore [c]pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. 3 Go your way; [d]behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. 4 [e]Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and [f]greet no one along the road. 5 [g]But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. 7 [h]And remain in the same house, [i]eating and drinking such things as they give, for [j]the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. 9 [k]And heal the sick there, and say to them, [l]'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 [m]'The very dust of your city which clings to us* we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' 12 But* I say to you that [n]it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

Woe to the Impenitent Cities

13 [o]"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! [p]For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon

* **9:54** NU-Text omits *just as Elijah did.*
* **9:55** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.
* **9:56** NU-Text omits the first sentence of this verse. * **10:1** NU-Text reads *seventy-two others.*
* **10:11** NU-Text reads *our feet.* * **10:12** NU-Text and M-Text omit *But.*

9:51 ***He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.*** This is the first indication that Jesus' attention was turning toward His final suffering in Jerusalem (v. 53; 13:22; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11,28,41). Luke's Gospel uniquely emphasizes this journey to Jerusalem.

9:52 ***Samaritans.*** These people were the descendants of Jews who had married Gentiles after the fall of the northern kingdom, Israel. The Samaritans eventually developed their own religious rites which they practiced on Mount Gerizim instead of at the temple in Jerusalem. Though there was deep hostility between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus ministered to both groups.

9:54 ***command fire to come down.*** James and John wanted Jesus to bring judgment upon the Samaritan villages that refused to respond to His message, just as Elijah had done in 2 Kings 1:9–16. Their demand for judgment was antithetical to Jesus' loving response (v. 56).

9:59 ***let me first go and bury my father.*** This aspiring disciple placed family responsibilities ahead of following Jesus. The concerns of home were this man's stumbling block.

9:62 ***fit for the kingdom.*** This remark of Jesus demonstrates the seriousness of commitment to Him.

10:2 ***The harvest truly is great.*** The picture of a great harvest suggests that a positive response awaited the laborers, even in the face of much rejection.

10:3 ***lambs among wolves.*** This image from Isaiah 40:11 was a popular one in Judaism.

10:13 ***if the mighty works . . . had been done.*** Jesus' remark was meant to wake the people up to what their rejection of Him signified.

9:51 [t] Mark 16:19 **9:53** [u] John 4:4, 9 **9:54** [v] Mark 3:17 [w] 2 Kin. 1:10, 12 **9:55** [x] [2 Tim. 1:7] **9:56** [y] John 3:17; 12:47 **9:57** [z] Matt. 8:19–22 **9:58** [a] Luke 2:7; 8:23 **9:59** [b] Matt. 8:21, 22 **9:61** [c] 1 Kin. 19:20 **9:62** [d] 2 Tim. 4:10 **10:1** [a] Mark 6:7 **10:2** [b] John 4:35 [c] 2 Thess. 3:1 **10:3** [d] Matt. 10:16 **10:4** [e] Luke 9:3–5 [f] 2 Kin. 4:29 **10:5** [g] Matt. 10:12 **10:7** [h] Matt. 10:11 [i] 1 Cor. 10:27 [j] 1 Tim. 5:18 **10:9** [k] Mark 3:15 [l] Matt. 3:2; 10:7 **10:11** [m] Acts 13:51 **10:12** [n] Matt. 10:15; 11:24 **10:13** [o] Matt. 11:21–23 [p] Ezek. 3:6

at the judgment than for you. 15[q]And you, Capernaum, who are [r]exalted to heaven, [s]will be brought down to Hades.* 16[t]He who hears you hears Me, [u]he who rejects you rejects Me, and [v]he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

The Seventy Return with Joy

17Then [w]the seventy* returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

18And He said to them, [x]"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19Behold, [y]I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather* rejoice because [z]your names are written in heaven."

Jesus Rejoices in the Spirit

21[a]In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 22[b]All* things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and [c]no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*."

23Then He turned to *His* disciples and said privately, [d]"Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things you see; 24for I tell you [e]that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen *it*, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard *it*."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

25And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, [f]"Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of *it*?"

27So he answered and said, [g]"'*You shall love the* LORD *your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,*'* and [h]'*your neighbor as yourself.*'"*

28And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and [i]you will live."

29But he, wanting to [j]justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. 31Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, [k]he passed by on the other side. 32Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33But a certain [l]Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had [m]compassion. 34So he went to *him* and

* **10:15** NU-Text reads *will you be exalted to heaven? You will be thrust down to Hades!*
* **10:17** NU-Text reads *seventy-two.* * **10:20** NU-Text and M-Text omit *rather.* * **10:22** M-Text reads *And turning to the disciples He said, "All …*
* **10:27** Deuteronomy 6:5 • Leviticus 19:18

10:16 ***He who hears you hears Me.*** Hearing the messenger is the same as hearing the One who sent him. Authority resides not in the messenger, but in the person the messenger represents, the source of the message.

10:18 ***I saw Satan.*** This verse provides a commentary on what the disciples' healing ministry meant. The reversal of the effects of sin and death, which Satan introduced through his deception in Genesis 3 is portrayed graphically as Satan falling from heaven. Jesus' ministry and what grows out of it represents the defeat of Satan, sin, and death.

10:19–20 ***I give you the authority.*** This passage records the transmission of Jesus' power to His immediate circle of disciples. It should be noted that similar power was not given beyond that circle of disciples.

10:22 ***All things have been delivered to Me.*** This is Jesus' declaration of total authority as the Son of God (John 10:18; 17:2). Jesus declares His unique relationship with God the Father. The Lord reveals Himself only through Jesus. To know God, one must know His Son, Jesus.

10:25–26 ***what shall I do to inherit eternal life.*** The question posed by the lawyer is really a challenge, since the verse speaks of the testing of Jesus. This is a similar, though probably distinct, event from Matthew 22:34–40 and Mark 12:28–34. To inherit something is to receive it. In other words, the man was asking, "What must I do to share in the reward at the resurrection of the righteous at the end?"

10:27 ***love the LORD . . . your neighbor.*** The lawyer responded to Jesus' question by quoting Deuteronomy 6:5, a text that was recited twice a day by every faithful Jew. This text summarized the central ethical standard of the law.

10:28 ***do this and you will live.*** Jesus was not saying that righteousness is the result of works. Rather He was saying that love for and obedience to God will be a natural result of placing one's faith in the Lord.

10:29 ***who is my neighbor.*** This question was an attempt to limit the demands of the law by suggesting that some people are neighbors while others are not. The lawyer was looking for minimal obedience while Jesus was looking for absolute obedience.

10:30 ***Jerusalem to Jericho.*** This was a 17-mile journey on a road known to harbor many robbers.

10:31–33 ***priest . . . Levite . . . Samaritan.*** Part of the beauty of the story of the Good Samaritan is the reversal of stereotypes. The priest and Levite traditionally would have been the "good guys." The

10:15 [q] Matt. 11:23 [r] Is. 14:13–15 [s] Ezek. 26:20
10:16 [t] John 13:20 [u] 1 Thess. 4:8 [v] John 5:23
10:17 [w] Luke 10:1 **10:18** [x] John 12:31 **10:19** [y] Mark 16:18 **10:20** [z] Is. 4:3 **10:21** [a] Matt. 11:25–27
10:22 [b] John 3:35; 5:27; 17:2 [c] [John 1:18; 6:44, 46] **10:23** [d] Matt. 13:16, 17 **10:24** [e] 1 Pet. 1:10, 11
10:25 [f] Matt. 19:16–19; 22:35 **10:27** [g] Deut. 6:5 [h] Lev. 19:18 **10:28** [i] Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21 **10:29** [j] Luke 16:15
10:31 [k] Ps. 38:11 **10:33** [l] John 4:9 [m] Luke 15:20

bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35On the next day, when he departed,* he took out two [n]denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' 36So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"

37And he said, "He who showed mercy on him."

Then Jesus said to him, [o]"Go and do likewise."

Mary and Martha Worship and Serve

38Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named [p]Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39And she had a sister called Mary, [q]who also [r]sat at Jesus'* feet and heard His word. 40But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

41And Jesus* answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42But [s]one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

The Model Prayer

11 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

2So He said to them, "When you pray, say:

[a]Our Father in heaven,*
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.*
Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.
3 Give us day by day our daily bread.
4 And [b]forgive us our sins,
For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one."*

A Friend Comes at Midnight

5And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? 8I say to you, [c]though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking

9[d]"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; [e]seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11[f]If a son asks for bread* from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13If you then, being evil, know how to give [g]good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

A House Divided Cannot Stand

14[h]And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had

* **10:35** NU-Text omits *when he departed.*
* **10:39** NU-Text reads *the Lord's.* * **10:41** NU-Text reads *the Lord.* * **11:2** NU-Text omits *Our* and *in heaven.* • NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **11:4** NU-Text omits *But deliver us from the evil one.* * **11:11** NU-Text omits the words from *bread* through *for* in the next sentence.

Samaritan would have been a "bad guy," a person who compromised in religious matters. However, the Samaritan knew how to treat his neighbor. The neighbor here was not someone the Samaritan knew or even someone of the same race, just someone in need.

10:36 ***which . . . was neighbor.*** The central issue is not determining who one's neighbor is, but being a good neighbor to all.

11:1 ***Lord, teach us to pray.*** The Lord's Prayer illustrates the variety of requests that one can and should make to God, as well as displaying the humble attitude that should accompany prayer. The use of the plural pronoun "us" throughout the prayer shows that it is not just the prayer of one person for his or her own personal needs, but a community prayer.

11:2 ***Your kingdom come.*** The reference here is to God's program and promise. This is more affirmation than request, highlighting the petitioner's submission to God's will and the desire to see God's work come to pass.

11:4 ***we also forgive.*** The petitioner recognizes that if mercy is to be sought from God, then mercy must be shown to others. We need to adopt the same standard that we expect others to follow. ***do not lead us into temptation.*** This remark is often misunderstood as suggesting that perhaps God can lead us into sin. The point is that if one is to avoid sin, one must follow where God leads. In short, the petitioner asks God for the spiritual protection necessary to avoid falling into sin.

10:35 [n] Matt. 20:2 **10:37** [o] Prov. 14:21 **10:38** [p] John 11:1; 12:2, 3 **10:39** [q] [1 Cor. 7:32–40] [r] Acts 22:3 **10:42** [s] [Ps. 27:4] **11:2** [a] Matt. 6:9–13 **11:4** [b] [Eph. 4:32] **11:8** [c] [Luke 18:1–5] **11:9** [d] [John 15:7] [e] Is. 55:6 **11:11** [f] Matt. 7:9 **11:13** [g] James 1:17 **11:14** [h] Matt. 9:32–34; 12:22, 24

gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. 15But some of them said, [i]"He casts out demons by Beelzebub,* the ruler of the demons."

16Others, testing *Him,* [j]sought from Him a sign from heaven. 17[k]But [l]He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house *divided* against a house falls. 18If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. 19And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they will be your judges. 20But if I cast out demons [m]with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21[n]When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. 22But [o]when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. 23[p]He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

An Unclean Spirit Returns

24[q]"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25And when he comes, he finds *it* swept and put in order. 26Then he goes and takes with *him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and [r]the last *state* of that man is worse than the first."

Keeping the Word

27And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, [s]"Blessed *is* the womb that bore You, and *the* breasts which nursed You!"

28But He said, [t]"More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Seeking a Sign

29[u]And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a [v]sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.* 30For as [w]Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. 31[x]The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a [y]greater than Solomon *is* here. 32The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for [z]they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here.

The Lamp of the Body

33[a]"No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts *it* in a secret place or under a [b]basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. 34[c]The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your eye* is bad, your body also *is* full of darkness. 35Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. 36If then your whole body *is* full of light, having no part dark, *the* whole *body* will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light."

Woe to the Pharisees and Lawyers

37And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in

* **11:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *Beelzebul.*
* **11:29** NU-Text omits *the prophet.*

11:17–18 *you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub.* The attribution of Jesus' miracles to Satan was not only blasphemous, it was illogical. If Satan had cast out the demon (v. 14), he would have been destroying the result of his own work.

11:20 *the finger of God.* This phrase is an allusion to God's power, like that demonstrated in the Exodus (Ex. 8:19; Deut. 9:10; Ps. 8:3). ***the kingdom of God has come upon you.*** Jesus' miracles represented the arrival of God's power and promise—in short, His rule. That rule comes in and through Jesus. The miracles of Jesus demonstrated God's victory over the forces of evil. The kingdom program, depicted as drawing near, will be consummated at the return of Jesus when this rule is manifested over every creature.

11:22 *when a stronger than he.* Jesus portrays Himself as someone stronger than Satan who overruns Satan's house and gives the spoils of victory to those who are His (Eph. 4:8–9).

11:23 *He who is not with Me.* Jesus' ministry forces everyone to make a choice. Neutrality is not an option. Either Jesus comes from God or He does not. Not to align with Jesus is to be against Him.

11:26 *the last state.* Jesus' point is that experiencing God's blessing and then ignoring it leaves one callous towards the work of God and exposed to the control of demonic forces.

11:29 *the sign of Jonah.* This refers to his prophetic call to repentance rather than to the resurrection foreshadowed by Jonah's return from the belly of the great fish.

11:36 *your whole body is full of light.* A person can become like light, a living picture of what God's Word teaches, by concentrating on the light of the truth.

11:15 [i] Matt. 9:34; 12:24 **11:16** [j] Matt. 12:38; 16:1
11:17 [k] Matt. 12:25–29 [l] John 2:25 **11:20** [m] Ex. 8:19
11:21 [n] Mark 3:27 **11:22** [o] [Is. 53:12] **11:23** [p] Matt. 12:30 **11:24** [q] Matt. 12:43–45 **11:26** [r] [2 Pet. 2:20]
11:27 [s] Luke 1:28, 48 **11:28** [t] [Luke 8:21] **11:29** [u] Matt. 12:38–42 [v] 1 Cor. 1:22 **11:30** [w] Jon. 1:17; 2:10; 3:3–10
11:31 [x] 1 Kin. 10:1–9 [y] [Rom. 9:5] **11:32** [z] Jon. 3:5
11:33 [a] Mark 4:21 [b] Matt. 5:15 **11:34** [c] Matt. 6:22, 23

and sat down to eat. 38[d]When the Pharisee saw *it,* he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner.

39[e]Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but [f]your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. 40Foolish ones! Did not [g]He who made the outside make the inside also? 41[h]But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you.

42[i]"But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe the mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and [j]pass by justice and the [k]love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 43[l]Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. 44[m]Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!* [n]For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over *them* are not aware *of them.*"

45Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, "Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also."

46And He said, "Woe to you also, lawyers! [o]For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. 47[p]Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. 48In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. 49Therefore the wisdom of God also said, [q]'I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they will kill and persecute,' 50that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, 51[r]from the blood of Abel to [s]the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.

52[t]"Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered."

53And as He said these things to them,* the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail *Him* vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, 54lying in wait for Him, and [u]seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.*

Beware of Hypocrisy

12 In [a]the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first *of all,* [b]"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2[c]For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. 3Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

Jesus Teaches the Fear of God

4[d]"And I say to you, [e]My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear

* **11:44** NU-Text omits *scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.* * **11:53** NU-Text reads *And when He left there.* * **11:54** NU-Text omits *and seeking* and *that they might accuse Him.*

11:39 ***make the outside . . . clean.*** These condemnations by Jesus are similar to those in Matthew 23. The Pharisees washed the outside of cups, making sure that the cups had not become unclean through contact with a dead insect (Lev. 11:31–38). Jesus pointed out that the Pharisees concerned themselves with outward appearances and ritual cleanness, while what was inside, what really counts, was full of selfishness and evil.

11:42 ***tithe mint and rue.*** Some Pharisees took the strictest interpretation and counted almost anything, including spices. However, they neglected two basic things that the prophets also had warned about: love and justice (Mic. 6:8; Zech. 7:8–10).

11:46 ***burdens.*** This term refers to a ship's cargo. The idea is that a heavy strain was being imposed on the people and yet, in the end, this burden did not bring them close to God. Here Jesus rebuked the tradition that had grown up around the law of Moses.

11:47–48 ***you build the tombs of the prophets.*** Jesus made a biting, ironic comparison between the current generation of Israel and the generations of the past. Jesus was saying that the current generation finished the job of slaying the prophets that the previous generation had started. The building and care of tombs was supposed to be an act of honoring the prophets, but Jesus pointed out that something else was really going on.

11:52 ***Woe to you lawyers.*** Jesus charged the lawyers with doing the opposite of what they claimed their calling to be. Rather than bringing people nearer to God, they had removed the possibility of their entering into that knowledge, and had prevented others from understanding it as well.

12:1–2 ***leaven.*** This represents the presence of corruption. Unleavened bread is what the Jews ate at Passover (Ex. 12:14–20). The corruption in view here is hypocrisy. Practicing hypocrisy is senseless because eventually all deeds—both good and evil—will be exposed.

12:4 ***do not be afraid of those who kill the body.*** This verse anticipates the presence of severe religious persecution in response to Jesus' remarks in Luke 11:39–54.

12:5 ***Fear Him.*** Even in the context of physical

11:38 [d] Mark 7:2, 3 **11:39** [e] Matt. 23:25 [f] Titus 1:15 **11:40** [g] Gen. 1:26, 27 **11:41** [h] [Luke 12:33; 16:9] **11:42** [i] Matt. 23:23 [j] [Mic. 6:7, 8] [k] John 5:42 **11:43** [l] Mark 12:38, 39 **11:44** [m] Matt. 23:27 [n] Ps. 5:9 **11:46** [o] Matt. 23:4 **11:47** [p] Matt. 23:29 **11:49** [q] Matt. 23:34 **11:51** [r] Gen. 4:8 [s] 2 Chr. 24:20, 21 **11:52** [t] Matt. 23:13 **11:54** [u] Mark 12:13 **12:1** [a] Mark 8:15 [b] Matt. 16:12 **12:2** [c] Matt. 10:26; [1 Cor. 4:5] **12:4** [d] Is. 51:7, 8, 12, 13 [e] [John 15:13–15]

Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, [f]fear Him!

6"Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins?* And [g]not one of them is forgotten before God. 7But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Confess Christ Before Men

8[h]"Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me [i]before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. 9But he who [j]denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

10"And [k]anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.

11[l]"Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. 12For the Holy Spirit will [m]teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

The Parable of the Rich Fool

13Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

14But He said to him, [n]"Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" 15And He said to them, [o]"Take heed and beware of covetousness,* for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

16Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, [p]"Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; [q]eat, drink, *and* be merry."' 20But God said to him, 'Fool! This night [r]your soul will be required of you; [s]then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

21"So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, [t]and is not rich toward God."

Do Not Worry

22Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, [u]do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. 24Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and [v]God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? 25And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest? 27Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even [w]Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O *you* of [x]little faith?

29"And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father [y]knows that you need these things. 31[z]But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things* shall be added to you.

32"Do not fear, little flock, for [a]it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33[b]Sell what you have and give [c]alms; [d]provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches

* **12:6** Greek *assarion*, a coin of very small value * **12:15** NU-Text reads *all covetousness.* * **12:31** NU-Text reads *His kingdom, and these things.*

persecution, the only One believers should fear is God, who sees how we live and judges us. Jesus was not guaranteeing physical preservation in this life, but was opening the prospect of deliverance in the next life.

12:6 *two copper coins.* These were the smallest coins in circulation, worth about one-sixteenth of a basic day's wages.

12:14 *who made Me a judge.* Jesus refuses to enter into a dispute over money, which is clearly dividing a family. Such disputes over money destroy relationships, so Jesus tells a parable that explains the danger of focusing on wealth.

12:18–19 *I will do this.* Including verse 17, the word "I" appears six times, showing the selfish focus this man has as a result of his fortune. His plan is to store his abundant resources for himself, as though the assets were his alone and should be hoarded. This focus on the self is what Jesus is condemning.

12:27–29 *God so clothes the grass.* This illustration indicates that God cares enough to provide beauty for the parts of His creation that have a short life. Why should we worry if God takes such care of even the smallest blade of grass? The Lord knows our problems and will provide us with what we need.

12:33 *Sell what you have.* In contrast to the world's hoarding of possessions, the disciple must be generous with what God gives. By serving God and others, you can invest in your eternal future. You cannot take possessions with you in the next life, but you can store up an eternal treasure by giving to others (Phil. 4:17).

12:5 [f] Ps. 119:120 **12:6** [g] Matt. 6:26 **12:8** [h] Matt. 10:32 [i] Ps. 119:46 **12:9** [j] Matt. 10:33 **12:10** [k] [Matt. 12:31, 32] **12:11** [l] Mark 13:11 **12:12** [m] [John 14:26] **12:14** [n] [John 18:36] **12:15** [o] [1 Tim. 6:6–10] **12:19** [p] Eccl. 11:9 [q] [Eccl. 2:24; 3:13; 5:18; 8:15] **12:20** [r] Ps. 52:7 [s] Ps. 39:6 **12:21** [t] [James 2:5; 5:1–5] **12:22** [u] Matt. 6:25–33 **12:24** [v] Job 38:41 **12:27** [w] 1 Kin. 10:4–7 **12:28** [x] Matt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8 **12:30** [y] Matt. 6:31, 32 **12:31** [z] Matt. 6:33 **12:32** [a] [Matt. 11:25, 26] **12:33** [b] Matt. 19:21 [c] Luke 11:41 [d] Matt. 6:20

nor moth destroys. 34For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant

35[e]"Let your waist be girded and [f]*your* lamps burning; 36and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37[g]Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them. 38And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. 39[h]But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and* not allowed his house to be broken into. 40[i]Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

41Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?"

42And the Lord said, [j]"Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food in due season? 43Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44[k]Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45[l]But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46the master of that servant will come on a [m]day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers. 47And [n]that servant who [o]knew his master's will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. 48[p]But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Christ Brings Division

49[q]"I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50But [r]I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is [s]accomplished! 51[t]Do *you* suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, [u]but rather division. 52[v]For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. 53[w]Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Discern the Time

54Then He also said to the multitudes, [x]"Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. 55And when *you see* the [y]south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. 56Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how *is it* you do not discern [z]this time?

* **12:39** NU-Text reads *he would not have allowed.*

12:34 ***where your treasure is.*** What people consider valuable is where their energy will be spent. Knowing God and investing in His purposes should be the treasure we seek.

12:38 ***if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch.*** This verse speaks of a return at an unusually late hour. The exact time referred to depends on which system of time was used. In the Roman system the second and third watch would be 9 P.M. to 3 A.M. By the Jewish method it would be 10 P.M. to 6 A.M.

12:41 ***only to us, or to all.*** Peter asked if Jesus' teaching was for the disciples only or for all people. Jesus did not answer the question directly. Instead He described a variety of categories of servants. Servants are those who belong to the Master and have their stewardship evaluated (19:11–27). Several responses, from faithfulness to blatant disobedience, are described in verses 42–48. The issue is who lives life in a way that looks for, and takes seriously, the return of Jesus (1 John 2:28).

12:45 ***begins to beat the male and female servants.*** This servant is depicted as consciously doing the opposite of caring for others, and of treating the Master's return as irrelevant.

12:46 ***will cut him in two.*** The image of being slain indicates the severity of this judgment, especially in contrast to the whippings of verses 47 and 48.

12:49 ***I came to send fire on the earth.*** Fire is an image associated with God's judgment (Jer. 5:14; 23:29). Jesus' coming brings judgment on those who refuse to accept Him and divides the believers from the faithless.

12:54–55 ***a cloud rising out of the west.*** In Palestine, a western breeze meant moisture coming from the Mediterranean Sea. A south wind meant hot air coming from the desert.

12:56 ***Hypocrites.*** Jesus rebuked His audience for being able to discern the weather but not what God was doing through Him.

12:35 [e] [1 Pet. 1:13] [f] [Matt. 25:1–13] **12:37** [g] Matt. 24:46 **12:39** [h] Rev. 3:3; 16:15 **12:40** [i] Mark 13:33 **12:42** [j] Matt. 24:45, 46; 25:21 **12:44** [k] Matt. 24:47; 25:21 **12:45** [l] 2 Pet. 3:3, 4 **12:46** [m] 1 Thess. 5:3 **12:47** [n] Deut. 25:2 [o] [James 4:17] **12:48** [p] [Lev. 5:17] **12:49** [q] Luke 12:51 **12:50** [r] Mark 10:38 [s] John 12:27; 19:30 **12:51** [t] Matt. 10:34–36 [u] John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19 **12:52** [v] Mark 13:12 **12:53** [w] Matt. 10:21, 36 **12:54** [x] Matt. 16:2, 3 **12:55** [y] Job 37:17 **12:56** [z] Luke 19:41–44

Make Peace with Your Adversary

57"Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do
you not judge what is right? 58[a]When you
go with your adversary to the magistrate,
make every effort [b]along the way to settle
with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the
judge deliver you to the officer, and the of-
ficer throw you into prison. 59I tell you, you
shall not depart from there till you have
paid the very last mite."

Repent or Perish

13 There were present at that season
some who told Him about the Galile-
ans whose blood Pilate had mingled with
their sacrifices. 2And Jesus answered and
said to them, "Do you suppose that these
Galileans were worse sinners than all *oth-
er* Galileans, because they suffered such
things? 3I tell you, no; but unless you re-
pent you will all likewise perish. 4Or those
eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell
and killed them, do you think that they
were worse sinners than all *other* men
who dwelt in Jerusalem? 5I tell you, no;
but unless you repent you will all likewise
perish."

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6He also spoke this parable: [a]"A certain
man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard,
and he came seeking fruit on it and found
none. 7Then he said to the keeper of his
vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have
come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find
none. Cut it down; why does it use up the
ground?' 8But he answered and said to him,
'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig
around it and fertilize *it*. 9And if it bears
fruit, *well*. But if not, after that* you can
[b]cut it down.'"

A Spirit of Infirmity

10Now He was teaching in one of the
synagogues on the Sabbath. 11And behold,
there was a woman who had a spirit of in-
firmity eighteen years, and was bent over
and could in no way raise *herself* up. 12But
when Jesus saw her, He called *her* to *Him*
and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed
from your [c]infirmity." 13[d]And He laid *His*
hands on her, and immediately she was
made straight, and glorified God.

14But the ruler of the synagogue an-
swered with indignation, because Jesus
had [e]healed on the Sabbath; and he said to
the crowd, [f]"There are six days on which
men ought to work; therefore come and be
healed on them, and [g]not on the Sabbath
day."

15The Lord then answered him and said,
"Hypocrite!* [h]Does not each one of you on
the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from
the stall, and lead *it* away to water it? 16So
ought not this woman, [i]being a daughter of
Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think
of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from
this bond on the Sabbath?" 17And when He
said these things, all His adversaries were
put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced
for all the glorious things that were [j]done
by Him.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

18[k]Then He said, "What is the kingdom
of God like? And to what shall I compare
it? 19It is like a mustard seed, which a man
took and put in his garden; and it grew and
became a large* tree, and the birds of the
air nested in its branches."

The Parable of the Leaven

20And again He said, "To what shall I
liken the kingdom of God? 21It is like leav-
en, which a woman took and hid in three
[l]measures* of meal till it was all leavened."

The Narrow Way

22[m]And He went through the cities and
villages, teaching, and journeying toward
Jerusalem. 23Then one said to Him, "Lord,
are there [n]few who are saved?"

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* **13:9** NU-Text reads *And if it bears fruit after that, well. But if not, you can cut it down.*
* **13:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *Hypocrites.*
* **13:19** NU-Text omits *large.* * **13:21** Greek *sata*, approximately two pecks in all

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13:1 *Pilate.* Pilate was known for his insensitivity to the Jewish people early in his rule. The event probably occurred during the Feast of the Passover or Tabernacles, when Galileans most likely would have been at the temple.

13:5 *unless you repent.* The manner in which a person dies is not a measure of righteousness; what is important is not to die outside of God's grace and care. The way to avoid such a fate is to repent, to come to God through the care of the Physician Jesus (5:32).

13:6 *a fig tree.* This tree often represents God's blessing, or a people who have a special relationship with God (Mic. 7:1–2). The man in this parable represents God; the fig tree represents Israel.

13:7 *for three years.* A fig tree was often given some time to bear good fruit since its root structure was complex and took time to develop. Three years would have been enough for the tree to yield some fruit.

13:15 *Hypocrite.* When the ruler of the synagogue became indignant regarding Jesus' healing on the Sabbath (vv. 10–14), Jesus pointed out that basic compassion was shown to animals on the Sabbath, so how much more compassion should be shown to a suffering woman (v. 16)?

13:18–19 *mustard.* A tree of the mustard family would grow to about twelve feet. The image of birds nesting in the trees is found frequently in the Old Testament (Ps. 104:12; Ezek. 17:22–24; Dan. 4:10–12).

12:58 [a] Prov. 25:8 [b] [Is. 55:6] **13:6** [a] Matt. 21:19 **13:9** [b] [John 15:2] **13:12** [c] Luke 7:21; 8:2 **13:13** [d] Acts 9:17 **13:14** [e] [Luke 6:6–11; 14:1–6] [f] Ex. 20:9; 23:12 [g] Mark 3:2 **13:15** [h] Luke 14:5 **13:16** [i] Luke 19:9 **13:17** [j] Mark 5:19, 20 **13:18** [k] Mark 4:30–32 **13:21** [l] Matt. 13:33 **13:22** [m] Mark 6:6 **13:23** [n] [Matt. 7:14; 20:16]

And He said to them, 24[o]"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for [p]many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25[q]When once the Master of the house has risen up and [r]shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, [s]'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, [t]'I do not know you, where you are from,' 26then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27[u]But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. [v]Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' 28[w]There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, [x]when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. 29They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. 30[y]And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

31On that very day* some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."

32And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third *day* [z]I shall be perfected.' 33Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

Jesus Laments over Jerusalem

34[a]"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing! 35See! [b]Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly,* I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, [c]'*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the* LORD*!*'"*

A Man with Dropsy Healed on the Sabbath

14 Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. 2And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. 3And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, [a]"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"*

4But they kept silent. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go. 5Then He answered them, saying, [b]"Which of you, having a donkey* or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" 6And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

Take the Lowly Place

7So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: 8"When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; 9and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. 10[c]But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. 11[d]For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

* **13:31** NU-Text reads *In that very hour.*
* **13:35** NU-Text and M-Text omit *assuredly.* • Psalm 118:26 * **14:3** NU-Text adds *or not.*
* **14:5** NU-Text and M-Text read *son.*

13:26 *We ate and drank . . . You taught.* The appeal here is by people who experience Jesus' presence. The passage primarily involves those Jews who witnessed Jesus' ministry. They were trying to gain entry into God's presence based simply on the fact that they had observed Jesus. Jesus refused them, pointing out that it was not enough for them to have been close to Him. In order to have a relationship with God, one must embrace Jesus and come to know Him.

13:29 *east . . . west . . . north . . . south.* People would come from all corners of the earth for entrance into God's kingdom. This passage alludes to the inclusion of Gentiles.

13:30 *there are last who will be first.* There will be many surprises in God's kingdom. Those who are despised on earth—some Gentiles, for example—will be greatly honored in the kingdom. Conversely, those who are considered influential and powerful on earth—the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus' day, for example—will be excluded from the kingdom.

13:32 *Go, tell that fox.* Herod is portrayed as more curious than hostile. The reference here is to Herod's cunning. Jesus' reply seems to take the Pharisees' warning at face value.

13:34 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.* The double address indicates Jesus' deep sorrow (2 Sam. 18:33; Jer. 22:29). The city had executed many of God's messengers. Stephen makes a similar point about the nation of Israel in Acts 7:51–53.

13:35 *Blessed is He.* This is a citation of Psalm 118:26. The people of Israel would not see the Messiah again until they were ready to receive Him and recognize that He was sent from God. Psalm 118 reflects the greeting of a priest to a group entering the temple. Jesus used the language of this psalm to illustrate God's greeting to Him.

14:7 *they chose the best places.* In ancient times the best seats at a meal were those next to the host.

13:24 [o] [Matt. 7:13] [p] [John 7:34; 8:21; 13:33] **13:25** [q] Is. 55:6 [r] Matt. 25:10 [s] Luke 6:46 [t] Matt. 7:23; 25:12 **13:27** [u] [Matt. 7:23; 25:41] [v] Ps. 6:8 **13:28** [w] Matt. 8:12; 13:42; 24:51 [x] Matt. 8:11 **13:30** [y] [Matt. 19:30; 20:16] **13:32** [z] [Heb. 2:10; 5:9; 7:28] **13:34** [a] Matt. 23:37–39 **13:35** [b] Lev. 26:31, 32 [c] Ps. 118:26; Matt. 21:9 **14:3** [a] Matt. 12:10 **14:5** [b] [Ex. 23:5] **14:10** [c] Prov. 25:6, 7 **14:11** [d] Matt. 23:12

12Then He also said to him who invited
Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper,
do not ask your friends, your brothers, your
relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also
invite you back, and you be repaid. 13But
when you give a feast, invite [e]*the* poor, *the*
maimed, *the* lame, *the* blind. 14And you
will be [f]blessed, because they cannot repay
you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrec-
tion of the just."

The Parable of the Great Supper

15Now when one of those who sat at the
table with Him heard these things, he said
to Him, [g]"Blessed *is* he who shall eat bread*
in the kingdom of God!"

16[h]Then He said to him, "A certain man
gave a great supper and invited many,
17and [i]sent his servant at supper time to
say to those who were invited, 'Come, for
all things are now ready.' 18But they all
with one *accord* began to make excus-
es. The first said to him, 'I have bought
a piece of ground, and I must go and see
it. I ask you to have me excused.' 19And
another said, 'I have bought five yoke of
oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask
you to have me excused.' 20Still another
said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore
I cannot come.' 21So that servant came
and reported these things to his master.
Then the master of the house, being an-
gry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly
into the streets and lanes of the city, and
bring in here *the* poor and *the* maimed
and *the* lame and *the* blind.' 22And the ser-
vant said, 'Master, it is done as you com-
manded, and still there is room.' 23Then
the master said to the servant, 'Go out
into the highways and hedges, and com-
pel *them* to come in, that my house may
be filled. 24For I say to you [j]that none of
those men who were invited shall taste my
supper.'"

Leaving All to Follow Christ

25Now great multitudes went with Him.
And He turned and said to them, 26[k]"If
anyone comes to Me [l]and does not hate
his father and mother, wife and children,
brothers and sisters, [m]yes, and his own life
also, he cannot be My disciple. 27And [n]who-
ever does not bear his cross and come after
Me cannot be My disciple. 28For [o]which of
you, intending to build a tower, does not
sit down first and count the cost, whether
he has *enough* to finish *it*— 29lest, after he
has laid the foundation, and is not able to
finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him,
30saying, 'This man began to build and was
not able to finish'? 31Or what king, going to
make war against another king, does not
sit down first and consider whether he is
able with ten thousand to meet him who
comes against him with twenty thousand?
32Or else, while the other is still a great way
off, he sends a delegation and asks condi-
tions of peace. 33So likewise, whoever of
you [p]does not forsake all that he has can-
not be My disciple.

Tasteless Salt Is Worthless

34[q]"Salt *is* good; but if the salt has lost
its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? 35It is
neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill,
but men throw it out. He who has ears to
hear, let him hear!"

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

15 Then [a]all the tax collectors and the
sinners drew near to Him to hear
Him. 2And the Pharisees and scribes com-
plained, saying, "This Man receives sin-
ners [b]and eats with them." 3So He spoke
this parable to them, saying:

4[c]"What man of you, having a hundred

* **14:15** M-Text reads *dinner.*

14:17 ***those who were invited.*** In the ancient world, invitations to a feast were sent out well in advance of the meal. Then on the day of the feast, servants would announce the start of the meal. This parable is similar to the one in Matthew 22:1–4, but was probably spoken on a different occasion.

14:20 ***I have married a wife.*** While the Old Testament exempted a man from military duty because of marriage (Deut. 20:7; 24:5), marriage was not an excuse for avoiding social duties. The general point here is that the man regarded his own affairs as more important than the feast.

14:21 ***the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.*** This list matches that of verse 13. The maimed were excluded from full participation in Jewish worship (Lev. 21:17–23). The master's second invitation extended the scope of the offer to those who were rejected by society.

14:23 ***Go out into the highways.*** The master's second invitation extended beyond the city limits, encouraging even more people to come to the feast. This may picture the inclusion of Gentiles in God's salvation (Is. 49:6). The instruction to *compel* them to come in does not mean to force people in, but to urge them.

14:34 ***Salt is good.*** In the ancient world, salt was often used as a catalyst for burning fuel such as cattle dung. The salt of the time was impure and could lose its strength over time, becoming useless. Jesus' point is that the same is true of a "saltless" disciple.

15:1 ***tax collectors . . . sinners.*** The three parables of chapter 15 explain why Jesus associated with the despised groups while the Pharisees and scribes did not. The parables in this chapter are found only in Luke.

15:4 ***a hundred sheep.*** This was a medium-sized flock. The average herd ran from 20 to 200 head, while a flock of 300 or more was considered large.

14:13 [e] Neh. 8:10, 12 **14:14** [f] [Matt. 25:34–40] **14:15** [g] Rev. 19:9 **14:16** [h] Matt. 22:2–14 **14:17** [i] Prov. 9:2, 5 **14:24** [j] [Acts 13:46] **14:26** [k] Deut. 13:6; 33:9 [l] Rom. 9:13 [m] Rev. 12:11 **14:27** [n] Luke 9:23 **14:28** [o] Prov. 24:27 **14:33** [p] Matt. 19:27 **14:34** [q] [Mark 9:50] **15:1** [a] [Matt. 9:10–13] **15:2** [b] Gal. 2:12 **15:4** [c] Matt. 18:12–14

sheep, if he loses one of them, does not
leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness,
and go after the one which is lost until he
finds it? 5And when he has found *it,* he lays
it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6And when he
comes home, he calls together *his* friends
and neighbors, saying to them, [d]'Rejoice
with me, for I have found my sheep [e]which
was lost!' 7I say to you that likewise there
will be more joy in heaven over one sinner
who repents [f]than over ninety-nine just
persons who [g]need no repentance.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

8"Or what woman, having ten silver
coins,* if she loses one coin, does not light
a lamp, sweep the house, and search care-
fully until she finds *it?* 9And when she has
found *it,* she calls *her* friends and neigh-
bors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for
I have found the piece which I lost!' 10Like-
wise, I say to you, there is joy in the pres-
ence of the angels of God over one sinner
who repents."

The Parable of the Lost Son

11Then He said: "A certain man had two
sons. 12And the younger of them said to *his*
father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods
that falls *to me.*' So he divided to them [h]*his*
livelihood. 13And not many days after, the
younger son gathered all together, jour-
neyed to a far country, and there wasted
his possessions with prodigal living. 14But
when he had spent all, there arose a severe
famine in that land, and he began to be in
want. 15Then he went and joined himself
to a citizen of that country, and he sent
him into his fields to feed swine. 16And he
would gladly have filled his stomach with
the pods that the swine ate, and no one
gave him *anything.*

17"But when he came to himself, he said,
'How many of my father's hired servants
have bread enough and to spare, and I per-
ish with hunger! 18I will arise and go to my
father, and will say to him, "Father, [i]I have
sinned against heaven and before you,
19and I am no longer worthy to be called
your son. Make me like one of your hired
servants."'

20"And he arose and came to his father.
But [j]when he was still a great way off, his
father saw him and had compassion, and
ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.
21And the son said to him, 'Father, I have
sinned against heaven [k]and in your sight,
and am no longer worthy to be called your
son.'

22"But the father said to his servants,
'Bring* out the best robe and put *it* on him,
and put a ring on his hand and sandals on
his feet. 23And bring the fatted calf here
and kill *it,* and let us eat and be merry;
24[l]for this my son was dead and is alive
again; he was lost and is found.' And they
began to be merry.

25"Now his older son was in the field.
And as he came and drew near to the
house, he heard music and dancing. 26So
he called one of the servants and asked
what these things meant. 27And he said to
him, 'Your brother has come, and because
he has received him safe and sound, your
father has killed the fatted calf.'

28"But he was angry and would not go in.
Therefore his father came out and pleaded

* **15:8** Greek *drachma,* a valuable coin often worn in a ten-piece garland by married women
* **15:22** NU-Text reads *Quickly bring.*

15:7 ***persons who need no repentance.*** This phrase is a rhetorical way of describing the scribes and Pharisees. A similar description is found in 5:31, where it is said that some do not need a physician. The scribes and Pharisees believed that they did not need to repent because they were not lost.

15:8 ***ten silver coins.*** A drachma was a silver coin equal to a day's wage for a basic laborer. The woman needed a lamp because she lived in a windowless house. Her broom for sweeping would have been made of palm twigs.

15:15 ***to feed swine.*** Feeding swine was an insulting job for a Jewish person, since pigs were unclean according to the law of Moses.

15:20 ***his father saw him and had compassion.*** Many scholars feel that the emphasis on the son in this parable causes people to miss the more important point, namely, the importance of the father's welcoming role. Still others think it could even be called the Parable of the Elder Brother. Interestingly, both brothers underestimate their father's love and grace. The younger brother is slow to realize the extent and permanence of his father's love. The elder brother has trouble understanding that the restored relationship with the younger son is vital to the life of the father. What makes the dramatic conversion possible is the younger son's knowledge that he will be accepted when he returns. While there are consequences to his behavior (his money is gone), he is welcomed to be a part of the family again. In many ways the welcome is even more than he could have hoped for. What is amazing about grace is that it is always more than we expect or deserve.

15:21 ***no longer worthy to be called your son.*** Despite his awareness of being accepted by his father, the son continued his confession of his sin. He then asked to become one of his father's servants. Similarly, a sinner realizes that he or she brings nothing to and deserves nothing from God, but must rely completely on God's mercy.

15:24 ***dead . . . alive again . . . lost . . . found.*** The total transformation of the prodigal son is summarized in these two contrasts. Such a transformation is a reason to celebrate. It is also the reason Jesus chose to associate with the lost.

15:28 ***he was angry.*** The elder brother's unhappiness over a fatted calf (v. 27) being killed to celebrate

15:6 [d] [Rom. 12:15] [e] [1 Pet. 2:10, 25] **15:7** [f] [Luke 5:32] [g] [Mark 2:17] **15:12** [h] Mark 12:44 **15:18** [i] 2 Sam. 12:13; 24:10, 17 **15:20** [j] [Eph. 2:13, 17] **15:21** [k] Ps. 51:4 **15:24** [l] Luke 9:60; 15:32

with him. 29So he answered and said to *his* father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. 30But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

31"And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32It was right that we should make merry and be glad, [m]for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"

The Parable of the Unjust Steward

16 He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an [a]account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'

3"Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.'

5"So he called every one of his master's debtors to *him*, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6And he said, 'A hundred measures* of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures* of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than [b]the sons of light.

9"And I say to you, [c]make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail,* they may receive you into an everlasting home. 10[d]He who *is* faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much. 11Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?* 12And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your [e]own?

13[f]"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

The Law, the Prophets, and the Kingdom

14Now the Pharisees, [g]who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. 15And He said to them, "You are those who [h]justify yourselves [i]before men, but [i]God knows your hearts. For [k]what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

16[l]"The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. 17[m]And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.

18[n]"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from *her* husband commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell* from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came

* **16:6** Greek *batos*, eight or nine gallons each (Old Testament *bath*) * **16:7** Greek *koros*, ten or twelve bushels each (Old Testament *kor*) * **16:9** NU-Text reads *it fails.* * **16:21** NU-Text reads *with what fell.*

the return of his undisciplined brother illustrates the response of the Pharisees and scribes at the prospect of sinners becoming acceptable to God.

16:1 ***a steward.*** This was a servant who supervised and administered an estate. The charge brought against this steward is incompetence.

16:8 ***So the master commended the unjust steward.*** The master recognized the foresight in the steward's generosity. It is debatable whether the steward was dishonest and robbed the master by such reductions or was shrewd in using his authority to discount the goods (vv. 6–7). The fact that the master commended the steward may suggest that the master was not robbed and that the steward's reduction was the result of either an adherence to the law or a lowering of the steward's own commission.

16:9 ***unrighteous mammon.*** This is money and should be used generously to build works that last. Money is called unrighteous because it often manifests unrighteousness and selfishness in people (1 Tim. 6:6–10,17–19; James 1:9–11; 5:1–6).

16:19 ***clothed in purple.*** Purple clothes were extremely expensive because they were made with a special dye extracted from a kind of snail.

16:20–21 ***licked his sores.*** To have his sores licked by dogs threatened Lazarus with infection as well as ritual uncleanness, since dogs fed on garbage, including dead animals.

15:32 [m] Luke 15:24 **16:2** [a] [Rom. 14:12] **16:8** [b] [Eph. 5:8] **16:9** [c] Dan. 4:27 **16:10** [d] Matt. 25:21 **16:12** [e] [1 Pet. 1:3, 4] **16:13** [f] Matt. 6:24 **16:14** [g] Matt. 23:14 **16:15** [h] Luke 10:29 [i] [Matt. 6:2, 5, 16] [j] Ps. 7:9 [k] 1 Sam. 16:7 **16:16** [l] Matt. 3:1–12; 4:17; 11:12, 13 **16:17** [m] Is. 40:8; 51:6 **16:18** [n] 1 Cor. 7:10, 11

and licked his sores. 22So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to [o]Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24"Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and [p]cool my tongue; for I [q]am tormented in this flame.' 25But Abraham said, 'Son, [r]remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

27"Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29Abraham said to him, [s]'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31But he said to him, [t]'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, [u]neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

Jesus Warns of Offenses

17 Then He said to the disciples, [a]"It is impossible that no offenses should come, but [b]woe *to him* through whom they do come! 2It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. 3Take heed to yourselves. [c]If your brother sins against you,* [d]rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. 4And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you,* saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

Faith and Duty

5And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

6[e]So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. 7And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? 8But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself [f]and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? 9Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not.* 10So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are [g]unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

Ten Lepers Cleansed

11Now it happened [h]as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, [i]who stood afar off. 13And they lifted up *their* voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

14So when He saw *them*, He said to them, [j]"Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

15And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice [k]glorified God, 16and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a [l]Samaritan.

17So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? 18Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" 19[m]And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

The Coming of the Kingdom

20Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would

* **17:3** NU-Text omits *against you.* * **17:4** M-Text omits *to you.* * **17:9** NU-Text ends verse with *commanded;* M-Text omits *him.*

16:22 ***Abraham's bosom.*** This was the blessed place of the dead. Angelic escorts for the dead were also known in Judaism. This verse indicates that the dead know their fate immediately.

16:24 ***I am tormented in this flame.*** The rich man desired relief from his suffering. The image of thirst for the experience of judgment is common (Is. 5:13; 65:13; Hos. 2:3).

16:29 ***They have Moses and the prophets.*** Abraham made it clear that the rich man's brothers should have known what to do, since they had the message of God in the ancient writings. The point here is that generosity with money and care for the poor were taught in the Old Testament (Deut. 14:28–29; Is. 3:14–15; Mic. 6:10–11).

17:1–2 ***woe to him.*** Jesus warned that judgment awaits those who cause others to stumble. The severe form of the warning suggests that false teaching, or leading someone into apostasy, is in view here.

a millstone. This was a heavy stone used in a grinding mill.

17:20 ***kingdom of God.*** In ancient Israel there was an expectation that the kingdom of God would come

16:22 [o] Matt. 8:11 **16:24** [p] Zech. 14:12 [q] [Mark 9:42–48] **16:25** [r] Luke 6:24 **16:29** [s] Acts 15:21; 17:11 **16:31** [t] [John 5:46] [u] John 12:10, 11 **17:1** [a] [1 Cor. 11:19] [b] [2 Thess. 1:6] **17:3** [c] [Matt. 18:15, 21] [d] [Prov. 17:10] **17:6** [e] [Mark 9:23; 11:23] **17:8** [f] [Luke 12:37] **17:10** [g] Rom. 3:12; 11:35 **17:11** [h] Luke 9:51, 52 **17:12** [i] Lev. 13:46 **17:14** [j] Matt. 8:4 **17:15** [k] Luke 5:25; 18:43 **17:16** [l] 2 Kin. 17:24 **17:19** [m] Matt. 9:22

come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21[n]nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!'* For indeed, [o]the kingdom of God is within you."

22Then He said to the disciples, [p]"The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see *it*. 23[q]And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!'* Do not go after *them* or follow *them*. 24[r]For as the lightning that flashes out of one *part* under heaven shines to the other *part* under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. 25[s]But first He must suffer many things and be [t]rejected by this generation. 26[u]And as it [v]was in the [w]days of [x]Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the [y]day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and [z]destroyed them all. 28[a]Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29but on [b]the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all. 30Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man [c]is revealed.

31"In that day, he [d]who is on the housetop, and his goods *are* in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32[e]Remember Lot's wife. 33[f]Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34[g]I tell you, in that night there will be two *men* in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35[h]Two *women* will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36Two *men* will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."*

37And they answered and said to Him, [i]"Where, Lord?"

So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

18 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men [a]always ought to pray and not lose heart, 2saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. 3Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' 4And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5[b]yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"

6Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. 7And [c]shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8I tell you [d]that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

* **17:21** NU-Text reverses *here* and *there*.
* **17:23** NU-Text reverses *here* and *there*.
* **17:36** NU-Text and M-Text omit verse 36.

with cosmic signs (Joel 2:28–32). Jesus' concept of the kingdom of God, however, was broader than the time of the final consummation.

17:21 *within you.* This verse indicates that there was an aspect of kingdom promise involved in Jesus' first coming. The kingdom of God is among earthly kingdoms today; but one day the kingdom of God will swallow up all rival kingdoms (Rev. 11:15). In verses 22–37, Jesus makes it clear that the kingdom has two phases—one now and one to come. In the beginning of His kingdom on earth, God first prepares a King to rule; then He gathers a people for Him to rule over; then He gives the Ruler a realm in which to reign. The kingdom of God is not the same as the church, though the church is a part of the kingdom. The kingdom now is the presence of God alongside earthly kingdoms. One day, however, Jesus will rule over all, and He will share that rule with His people (Rev. 2:26–27; 5:9–10; 20:4–6).

17:26 *in the days of Noah.* At that time people paid little attention to God and faced judgment as a result (Gen. 6:5–13). The same will be the case at Jesus' return.

17:32 *Lot's wife.* This woman represents those who are attached to earthly things, those whose hearts are still in this world. Like Lot's wife, such people will perish (Gen. 19:26).

17:34–37 *one will be taken.* This phrase suggests judgment such as when the soldiers took Jesus to crucify Him. Verse 37 makes it clear that those who are taken are taken to final judgment. The vultures will be gathered. When judgment comes, it will be final and terrible, with the stench of death and the presence of vultures everywhere. No one will need to look for the place of judgment; the presence of the birds will reveal where the carcasses are.

18:2 *a judge.* The Romans allowed the Jews to manage most of their own affairs. This judge did not fear God, and was therefore probably a secular judge, not a religious one. The dishonest judge represents corrupted power.

18:5 *this widow troubles me.* The persistence of the widow is the lesson of the parable. God is a counterexample to the judge. God does not begrudge answering prayer. Jesus' point is that, if an insensitive judge will respond to the continual requests of a widow, God will certainly respond to the continual prayers of believers.

17:21 [n] Luke 17:23 [o] [Rom. 14:17] **17:22** [p] Matt. 9:15 **17:23** [q] Matt. 24:23 **17:24** [r] Matt. 24:27 **17:25** [s] Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33 [t] Luke 9:22 **17:26** [u] Matt. 24:37–39 [v] [Gen. 6:5–7] [w] [Gen. 6:8–13] [x] 1 Pet. 3:20 **17:27** [y] Gen. 7:1–16 [z] Gen. 7:19–23 **17:28** [a] Gen. 19 **17:29** [b] Gen. 19:16, 24, 29 **17:30** [c] [2 Thess. 1:7] **17:31** [d] Mark 13:15 **17:32** [e] Gen. 19:26 **17:33** [f] Matt. 10:39; 16:25 **17:34** [g] [1Thess.4:17] **17:35** [h] Matt.24:40,41 **17:37** [i] Matt. 24:28 **18:1** [a] Luke 11:5–10 **18:5** [b] Luke 11:8 **18:7** [c] Rev. 6:10 **18:8** [d] Heb. 10:37

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

9 Also He spoke this parable to some [e]who trusted in themselves that they were
righteous, and despised others: 10 "Two
men went up to the temple to pray, one
a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.
11 The Pharisee [f]stood and prayed thus
with himself, [g]'God, I thank You that I am
not like other men—extortioners, unjust,
adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I
fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I
possess.' 13 And the tax collector, standing
afar off, would not so much as raise *his*
eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, say-
ing, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' 14 I
tell you, this man went down to his house
justified *rather* than the other; [h]for every-
one who exalts himself will be humbled,
and he who humbles himself will be ex-
alted."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

15 [i]Then they also brought infants to
Him that He might touch them; but when
the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.
16 But Jesus called them to *Him* and said,
"Let the little children come to Me, and do
not forbid them; for [j]of such is the kingdom
of God. 17 [k]Assuredly, I say to you, whoever
does not receive the kingdom of God as a
little child will by no means enter it."

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

18 [l]Now a certain ruler asked Him, say-
ing, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to in-
herit eternal life?"

19 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call
Me good? No one *is* good but [m]One, *that*
is, God. 20 You know the commandments:
[n]*'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,'*
'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,'
[o]*'Honor your father and your mother.'*"*

21 And he said, "All [p]these things I have
kept from my youth."

22 So when Jesus heard these things, He
said to him, "You still lack one thing. [q]Sell
all that you have and distribute to the poor,
and you will have treasure in heaven; and
come, follow Me."

23 But when he heard this, he became
very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

With God All Things Are Possible

24 And when Jesus saw that he became
very sorrowful, He said, [r]"How hard it is
for those who have riches to enter the king-
dom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel
to go through the eye of a needle than for
a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

26 And those who heard it said, "Who
then can be saved?"

27 But He said, [s]"The things which are im-
possible with men are possible with God."

28 [t]Then Peter said, "See, we have left all*
and followed You."

29 So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say
to you, [u]there is no one who has left house
or parents or brothers or wife or children,
for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 [v]who
shall not receive many times more in this
present time, and in the age to come eter-
nal life."

Jesus a Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection

31 [w]Then He took the twelve aside and
said to them, "Behold, we are going up to
Jerusalem, and all things [x]that are written
by the prophets concerning the Son of Man
will be accomplished. 32 For [y]He will be de-
livered to the Gentiles and will be mocked
and insulted and spit upon. 33 They will
scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third
day He will rise again."

* **18:20** Exodus 20:12–16; Deuteronomy 5:16–20
* **18:28** NU-Text reads *our own*.

18:11–12 ***God, I thank You.*** The tone of the prayer reveals the Pharisee's problem. He uses the pronoun "I" five times in two verses. The Pharisee's attitude seems to be that God should be grateful to him for his commitment. The man obviously looked down on other people and was proud of his fasting and tithing.

18:13 ***God, be merciful to me a sinner.*** This is an example of the humble spirit of repentance that Jesus commends. The tax collector knew that he could not say or bring anything to enhance his standing with God. He knew that only God's mercy and grace, and not his own works, could deliver him.

18:16 ***But Jesus called them.*** Jesus used the thoughtlessness of his disciples to make two points: (1) all people, even little children, are important to God; and (2) the kingdom of God consists of those who respond to Him with the trust that a little child gives to a parent.

18:22 ***Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor.*** This was a radical test of the ruler's concern for others (12:33–34). Jesus was determining whether the ruler's treasure (Matt. 6:19–21) lay with God or money (16:13). Jesus was not establishing a new requirement for being saved. He was examining the ruler's orientation to God by directly confronting him with the very thing that was hindering him—namely, his wealth.

18:24–25 ***For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.*** Jesus used this figure of speech to emphasize the difficulty of turning from wealth to find salvation. Because many Jewish people believed that wealth was evidence of God's blessing, Jesus' statements would have been shocking to His audience.

18:9 [e] Luke 10:29; 16:15 **18:11** [f] Ps. 135:2 [g] Is. 1:15; 58:2 **18:14** [h] Luke 14:11 **18:15** [i] Mark 10:13–16 **18:16** [j] 1 Pet. 2:2 **18:17** [k] Mark 10:15 **18:18** [l] Matt. 19:16–29 **18:19** [m] Ps. 86:5; 119:68 **18:20** [n] Ex. 20:12–16; Deut. 5:16–20 [o] Eph. 6:2; Col. 3:20 **18:21** [p] Phil. 3:6 **18:22** [q] Matt. 6:19, 20; 19:21 **18:24** [r] Mark 10:23 **18:27** [s] Jer. 32:17 **18:28** [t] Matt. 19:27 **18:29** [u] Deut. 33:9 **18:30** [v] Job 42:10 **18:31** [w] Matt. 16:21; 17:22; 20:17 [x] Ps. 22 **18:32** [y] Acts 3:13

34 [z]But they understood none of these
things; this saying was hidden from them,
and they did not know the things which
were spoken.

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

35 [a]Then it happened, as He was coming
near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat
by the road begging. 36 And hearing a mul-
titude passing by, he asked what it meant.
37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth
was passing by. 38 And he cried out, say-
ing, "Jesus, [b]Son of David, have mercy on
me!"
39 Then those who went before warned
him that he should be quiet; but he cried
out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy
on me!"
40 So Jesus stood still and commanded
him to be brought to Him. And when he
had come near, He asked him, 41 saying,
"What do you want Me to do for you?"
He said, "Lord, that I may receive my
sight."
42 Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your
sight; [c]your faith has made you well."
43 And immediately he received his sight,
and followed Him, [d]glorifying God. And all
the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise
to God.

Jesus Comes to Zacchaeus' House

19 Then *Jesus* entered and passed
through [a]Jericho. 2 Now behold,
there was a man named Zacchaeus who
was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.
3 And he sought to [b]see who Jesus was,
but could not because of the crowd, for
he was of short stature. 4 So he ran ahead
and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see
Him, for He was going to pass that *way*.
5 And when Jesus came to the place, He
looked up and saw him,* and said to him,
"Zacchaeus, make haste and come down,
for today I must stay at your house." 6 So he
made haste and came down, and received
Him joyfully. 7 But when they saw *it*, they
all complained, saying, [c]"He has gone to be
a guest with a man who is a sinner."
8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the
Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods
to the [d]poor; and if I have taken anything
from anyone by [e]false accusation, [f]I restore
fourfold."
9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation
has come to this house, because [g]he also is
[h]a son of Abraham; 10 [i]for the Son of Man
has come to seek and to save that which
was lost."

The Parable of the Minas

11 Now as they heard these things, He
spoke another parable, because He was
near Jerusalem and because [j]they thought
the kingdom of God would appear immedi-
ately. 12 [k]Therefore He said: "A certain no-
bleman went into a far country to receive
for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 So
he called ten of his servants, delivered to
them ten minas,* and said to them, 'Do
business till I come.' 14 [l]But his citizens hat-
ed him, and sent a delegation after him,
saying, 'We will not have this *man* to reign
over us.'
15 "And so it was that when he returned,
having received the kingdom, he then com-
manded these servants, to whom he had
given the money, to be called to him, that
he might know how much every man had
gained by trading. 16 Then came the first,
saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten
minas.' 17 And he said to him, [m]'Well *done*,
good servant; because you were [n]faithful in
a very little, have authority over ten cities.'
18 And the second came, saying, 'Master,
your mina has earned five minas.' 19 Like-
wise he said to him, 'You also be over five
cities.'

* **19:5** NU-Text omits *and saw him.* * **19:13** The *mina* (Greek *mna*, Hebrew *minah*) was worth about three months' salary.

18:34 ***they understood none of these things.*** The disciples may have understood something of what Jesus said, but they could not understand why God's Chosen One would have to face such suffering. For those who were expecting the Promised One to be an exalted figure who would deliver God's people, it would be very difficult to reconcile such an expectation with such terrible suffering.
18:38 ***Son of David.*** Note the irony in this verse. The blind man recognized who Jesus was more clearly than many people who were blessed with physical sight. The blind man's cry for mercy demonstrated his belief that Jesus had the power to heal him.
19:2 ***Zacchaeus.*** This was the chief tax collector, which meant he most likely bid for the right to collect taxes and then hired another tax collector to actually gather the money.
19:7 ***they all complained.*** The crowd was not happy with Jesus' choice of who to honor with His fellowship. In the crowd's opinion, Zacchaeus was a sinner. Tax collectors often took for themselves a high percentage of what they demanded. They were hated and despised in ancient Israel.
19:11 ***they thought.*** Evidently the disciples believed that Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem would signal the arrival of the kingdom of God. Jesus' parable in verses 12–27 was designed to dispel this misconception. Note that the disciples raised the same question in Acts 1:6.
19:13 ***ten minas.*** Each servant received one mina or about three months' wages for the average worker. The master, symbolizing Jesus Himself, wants to see fruit, or dividends from his investment. Did his servants put the money they received to good use?

18:34 [z] Luke 2:50; 9:45 **18:35** [a] Matt. 20:29–34 **18:38** [b] Matt. 9:27 **18:42** [c] Luke 17:19 **18:43** [d] Luke 5:26 **19:1** [a] Josh. 6:26 **19:3** [b] John 12:21 **19:7** [c] Luke 5:30; 15:2 **19:8** [d] [Ps. 41:1] [e] Luke 3:14 [f] Ex. 22:1 **19:9** [g] [Gal. 3:7] [h] [Luke 13:16] **19:10** [i] Matt. 18:11 **19:11** [j] Acts 1:6 **19:12** [k] Matt. 25:14–30 **19:14** [l] [John 1:11] **19:17** [m] Matt. 25:21, 23 [n] Luke 16:10

20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master,
here is your mina, which I have kept put
away in a handkerchief. 21 [o]For I feared
you, because you are an austere man. You
collect what you did not deposit, and reap
what you did not sow.' 22 And he said to him,
[p]'Out of your own mouth I will judge you,
you wicked servant. [q]You knew that I was
an austere man, collecting what I did not
deposit and reaping what I did not sow.
23 Why then did you not put my money in
the bank, that at my coming I might have
collected it with interest?'
24 "And he said to those who stood by,
'Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him
who has ten minas.' 25 (But they said to him,
'Master, he has ten minas.') 26 'For I say to
you, [r]that to everyone who has will be giv-
en; and from him who does not have, even
what he has will be taken away from him.
27 But bring here those enemies of mine,
who did not want me to reign over them,
and slay *them* before me.'"

The Triumphal Entry

28 When He had said this, [s]He went on
ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 [t]And it
came to pass, when He drew near to Beth-
phage* and [u]Bethany, at the mountain
called [v]Olivet, *that* He sent two of His dis-
ciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village oppo-
site *you,* where as you enter you will find
a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat.
Loose it and bring *it here.* 31 And if anyone
asks you, 'Why are you loosing *it*?' thus
you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord
has need of it.'"
32 So those who were sent went their
way and found *it* just [w]as He had said to
them. 33 But as they were loosing the colt,
the owners of it said to them, "Why are you
loosing the colt?"
34 And they said, "The Lord has need of
him." 35 Then they brought him to Jesus.
[x]And they threw their own clothes on the
colt, and they set Jesus on him. 36 And as He
went, *many* spread their clothes on the road.
37 Then, as He was now drawing near the
descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole
multitude of the disciples began to [y]rejoice
and praise God with a loud voice for all the
mighty works they had seen, 38 saying:

> [z]"'*Blessed is the King who comes in the*
> *name of the* LORD*!'**
> [a]Peace in heaven and glory in the
> highest!"

39 And some of the Pharisees called to
Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke
Your disciples."
40 But He answered and said to them, "I
tell you that if these should keep silent, [b]the
stones would immediately cry out."

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

41 Now as He drew near, He saw the
city and [c]wept over it, 42 saying, "If you
had known, even you, especially in this
[d]your day, the things *that* [e]*make* for your
[f]peace! But now they are hidden from your
eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when
your enemies will [g]build an embankment
around you, surround you and close you in
on every side, 44 [h]and level you, and your
children within you, to the ground; and
[i]they will not leave in you one stone upon
another, [j]because you did not know the
time of your visitation."

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

45 [k]Then He went into the temple and be-
gan to drive out those who bought and sold
in it,* 46 saying to them, "It is written, [l]'*My*
*house is** *a house of prayer,*'* but you have
made it a [m]'*den of thieves.*'"*
47 And He [n]was teaching daily in the tem-
ple. But [o]the chief priests, the scribes, and
the leaders of the people sought to destroy
Him, 48 and were unable to do anything; for
all the people were very attentive to [p]hear
Him.

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* **19:29** M-Text reads *Bethsphage.* * **19:38** Psalm 118:26 * **19:45** NU-Text reads *those who were selling.* * **19:46** NU-Text reads *shall be.* • Isaiah 56:7 • Jeremiah 7:11

19:20–23 ***I feared you.*** The unfaithful servant's excuse for failure reflects a negative view of the nobleman. If the servant had really feared the master, he would have done something with the money. Even putting the money in the bank would have yielded interest.

19:31–34 ***the Lord has need of it.*** Such borrowing of an animal was not as strange as it may appear. There was an ancient custom by which a political or religious leader could commandeer property for short-term use. Jesus was entering Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, festivals that commemorated the great act of God's deliverance of the nation. Such feasts were often celebrated at this time with the hope that God's decisive deliverance would come.

19:41 ***wept over it.*** Jesus knew that so many of the people of Israel had rejected Him that the nation would suffer judgment, in the form of the terrible destruction that came on Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

19:43 ***build an embankment around you.*** This is a prediction of Rome's successful siege of Jerusalem under Titus. The details reflect a divine judgment for covenant unfaithfulness, similar to the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (Is. 29:1–4; Jer. 6:6–21; Ezek. 4:1–3).

19:45 ***He went into the temple.*** Jesus cleansed the temple in anger after seeing that the place of prayer had become an excuse for corrupt commerce.

19:21 [o] Matt. 25:24 **19:22** [p] Job 15:6 [q] Matt. 25:26 **19:26** [r] Luke 8:18 **19:28** [s] Mark 10:32 **19:29** [t] Matt. 21:1 [u] John 12:1 [v] Acts 1:12 **19:32** [w] Luke 22:13 **19:35** [x] 2 Kin. 9:13 **19:37** [y] Luke 13:17; 18:43 **19:38** [z] Ps. 118:26 [a] [Eph. 2:14] **19:40** [b] Hab. 2:11 **19:41** [c] John 11:35 **19:42** [d] Heb. 3:13 [e] [Acts 10:36] [f] [Rom. 5:1] **19:43** [g] Jer. 6:3, 6 **19:44** [h] 1 Kin. 9:7, 8 [i] Matt. 24:2 [j] [1 Pet. 2:12] **19:45** [k] Mark 11:11, 15–17 **19:46** [l] Is. 56:7 [m] Jer. 7:11 **19:47** [n] Luke 21:37; 22:53 [o] John 7:19; 8:37 **19:48** [p] Luke 21:38

Jesus' Authority Questioned

20 Now [a]it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, *that* the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted *Him* **2**and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, [b]by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"

3But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: **4**The [c]baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?"

5And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then* did you not believe him?' **6**But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, [d]for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." **7**So they answered that they did not know where *it was* from.

8And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers

9Then He began to tell the people this parable: [e]"A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. **10**Now at vintage-time he [f]sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. **11**Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. **12**And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast *him* out.

13"Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.' **14**But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the [g]heir. Come, [h]let us kill him, that the inheritance may be [i]ours.' **15**So they cast him out of the vineyard and [j]killed *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? **16**He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to [k]others."

And when they heard *it* they said, "Certainly not!"

17Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written:

[l]'The stone which the builders rejected
*Has become the chief cornerstone'?**

18Whoever falls on that stone will be [m]broken; but [n]on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

19And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people*—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar?

20[o]So they watched *Him*, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

21Then they asked Him, saying, [p]"Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism,

* **20:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit *then*.
* **20:17** Psalm 118:22 * **20:19** M-Text reads *but they were afraid.*

Merchants were selling sacrificial animals in the outer court of the temple (the Court of the Gentiles) at exorbitant prices. Money changers were making an excessive profit exchanging currencies for the temple shekel. John records a temple cleansing in John 2:13–22, but it is not clear whether that event is the same as this one in Luke. Since John places the event early in Jesus' ministry, Jesus might have cleansed the temple twice.

20:4 ***The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?*** Here as throughout the Gospel of Luke, the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus are linked. Jesus' question presented the Pharisees with a dilemma. If they recognized John's ministry as coming from heaven, they would be recognizing the same divine origin of Jesus' similar "independent" Spirit-directed ministry. But if the Pharisees denied that John was sent by God they risked angering the majority of the people, who believed that John's ministry was divinely directed (vv. 5–6).

20:9 ***A certain man planted a vineyard.*** The imagery of the vineyard recalls the subject of Jesus' parable in 13:6–9. This parable is also found in Matthew 21:33–44 and Mark 12:1–12, with some slight variations of detail in each account.

20:14 ***This is the heir.*** The vinedressers hoped that with the son gone, the inheritance would fall to those who worked the property, a transfer that was possible in the ancient world. The details of this parable do not represent the thinking of those who crucified Jesus. The leaders of Israel thought they were stopping someone who was dangerous to Judaism, not that they were going to inherit Jesus' kingdom.

20:17 ***The stone which the builders rejected.*** This passage, taken from Psalm 118:22, pictures the exaltation of the Righteous One, Jesus, after His rejection. Opposition will not stop God from making the One who is rejected the center of His work of salvation.

20:18 ***Whoever falls on that stone.*** Jesus is the stone. Anyone who goes against the stone will be destroyed. Jesus' statement is similar to a late Jewish proverb: "If the stone falls on the pot, alas for the pot; If the pot falls on the stone, alas for the pot." The imagery for the stone is also found in 1 Peter 2:4–8.

20:1 [a] Matt. 21:23–27 **20:2** [b] Acts 4:7; 7:27
20:4 [c] John 1:26, 31 **20:6** [d] Luke 7:24–30 **20:9** [e] Mark 12:1–12 **20:10** [f] [1 Thess. 2:15] **20:14** [g] [Heb. 1:1–3] [h] Matt. 27:21–23 [i] John 11:47, 48 **20:15** [j] Luke 23:33 **20:16** [k] Rom. 11:1, 11 **20:17** [l] Ps. 118:22 **20:18** [m] Is. 8:14, 15 [n] [Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45] **20:20** [o] Matt. 22:15 **20:21** [p] Mark 12:14

but teach the way of God in truth: 22Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

23But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me?* 24Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?"

They answered and said, "Caesar's."

25And He said to them, [q]"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

26But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.

The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?

27[r]Then some of the Sadducees, [s]who deny that there is a resurrection, came to *Him* and asked Him, 28saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us *that* if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 29Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. 30And the second* took her as wife, and he died childless. 31Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children,* and died. 32Last of all the woman died also. 33Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife."

34Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35But those who are [t]counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36nor can they die anymore, for [u]they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, [v]being sons of the resurrection. 37But even Moses showed in the *burning* bush *passage* that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord [w]*'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'** 38For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for [x]all live to Him."

39Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." 40But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord?

41And He said to them, [y]"How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? 42Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms:

[z]*'The LORD said to my Lord,*
"Sit at My right hand,
43 *Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."'**

44Therefore David calls Him *'Lord'*; [a]how is He then his Son?"

Beware of the Scribes

45[b]Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, 46[c]"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, [d]love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, 47[e]who devour widows' houses, and for a [f]pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

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* **20:23** NU-Text omits *Why do you test Me?*
* **20:30** NU-Text ends verse 30 here. * **20:31** NU-Text and M-Text read *the seven also left no children.* * **20:37** Exodus 3:6, 15 * **20:43** Psalm 110:1

20:22 ***Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar.*** This question concerned the poll tax to Rome, which was different from the taxes collected by the tax collectors. The poll tax was a citizenship tax paid directly to Rome, as an indication that Israel was subject to that Gentile nation. The Pharisees' query was a trick question. If Jesus answered yes, the people would be angry because He respected a foreign power. If He answered no, He could be charged with sedition.

20:24 ***Whose image and inscription does it have?*** Jesus' reply was clever. He had the Pharisees pull out a coin, indicating that they already recognized Roman sovereignty by using Roman coins themselves. A penny was a silver coin that had a picture of the emperor Tiberius on it.

20:27 ***Sadducees.*** The Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes were three major divisions in first-century Judaism. The Sadducees rejected the oral traditions that the Pharisees too stringently obeyed. Instead they based their teaching only on the first five books of the Old Testament. They also denied that there could be a resurrection.

20:36 ***they are equal to the angels.*** The everlasting life of a resurrected person makes that person something like an angel. Paul explains further that in the resurrection we will be given resurrection bodies similar to Christ's (1 Cor. 15:25–58). This will be a new experience that will not necessarily parallel experiences on this earth, such as marriage.

20:41–42 ***How can they say.*** Here Jesus takes His turn at raising a theological issue. The dilemma He poses is how the Messiah could be called the Son of David, when David himself gave Him the title *Lord, my Lord*. This is a citation from Psalm 110:1. The Messiah was David's descendant and yet David gave Him the respect due to a superior, the reverse of what normally occurred in ancient times. Jesus was not denying the title *Son of David* to the Messiah, He was simply noting that the title *Lord*, meaning "Master," is more central. Even David one day will bow at the Messiah's feet and confess that He is Lord (Phil. 2:10).

20:25 [q] [1 Pet. 2:13–17] **20:27** [r] Mark 12:18–27 [s] Acts 23:6, 8 **20:35** [t] Phil. 3:11 **20:36** [u] [1 John 3:2] [v] Rom. 8:23 **20:37** [w] Ex. 3:1–6, 15 **20:38** [x] [Rom. 6:10, 11; 14:8, 9] **20:41** [y] Matt. 22:41–46 **20:42** [z] Ps. 110:1 **20:44** [a] Rom. 1:3; 9:4, 5 **20:45** [b] Matt. 23:1–7 **20:46** [c] Matt. 23:5 [d] Luke 11:43; 14:7 **20:47** [e] Matt. 23:14 [f] [Matt. 6:5, 6]

The Widow's Two Mites

21 And He looked up [a]and saw the rich
putting their gifts into the treasury,
2and He saw also a certain [b]poor widow
putting in two [c]mites. **3**So He said, "Truly
I say to you [d]that this poor widow has put
in more than all; **4**for all these out of their
abundance have put in offerings for God,*
but she out of her poverty put in [e]all the
livelihood that she had."

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple

5[f]Then, as some spoke of the temple, how
it was adorned with beautiful stones and
donations, He said, **6**"These things which
you see—the days will come in which [g]not
one stone shall be left upon another that
shall not be thrown down."

The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age

7So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher,
but when will these things be? And what
sign *will there be* when these things are
about to take place?"

8And He said: [h]"Take heed that you not
be deceived. For many will come in My
name, saying, 'I am *He*,' and, 'The time
has drawn near.' Therefore* do not go af-
ter them. **9**But when you hear of [i]wars and
commotions, do not be terrified; for these
things must come to pass first, but the end
will not *come* immediately."

10[j]Then He said to them, "Nation will
rise against nation, and kingdom against
kingdom. **11**And there will be great [k]earth-
quakes in various places, and famines and
pestilences; and there will be fearful sights
and great signs from heaven. **12**[l]But before
all these things, they will lay their hands
on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you*
up to the synagogues and [m]prisons. [n]You
will be brought before kings and rulers [o]for
My name's sake. **13**But [p]it will turn out for
you as an occasion for testimony. **14**[q]There-
fore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate
beforehand on what you will answer; **15**for
I will give you a mouth and wisdom [r]which
all your adversaries will not be able to con-
tradict or resist. **16**[s]You will be betrayed
even by parents and brothers, relatives and
friends; and they will put [t]*some* of you to
death. **17**And [u]you will be hated by all for
My name's sake. **18**[v]But not a hair of your
head shall be lost. **19**By your patience pos-
sess your souls.

The Destruction of Jerusalem

20[w]"But when you see Jerusalem sur-
rounded by armies, then know that its
desolation is near. **21**Then let those who
are in Judea flee to the mountains, let
those who are in the midst of her depart,
and let not those who are in the country
enter her. **22**For these are the days of ven-
geance, that [x]all things which are written
may be fulfilled. **23**[y]But woe to those who
are pregnant and to those who are nursing
babies in those days! For there will be great
distress in the land and wrath upon this
people. **24**And they will fall by the edge of
the sword, and be led away captive into all
nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled
by Gentiles [z]until the times of the Gentiles
are fulfilled.

* **21:4** NU-Text omits *for God*. * **21:8** NU-Text omits *Therefore*.

21:2 *two mites*. These were the smallest currency available.

21:5 *donations*. These were gift offerings for the decoration of the temple and included gold and silver-plated gates, grapevine clusters, and Babylonian linen tapestries which hung from the temple veil. Even Tacitus, the Roman historian, called it an "immensely opulent temple."

21:6 *not one stone shall be left upon another*. Jesus noted that the beautiful place of worship was temporary and would be destroyed. He was referring to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which itself was a picture of the destruction of the last days.

21:8 *Take heed that you not be deceived*. The first century and early second century were times of great messianic fervor in Judaism, as the Israelites sought freedom from Roman rule. Many people claimed to be the Messiah. Jesus warned His disciples not to be fooled by such claims.

21:12 *synagogues and prisons . . . kings and rulers*. These references indicate that all nations would share responsibility for the massacre of the disciples.

21:15 *I will give you a mouth and wisdom*. Jesus promises the disciples that the Holy Spirit will assist them in giving testimony (12:11–12). The initial fulfillment of this promise is found in Acts 4:8–14; 7:54; and 26:24–30.

21:16 *You will be betrayed*. The persecution of the disciples would be painful and severe. Identifying with Jesus often means risking the rejection and denunciation of family, and in some cases martyrdom.

21:20 *its desolation*. This passage compared the desecration of the temple to what occurred in 167 B.C., when Antiochus Epiphanes erected an altar to Zeus in the temple. A similar desecration of the temple site occurred during the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

21:22 *days of vengeance*. Jerusalem had become an object of divine judgment because of its unfaithfulness. Jesus warned of this consequence throughout His ministry (13:9,34–35; 19:41–44). The premise for such judgment goes back to the curses of the Mosaic

21:1 [a] Mark 12:41–44 **21:2** [b] [2 Cor. 6:10] [c] Mark 12:42 **21:3** [d] [2 Cor. 8:12] **21:4** [e] [2 Cor. 8:12] **21:5** [f] Mark 13:1 **21:6** [g] Luke 19:41–44 **21:8** [h] Eph. 5:6 **21:9** [i] Rev. 6:4 **21:10** [j] Matt. 24:7 **21:11** [k] Rev. 6:12 **21:12** [l] [Rev. 2:10] [m] Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:4; 16:24 [n] Acts 25:23 [o] 1 Pet. 2:13 **21:13** [p] [Phil. 1:12–14, 28] **21:14** [q] Luke 12:11 **21:15** [r] Acts 6:10 **21:16** [s] Mic. 7:6 [t] Acts 7:59; 12:2 **21:17** [u] Matt. 10:22 **21:18** [v] Matt. 10:30 **21:20** [w] Mark 13:14 **21:22** [x] [Dan. 9:24–27] **21:23** [y] Matt. 24:19 **21:24** [z] [Dan. 9:27; 12:7]

The Coming of the Son of Man

25 [a]"And there will be signs in the sun, in
the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth
distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea
and the waves roaring; 26 men's hearts fail-
ing them from fear and the expectation
of those things which are coming on the
earth, [b]for the powers of the heavens will
be shaken. 27 Then they will see the Son of
Man [c]coming in a cloud with power and
great glory. 28 Now when these things begin
to happen, look up and lift up your heads,
because [d]your redemption draws near."

The Parable of the Fig Tree

29 [e]Then He spoke to them a parable:
"Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.
30 When they are already budding, you
see and know for yourselves that summer
is now near. 31 So you also, when you see
these things happening, know that the
kingdom of God is near. 32 Assuredly, I say
to you, this generation will by no means
pass away till all things take place. 33 [f]Heav-
en and earth will pass away, but My [g]words
will by no means pass away.

The Importance of Watching

34 "But [h]take heed to yourselves, lest
your hearts be weighed down with carous-
ing, drunkenness, and [i]cares of this life,
and that Day come on you unexpectedly.
35 For [j]it will come as a snare on all those
who dwell on the face of the whole earth.
36 [k]Watch therefore, and [l]pray always that
you may be counted [m]worthy* to escape all
these things that will come to pass, and [n]to
stand before the Son of Man."

37 [o]And in the daytime He was teaching
in the temple, but [p]at night He went out
and stayed on the mountain called Olivet.
38 Then early in the morning all the people
came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

The Plot to Kill Jesus

22 Now [a]the Feast of Unleavened Bread
drew near, which is called Passover.
2 And [b]the chief priests and the scribes
sought how they might kill Him, for they
feared the people.

3 [c]Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed
Iscariot, who was numbered among the
[d]twelve. 4 So he went his way and conferred
with the chief priests and captains, how he
might betray Him to them. 5 And they were
glad, and [e]agreed to give him money. 6 So he
promised and sought opportunity to [f]betray
Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

Jesus and His Disciples Prepare the Passover

7 [g]Then came the Day of Unleavened
Bread, when the Passover must be killed.
8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go
and prepare the Passover for us, that we
may eat."

9 So they said to Him, "Where do You
want us to prepare?"

10 And He said to them, "Behold, when
you have entered the city, a man will meet
you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him
into the house which he enters. 11 Then you
shall say to the master of the house, 'The
Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest
room where I may eat the Passover with My
disciples?"' 12 Then he will show you a large,
furnished upper room; there make ready."

13 So they went and [h]found it just as He
had said to them, and they prepared the
Passover.

* **21:36** NU-Text reads *may have strength.*

covenant and the Old Testament prophets' warnings of coming judgment (Deut. 28:49–57; 32:35; Jer. 6:1–8; 26:1–9; Hos. 9:7).

21:27 ***the Son of Man coming in a cloud.*** The reference here is to the authoritative return of Jesus. The allusion to the cloud and the figure comes from Daniel 7:13–14, with its picture of One who receives authority from the Ancient of Days. Jesus viewed this text in terms of an apocalyptic deliverance. The image of the cloud is important, since God is identified as riding the clouds in the Old Testament (Ex. 34:5; Ps. 104:3). The Son of Man has divine authority to judge the world.

21:29–30 ***When they are already budding.*** The tender buds that appear every spring on trees show that summer is approaching; the appearance of the signs Jesus describes will warn of the coming of the end times.

21:33 ***will by no means pass away.*** The disciples had the assurance that Jesus' promises concerning the end times were more certain than creation itself. God made an unconditional and unilateral covenant, and He will keep it (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:18–21; Ps. 89).

21:34 ***take heed to yourselves.*** Though the events of the end times may not come to pass for a long time, believers should continue to look for their arrival. The day of Jesus' return should not take us by surprise. We should live as if it is imminent.

22:1 ***the Feast of Unleavened Bread.*** This feast took place immediately following Passover (Ex. 12:1–20; Deut. 16:1–8). The two feasts were often considered as one. Passover commemorated the night of the tenth plague in Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread celebrated the Exodus.

22:4 ***captains.*** These were Levites who were members of the temple guard. They were the ones who could make the arrest.

22:11–12 ***guest room.*** Such rooms were often made available to the thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover and the

21:25 [a] [2 Pet. 3:10–12] **21:26** [b] Matt. 24:29
21:27 [c] Rev. 1:7; 14:14 **21:28** [d] [Rom. 8:19, 23]
21:29 [e] Mark 13:28 **21:33** [f] Matt. 24:35 [g] Is. 40:8
21:34 [h] 1 Thess. 5:6 [i] Luke 8:14 **21:35** [j] Rev. 3:3; 16:15
21:36 [k] Matt. 24:42; 25:13 [l] Luke 18:1 [m] Luke 20:35 [n] [Eph. 6:13] **21:37** [o] John 8:1, 2 [p] Luke 22:39 **22:1** [a] Matt. 26:2–5 **22:2** [b] John 11:47 **22:3** [c] Mark 14:10, 11
[d] Matt. 10:2–4 **22:5** [e] Zech. 11:12 **22:6** [f] Ps. 41:9
22:7 [g] Matt. 26:17–19 **22:13** [h] Luke 19:32

Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper

14 [i]When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve* apostles with Him.
15 Then He said to them, "With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it [j]until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; 18 for [k]I say to you,* I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

19 [l]And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, "This is My [m]body which is given for you; [n]do this in remembrance of Me."

20 Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, [o]"This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.
21 [p]But behold, the hand of My betrayer *is* with Me on the table. 22 [q]And truly the Son of Man goes [r]as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

23 [s]Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

The Disciples Argue About Greatness

24 [t]Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. 25 [u]And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'
26 [v]But not so *among* you; on the contrary, [w]he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. 27 [x]For who *is* greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? *Is* it not he who sits at the table? Yet [y]I am among you as the One who serves.

28 "But you are those who have continued with Me in [z]My trials. 29 And [a]I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, 30 that [b]you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, [c]and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

31 And the Lord said,* "Simon, Simon! Indeed, [d]Satan has asked for you, that he may [e]sift *you* as wheat. 32 But [f]I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, [g]strengthen your brethren."

33 But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."

34 [h]Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

Supplies for the Road

35 [i]And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?"

So they said, "Nothing."

36 Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. 37 For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: [j]*'And He was numbered with the transgressors.'*" For the things concerning Me have an end."

38 So they said, "Lord, look, here *are* two swords."

And He said to them, "It is enough."

The Prayer in the Garden

39 [k]Coming out, [l]He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. 40 [m]When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

* **22:14** NU-Text omits *twelve*. * **22:18** NU-Text adds *from now on*. * **22:31** NU-Text omits *And the Lord said*. * **22:37** Isaiah 53:12

Feast of Unleavened Bread. Such a room would contain couches for guests at the feasts to recline for the meal. Access to the room was probably gained by stairs on the outside of the house.

22:19 *My body . . . do this in remembrance.* Jesus instituted a new meal which is not only a memorial of His death, but also a fellowship meal of unity. It is a proclamation and a symbol of the believer's anticipation of Jesus' return, when all God's promises will be fulfilled (1 Cor. 10:16–17; 11:23–26).

22:20 *This cup is the new covenant.* The wine of the Lord's Supper depicts the giving of life, a sacrifice of blood, which inaugurated the new covenant for those who respond to Jesus' offer of salvation (Heb. 8:8,13; 9:11–28).

22:30 *eat and drink . . . sit on thrones judging.* This is a promise of future blessing and authority. The disciples were promised a seat at the banquet of victory and the right to help Jesus rule over Israel on His return (Matt. 19:28; 2 Tim. 2:12).

22:32 *I have prayed for you . . . you have returned.* The Greek word for *you* here is singular, referring specifically to Peter. In effect, Jesus restored Peter even before his fall (vv. 54–62), and He instructed the disciple to shepherd the saints by strengthening them.

22:37 *this which is written.* Jesus cited Isaiah 53:12, which describes a righteous one who suffers as a

22:14 *i* Mark 14:17 **22:16** *j* [Rev. 19:9] **22:18** *k* Mark 14:25 **22:19** *l* Matt. 26:26 *m* [1 Pet. 2:24] *n* 1 Cor. 11:23–26 **22:20** *o* 1 Cor. 10:16 **22:21** *p* John 13:21, 26, 27 **22:22** *q* Matt. 26:24 *r* Acts 2:23 **22:23** *s* John 13:22, 25 **22:24** *t* Mark 9:34 **22:25** *u* Mark 10:42–45 **22:26** *v* [1 Pet. 5:3] *w* Luke 9:48 **22:27** *x* [Luke 12:37] *y* Phil. 2:7 **22:28** *z* [Heb. 2:18; 4:15] **22:29** *a* Matt. 24:47 **22:30** *b* [Matt. 8:11] *c* [Rev. 3:21] **22:31** *d* 1 Pet. 5:8 *e* Amos 9:9 **22:32** *f* [John 17:9, 11, 15] *g* John 21:15–17 **22:34** *h* John 13:37, 38 **22:35** *i* Matt. 10:9 **22:37** *j* Is. 53:12 **22:39** *k* John 18:1 *l* Luke 21:37 **22:40** *m* Mark 14:32–42

41 [n]And He was withdrawn from them
about a stone's throw, and He knelt down
and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your
will, take this cup away from Me; never-
theless [o]not My will, but Yours, be done."
43 Then [p]an angel appeared to Him from
heaven, strengthening Him. 44 [q]And being
in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then
His sweat became like great drops of blood
falling down to the ground.*
45 When He rose up from prayer, and had
come to His disciples, He found them sleep-
ing from sorrow. 46 Then He said to them,
"Why [r]do you sleep? Rise and [s]pray, lest
you enter into temptation."

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

47 And while He was still speaking, [t]be-
hold, a multitude; and he who was called
[u]Judas, one of the twelve, went before them
and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. 48 But
Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betray-
ing the Son of Man with a [v]kiss?"
49 When those around Him saw what
was going to happen, they said to Him,
"Lord, shall we strike with the sword?"
50 And [w]one of them struck the servant of
the high priest and cut off his right ear.
51 But Jesus answered and said, "Permit
even this." And He touched his ear and
healed him.
52 [x]Then Jesus said to the chief priests,
captains of the temple, and the elders who
had come to Him, "Have you come out, as
against a [y]robber, with swords and clubs?
53 When I was with you daily in the [z]temple,
you did not try to seize Me. But this is your
[a]hour, and the power of darkness."

Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps Bitterly

54 [b]Having arrested Him, they led *Him*
and brought Him into the high priest's
house. [c]But Peter followed at a distance.
55 [d]Now when they had kindled a fire in
the midst of the courtyard and sat down
together, Peter sat among them. 56 And a
certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat
by the fire, looked intently at him and said,
"This man was also with Him."
57 But he denied Him,* saying, "Woman,
I do not know Him."
58 [e]And after a little while another saw
him and said, "You also are of them."
But Peter said, "Man, I am not!"
59 [f]Then after about an hour had passed,
another confidently affirmed, saying,
"Surely this *fellow* also was with Him, for
he is a [g]Galilean."
60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know
what you are saying!"
Immediately, while he was still speak-
ing, the rooster* crowed. 61 And the Lord
turned and looked at Peter. Then [h]Peter
remembered the word of the Lord, how
He had said to him, [i]"Before the rooster
crows,* you will deny Me three times." 62 So
Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Mocked and Beaten

63 [j]Now the men who held Jesus mocked
Him and [k]beat Him. 64 And having blind-
folded Him, they [l]struck Him on the face
and asked Him,* saying, "Prophesy! Who
is the one who struck You?" 65 And many
other things they blasphemously spoke
against Him.

Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin

66 [m]As soon as it was day, [n]the elders of
the people, both chief priests and scribes,
came together and led Him into their coun-
cil, saying, 67 [o]"If You are the Christ, tell us."
But He said to them, "If I tell you, you
will [p]by no means believe. 68 And if I also
ask *you*, you will by no means answer Me
or let *Me* go.* 69 [q]Hereafter the Son of Man

* **22:44** NU-Text brackets verses 43 and 44 as not in the original text. * **22:57** NU-Text reads *denied it*. * **22:60** NU-Text and M-Text read *a rooster*. * **22:61** NU-Text adds *today*. * **22:64** NU-Text reads *And having blindfolded Him, they asked Him*. * **22:68** NU-Text omits *also* and *Me or let Me go*.

criminal. Jesus noted that His death would fulfill Isaiah's prediction.

22:42 *this cup.* This is a figure of speech for wrath (Ps. 11:6; 75:7–8; Jer. 25:15–16; Ezek. 23:31–34).

22:43 *strengthening Him.* God's answer to Jesus' prayer did not allow His Son to avoid suffering. However, God did provide angelic help for Jesus to face what was coming. Sometimes God answers prayer by eliminating trials; sometimes He answers by strengthening us in the midst of them.

22:52 *as against a robber.* The Greek term for *robber* was used of both highway bandits and revolutionaries. Jesus rebuked His captors for treating Him as though He were a dangerous lawbreaker.

22:59 *for he is a Galilean.* According to Mark 14:70, Peter's accent gave him away as being from the same region as Jesus.

22:66 *the elders of the people . . . came together.* The description here is of a major morning trial that involved all the Jewish religious leaders, the entire council or Sanhedrin. This trial violated various Jewish legal rules given in later sources: meeting on the morning of a feast; meeting at Caiaphas's home; trying a defendant without defense; and reaching the verdict in one day instead of the two days that were required for capital cases.

22:69 *on the right hand of the power of God.* Jesus'

22:41 [n] Matt. 26:39 **22:42** [o] John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29 **22:43** [p] Matt. 4:11 **22:44** [q] [Heb. 5:7] **22:46** [r] Luke 9:32 [s] Luke 22:40 **22:47** [t] John 18:3–11 [u] Acts 1:16, 17 **22:48** [v] [Prov. 27:6] **22:50** [w] Matt. 26:51 **22:52** [x] Matt. 26:55 [y] Luke 23:32 **22:53** [z] Luke 19:47, 48 [a] [John 12:27] **22:54** [b] Matt. 26:57 [c] John 18:15 **22:55** [d] Mark 14:66–72 **22:58** [e] John 18:25 **22:59** [f] Mark 14:70 [g] Acts 1:11; 2:7 **22:61** [h] Matt. 26:75 [i] John 13:38 **22:63** [j] Ps. 69:1, 4, 7–9 [k] Is. 50:6 **22:64** [l] Zech. 13:7 **22:66** [m] Matt. 27:1 [n] Acts 4:26 **22:67** [o] Matt. 26:63–66 [p] Luke 20:5–7 **22:69** [q] Heb. 1:3; 8:1

will sit on the right hand of the power of God."

70Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?"

So He said to them, [r]"You *rightly* say that I am."

71[s]And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Jesus Handed Over to Pontius Pilate

23 Then [a]the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to [b]Pilate. 2And they began to [c]accuse Him, saying, "We found this *fellow* [d]perverting the* nation, and [e]forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying [f]that He Himself is Christ, a King."

3[g]Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

He answered him and said, "*It is as* you say."

4So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, [h]"I find no fault in this Man."

5But they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from [i]Galilee to this place."

Jesus Faces Herod

6When Pilate heard of Galilee,* he asked if the Man were a Galilean. 7And as soon as he knew that He belonged to [j]Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. 8Now when Herod saw Jesus, [k]he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long *time* to see Him, because [l]he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. 9Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him [m]nothing. 10And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. 11[n]Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked *Him*, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. 12That very day [o]Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

Taking the Place of Barabbas

13[p]Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, 14said to them, [q]"You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, [r]having examined *Him* in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; 15no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him;* and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. 16[s]I will therefore chastise Him and release *Him*" 17[t](for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).*

18And [u]they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this *Man*, and release to us Barabbas"— 19who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.

20Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. 21But they shouted, saying, "Crucify *Him*, crucify Him!"

22Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let *Him* go."

23But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed.* 24So [v]Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested.

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* **23:2** NU-Text reads *our.* * **23:6** NU-Text omits *of Galilee.* * **23:15** NU-Text reads *for he sent Him back to us.* * **23:17** NU-Text omits verse 17. * **23:23** NU-Text omits *and of the chief priests.*

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reply here alludes to the regal enthronement image of Psalm 110:1. This reply is what convicted Him. Apparently what offended Jesus' audience was His claim to sit in God's presence and to exercise divine authority. In effect, His answer to their question about being the Christ was more than they expected. It was not blasphemous to claim to be Messiah. What was blasphemous was the claim to be the Judge of Jewish people, with God's authority.

23:2 *began to accuse.* Three charges were lodged against Jesus: (1) perverting the nation, (2) forbidding payment of taxes to Rome, and (3) claiming to be the Christ. The first charge, which was a general complaint, involved disturbing the peace. The other two charges could have been construed as challenges to Rome. The second charge was a blatant lie (20:20–26). The third charge was true, but not in the threatening sense that the prosecutors suggested. A three-part Roman procedure was followed at the trial; charges, examination, and verdict.

23:5 *they were the more fierce.* By mentioning the charge that Jesus stirred up the people, the leaders suggested that Pilate risked being found derelict in his duty if he let Jesus go.

23:7 *Herod's jurisdiction.* Herod was responsible for Galilee, so Pilate "passed the buck" for the ruling and showed political courtesy at the same time.

23:16 *chastise Him and release Him.* Pilate hoped that a public whipping might satisfy the crowd and tame Jesus, avoiding the need to resort to the death penalty.

23:18–19 *Away with this Man.* The entire crowd is portrayed as wanting Jesus to die. Luke makes it clear that Jesus' death was not only instigated by Jewish officials but approved by the Jewish people.

22:70 [r] Matt. 26:64; 27:11 **22:71** [s] Mark 14:63
23:1 [a] John 18:28 [b] Luke 3:1; 13:1 **23:2** [c] Acts 24:2 [d] Acts 17:7 [e] Matt. 17:27 [f] John 19:12 **23:3** [g] 1 Tim. 6:13
23:4 [h] [1 Pet. 2:22] **23:5** [i] John 7:41 **23:7** [j] Luke 3:1; 9:7; 13:31 **23:8** [k] Luke 9:9 [l] Matt. 14:1 **23:9** [m] John 19:9 **23:11** [n] Is. 53:3 **23:12** [o] Acts 4:26, 27
23:13 [p] Mark 15:14 **23:14** [q] Luke 23:1, 2 [r] Luke 23:4
23:16 [s] John 19:1 **23:17** [t] John 18:39 **23:18** [u] Acts 3:13–15 **23:24** [v] Mark 15:15

25 [w]And he released to them* the one they
requested, who for rebellion and murder
had been thrown into prison; but he deliv-
ered Jesus to their will.

The King on a Cross

26 [x]Now as they led Him away, they laid
hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian,
who was coming from the country, and on
him they laid the cross that he might bear
it after Jesus.
27 And a great multitude of the people fol-
lowed Him, and women who also mourned
and lamented Him. 28 But Jesus, turning to
them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do
not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves
and for your children. 29 [y]For indeed the
days are coming in which they will say,
'Blessed *are* the barren, wombs that nev-
er bore, and breasts which never nursed!'
30 Then they will begin [z]*'to say to the moun-
tains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover
us!"'** 31 [a]For if they do these things in the
green wood, what will be done in the dry?"
32 [b]There were also two others, crimi-
nals, led with Him to be put to death. 33 And
[c]when they had come to the place called
Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the
criminals, one on the right hand and the
other on the left. 34 Then Jesus said, "Fa-
ther, [d]forgive them, for [e]they do not know
what they do."*
And [f]they divided His garments and cast
lots. 35 And [g]the people stood looking on.
But even the [h]rulers with them sneered,
saying, "He saved others; let Him save
Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of
God."
36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming
and offering Him [i]sour wine, 37 and saying,
"If You are the King of the Jews, save Your-
self."
38 [j]And an inscription also was written
over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and
Hebrew:*

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 [k]Then one of the criminals who were
hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You
are the Christ,* save Yourself and us."
40 But the other, answering, rebuked
him, saying, "Do you not even fear God,
seeing you are under the same condemna-
tion? 41 And we indeed justly, for we receive
the due reward of our deeds; but this Man
has done [l]nothing wrong." 42 Then he said
to Jesus, "Lord,* remember me when You
come into Your kingdom."
43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I
say to you, today you will be with Me in
[m]Paradise."

Jesus Dies on the Cross

44 [n]Now it was* about the sixth hour, and
there was darkness over all the earth until
the ninth hour. 45 Then the sun was dark-
ened,* and [o]the veil of the temple was torn
in two. 46 And when Jesus had cried out
with a loud voice, He said, "Father, [p]*'into
Your hands I commit My spirit.'"** [q]Having
said this, He breathed His last.
47 [r]So when the centurion saw what had
happened, he glorified God, saying, "Cer-
tainly this was a righteous Man!"
48 And the whole crowd who came to-
gether to that sight, seeing what had been
done, beat their breasts and returned.
49 [s]But all His acquaintances, and the wom-
en who followed Him from Galilee, stood at
a distance, watching these things.

Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb

50 [t]Now behold, *there was* a man named
Joseph, a council member, a good and
just man. 51 He had not consented to their

* **23:25** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to them.*
* **23:30** Hosea 10:8 * **23:34** NU-Text brackets the first sentence as a later addition. * **23:38** NU-Text omits *written* and *in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.* * **23:39** NU-Text reads *Are You not the Christ?* * **23:42** NU-Text reads *And he said, "Jesus, remember me.* * **23:44** NU-Text adds *already.* * **23:45** NU-Text reads *obscured.*
* **23:46** Psalm 31:5

23:26 ***Simon a Cyrenian*** was recruited to carry Jesus' cross. He was from a leading city of Libya.
23:28 ***do not weep for me.*** Though He was dying, Jesus pointed out that their weeping should be for Jerusalem and its inhabitants, since judgment was going to fall on the city (19:41–44). Jerusalem here represents the entire nation of Israel.
23:31 ***what will be done in the dry.*** The idea here seems to be "If this is what is done to a live tree, what will happen to the dead one?" In other words, "If Jesus, the living tree, has not been spared, how much more will dead wood not be spared." This is Jesus' final lament over the nation of Israel.
23:33 ***the place called Calvary.*** The name of the place in Aramaic is Golgotha, which means "skull." Calvary is the Latin name for Golgotha. Possibly the name referred to a geographical feature of the locale, something that resembled a skull.
23:36 ***sour wine.*** The drink referred to here was probably wine vinegar, which was inexpensive and quenched thirst better than water. It was a drink of the poor.
23:44 ***sixth hour . . . ninth hour.*** The first hour was sunrise, so the time was 12 P.M. to 3 P.M. During these three hours, signs of creation revealed that the hour was not one of light but of darkness (22:53).
23:47 ***Certainly this was a righteous Man.*** If Jesus was righteous and innocent, then He is who He claimed to be. Thus a second figure besides the thief on the cross had insight into Jesus' death.

23:25 [w] Is. 53:8 **23:26** [x] Matt. 27:32 **23:29** [y] Matt. 24:19 **23:30** [z] Hos. 10:8; Rev. 6:16, 17; 9:6 **23:31** [a] [Jer. 25:29] **23:32** [b] Is. 53:9, 12 **23:33** [c] John 19:17–24 **23:34** [d] 1 Cor. 4:12 [e] Acts 3:17 [f] Matt. 27:35 **23:35** [g] Ps. 22:17 [h] Matt. 27:39 **23:36** [i] Ps. 69:21 **23:38** [j] John 19:19 **23:39** [k] Mark 15:32 **23:41** [l] [Heb. 7:26] **23:43** [m] [Rev. 2:7] **23:44** [n] Matt. 27:45–56 **23:45** [o] Matt. 27:51 **23:46** [p] Ps. 31:5 [q] John 19:30 **23:47** [r] Mark 15:39 **23:49** [s] Ps. 38:11 **23:50** [t] Matt. 27:57–61

decision and deed. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, [u]who himself was also waiting* for the kingdom of God. 52This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53[v]Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb *that was* hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. 54That day was [w]the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

55And the women [x]who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and [y]they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. 56Then they returned and [z]prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath [a]according to the commandment.

He Is Risen

24 Now [a]on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them,* came to the tomb [b]bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2[c]But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3[d]Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4And it happened, as they were greatly* perplexed about this, that [e]behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6He is not here, but is risen! [f]Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7saying, 'The Son of Man must be [g]delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "

8And [h]they remembered His words. 9[i]Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10It was Mary Magdalene, [j]Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles. 11[k]And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. 12[l]But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying* by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

The Road to Emmaus

13[m]Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles* from Jerusalem. 14And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that [n]Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. 16But [o]their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

17And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"*

18Then the one [p]whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

19And He said to them, "What things?"

So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, [q]who was a Prophet [r]mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20[s]and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. 21But we were hoping [t]that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. 22Yes, and [u]certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. 23When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. 24And [v]certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

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* **23:51** NU-Text reads *who was waiting.*
* **24:1** NU-Text omits *and certain other women with them.* * **24:4** NU-Text omits *greatly.*
* **24:12** NU-Text omits *lying.* * **24:13** Literally *sixty stadia* * **24:17** NU-Text reads *as you walk? And they stood still, looking sad.*

23:52 *the body of Jesus.* There is no doubt that Jesus died. Efforts to explain the resurrection as something like a return from a coma are more impossible than the idea of the resurrection itself.

23:54 *That day was the Preparation.* Jesus was buried late on Friday, on the day called Preparation when everything was made ready for the Sabbath, the day when no labor could take place.

24:2 *they found the stone rolled away.* Matthew 28:2 mentions that an earthquake moved the stone, which would have fit in a channel in front of the entrance to the tomb. Moving the stone would have been possible, though difficult, for a group of people. The earthquake settles the question of how the stone was moved.

24:11 *they did not believe them.* Skepticism reigned among the disciples. It is clear that they did not expect a resurrection. The disciples thought the women's story was nonsense.

24:12 *Peter arose and ran.* Having already experienced a fulfilled prediction of the Lord (22:54–62), Peter hurried to the tomb to check out the women's story. It is hard to say whether Peter believed in the resurrection when he left the tomb. At that point he was probably more amazed than anything else.

24:19–21 *Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet.* These disciples on the road to Emmaus regarded Jesus as the Revealer of God's way and the Doer of His work.

24:23 *He was alive.* The women reported that there was no body found in Jesus' tomb, and that angels had announced to them that Jesus lives. The fact

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23:51 [u] Luke 2:25, 38 **23:53** [v] Mark 15:46 **23:54** [w] Matt. 27:62 **23:55** [x] Luke 8:2 [y] Mark 15:47 **23:56** [z] Mark 16:1 [a] Ex. 20:10 **24:1** [a] John 20:1–8 [b] Luke 23:56 **24:2** [c] Mark 16:4 **24:3** [d] Mark 16:5 **24:4** [e] John 20:12 **24:6** [f] Luke 9:22 **24:7** [g] Luke 9:44; 11:29, 30; 18:31–33 **24:8** [h] John 2:19–22 **24:9** [i] Mark 16:10 **24:10** [j] Luke 8:3 **24:11** [k] Luke 24:25 **24:12** [l] John 20:3–6 **24:13** [m] Mark 16:12 **24:15** [n] [Matt. 18:20] **24:16** [o] John 20:14; 21:4 **24:18** [p] John 19:25 **24:19** [q] Matt. 21:11 [r] Acts 7:22 **24:20** [s] Acts 13:27, 28 **24:21** [t] Luke 1:68; 2:38 **24:22** [u] Mark 16:10 **24:24** [v] Luke 24:12

25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 [w]Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His [x]glory?" 27 And beginning at [y]Moses and [z]all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

The Disciples' Eyes Opened

28 Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and [a]He indicated that He would have gone farther. 29 But [b]they constrained Him, saying, [c]"Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.

30 Now it came to pass, as [d]He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it,* and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" 33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and [e]has appeared to Simon!" 35 And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

36 [f]Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen [g]a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. [h]Handle Me and see, for a [i]spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.* 41 But while they still did not believe [j]for joy, and marveled, He said to them, [k]"Have you any food here?" 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.* 43 [l]And He took *it* and ate in their presence.

The Scriptures Opened

44 Then He said to them, [m]"These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me." 45 And [n]He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

46 Then He said to them, [o]"Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise* from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and [p]remission of sins should be preached in His name [q]to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And [r]you are witnesses of these things. 49 [s]Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem* until you are endued with power from on high."

The Ascension

50 And He led them out [t]as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 [u]Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. 52 [v]And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually [w]in the temple praising and* blessing God. Amen.*

* **24:40** Some printed New Testaments omit this verse. It is found in nearly all Greek manuscripts.
* **24:42** NU-Text omits *and some honeycomb.*
* **24:46** NU-Text reads *written, that the Christ should suffer and rise.* * **24:49** NU-Text omits *of Jerusalem.* * **24:53** NU-Text omits *praising and.* • NU-Text omits *Amen.*

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that the men were still sad indicates that they did not believe the report.

24:25 ***slow of heart to believe.*** Jesus, who at this time was still not known to the travelers, rebuked His companions and reminded them of the things that the prophets taught.

24:27 ***And beginning at Moses.*** Going from the books of Moses to the Prophets, Jesus provided an overview of God's plan in the Scriptures. This plan is present throughout the entire Old Testament (Acts 3:22–26; 10:43).

24:39 ***flesh and bones.*** Jesus pointed out that a raised body is not a disembodied spirit. The presence of His body indicates that Jesus had been raised and that He was not a hallucination. He was raised in the same physical body in which He had been put to death. The difference was that His resurrected body is not corruptible and not subject to death.

24:46 ***Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead.*** Two parts of God's plan had been fulfilled. Jesus had been crucified and raised from the dead. Old Testament texts that predict these events are Psalm 22 and Psalm 118:22.

24:49 ***the Promise of My Father.*** This is a reference to the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). It was promised in Jeremiah 31:31–33, and in Joel 2:28. Peter called this coming of the Spirit "the beginning" (Acts 11:15) because the real fulfillment of God's promise of salvation would start in those people united by the Spirit to establish the church.

24:26 *w* Acts 17:2, 3 *x* [1 Pet. 1:10–12] **24:27** *y* [Deut. 18:15] *z* [Is. 7:14; 9:6] **24:28** *a* Mark 6:48 **24:29** *b* Gen. 19:2, 3 *c* [John 14:23] **24:30** *d* Matt. 14:19 **24:34** *e* 1 Cor. 15:5 **24:36** *f* Mark 16:14 **24:37** *g* Mark 6:49 **24:39** *h* John 20:20, 27 *i* [1 Cor. 15:50] **24:41** *j* Gen. 45:26 *k* John 21:5 **24:43** *l* Acts 10:39–41 **24:44** *m* Matt. 16:21; 17:22; 20:18 **24:45** *n* Acts 16:14 **24:46** *o* Acts 17:3 **24:47** *p* Acts 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18 *q* [Jer. 31:34] **24:48** *r* [Acts 1:8] **24:49** *s* Joel 2:28 **24:50** *t* Acts 1:12 **24:51** *u* Mark 16:19 **24:52** *v* Matt. 28:9 **24:53** *w* Acts 2:46

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
JOHN

▶ **AUTHOR:** Jesus nicknamed John and his brother, James, "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). John was evidently among the Galileans who followed John the Baptist until they were called to follow Jesus at the outset of His public ministry. These Galileans were later called to become full-time disciples of the Lord (Luke 5:1–11), and John was among the twelve men who were selected to be apostles (Luke 6:12–16). The author of this Gospel is identified only as the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7), but attention to detail concerning geography and Jewish culture in the Gospel lend credibility to the author's claim to be an eyewitness. The strong testimony of the early church relates this eyewitness to the apostle John.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 29–33 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** John 20:30–31

▶ **THEME:** John is a great book for new or young Christians because it intentionally helps the reader understand the significance of Jesus. What becomes increasingly clear as you read the Gospel of John is that Jesus does not fit the image of someone who is simply a nice moral teacher. Only a lunatic would make the claims He makes for Himself unless He was who He said He was. John leaves no room for indecision. Like the many people Jesus encounters in the book, as you read, you must either reject Him or accept Him, and say in the end like Thomas: "My Lord and my God" (20:28). This Gospel is an incredibly powerful presentation of Jesus.

The Eternal Word

1 In the beginning [a]was the Word, and the [b]Word was [c]with God, and the Word was [d]God. **2**[e]He was in the beginning with God. **3**[f]All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. **4**[g]In Him was life, and [h]the life was the light of men. **5**And [i]the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend* it.

John's Witness: The True Light

6There was a [j]man sent from God, whose name *was* John. **7**This man came for a [k]witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might [l]believe. **8**He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that [m]Light. **9**[n]That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.*

* **1:5** Or *overcome* * **1:9** Or *That was the true Light which, coming into the world, gives light to every man.*

1:1 ***In the beginning.*** Genesis 1:1 starts with the moment of creation and moves forward to the creation of humanity. John 1:1 starts with creation and contemplates eternity past. ***the Word was with God.*** This suggests a face-to-face relationship. In the ancient world, it was important that persons of equal station be on the same level when seated across from one another.

1:3 ***All things were made through Him.*** God the Father created the world (Gen. 1:1) through God the Son (Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2). All creation was made through Him. Thus, He is the Creator God.

1:4 ***light of men.*** This image conveys the concept of revelation. As the light, Jesus Christ reveals both sin and God to humans (Ps. 36:9). Later in this Gospel, Christ declares Himself to be both the life (11:25) and the light (8:12). Death and darkness flee when the life and light enter.

1:5 ***light shines in the darkness.*** Although Satan and his forces resist the light, they cannot thwart its power. In short, Jesus is life and light; those who accept Him are "sons of light" (12:35–36). As the creation of light was the beginning of the original creation, so, when believers receive the light, they become part of the new creation (2 Cor. 4:3–6).

1:7 ***for a witness.*** This phrase means "to testify" or "to declare." John uses the word translated *witness* 33 times as a verb and 14 times as a noun in his Gospel. The term is particularly important to his purpose, which is to record adequate witnesses to Jesus as the Messiah so that individuals might believe Him (20:30–31). ***believe.*** This word means "to trust." John uses this verb almost 100 times in his Gospel to express what must take place for a person to receive the gift of eternal life.

1:1 [a] 1 John 1:1 [b] Rev. 19:13 [c] [John 17:5] [d] [1 John 5:20] **1:2** [e] Gen. 1:1 **1:3** [f] [Col. 1:16, 17] **1:4** [g] [1 John 5:11] [h] John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46 **1:5** [i] [John 3:19] **1:6** [j] Matt. 3:1–17 **1:7** [k] John 3:25–36; 5:33–35 [l] [John 3:16] **1:8** [m] Is. 9:2; 49:6 **1:9** [n] Is. 49:6

10 He was in the world, and the world was
made through Him, and [o]the world did not
know Him. 11 [p]He came to His own,* and
His own* did not receive Him. 12 But [q]as
many as received Him, to them He gave the
right to become children of God, to those
who believe in His name: 13 [r]who were born,
not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor
of the will of man, but of God.

The Word Becomes Flesh

14 [s]And the Word [t]became [u]flesh and
dwelt among us, and [v]we beheld His glory,
the glory as of the only begotten of the Fa-
ther, [w]full of grace and truth.

15 [x]John bore witness of Him and cried
out, saying, "This was He of whom I said,
[y]'He who comes after me is preferred be-
fore me, [z]for He was before me.'"

16 And* of His [a]fullness we have all re-
ceived, and grace for grace. 17 For [b]the law
was given through Moses, *but* [c]grace and
[d]truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 [e]No
one has seen God at any time. [f]The only
begotten Son,* who is in the bosom of the
Father, He has declared *Him*.

A Voice in the Wilderness

19 Now this is [g]the testimony of John,
when the Jews sent priests and Levites
from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

20 [h]He confessed, and did not deny, but
confessed, "I am not the Christ."

21 And they asked him, "What then? Are
you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you [i]the Prophet?"

And he answered, "No."

22 Then they said to him, "Who are you,
that we may give an answer to those who
sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said: [j]"I *am*

> [k]'*The voice of one crying in the*
> *wilderness:*
> *"Make straight the way of the* LORD,'"*

as the prophet Isaiah said."

24 Now those who were sent were from
the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, say-
ing, "Why then do you baptize if you are
not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Proph-
et?"

26 John answered them, saying, [l]"I bap-
tize with water, [m]but there stands One
among you whom you do not know. 27 [n]It
is He who, coming after me, is preferred
before me, whose sandal strap I am not
worthy to loose."

28 These things were done [o]in Bethaba-
ra* beyond the Jordan, where John was
baptizing.

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* **1:11** That is, His own things or domain • That is, His own people * **1:16** NU-Text reads *For.* * **1:18** NU-Text reads *only begotten God.* * **1:23** Isaiah 40:3 * **1:28** NU-Text and M-Text read *Bethany.*

1:11 *receive.* This means "to receive with favor" and implies "welcome." Instead of a welcome mat, Jesus had a door slammed in His face. The themes of rejection and reception (v. 12) introduced in the prologue (1:1–18) appear repeatedly throughout the Gospel of John.

1:12 *He gave the right.* This phrase refers to the legitimate entitlement to the position of children of God. By believing, undeserving sinners can become full members of God's family.

1:14 *the Word became flesh.* The Son of God who was from eternity became human, with limitations in time and space (Phil. 2:5–8). This is the doctrine of the incarnation: God became human. Nothing of the essential nature of deity was lost in this event; we might rephrase *became* as "took to Himself." John uses the word *flesh* to refer to the physical nature of humans, not to our sinful disposition. ***dwelt among us.*** The Greek word for *tent* or *dwelling* was also used in the Greek Old Testament for the tabernacle, where the presence of God dwelt. ***only begotten.*** This means unique, one of a kind.

1:16 *grace for grace.* The background of this doubled term, as well as the use of the term in verse 17, is found in Exodus 32–34. Moses and the people had received grace, but they were in tremendous need of more grace (Ex. 33:13).

1:18 *No one has seen God.* God is Spirit (4:24) and is invisible (Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17) unless God chooses to reveal Himself. Humans cannot look at God and live (Ex. 33:20). However, the Son is in intimate relationship with the Father, face-to-face with God (1:1; 6:46; 1 John 1:2). God became visible to human eyes in the man Jesus. It is through seeing the Son that we see God.

1:19–20 *the Jews.* This refers to the Jewish leaders or the council (the Sanhedrin), who would be responsible for examining anyone thought to be a prophet, to see if the person was true or false.

1:23 *Make straight.* When a king traveled, roads were built so that the royal chariot would not have to travel over rough terrain or be stuck in the mud. Isaiah was saying that before God appeared to manifest His glory, a voice would be heard, inviting Israel to make straight the way by which God Himself would come.

1:24 *the Pharisees.* The Pharisees were an influential sect that numbered about 6,000. As strict interpreters of the law in Israel, they were extremely zealous for ritual and tradition.

1:27 *whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.* Undoing the shoe strap was the job of a slave. The Jewish Talmud says, "Everything that a servant will do for his master, a scholar shall perform for his teacher, except the menial task of loosing his sandal thong." Thus, John was saying that "Jesus Christ is the living Lord and I am the voice, His servant and slave. Actually, I'm not even worthy to be His slave."

1:10 [o] Heb. 1:2 **1:11** [p] Is. 53:3; [Luke 19:14] **1:12** [q] Gal. 3:26 **1:13** [r] [1 Pet. 1:23] **1:14** [s] Rev. 19:13 [t] Gal. 4:4 [u] Heb. 2:11 [v] Is. 40:5 [w] [John 8:32; 14:6; 18:37] **1:15** [x] John 3:32 [y] [Matt. 3:11] [z] [Col. 1:17] **1:16** [a] [Col. 1:19; 2:9] **1:17** [b] [Ex. 20:1] [c] [Rom. 5:21; 6:14] [d] [John 8:32; 14:6; 18:37] **1:18** [e] Ex. 33:20 [f] 1 John 4:9 **1:19** [g] John 5:33 **1:20** [h] Luke 3:15 **1:21** [i] Deut. 18:15, 18 **1:23** [j] Matt. 3:3 [k] Is. 40:3 **1:26** [l] Matt. 3:11 [m] Mal. 3:1 **1:27** [n] Acts 19:4 **1:28** [o] Judg. 7:24

The Lamb of God

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming
toward him, and said, "Behold! [p]The Lamb
of God [q]who takes away the sin of the world!
30 This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes
a Man who is preferred before me, for He
was before me.' 31 I did not know Him; but
that He should be revealed to Israel, [r]there-
fore I came baptizing with water."
32 [s]And John bore witness, saying, "I saw
the Spirit descending from heaven like a
dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did
not know Him, but He who sent me to bap-
tize with water said to me, 'Upon whom
you see the Spirit descending, and remain-
ing on Him, [t]this is He who baptizes with
the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and tes-
tified that this is the [u]Son of God."

The First Disciples

35 Again, the next day, John stood with
two of his disciples. 36 And looking at Jesus
as He walked, he said, [v]"Behold the Lamb
of God!"
37 The two disciples heard him speak,
and they [w]followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus
turned, and seeing them following, said to
them, "What do you seek?"
They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to
say, when translated, Teacher), "where are
You staying?"
39 He said to them, "Come and see." They
came and saw where He was staying, and
remained with Him that day (now it was
about the tenth hour).
40 One of the two who heard John *speak*,
and followed Him, was [x]Andrew, Simon
Peter's brother. 41 He first found his own
brother Simon, and said to him, "We have
found the Messiah" (which is translated,
the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus.
Now when Jesus looked at him, He said,
"You are Simon the son of Jonah.* [y]You
shall be called Cephas" (which is translat-
ed, A Stone).

Philip and Nathanael

43 The following day Jesus wanted to go
to Galilee, and He found [z]Philip and said to
him, "Follow Me." 44 Now [a]Philip was from
Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.
45 Philip found [b]Nathanael and said to him,
"We have found Him of whom [c]Moses in
the law, and also the [d]prophets, wrote—
Jesus [e]of Nazareth, the [f]son of Joseph."
46 And Nathanael said to him, [g]"Can any-
thing good come out of Nazareth?"
Philip said to him, "Come and see."
47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward
Him, and said of him, "Behold, [h]an Israelite
indeed, in whom is no deceit!"
48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You
know me?"
Jesus answered and said to him, "Before
Philip called you, when you were under the
fig tree, I saw you."
49 Nathanael answered and said to Him,
"Rabbi, [i]You are the Son of God! You are
[j]the King of Israel!"
50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Be-
cause I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig
tree,' do you believe? You will see greater
things than these." 51 And He said to him,
"Most assuredly, I say to you, [k]hereafter*
you shall see heaven open, and the angels
of God ascending and descending upon the
Son of Man."

Water Turned to Wine

2 On the third day there was a [a]wedding
in [b]Cana of Galilee, and the [c]mother of
Jesus was there. 2 Now both Jesus and His
disciples were invited to the wedding. 3 And
when they ran out of wine, the mother of
Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."
4 Jesus said to her, [d]"Woman, [e]what does
your concern have to do with Me? [f]My hour
has not yet come."

* **1:42** NU-Text reads *John.* * **1:51** NU-Text omits *hereafter.*

1:29 ***The Lamb of God.*** Jesus Christ is the Lamb that God would give as a sacrifice not only for Israel, but for the whole world (Is. 52:13—53:12).
1:33 ***this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.*** Seven times, the New Testament mentions this ministry of Jesus. Five are prophetic (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5); one is historical (Acts 11:16–18); one is doctrinal (1 Cor. 12:13).
1:42 ***Cephas.*** This is the Aramaic word for "rock" (Matt. 16:18).
1:45 ***Nathanael.*** This name is not mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels. But in every list of the apostles in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the name Bartholomew is listed with Philip, as Nathanael is linked with Philip here. It is likely that Nathanael and Bartholomew were the same person.
1:46 ***Nazareth.*** Nathanael knew that the Old Testament prophets had predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Furthermore, Nazareth was an obscure village. Nathanael simply could not fathom that such a significant person as the Messiah could come from such an insignificant place as Nazareth.
1:48–49 ***under the fig tree.*** In the Old Testament, this expression often suggests being safe and at leisure (1 Kin. 4:25; Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10).
2:1–2 ***Cana.*** This city was about four and a half miles northwest of Nazareth. ***the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited.*** This suggests that Jesus and His disciples were invited because of Mary. Her forwardness in asking Jesus to help when the wine ran out (v. 3) may indicate that she was in some way related to the family holding the wedding.
2:3 ***They have no wine.*** Hospitality in the East was a

1:29 [p] Rev. 5:6–14 [q] [1 Pet. 2:24] **1:31** [r] Matt. 3:6 **1:32** [s] Mark 1:10 **1:33** [t] Is. 42:1; 61:1; Matt. 3:11 **1:34** [u] John 11:27 **1:36** [v] John 1:29 **1:37** [w] Matt. 4:20, 22 **1:40** [x] Matt. 4:18 **1:42** [y] Matt. 16:18 **1:43** [z] John 6:5; 12:21, 22; 14:8, 9 **1:44** [a] John 12:21 **1:45** [b] John 21:2 [c] Luke 24:27 [d] [Zech. 6:12] [e] [Matt. 2:23] [f] Luke 3:23 **1:46** [g] John 7:41, 42, 52 **1:47** [h] Ps. 32:2; 73:1 **1:49** [i] Matt. 14:33 [j] Matt. 21:5 **1:51** [k] Gen. 28:12 **2:1** [a] [Heb. 13:4] [b] John 4:46 [c] John 19:25 **2:4** [d] John 19:26 [e] 2 Sam. 16:10 [f] John 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20

5His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do *it*."

6Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, [g]according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. 7Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8And He said to them, "Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast." And they took *it*. 9When the master of the feast had tasted [h]the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. 10And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the *guests* have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"

11This [i]beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, [j]and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

12After this He went down to [k]Capernaum, He, His mother, [l]His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

13[m]Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14[n]And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. 15When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. 16And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make [o]My Father's house a house of merchandise!" 17Then His disciples remembered that it was written, [p]*"Zeal for Your house has eaten* Me up."**

18So the Jews answered and said to Him, [q]"What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"

19Jesus answered and said to them, [r]"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

20Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

21But He was speaking [s]of the temple of His body. 22Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, [t]His disciples remembered that He had said this to them;* and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

The Discerner of Hearts

23Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the [u]signs which He did. 24But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He [v]knew all *men*, 25and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for [w]He knew what was in man.

* **2:17** NU-Text and M-Text read *will eat*. • Psalm 69:9 * **2:22** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to them*.

sacred duty. A wedding feast often lasted for a week. To run out of wine at such an important event would have been humiliating for the bride and groom. The family of Jesus was not wealthy, and it is likely their relatives and acquaintances were not either. This may have been a "low-budget" wedding feast.

2:6 *six waterpots.* Each waterpot held 20–30 gallons, for a total of 120–180 gallons of the finest wine (v. 10). ***manner of purification of the Jews.*** Jewish tradition required several kinds of ceremonial washings. Strict Jews washed their hands before a meal, between courses, and after the meal. This "purifying" extended not only to washing hands, but also to washing cups and vessels (Mark 7:3–4).

2:11 *This beginning of signs.* In the Gospel of John, the miracles of Jesus are called signs, indicating that they pointed to His messiahship. This sign signified Christ's glory—that is, His deity. When Jesus transformed water into wine, He demonstrated His power.

2:13 *the Passover of the Jews.* Every male Jew was required to go to Jerusalem three times a year—for the Feast of Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Ex. 23:14–19; Lev. 23). ***Jerusalem.*** The Synoptic Gospels concentrate on Jesus' Galilean ministry. John focuses on Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem.

2:14 *And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves.* The Synoptic Gospels place the cleansing of the temple at the conclusion of Jesus' ministry (Matt. 21:12–13), whereas John puts it at the beginning. Apparently, Jesus cleansed the temple two different times. The law of Moses required that any animal offered in sacrifice be unblemished and that every Jewish male over 19 years of age pay a temple tax (Lev. 1:3; Deut. 17:1). As a result, tax collectors and inspectors of sacrificial animals were present at the temple. However, these officials would not accept secular coins because they had an image of the Roman emperor. To put such coins into the temple treasury was thought to be an offense. Accordingly, merchants and money changers set up shop and charged high prices for changing currency and for sacrificial animals.

2:19 *Destroy this temple.* Jesus was not talking about the physical building; He was referring to His body, as John emphasizes in verse 21. Jesus was speaking of His death. ***I will raise it up.*** Note that Jesus did not say, "I will build it again." He was referring to His resurrection, three days after His death.

2:20 *Forty-six years.* Herod the Great began restoring the temple in 20 B.C. The work was not finished at the time of this conversation. In fact, it was not completed until around A.D. 64 under Herod Agrippa.

2:23 *many believed in His name.* This was saving faith. John's purpose in recording Jesus' miracles was for people to believe and have eternal life (20:30–31).

2:24 *But Jesus did not commit Himself.* This word

2:6 [g] [Mark 7:3] **2:9** [h] John 4:46 **2:11** [i] John 4:54 [j] [John 1:14] **2:12** [k] Matt. 4:13 [l] Matt. 12:46; 13:55 **2:13** [m] Deut. 16:1–6 **2:14** [n] Mark 11:15, 17 **2:16** [o] Luke 2:49 **2:17** [p] Ps. 69:9 **2:18** [q] Matt. 12:38 **2:19** [r] Matt. 26:61; 27:40 **2:21** [s] [1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19] **2:22** [t] Luke 24:8 **2:23** [u] [Acts 2:22] **2:24** [v] Rev. 2:23 **2:25** [w] Matt. 9:4

The New Birth

3 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.
2 [a]This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for [b]no one can do these signs that You do unless [c]God is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, [d]unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, [e]unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6** That which is born of the flesh is [f]flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' **8** [g]The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, [h]"How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? **11** [i]Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and [j]you do not receive Our witness. **12** If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? **13** [k]No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is,* the Son of Man who is in heaven.* **14** [l]And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so [m]must the Son of Man be lifted up, **15** that whoever [n]believes in Him should not perish but* [o]have eternal life. **16** [p]For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten [q]Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** [r]For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

18 [s]"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **19** And this is the condemnation, [t]that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **20** For [u]everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. **21** But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been [v]done in God."

* **3:13** NU-Text omits *who is in heaven.*
* **3:15** NU-Text omits *not perish but.*

is the same Greek word translated *believe* in verse 23. There is a play on words here. These individuals trusted Jesus, but Jesus did not entrust Himself to them.

3:2 *by night.* The fact that Nicodemus came to Jesus at night may reveal the timidity of his faith (12:42); however, his faith was developing (7:50–51; 19:39).

3:3 *unless one is born again.* Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus that there is more to having a right relationship with God than being physically born a Jew. The new birth is not physical; rather, it is spiritual (v. 6). It must come by the Spirit of God if it is a spiritual birth (v. 5).

3:5 *born of water and the Spirit.* There are several interpretations of this phrase. (1) Jesus was referring to water baptism (Acts 10:43–47). (2) Water is to be understood as a symbol for the Holy Spirit. (3) Water is to be understood as a symbol of the Word of God. (4) Jesus used the phrase "born of water" to refer to physical birth. He then used the contrasting phrase "of the Spirit" to refer to spiritual birth. (5) Jesus used the phrase "born of water" to refer to John the Baptist's baptism. (6) Jesus used the Old Testament imagery of "water" and "wind" to refer to the work of God from above (Is. 44:3–5).

3:8 *The wind.* Jesus used the wind as an illustration of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated *Spirit* also means "wind." As the wind seemingly blows where it wills, so the Holy Spirit sovereignly works. Likewise, no one knows the origin or destination of the wind, but everyone knows it is there. The same is true of the Holy Spirit.

3:12 *heavenly things.* This refers to events like Christ's ascension (6:61–62) and the coming of the Holy Spirit (16:7).

3:14 *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness.* Those who looked at it lived (Num. 21:9). So it is with the Son of Man (1:51). ***lifted up.*** Every time these words occur in the Gospel of John, there is a reference to Jesus' death (8:28; 12:32,34).

3:16 Belief—Belief involves understanding, knowing, living, and being committed to a relationship with God. How one does all that is so different from not doing it, it is like being born again to a new life. Nicodemus had a little knowledge. What Nicodemus failed to understand was the nature of spiritual reality. He was earthbound and didn't understand that Jesus and belief are God things. He could not get from where he was to where Jesus was on the road of his understanding. He needed to accept a new road, namely the one Jesus was walking, toward Him. Jesus draws us to that light, His light. We have to respond to it as Nicodemus did over time (7:50; 19:39). Belief involves internalizing these truths with our whole hearts and minds, being born again, letting all of ourselves be exposed to, and by, that light.

3:20 *For everyone practicing evil hates the light.* People offer many excuses for not accepting Christ.

3:2 [a] John 7:50; 19:39 [b] John 9:16, 33 [c] [Acts 10:38]
3:3 [d] [1 Pet. 1:23] **3:5** [e] [Acts 2:38] **3:6** [f] 1 Cor. 15:50
3:8 [g] Eccl. 11:5 **3:9** [h] John 6:52, 60 **3:11** [i] [Matt. 11:27]
[j] John 3:32; 8:14 **3:13** [k] Eph. 4:9 **3:14** [l] Num. 21:9
[m] John 8:28; 12:34; 19:18 **3:15** [n] John 6:47 [o] John 3:36
3:16 [p] Rom. 5:8 [q] [Is. 9:6] **3:17** [r] Luke 9:56 **3:18** [s] John 5:24; 6:40, 47; 20:31 **3:19** [t] [John 1:4, 9–11] **3:20** [u] Eph. 5:11, 13 **3:21** [v] 1 Cor. 15:10

John the Baptist Exalts Christ

22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there
He remained with them [w]and baptized.
23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon
near [x]Salim, because there was much wa-
ter there. [y]And they came and were bap-
tized. 24 For [z]John had not yet been thrown
into prison.

25 Then there arose a dispute between
some of John's disciples and the Jews
about purification. 26 And they came to
John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was
with you beyond the Jordan, [a]to whom you
have testified—behold, He is baptizing,
and all [b]are coming to Him!"

27 John answered and said, [c]"A man can
receive nothing unless it has been giv-
en to him from heaven. 28 You yourselves
bear me witness, that I said, [d]'I am not
the Christ,' but, [e]'I have been sent before
Him.' 29 [f]He who has the bride is the bride-
groom; but [g]the friend of the bridegroom,
who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly
because of the bridegroom's voice. There-
fore this joy of mine is fulfilled. 30 [h]He must
increase, but I *must* decrease. 31 [i]He who
comes from above [j]is above all; [k]he who is
of the earth is earthly and speaks of the
earth. [l]He who comes from heaven is above
all. 32 And [m]what He has seen and heard,
that He testifies; and no one receives His
testimony. 33 He who has received His testi-
mony [n]has certified that God is true. 34 [o]For
He whom God has sent speaks the words
of God, for God does not give the Spirit [p]by
measure. 35 [q]The Father loves the Son, and
has given all things into His hand. 36 [r]He
who believes in the Son has everlasting
life; and he who does not believe the Son
shall not see life, but the [s]wrath of God
abides on him."

A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah

4 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the
Pharisees had heard that Jesus made
and [a]baptized more disciples than John
2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize,
but His disciples), 3 He left Judea and de-
parted again to Galilee. 4 But He needed to
go through Samaria.

5 So He came to a city of Samaria which
is called Sychar, near the plot of ground
that [b]Jacob [c]gave to his son Joseph. 6 Now
Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, be-
ing wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by
the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman of Samaria came to draw
water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."
8 For His disciples had gone away into the
city to buy food.

Some cite the presence of hypocrites in the church. Others claim inability to believe some of the truths about Christ or the gospel. These are merely attempts to conceal a heart in rebellion against God. The ultimate reason people do not come to Christ is that they do not want to.

3:26 *they came to John.* John the Baptist's disciples were loyal to him. They were deeply concerned that one of his "disciples," Jesus, was competing with and surpassing him. In their astonishment, they exaggerated the predicament, saying, "all are coming to Him." They were concerned that John was losing his audience to another preacher.

3:27 *John answered.* John the Baptist clarified the relationship between himself and Jesus. First, he talked about himself (vv. 27–29); then he talked about Jesus (vv. 30–36). John explained that he could not accept the position of supremacy that his disciples wanted to thrust upon him because he had not received it from heaven.

3:29 *friend of the bridegroom.* John compared himself to this person who was generally appointed to arrange the preliminaries of the wedding, to manage the wedding, and to preside at the wedding feast.

3:31 *He who comes from above.* This is a reference to Christ. ***he who is of the earth.*** This refers to John the Baptist. John emphasized his earthly origin and its limitations. John proclaimed divine truth on earth; Jesus, on the other hand, is from heaven and above all.

3:33 *has certified.* In a society where many could not read, seals were used to convey a clear message, even to the illiterate. A seal indicated ownership to all and expressed a person's personal guarantee. To receive Jesus' testimony is to certify that God is true regarding what He has sealed.

3:34 *God does not give the Spirit by measure.* Unlike human teachers, Jesus was not given the Spirit in a limited way (Is. 11:1–2). All three Persons of the Trinity are referred to in this verse; God the Father sent Christ the Son, and gave Him the Holy Spirit without measure.

4:1 *Therefore, when.* This refers the reader back to 3:22–36. Christ's success in winning disciples had created jealousy among John's followers and provoked questions among the Pharisees. Since Jesus did not want to be drawn into a controversy over baptism at this stage of His ministry, He left Judea for Galilee (v. 3).

4:4 *He needed to go through Samaria.* The shortest route from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north went through Samaria. The journey took three days if He wanted to travel the direct route. The Jews often avoided Samaria by going around it along the Jordan River. The hatred between the Jews and Samaritans went back to the days of the exile. Samaria was the region between Judea and Galilee. When the northern kingdom was exiled to Assyria, King Sargon repopulated the area with captives from other lands. The intermarriage of these foreigners and the Jews who had been left complicated the ancestry of the Samaritans. The Jews hated the Samaritans and considered them to be no longer "pure" Jews.

3:22 [w] John 4:1, 2 **3:23** [x] 1 Sam. 9:4 [y] Matt. 3:5, 6 **3:24** [z] Matt. 4:12; 14:3 **3:26** [a] John 1:7, 15, 27, 34 [b] Mark 2:2; 3:10; 5:24 **3:27** [c] 1 Cor. 3:5, 6; 4:7 **3:28** [d] John 1:19–27 [e] Mal. 3:1 **3:29** [f] [2 Cor. 11:2] [g] Song 5:1 **3:30** [h] [Is. 9:7] **3:31** [i] John 3:13; 8:23 [j] Matt. 28:18 [k] 1 Cor. 15:47 [l] John 6:33 **3:32** [m] John 3:11; 15:15 **3:33** [n] 1 John 5:10 **3:34** [o] Deut. 18:18; John 7:16 [p] John 1:16 **3:35** [q] [Heb. 2:8] **3:36** [r] John 3:16, 17; 6:47 [s] Rom. 1:18 **4:1** [a] John 3:22, 26 **4:5** [b] Gen. 33:19 [c] Gen. 48:22

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to
Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a
drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For
[d]Jews have no dealings with [e]Samaritans.
10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you
knew the [f]gift of God, and who it is who
says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would
have asked Him, and He would have given
you [g]living water."
11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have
nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.
Where then do You get that living water?
12 Are You greater than our father Jacob,
who gave us the well, and drank from it
himself, as well as his sons and his live-
stock?"
13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Who-
ever drinks of this water will thirst again,
14 but [h]whoever drinks of the water that I
shall give him will never thirst. But the
water that I shall give him [i]will become in
him a fountain of water springing up into
everlasting life."
15 [j]The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me
this water, that I may not thirst, nor come
here to draw."
16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your hus-
band, and come here."
17 The woman answered and said, "I
have no husband."
Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I
have no husband,' 18 for you have had five
husbands, and the one whom you now have
is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."
19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, [k]I per-
ceive that You are a prophet. 20 Our fathers
worshiped on [l]this mountain, and you *Jews*
say that in [m]Jerusalem is the place where
one ought to worship."
21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me,
the hour is coming [n]when you will neither
on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, wor-
ship the Father. 22 You worship [o]what you
do not know; we know what we worship,
for [p]salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour
is coming, and now is, when the true wor-
shipers will [q]worship the Father in [r]spirit
[s]and truth; for the Father is seeking such
to worship Him. 24 [t]God *is* Spirit, and those
who worship Him must worship in spirit
and truth."
25 The woman said to Him, "I know
that Messiah [u]is coming" (who is called
Christ). "When He comes, [v]He will tell us
all things."
26 Jesus said to her, [w]"I who speak to you
am *He*."

The Whitened Harvest

27 And at this *point* His disciples came,
and they marveled that He talked with a
woman; yet no one said, "What do You
seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"
28 The woman then left her waterpot,
went her way into the city, and said to the
men, 29 "Come, see a Man [x]who told me all
things that I ever did. Could this be the
Christ?" 30 Then they went out of the city
and came to Him.
31 In the meantime His disciples urged
Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."
32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat
of which you do not know."
33 Therefore the disciples said to one an-
other, "Has anyone brought Him *anything*
to eat?"
34 Jesus said to them, [y]"My food is to do
the will of Him who sent Me, and to [z]finish
His work. 35 Do you not say, 'There are still
four months and *then* comes [a]the harvest'?
Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and
look at the fields, [b]for they are already
white for harvest! 36 [c]And he who reaps re-
ceives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal
life, that [d]both he who sows and he who
reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this
the saying is true: [e]'One sows and another
reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap that for which
you have not labored; [f]others have labored,
and you have entered into their labors."

4:14 ***a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.*** Jesus desired a drink of water. He then directed the focus of discussion from physical water to spiritual water, pointing out the tremendous advantages of the second kind, which is obtained without cost or effort. This water satisfies completely and eternally.

4:16 ***Go, call your husband.*** Jesus mentioned the woman's husband in order to expose her sin (v. 18).

4:20 ***you Jews say that in Jerusalem.*** The Jews insisted that the exclusive place of worship was Jerusalem. But the Samaritans had set up a rival worship site on Mount Gerizim, which according to their tradition was where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac and where later on he met Melchizedek.

4:24 ***God is Spirit . . . must worship in spirit and truth.*** God is not limited by time and space. When people are born of the Spirit, they can commune with God anywhere. *Spirit* is the opposite of what is material and earthly, for example, Mount Gerizim. Christ makes worship a matter of the heart. *Truth* is what is in harmony with the nature and will of God. The issue is not where a person worships, but how and whom.

4:29 ***all things that I ever did.*** In her excitement, the woman exaggerated. She did not report what Jesus actually told her, but what He could have told her. Note the woman's spiritual journey. She first viewed Christ as a Jew (v. 9), then as a prophet (v. 19), and finally as the Messiah.

4:36 ***receives wages.*** The reaper of a spiritual harvest receives wages—that is, fruit which brings joy. In this case, Jesus sowed by giving the message to the woman. The disciples were going to reap the harvest that He had sown.

4:9 [d] Acts 10:28 [e] 2 Kin. 17:24 **4:10** [f] [Rom. 5:15] [g] Is. 12:3; 44:3 **4:14** [h] [John 6:35, 58] [i] John 7:37, 38 **4:15** [j] John 6:34, 35; 17:2, 3 **4:19** [k] Luke 7:16, 39; 24:19 **4:20** [l] Judg. 9:7 [m] Deut. 12:5, 11 **4:21** [n] 1 Tim. 2:8 **4:22** [o] [2 Kin. 17:28–41] [p] [Rom. 3:1; 9:4, 5] **4:23** [q] [Heb. 13:10–14] [r] Phil. 3:3 [s] [John 1:17] **4:24** [t] 2 Cor. 3:17 **4:25** [u] Deut. 18:15 [v] John 4:29, 39 **4:26** [w] Matt. 26:63, 64 **4:29** [x] John 4:25 **4:34** [y] Ps. 40:7, 8 [z] [John 6:38; 17:4; 19:30] **4:35** [a] Gen. 8:22 [b] Matt. 9:37 **4:36** [c] Dan. 12:3 [d] 1 Thess. 2:19 **4:37** [e] 1 Cor. 3:5–9 **4:38** [f] [1 Pet. 1:12]

The Savior of the World

39 And many of the Samaritans of that
city believed in Him [g]because of the word
of the woman who testified, "He told me all
that I *ever* did." 40 So when the Samaritans
had come to Him, they urged Him to stay
with them; and He stayed there two days.
41 And many more believed because of His
own [h]word.
42 Then they said to the woman, "Now
we believe, not because of what you said,
for [i]we ourselves have heard *Him* and we
know that this is indeed the Christ,* the
Savior of the world."

Welcome at Galilee

43 Now after the two days He departed
from there and went to Galilee. 44 For [j]Jesus
Himself testified that a prophet has no hon-
or in his own country. 45 So when He came to
Galilee, the Galileans received Him, [k]hav-
ing seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at
the feast; [l]for they also had gone to the feast.

A Nobleman's Son Healed

46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee
[m]where He had made the water wine. And
there was a certain nobleman whose son
was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard
that Jesus had come out of Judea into Gal-
ilee, he went to Him and implored Him to
come down and heal his son, for he was
at the point of death. 48 Then Jesus said to
him, [n]"Unless you *people* see signs and
wonders, you will by no means believe."
49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come
down before my child dies!"
50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your
son lives." So the man believed the word
that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his
way. 51 And as he was now going down,
his servants met him and told *him,* saying,
"Your son lives!"
52 Then he inquired of them the hour
when he got better. And they said to him,
"Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever
left him." 53 So the father knew that *it was*
at the same hour in which Jesus said to
him, "Your son lives." And he himself be-
lieved, and his whole household.
54 This again *is* the second sign Jesus
did when He had come out of Judea into
Galilee.

A Man Healed at the Pool of Bethesda

5 After [a]this there was a feast of the Jews,
and Jesus [b]went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now
there is in Jerusalem [c]by the Sheep *Gate* a
pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda,*
having five porches. 3 In these lay a great
multitude of sick people, blind, lame, para-
lyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.
4 For an angel went down at a certain time
into the pool and stirred up the water; then
whoever stepped in first, after the stirring
of the water, was made well of whatever
disease he had.* 5 Now a certain man was
there who had an infirmity thirty-eight
years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there,
and knew that he already had been *in that
condition* a long time, He said to him, "Do
you want to be made well?"
7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I
have no man to put me into the pool when
the water is stirred up; but while I am com-
ing, another steps down before me."
8 Jesus said to him, [d]"Rise, take up your
bed and walk." 9 And immediately the man
was made well, took up his bed, and walked.
And [e]that day was the Sabbath. 10 The
Jews therefore said to him who was cured,
"It is the Sabbath; [f]it is not lawful for you to
carry your bed."
11 He answered them, "He who made
me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and
walk.' "
12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man
who said to you, 'Take up your bed and
walk'?" 13 But the one who was [g]healed did
not know who it was, for Jesus had with-
drawn, a multitude being in *that* place.
14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple,
and said to him, "See, you have been made
well. [h]Sin no more, lest a worse thing come
upon you."

* **4:42** NU-Text omits *the Christ.* * **5:2** NU-Text reads *Bethzatha.* * **5:4** NU-Text omits *waiting for the moving of the water* at the end of verse 3, and all of verse 4.

4:42 *Savior of the world.* This title is used only here and in 1 John 4:14. The Jews of Jesus' day taught that to approach God, one first had to be a Jew. By including this incident in the Gospel, John demonstrates that Jesus is for all people of the world.

4:46 *a certain nobleman.* This was probably someone who was in the service of the king. Herod Antipas was technically the "tetrarch" of Galilee, but he was referred to as a king.

5:2 *the Sheep Gate.* This was a gate in the wall of Jerusalem near the temple, through which sheep were brought for sacrifice.

5:9 *took up his bed, and walked.* Carrying a bed on the Sabbath was considered a violation of the law of Moses (v. 10).

5:10 *it is not lawful.* The law of Moses taught that the Sabbath must be different from other days. On it, neither people nor animals could work. The prophet Jeremiah had prohibited carrying burdens or working on the Sabbath (Jer. 17:21–22). Over the years, the Jewish leaders had amassed thousands of rules and regulations concerning the Sabbath. By Jesus' day, they had 39 different classifications of work. According to them, carrying furniture and even providing medical treatment on the Sabbath were forbidden. Jesus did not break the law. He violated the *traditions* of the Pharisees which had grown up around the law.

4:39 [g] John 4:29 **4:41** [h] Luke 4:32 **4:42** [i] 1 John 4:14
4:44 [j] Matt. 13:57 **4:45** [k] John 2:13, 23; 3:2 [l] Deut. 16:16
4:46 [m] John 2:1, 11 **4:48** [n] 1 Cor. 1:22 **5:1** [a] Deut. 16:16
[b] John 2:13 **5:2** [c] Neh. 3:1, 32; 12:39 **5:8** [d] Luke 5:24
5:9 [e] John 9:14 **5:10** [f] Jer. 17:21, 22 **5:13** [g] Luke 13:14; 22:51 **5:14** [h] John 8:11

15The man departed and told the Jews
that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Honor the Father and the Son

16For this reason the Jews [i]persecuted
Jesus, and sought to kill Him,* because
He had done these things on the Sabbath.
17But Jesus answered them, [j]"My Father
has been working until now, and I have
been working."
18Therefore the Jews [k]sought all the
more to kill Him, because He not only broke
the Sabbath, but also said that God was His
Father, [l]making Himself equal with God.
19Then Jesus answered and said to them,
"Most assuredly, I say to you, [m]the Son can
do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the
Father do; for whatever He does, the Son
also does in like manner. 20For [n]the Father
loves the Son, and [o]shows Him all things
that He Himself does; and He will show
Him greater works than these, that you
may marvel. 21For as the Father raises the
dead and gives life to *them*, [p]even so the
Son gives life to whom He will. 22For the
Father judges no one, but [q]has committed
all judgment to the Son, 23that all should
honor the Son just as they honor the Father.
[r]He who does not honor the Son does not
honor the Father who sent Him.

Life and Judgment Are Through the Son

24"Most assuredly, I say to you, [s]he who
hears My word and believes in Him who
sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not
come into judgment, [t]but has passed from
death into life. 25Most assuredly, I say to
you, the hour is coming, and now is, when
[u]the dead will hear the voice of the Son of
God; and those who hear will live. 26For [v]as
the Father has life in Himself, so He has
granted the Son to have [w]life in Himself,
27and [x]has given Him authority to execute
judgment also, [y]because He is the Son of
Man. 28Do not marvel at this; for the hour
is coming in which all who are in the
graves will [z]hear His voice 29[a]and come
forth—[b]those who have done good, to the
resurrection of life, and those who have
done evil, to the resurrection of condem-
nation. 30[c]I can of Myself do nothing. As
I hear, I judge; and My judgment is right-
eous, because [d]I do not seek My own will
but the will of the Father who sent Me.

The Fourfold Witness

31[e]"If I bear witness of Myself, My wit-
ness is not true. 32[f]There is another who
bears witness of Me, and I know that the
witness which He witnesses of Me is true.
33You have sent to John, [g]and he has borne
witness to the truth. 34Yet I do not receive
testimony from man, but I say these things
that you may be saved. 35He was the burn-
ing and [h]shining lamp, and [i]you were will-
ing for a time to rejoice in his light. 36But
[j]I have a greater witness than John's; for
[k]the works which the Father has given Me
to finish—the very [l]works that I do—bear
witness of Me, that the Father has sent

* **5:16** NU-Text omits *and sought to kill Him.*

5:16 ***the Jews persecuted Jesus.*** This is the first recorded declaration of open hostility toward Jesus in the Gospel of John.

5:17 ***My Father.*** Jesus is "the only begotten Son" (1:14,18; 3:16,18)—that is, the unique Son of God. Here He claims not only a unique relationship with God the Father, but also equality with God in nature. Since God continually does good works without allowing Himself to stop on the Sabbath, the Son does likewise, since He is equal with God. Certainly the Jewish leaders understood the implications of Jesus' claims (v. 18).

5:19 ***the Son can do nothing of Himself.*** Action by the Son apart from the Father is impossible because of the unity of the Father and the Son (v. 17). ***whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.*** Here is a claim of deity and unity with the Father.

5:22 ***all judgment to the Son.*** The Jews recognized that God alone had the right to judge humanity. In claiming that the Father committed all judgment to Him, Jesus again claimed equality with God.

5:24 Never-Ending Life—One of the primary features of the new life that we have in Christ is that it is an eternal or everlasting life. This truth completely changes how we look at our present lives and at the future. It needs to be seen as something we possess even now (10:28). We have entered into a new, personal relationship with God that gives us a spiritual vitality and fullness of life that we lacked before (17:3). It will be completely fulfilled in the future when we are bodily redeemed (Rom. 8:23). The greatness of this spiritual reality constitutes a wonderful incentive to vigorously proclaim the gospel to those who are still dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).

5:26 ***For.*** This indicates that this verse explains the previous verse. Christ can give life because He Himself possesses life. He not only has a part in giving it, He is the source of it. This is another testimony to Jesus' deity because only God has life in Himself.

5:29 ***resurrection of life . . . resurrection of condemnation.*** Two separate resurrections are presented here in the fashion of the Old Testament prophets, who often grouped together events of the future without distinction of the time (Is. 61:2). Jesus was teaching the universality of resurrection, not the timing of it.

5:31–32 ***My witness is not true.*** If Christ were the only one bearing witness of what He was claiming, His witness would not be accepted. According to

5:16 *i* John 8:37; 10:39 **5:17** *j* [John 9:4; 17:4] **5:18** *k* John 7:1, 19 *l* John 10:30 **5:19** *m* John 5:30; 6:38; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10 **5:20** *n* Matt. 3:17 *o* [Matt. 11:27] **5:21** *p* [John 11:25] **5:22** *q* [Acts 17:31] **5:23** *r* 1 John 2:23 **5:24** *s* John 3:16, 18; 6:47 *t* [1 John 3:14] **5:25** *u* [Col. 2:13] **5:26** *v* Ps. 36:9 *w* 1 Cor. 15:45 **5:27** *x* [Acts 10:42; 17:31] *y* Dan. 7:13 **5:28** *z* [1 Thess. 4:15–17] **5:29** *a* Is. 26:19 *b* Dan. 12:2 **5:30** *c* John 5:19 *d* Matt. 26:39 **5:31** *e* John 8:14 **5:32** *f* [Matt. 3:17] **5:33** *g* [John 1:15, 19, 27, 32] **5:35** *h* 2 Pet. 1:19 *i* Mark 6:20 **5:36** *j* 1 John 5:9 *k* John 3:2; 10:25; 17:4 *l* John 9:16; 10:38

Me. 37And the Father Himself, who sent Me, [m]has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, [n]nor seen His form. 38But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. 39[o]You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and [p]these are they which testify of Me. 40[q]But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

41[r]"I do not receive honor from men. 42But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 43I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. 44[s]How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek [t]the honor that *comes* from the only God? 45Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; [u]there is *one* who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. 46For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; [v]for he wrote about Me. 47But if you [w]do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Feeding the Five Thousand

6 After [a]these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is *the Sea* of [b]Tiberias. 2Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were [c]diseased. 3And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

4[d]Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. 5[e]Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to [f]Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" 6But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

7Philip answered Him, [g]"Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."

8One of His disciples, [h]Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 9"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, [i]but what are they among so many?"

10Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed *them* to the disciples, and the disciples* to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. 12So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." 13Therefore they gathered *them* up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. 14Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly [j]the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Jesus Walks on the Sea

15Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him [k]king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

16[l]Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, 17got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. 18Then the sea arose

* **6:11** NU-Text omits *to the disciples, and the disciples.*

Jewish legal practice, a person's testimony about himself was not accepted in court. So, in this case, Jesus offered another witness—John the Baptist (v. 33).

5:42 *the love of God.* This love is not love from God but love for God. Love from God is evidenced in Christ (3:16; Rom. 5:8). Since God loves us, we should love Him (Deut. 6:5; 1 John 4:19).

5:45 *you trust.* Christ will not have to accuse the people on judgment day because the one in whom they place their trust, Moses, will. The people will be condemned by the very law they professed to keep.

5:46 *for he wrote about Me.* Moses wrote about Christ in the promises to the patriarchs, in the history of the deliverance from Egypt, in the symbolic institutions of the law, and in the prediction of a Prophet like himself (Luke 24:25–26). If the people had believed Moses, they would have received Jesus gladly. Over 300 Old Testament prophecies were specifically fulfilled in the first coming of Christ.

6:1 *Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.* John's use of the name Tiberias is an indication that his Gospel was written for those outside of Palestine. The Jewish people called this body of water the Lake of Gennesaret. The Romans called it Tiberias, after the city built on its western shore by Herod Antipas and named for the Emperor Tiberius.

6:7 *Two hundred denarii.* One denarius was a day's wage for a laborer or field hand (Matt. 20:2). Two hundred denarii would have been almost two-thirds of a year's wages.

6:9 *barley loaves.* These were an inexpensive food of the common people and the poor.

6:10–11 *in number about five thousand . . . He distributed . . . those sitting down.* This is the only miracle of Jesus that is recounted in all four Gospels.

6:15 *to make Him king.* Moses had not only miraculously provided food for the Israelites, he had also led them out of bondage in Egypt. Perhaps these men felt that Jesus could lead them out of bondage to the Romans. Christ was at the zenith of His popularity, and the temptation to take the kingdom without the cross must have been great (Matt. 4:8–10).

5:37 [m] Matt. 3:17 [n] 1 John 4:12 **5:39** [o] Is. 8:20; 34:16 [p] Luke 24:27 **5:40** [q] John 1:11; 3:19] **5:41** [r] 1 Thess. 2:6 **5:44** [s] John 12:43 [t] [Rom. 2:29] **5:45** [u] Rom. 2:12 **5:46** [v] Deut. 18:15, 18 **5:47** [w] Luke 16:29, 31
6:1 [a] Mark 6:32 [b] John 6:23; 21:1 **6:2** [c] Matt. 4:23; 8:16; 9:35; 14:36; 15:30; 19:2 **6:4** [d] Deut. 16:1 **6:5** [e] Matt. 14:14 [f] John 1:43 **6:7** [g] Num. 11:21, 22 **6:8** [h] John 1:40
6:9 [i] 2 Kin. 4:43 **6:14** [j] Gen. 49:10 **6:15** [k] [John 18:36]
6:16 [l] Matt. 14:23

because a great wind was blowing. 19So when they had rowed about three or four miles,* they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were [m]afraid. 20But He said to them, [n]"It is I; do not be afraid." 21Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

The Bread from Heaven

22On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered,* and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone— 23however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks— 24when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, [o]seeking Jesus. 25And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"

26Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27[p]Do not labor for the food which perishes, but [q]for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, [r]because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

28Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

29Jesus answered and said to them, [s]"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

30Therefore they said to Him, [t]"What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? 31[u]Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, [v]*'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'*"*

32Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but [w]My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34[x]Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

35And Jesus said to them, [y]"I am the bread of life. [z]He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never [a]thirst. 36[b]But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet [c]do not believe. 37[d]All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and [e]the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38For I have come down from heaven, [f]not to do My own will, [g]but the will of Him who sent Me. 39This is the will of the Father who sent Me, [h]that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40And this is the will of Him who sent Me, [i]that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Rejected by His Own

41The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." 42And they said, [j]"Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

43Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. 44[k]No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me [l]draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. 45It is written in the prophets, [m]*'And they shall all be taught by God.'*"* [n]Therefore everyone who has heard and learned* from the Father comes to Me.

* **6:19** Literally *twenty-five or thirty stadia*
* **6:22** NU-Text omits *that* and *which His disciples had entered.* * **6:31** Exodus 16:4; Nehemiah 9:15; Psalm 78:24 * **6:45** Isaiah 54:13 • M-Text reads *hears and has learned.*

6:19–21 *they saw Jesus walking on the sea.* This miracle, the fifth sign recorded by John, pointed to Jesus' deity. Only God could walk on water, calm the sea, and supernaturally transport the disciples to their destination.

6:27 *Do not labor.* The impression that one must work for eternal life is quickly corrected when Jesus adds "which the Son of Man will give you." The Son provides *life* as a gift (4:10).

6:31 *He gave them bread from heaven.* There was a tradition that said the Messiah would cause manna to fall from heaven as Moses did (Ex. 16:4,15). The people probably also saw this "miracle worker" as the perpetual provider of physical needs rather than spiritual ones.

6:32 *My Father.* The crowd misrepresented the truth, so Jesus corrected them. The manna had not come from Moses; it had been provided by God. Moreover, God still gives "true bread"—that is, eternal life (v. 33).

6:39–40 *the will of the Father.* This is twofold: (1) that all who come to the Son will be received and not lost; (2) that all who see and believe on the Son will have eternal life.

6:42 *the son of Joseph.* The religious leaders' proof that Jesus was not from heaven was that they knew His parents. To them, there was nothing supernatural about Jesus' origin.

6:19 [m] Matt. 17:6 **6:20** [n] Is. 43:1, 2 **6:24** [o] Luke 4:42 **6:27** [p] Matt. 6:19 [q] John 4:14 [r] Acts 2:22 **6:29** [s] [1 John 3:23] **6:30** [t] Matt. 12:38; 16:1 **6:31** [u] Ex. 16:15 [v] Ex. 16:4, 15; Neh. 9:15; Ps. 78:24 **6:32** [w] John 3:13, 16 **6:34** [x] John 4:15 **6:35** [y] John 6:48, 58 [z] John 4:14; 7:37 [a] Is. 55:1, 2 **6:36** [b] John 6:26, 64; 15:24 [c] John 10:26 **6:37** [d] John 6:45 [e] 2 Tim. 2:19 **6:38** [f] Matt. 26:39 [g] John 4:34 **6:39** [h] John 10:28; 17:12; 18:9 **6:40** [i] John 3:15, 16; 4:14; 6:27, 47, 54 **6:42** [j] Matt. 13:55 **6:44** [k] Song 1:4 [l] [Phil. 1:29; 2:12, 13] **6:45** [m] Is. 54:13 [n] John 6:37

46 [o]Not that anyone has seen the Father, [p]except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. 47 Most assuredly, I say to you, [q]he who believes in Me* has everlasting life. 48 [r]I am the bread of life. 49 [s]Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 [t]This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread [u]which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and [v]the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

52 The Jews therefore [w]quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?"

53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless [x]you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 [y]Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For My flesh is food indeed,* and My blood is drink indeed. 56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood [z]abides in Me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 [a]This is the bread which came down from heaven—not [b]as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Many Disciples Turn Away

60 [c]Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard *this,* said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 [d]*What* then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? 63 [e]It is the Spirit who gives life; the [f]flesh profits nothing. The [g]words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life. 64 But [h]there are some of you who do not believe." For [i]Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. 65 And He said, "Therefore [j]I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

66 [k]From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have [l]the words of eternal life. 69 [m]Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

70 Jesus answered them, [n]"Did I not choose you, the twelve, [o]and one of you is a devil?" 71 He spoke of [p]Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would [q]betray Him, being one of the twelve.

Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve

7 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, [a]because the Jews* sought to kill Him. 2 [b]Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. 3 [c]His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. 4 For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." 5 For [d]even His [e]brothers did not believe in Him.

6 Then Jesus said to them, [f]"My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. 7 [g]The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me [h]because I testify of it that its

* **6:47** NU-Text omits *in Me.* * **6:55** NU-Text reads *true food* and *true drink.* * **6:69** NU-Text reads *You are the Holy One of God.* * **7:1** That is, the ruling authorities

6:47 *everlasting life.* The believer, possessing both peace and purpose, can rejoice even in the midst of fiery trials, knowing that God Himself will arrange the outcome for His glory and the believer's good (Rom. 8:28).

6:48–49 *I am the bread of life.* Those who believe in Him have life (v. 47). The manna in the wilderness did not ultimately sustain life. Those who ate it eventually died because it could not provide eternal life.

6:53–58 *eats My flesh and drinks My blood.* Jesus had made it abundantly clear in this context that eternal life is gained by believing (vv. 29,35,40,47). These verses teach that the benefits of Jesus' death must be appropriated, by faith, by each individual.

6:60 *This is a hard saying.* It was hard for the Jewish learners to accept the idea of eating flesh and drinking blood. Jews were forbidden to even taste blood.

6:63 *It is the Spirit who gives life.* Jesus was trying to get the religious leaders to see beyond the physical aspects of His teaching to the real issue—namely, that if they believed on Him they would have eternal life.

7:2 *Feast of Tabernacles.* This was one of the three great Jewish religious festivals (Passover and Pentecost were the other two). It was called the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) because for seven days the people lived in makeshift shelters or lean-tos made of branches and leaves. The feast commemorated the days when the Israelites wandered in the wilderness and lived in tents (Lev. 23:40–43).

7:3–4 *His brothers.* Jesus' brothers argued, "If You

6:46 [o] John 1:18 [p] Matt. 11:27 **6:47** [q] [John 3:16, 18] **6:48** [r] John 6:33, 35 **6:49** [s] John 6:31, 58 **6:50** [t] John 6:51, 58 **6:51** [u] John 3:13 [v] Heb. 10:5 **6:52** [w] John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19 **6:53** [x] Matt. 26:26 **6:54** [y] John 4:14; 6:27, 40 **6:56** [z] [1 John 3:24; 4:15, 16] **6:58** [a] John 6:49–51 [b] Ex. 16:14–35 **6:60** [c] John 6:66 **6:62** [d] Acts 1:9; 2:32, 33 **6:63** [e] 2 Cor. 3:6 [f] John 3:6 [g] [John 6:68; 14:24] **6:64** [h] John 6:36 [i] John 2:24, 25; 13:11 **6:65** [j] John 6:37, 44, 45 **6:66** [k] Luke 9:62 **6:68** [l] Acts 5:20 **6:69** [m] Luke 9:20 **6:70** [n] Luke 6:13 [o] [John 13:27] **6:71** [p] John 12:4; 13:2, 26 [q] Matt. 26:14–16 **7:1** [a] John 5:18; 7:19, 25; 8:37, 40 **7:2** [b] Lev. 23:34 **7:3** [c] Matt. 12:46 **7:5** [d] Ps. 69:8; Mic. 7:6 [e] Mark 3:21 **7:6** [f] John 2:4; 8:20 **7:7** [g] [John 15:19] [h] John 3:19

works are evil. 8You go up to this feast. I
am not yet* going up to this feast, [i]for My
time has not yet fully come." 9When He had
said these things to them, He remained in
Galilee.

The Heavenly Scholar

10But when His brothers had gone up,
then He also went up to the feast, not open-
ly, but as it were in secret. 11Then [j]the Jews
sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where
is He?" 12And [k]there was much complain-
ing among the people concerning Him.
[l]Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No,
on the contrary, He deceives the people."
13However, no one spoke openly of Him
[m]for fear of the Jews.

14Now about the middle of the feast
Jesus went up into the temple and [n]taught.
15[o]And the Jews marveled, saying, "How
does this Man know letters, having never
studied?"

16Jesus* answered them and said, [p]"My
doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.
17[q]If anyone wills to do His will, he shall
know concerning the doctrine, whether it
is from God or *whether* I speak on My own
authority. 18[r]He who speaks from himself
seeks his own glory; but He who [s]seeks the
glory of the One who sent Him is true, and
[t]no unrighteousness is in Him. 19[u]Did not
Moses give you the law, yet none of you
keeps the law? [v]Why do you seek to kill
Me?"

20The people answered and said, [w]"You
have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"

21Jesus answered and said to them, "I
did one work, and you all marvel. 22[x]Moses
therefore gave you circumcision (not that it
is from Moses, [y]but from the fathers), and
you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23If
a man receives circumcision on the Sab-
bath, so that the law of Moses should not
be broken, are you angry with Me because
[z]I made a man completely well on the Sab-
bath? 24[a]Do not judge according to appear-
ance, but judge with righteous judgment."

Could This Be the Christ?

25Now some of them from Jerusalem
said, "Is this not He whom they seek to
[b]kill? 26But look! He speaks boldly, and
they say nothing to Him. [c]Do the rulers
know indeed that this is truly* the Christ?
27[d]However, we know where this Man is
from; but when the Christ comes, no one
knows where He is from."

28Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in
the temple, saying, [e]"You both know Me,
and you know where I am from; and [f]I have
not come of Myself, but He who sent Me [g]is
true, [h]whom you do not know. 29But* [i]I know
Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me."

30Therefore [j]they sought to take Him;
but [k]no one laid a hand on Him, because
His hour had not yet come. 31And [l]many
of the people believed in Him, and said,
"When the Christ comes, will He do more
signs than these which this *Man* has done?"

Jesus and the Religious Leaders

32The Pharisees heard the crowd mur-
muring these things concerning Him, and
the Pharisees and the chief priests sent
officers to take Him. 33Then Jesus said to
them,* [m]"I shall be with you a little while
longer, and *then* I [n]go to Him who sent Me.
34You [o]will seek Me and not find *Me,* and
where I am you [p]cannot come."

35Then the Jews said among themselves,
"Where does He intend to go that we shall
not find Him? Does He intend to go to [q]the
Dispersion among the Greeks and teach
the Greeks? 36What is this thing that He
said, 'You will seek Me and not find Me,
and where I am you cannot come'?"

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

37[r]On the last day, that great *day* of the
feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying,
[s]"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and

* **7:8** NU-Text omits *yet*. * **7:16** NU-Text and M-Text read *So Jesus*. * **7:26** NU-Text omits *truly*. * **7:29** NU-Text and M-Text omit *But*. * **7:33** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to them*.

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are really working miracles and thus claiming to be the Messiah, do not hide in obscure Galilee. If You are doing miracles at all, then do them in Jerusalem at the Feast to convince the whole nation." These words were sarcastic, as verse 5 explains.

7:14 *the middle of the feast.* This would have been the fourth day of the seven-day feast. During the first half of the festival, Jesus remained in seclusion (v. 10). During the second half, He began to teach publicly. This is the first mention in the Gospel of John of Jesus teaching in the temple.

7:15 *having never studied.* Jesus never attended a rabbinical school. Similar bewilderment was later expressed regarding Jesus' disciples (Acts 4:13).

7:28–29 *You both know Me, and you know where I am from.* Jesus reminded the leaders that they knew His origin. Their problem was that they did not know God, who sent Jesus. He explained to them that He knew God, was from God, and was sent by God.

7:32 *to take Him.* The Jewish leaders decided earlier that they wanted to kill Christ (5:16), but this is the first real attempt on His life.

7:37–39 *that great day of the feast.* On each day of the feast, the people came with palm branches and marched around the great altar. A priest took

7:8 [i] John 8:20 **7:11** [j] John 11:56 **7:12** [k] John 9:16; 10:19 [l] Luke 7:16 **7:13** [m] [John 9:22; 12:42; 19:38] **7:14** [n] Ps. 22:22; Mark 6:34 **7:15** [o] Matt. 13:54 **7:16** [p] John 3:11 **7:17** [q] John 3:21; 8:43 **7:18** [r] John 5:41 [s] John 8:50 [t] [2 Cor. 5:21] **7:19** [u] Deut. 33:4 [v] Matt. 12:14 **7:20** [w] John 8:48, 52 **7:22** [x] Lev. 12:3 [y] Gen. 17:9–14 **7:23** [z] John 5:8, 9, 16 **7:24** [a] Prov. 24:23 **7:25** [b] Matt. 21:38; 26:4 **7:26** [c] John 7:48 **7:27** [d] Luke 4:22 **7:28** [e] John 8:14 [f] John 5:43 [g] Rom. 3:4 [h] John 1:18; 8:55 **7:29** [i] Matt. 11:27 **7:30** [j] Mark 11:18 [k] John 7:32, 44; 8:20; 10:39 **7:31** [l] Matt. 12:23 **7:33** [m] John 13:33 [n] [1 Pet. 3:22] **7:34** [o] Hos. 5:6 [p] [Matt. 5:20] **7:35** [q] James 1:1 **7:37** [r] Lev. 23:36 [s] [Is. 55:1]

drink. 38[t]He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, [u]out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39[v]But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing* in Him would receive; for the Holy* Spirit was not yet *given,* because Jesus was not yet [w]glorified.

Who Is He?

40Therefore many* from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is [x]the Prophet." 41Others said, "This is [y]the Christ."

But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? 42[z]Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, [a]where David was?" 43So [b]there was a division among the people because of Him. 44Now [c]some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

Rejected by the Authorities

45Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?"

46The officers answered, [d]"No man ever spoke like this Man!"

47Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived? 48Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? 49But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

50Nicodemus [e](he who came to Jesus by night,* being one of them) said to them, 51[f]"Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"

52They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for [g]no prophet has arisen* out of Galilee."

An Adulteress Faces the Light of the World

53And everyone went to his *own* house.*

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2Now early* in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and [a]taught them. 3Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught* in [b]adultery, in the very act. 5[c]Now Moses, in the law, commanded* us that such should be stoned.* But what do You say?"* 6This they said, testing Him, that they [d]might have *something* of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with *His* finger, as though He did not hear.*

7So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up* and said to them, [e]"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." 8And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9Then those who heard *it,* [f]being convicted by *their* conscience,* went out one by one,

*7:39 NU-Text reads *who believed.* • NU-Text omits *Holy.* *7:40 NU-Text reads *some.* *7:50 NU-Text reads *before.* *7:52 NU-Text reads *is to rise.* *7:53 The words *And everyone* through *sin no more* (8:11) are bracketed by NU-Text as not original. They are present in over 900 manuscripts. *8:2 M-Text reads *very early.* *8:4 M-Text reads *we found this woman.* *8:5 M-Text reads *in our law Moses commanded.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *to* stone such. • M-Text adds *about her.* *8:6 NU-Text and M-Text omit *as though He did not hear.* *8:7 M-Text reads *He looked up.* *8:9 NU-Text and M-Text omit *being convicted by their conscience.*

a golden pitcher filled with water from the pool of Siloam, carried it to the temple, and poured it on the altar as an offering to God. This dramatic ceremony was a memorial of the water that flowed from the rock when the Israelites traveled through the wilderness. On the last day of the feast, the people marched seven times around the altar in memory of the seven circuits around the walls of Jericho.

7:38 *as the Scripture has said.* The reference is not to a single passage, but to the general emphasis of such passages as Deuteronomy 18:15, Isaiah 58:11, and Zechariah 14:8. In contrast to the small amount of water poured out each day during the feast, there will be a river of water coming out of those who believe in Christ. Not only will they be satisfied themselves, but they will also become a river so that others may drink and be satisfied (v. 39).

7:40–42 *Christ comes from the seed of David.* These people knew that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2). However, they did not know that Jesus had been born there. They thought He was from Galilee. They knew the Scripture, but they did not take the time to know the Messiah (5:39).

8:2 *He sat down.* Teachers in ancient Israel sat when they taught. Jesus assumed the position of an authoritative teacher.

8:3 *a woman caught in adultery.* The scribes and Pharisees were not interested in helping the woman, but in using her sinful circumstances to discredit Jesus (v. 6). His refusal to countenance the stoning of the woman does not bring Him into conflict with the law given to Moses, nor does He condone sin. The issue in the encounter was the accusers' blindness to their own sin.

8:4–5 *commanded us that such should be stoned.* Stoning was specified in certain cases of adultery (Deut. 22:23–24), though not all. (It is not clear why the authorities intended to punish the woman but not the man.) In the Greek text, the pronoun *You* is emphatic. The religious leaders were trying to trap Jesus into saying something that was contrary to the law.

8:6 *testing him.* If Jesus had said not to stone her, He would have contradicted Jewish law. If He had said to stone her, He would have run counter to Roman law, which did not permit Jews to carry out their own

7:38 [t] Deut. 18:15 [u] Is. 12:3; 43:20; 44:3; 55:1 **7:39** [v] Is. 44:3 [w] John 12:16; 13:31; 17:5 **7:40** [x] Deut. 18:15, 18 **7:41** [y] John 4:42; 6:69 **7:42** [z] Mic. 5:2 [a] 1 Sam. 16:1, 4 **7:43** [b] John 7:12 **7:44** [c] John 7:30 **7:46** [d] Luke 4:22 **7:50** [e] John 3:1, 2; 19:39 **7:51** [f] Deut. 1:16, 17; 19:15 **7:52** [g] [Is. 9:1, 2] **8:2** [a] John 8:20; 18:20 **8:4** [b] Ex. 20:14 **8:5** [c] Lev. 20:10 **8:6** [d] Matt. 22:15 **8:7** [e] Deut. 17:7 **8:9** [f] Rom. 2:22

beginning with the oldest *even* to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her,* "Woman, where are those accusers of yours?* Has no one condemned you?"

11She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, [g]"Neither do I condemn you; go and* [h]sin no more."

12Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, [i]"I am the light of the world. He who [j]follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Jesus Defends His Self-Witness

13The Pharisees therefore said to Him, [k]"You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."

14Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but [l]you do not know where I come from and where I am going. 15[m]You judge according to the flesh; [n]I judge no one. 16And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for [o]I am not alone, but I *am* with the Father who sent Me. 17[p]It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. 18I am One who bears witness of Myself, and [q]the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."

19Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?"

Jesus answered, [r]"You know neither Me nor My Father. [s]If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also."

20These words Jesus spoke in [t]the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and [u]no one laid hands on Him, for [v]His hour had not yet come.

Jesus Predicts His Departure

21Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and [w]you will seek Me, and [x]will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come."

22So the Jews said, "Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come'?"

23And He said to them, [y]"You are from beneath; I am from above. [z]You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24[a]Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; [b]for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

25Then they said to Him, "Who are You?"

And Jesus said to them, "Just what I [c]have been saying to you from the beginning. 26I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but [d]He who sent Me is true; and [e]I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."

27They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.

28Then Jesus said to them, "When you [f]lift up the Son of Man, [g]then you will know that I am *He*, and [h]*that* I do nothing of Myself; but [i]as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. 29And [j]He who sent Me is with Me. [k]The Father has not left Me alone, [l]for I always do those things that please Him."

30As He spoke these words, [m]many believed in Him.

The Truth Shall Make You Free

31Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you [n]abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32And you shall know the [o]truth, and [p]the truth shall make you free."

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* **8:10** NU-Text omits *and saw no one but the woman;* M-Text reads *He saw her and said.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *of yours.* * **8:11** NU-Text and M-Text add *from now on.*

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executions (18:31). What Jesus wrote on the ground is a matter of conjecture.

8:13 ***Your witness is not true.*** This phrase does not mean "false"; it means "not sufficient." The Pharisees challenged Jesus on legal grounds because no man on trial in a Jewish court was allowed to testify on his own behalf. Their point was that, if Jesus were the only one testifying as to who He claimed to be, it would not be enough to prove His case.

8:14 ***My witness is true.*** In 5:31 Jesus argued on the basis of legality and offered other witnesses. Sometimes, however, an individual is the only one who knows the facts about himself. Thus, self-disclosure is the only way to truth (7:29; 13:3).

8:15 ***according to the flesh.*** This could mean either "according to appearance" or "by human standards." The religious leaders formed conclusions based on human standards and an imperfect, external, and superficial examination. Jesus did not judge according to human standards or outward appearances.

8:24 ***I am He.*** This was God's designation of Himself (Ex. 3:14). Jesus was claiming to be God. This assertion was not understood by the religious leaders at this time. Later, Jesus' claim to be the "I am" (v. 58) prompted the Jewish leaders to seek His life (v. 59).

8:31 God's Word Confirms—The Bible establishes the truth in our own hearts in several ways.

1. *It confirms our salvation.* In Jesus' own words in the Gospel of John: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (5:24). Compare 3:16; 6:27,35,37,40; 10:27–29; Romans 8:1.
2. *It confirms the hand of God in all of life's bitter disappointments.* Romans 8:28 provides reassurance and comfort in these crucial situations:

8:11 [g] [John 3:17] [h] [John 5:14] **8:12** [i] John 1:4; 9:5; 12:35 [j] 1 Thess. 5:5 **8:13** [k] John 5:31 **8:14** [l] John 7:28; 9:29 **8:15** [m] John 7:24 [n] [John 3:17; 12:47; 18:36] **8:16** [o] John 16:32 **8:17** [p] Deut. 17:6; 19:15 **8:18** [q] John 5:37 **8:19** [r] John 16:3 [s] John 14:7 **8:20** [t] Mark 12:41, 43 [u] John 2:4; 7:30 [v] John 7:8 **8:21** [w] John 7:34; 13:33 [x] John 8:24 **8:23** [y] John 3:31 [z] 1 John 4:5 **8:24** [a] John 8:21 [b] [Mark 16:16] **8:25** [c] John 4:26 **8:26** [d] John 7:28 [e] John 3:32; 15:15 **8:28** [f] John 3:14; 12:32; 19:18 [g] [Rom. 1:4] [h] John 5:19, 30 [i] John 3:11 **8:29** [j] John 14:10 [k] John 8:16; 16:32 [l] John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38 **8:30** [m] John 7:31; 10:42; 11:45 **8:31** [n] [John 14:15, 23] **8:32** [o] [John 1:14, 17; 14:6] [p] [Rom. 6:14, 18, 22]

33 They answered Him, [a]"We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, 'You will be made free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, [r]whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And [s]a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. 36 [t]Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Abraham's Seed and Satan's

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but [u]you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 [v]I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with* your father."

39 They answered and said to Him, [w]"Abraham is our father."

Jesus said to them, [x]"If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40 [y]But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth [z]which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. 41 You do the deeds of your father."

Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; [a]we have one Father—God."

42 Jesus said to them, [b]"If God were your Father, you would love Me, for [c]I proceeded forth and came from God; [d]nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 [e]Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 [f]You are of *your* father the devil, and the [g]desires of your father you want to [h]do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and [i]does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 [j]He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

Before Abraham Was, I AM

48 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and [k]have a demon?"

49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and [l]you dishonor Me. 50 And [m]I do not seek My *own* glory; there is One who seeks and judges. 51 Most assuredly, I say to you, [n]if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You [o]have a demon! [p]Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' 53 Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. [q]Who do You make Yourself out to be?"

54 Jesus answered, [r]"If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. [s]It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your* God. 55 Yet [t]you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and [u]keep His word. 56 Your father Abraham [v]rejoiced to see My day, [w]and he saw *it* and was glad."

57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, [x]before Abraham was, [y]I AM."

59 Then [z]they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple,* [a]going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

*8:38 NU-Text reads *heard from*. *8:54 NU-Text and M-Text read *our*. *8:59 NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

3. *It confirms our forgiveness when we sin.* Repeatedly, the Bible assures us that all confessed sin is instantly and eternally forgiven (Ps. 32:5; 103:12; Is. 38:17).

8:33 ***have never been in bondage to anyone.*** The Pharisees' objection is startling. In their past, the Israelites had been in bondage to the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians. At the time they spoke, Israel was under the power of Rome.

8:39 ***Abraham is our father.*** The Pharisees believed that being a descendant of Abraham guaranteed them a place in heaven.

8:41 ***We were not born of fornication.*** From ancient times, this has been interpreted as a sneer, as if to say, "We are not illegitimate children, but You are." Apparently gossip followed Jesus, alleging that He had been conceived out of wedlock.

8:53 ***Are You greater than our father Abraham.*** Abraham and the prophets kept God's word and died. Jesus was claiming not that He would prevent physical death, but that He could give eternal life. To the Jewish leaders, this was proof that Jesus was demon-possessed.

8:58–59 ***I AM.*** Jesus was not just claiming to have lived before Abraham; He was claiming eternal existence. He was claiming to be God Himself (Ex. 3:14). This time the Jewish leaders understood that Jesus

8:33 [q] [Matt. 3:9] **8:34** [r] 2 Pet. 2:19 **8:35** [s] Gal. 4:30 **8:36** [t] Gal. 5:1 **8:37** [u] John 7:19 **8:38** [v] [John 3:32; 5:19, 30; 14:10, 24] **8:39** [w] Matt. 3:9 [x] [Rom. 2:28] **8:40** [y] John 8:37 [z] John 8:26 **8:41** [a] Is. 63:16 **8:42** [b] 1 John 5:1 [c] John 16:27; 17:8, 25 [d] Gal. 4:4 **8:43** [e] [John 7:17] **8:44** [f] Matt. 13:38 [g] 1 John 2:16, 17 [h] [1 John 3:8–10, 15] [i] [Jude 6] **8:47** [j] 1 John 4:6 **8:48** [k] John 7:20; 10:20 **8:49** [l] John 5:41 **8:50** [m] John 5:41; 7:18 **8:51** [n] John 5:24; 11:26 **8:52** [o] John 7:20; 10:20 [p] Zech. 1:5 **8:53** [q] John 10:33; 19:7 **8:54** [r] John 5:31, 32 [s] Acts 3:13 **8:55** [t] John 7:28, 29 [u] [John 15:10] **8:56** [v] Luke 10:24 [w] Heb. 11:13 **8:58** [x] Mic. 5:2 [y] Rev. 1:8 **8:59** [z] John 10:31; 11:8 [a] Luke 4:30

A Man Born Blind Receives Sight

9 Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man
who was blind from birth. 2And His
disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, [a]who
sinned, this man or his parents, that he was
born blind?"

3Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor
his parents sinned, [b]but that the works of
God should be revealed in him. 4[c]I* must
work the works of Him who sent Me while
it is [d]day; *the* night is coming when no one
can work. 5As long as I am in the world, [e]I
am the light of the world."

6When He had said these things, [f]He
spat on the ground and made clay with
the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of
the blind man with the clay. 7And He said
to him, "Go, wash [g]in the pool of Siloam"
(which is translated, Sent). So [h]he went and
washed, and came back seeing.

8Therefore the neighbors and those who
previously had seen that he was blind*
said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?"

9Some said, "This is he." Others *said,*
"He is like him."*

He said, "I am *he*."

10Therefore they said to him, "How were
your eyes opened?"

11He answered and said, [i]"A Man called
Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes
and said to me, 'Go to the pool of* Siloam
and wash.' So I went and washed, and I re-
ceived sight."

12Then they said to him, "Where is He?"

He said, "I do not know."

The Pharisees Excommunicate the Healed Man

13They brought him who formerly was
blind to the Pharisees. 14Now it was a Sab-
bath when Jesus made the clay and opened
his eyes. 15Then the Pharisees also asked
him again how he had received his sight.
He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes,
and I washed, and I see."

16Therefore some of the Pharisees said,
"This Man is not from God, because He
does not keep the Sabbath."

Others said, [j]"How can a man who is a
sinner do such signs?" And [k]there was a
division among them.

17They said to the blind man again,
"What do you say about Him because He
opened your eyes?"

He said, [l]"He is a prophet."

18But the Jews did not believe concerning
him, that he had been blind and received
his sight, until they called the parents of
him who had received his sight. 19And they
asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who
you say was born blind? How then does he
now see?"

20His parents answered them and
said, "We know that this is our son, and
that he was born blind; 21but by what
means he now sees we do not know, or
who opened his eyes we do not know.
He is of age; ask him. He will speak for
himself." 22His parents said these *things*
because [m]they feared the Jews, for the
Jews had agreed already that if any-
one confessed *that* He *was* Christ, he
[n]would be put out of the synagogue.
23Therefore his parents said, "He is of age;
ask him."

24So they again called the man who was
blind, and said to him, [o]"Give God the glo-
ry! [p]We know that this Man is a sinner."

25He answered and said, "Whether He is
a sinner *or not* I do not know. One thing I
know: that though I was blind, now I see."

26Then they said to him again, "What
did He do to you? How did He open your
eyes?"

27He answered them, "I told you already,
and you did not listen. Why do you want to
hear *it* again? Do you also want to become
His disciples?"

28Then they reviled him and said, "You
are His disciple, but we are Moses' disci-
ples. 29We know that God [q]spoke to [r]Mo-
ses; *as for* this *fellow,* [s]we do not know
where He is from."

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* **9:4** NU-Text reads *We.* * **9:8** NU-Text reads *a beggar.* * **9:9** NU-Text reads "No, *but he is like him.*" * **9:11** NU-Text omits *the pool of.*

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was claiming to be God, so they took up stones to stone Him for blasphemy (Lev. 24:16).

9:1 ***a man who was blind from birth.*** Most likely he was a beggar. Beggars waited by the gates of the temple for gifts from worshipers. Therefore, it is likely that this scene took place near the temple.

9:2 ***who sinned.*** It was commonly supposed that sickness was a result of sin. It would follow that sin committed by a baby still in the womb or sin committed by parents could result in a baby being born with a disease. Jesus rejected both suggestions (v. 3).

9:7 ***pool of Siloam.*** Hezekiah had a tunnel cut through solid rock to transport water from Gihon into the city of Jerusalem, to the pool of Siloam (2 Kin. 20:20; 2 Chr. 32:30). John emphasizes that the name Siloam means "sent," because Jesus had just announced that He had been sent by God (v. 4).

9:22 ***put out of the synagogue.*** To take this action was a form of excommunication. The Jews had three types of excommunication: one lasting 30 days, during which the person could not come within six feet of anybody else; one for an indefinite time, during which the person was excluded from all fellowship and worship; and one that meant absolute expulsion forever. These judgments were very serious because no one could conduct business with a person who was excommunicated.

9:2 [a] John 9:34 **9:3** [b] John 11:4 **9:4** [c] [John 4:34; 5:19, 36; 17:4] [d] John 11:9, 10; 12:35 **9:5** [e] [John 1:5, 9; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35, 46] **9:6** [f] Mark 7:33; 8:23 **9:7** [g] Neh. 3:15 [h] 2 Kin. 5:14 **9:11** [i] John 9:6, 7 **9:16** [j] John 3:2; 9:33 [k] John 7:12, 43; 10:19 **9:17** [l] [John 4:19; 6:14] **9:22** [m] Acts 5:13 [n] John 16:2 **9:24** [o] Josh. 7:19 [p] John 9:16 **9:29** [q] Num. 12:6–8 [r] [John 5:45–47] [s] John 7:27, 28; 8:14

30 The man answered and said to them,
t"Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you
do not know where He is from; yet He
has opened my eyes! 31 Now we know that
u God does not hear sinners; but if anyone
is a worshiper of God and does His will,
He hears him. 32 Since the world began it
has been unheard of that anyone opened
the eyes of one who was born blind. 33 v If
this Man were not from God, He could do
nothing."
34 They answered and said to him, w"You
were completely born in sins, and are you
teaching us?" And they cast him out.

True Vision and True Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him
out; and when He had x found him, He
said to him, "Do you y believe in z the Son
of God?"*
36 He answered and said, "Who is He,
Lord, that I may believe in Him?"
37 And Jesus said to him, "You have both
seen Him and a it is He who is talking with
you."
38 Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he
b worshiped Him.
39 And Jesus said, c"For judgment I have
come into this world, d that those who do
not see may see, and that those who see
may be made blind."
40 Then *some* of the Pharisees who were
with Him heard these words, e and said to
Him, "Are we blind also?"
41 Jesus said to them, f"If you were blind,
you would have no sin; but now you say,
'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

Jesus the True Shepherd

10 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who
does not enter the sheepfold by the
door, but climbs up some other way, the
same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who
enters by the door is the shepherd of the
sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and
the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his
own sheep by a name and leads them out.
4 And when he brings out his own sheep,
he goes before them; and the sheep follow
him, for they know his voice. 5 Yet they
will by no means follow a b stranger, but
will flee from him, for they do not know
the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus used this il-
lustration, but they did not understand the
things which He spoke to them.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

7 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most
assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of
the sheep. 8 All who *ever* came before Me*
are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did
not hear them. 9 c I am the door. If anyone
enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go
in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief
does not come except to steal, and to kill,
and to destroy. I have come that they may
have life, and that they may have *it* more
abundantly.
11 d"I am the good shepherd. The good
shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But
a hireling, *he who is* not the shepherd, one
who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf
coming and e leaves the sheep and flees;
and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters
them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a
hireling and does not care about the sheep.
14 I am the good shepherd; and f I know My
sheep, and g am known by My own. 15 h As
the Father knows Me, even so I know the
Father; i and I lay down My life for the

* **9:35** NU-Text reads *Son of Man.* * **10:8** M-Text omits *before Me.*

9:30–33 *unheard of.* There is no healing of a blind man recorded anywhere in the Old Testament.
9:38 *Lord, I believe.* Note the progression throughout this chapter of the healed man's understanding of the person of Christ. First, he called Jesus "a Man" (v. 11); then, "a prophet" (v. 17); and finally, he realized that Jesus is the Son of God (vv. 35–38).
10:1 *sheepfold.* A sheepfold was a walled enclosure or high fence made with stakes and having one door or gate; often the enclosure was a cave. ***some other way.*** The Pharisees had secured their power by illegitimate means.
10:3 *the doorkeeper.* The doorkeeper was the undershepherd. ***calls his own sheep by name.*** The naming of sheep was an ancient practice (Ps. 147:4; Is. 40:26).
10:7 *I am the door.* In verses 1–5, Jesus is the shepherd; here, He is the door. Some shepherds lay down across the entry of the sheepfold at night to sleep. Wild beasts would be discouraged from entering, and sheep would not exit. Thus, the shepherd was also the door.
10:10 *may have it more abundantly.* The thieves take life; the shepherd gives it. Abundant life includes salvation, nourishment, healing (v. 9), and much more. *Life* here refers to eternal life, God's life. It speaks not only of endlessness, but of quality of life. With Christ, life on earth can reach much higher quality, and then in heaven it will be complete and perfect.
10:11 The Ministry of Jesus—Jesus' most important teachings are: the kingdom of God (Matt. 5–7; 24–25); His divine authority over men (Matt. 7:28–29; Mark 2:10); His own role as God and Messiah demonstrated by miracles and signs; the significance of His death and resurrection (Matt. 16:21; Luke 24:26); the relationship which His disciples and subsequent believers are to share with Him (John 13–16); and the urgency of His commission to believers to make disciples (Matt. 28:19–20). The most significant events of His earthly life, His death and resurrection, are central to the entire Christian faith (1 Cor. 15:14).

9:30 t John 3:10 **9:31** u Zech. 7:13 **9:33** v John 3:2; 9:16 **9:34** w John 9:2 **9:35** x John 5:14 y John 1:7; 16:31 z Matt. 14:33; 16:16 **9:37** a John 4:26 **9:38** b Matt. 8:2 **9:39** c [John 3:17; 5:22, 27; 12:47] d Matt. 13:13; 15:14 **9:40** e [Rom. 2:19] **9:41** f John 15:22, 24 **10:3** a John 20:16 **10:5** b [2 Cor. 11:13–15] **10:9** c [Eph. 2:18] **10:11** d Is. 40:11 **10:12** e Zech. 11:16, 17 **10:14** f 2 Tim. 2:19 g 2 Tim. 1:12 **10:15** h Matt. 11:27 i [John 15:13; 19:30]

sheep. 16And [j]other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; [k]and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.

17"Therefore My Father [l]loves Me, [m]because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I [n]have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. [o]This command I have received from My Father."

19Therefore [p]there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. 20And many of them said, [q]"He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?"

21Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. [r]Can a demon [s]open the eyes of the blind?"

The Shepherd Knows His Sheep

22Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23And Jesus walked in the temple, [t]in Solomon's porch. 24Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. [u]The works that I do in My Father's name, they [v]bear witness of Me. 26But [w]you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.* 27[x]My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29[y]My Father, [z]who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand. 30[a]I and *My* Father are one."

Renewed Efforts to Stone Jesus

31Then [b]the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. 32Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"

33The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for [c]blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, [d]make Yourself God."

34Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, [e]'*I said, "You are gods"*'?* 35If He called them gods, [f]to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture [g]cannot be broken), 36do you say of Him [h]whom the Father sanctified and [i]sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' [j]because I said, 'I am [k]the Son of God'? 37[l]If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38but if I do, though you do not believe Me, [m]believe the works, that you may know and believe* [n]that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him." 39[o]Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

* **10:26** NU-Text omits *as I said to you.*
* **10:34** Psalm 82:6 * **10:38** NU-Text reads *understand.*

The death of Christ was a humiliating physical death (John 19:18,33) that constituted a spiritual separation from God (Matt. 27:46). Within this moment there occurred the inexplicable mystery of the Father punishing the Son for the sins of the world (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18). The greatest crime of human history was in the plan of God (Acts 2:23) and became the basis of salvation for sinners (Is. 53:5). The resurrection of Christ demonstrated that His death, by which believing sinners are justified, was valid (1 Cor. 15:12–20). The historical evidence for the resurrection is plentiful: the many separate accounts of post-resurrection appearances, the empty tomb, and the transformed disciples. It is the power of the resurrection that empowers Christians today to live the Christian life (Eph. 1:19–20; Phil. 3:10).

10:16 ***other sheep I have.*** These were not Jews in heathen lands, but Gentiles. The Jewish people had asked if Jesus would go and teach the Gentiles (7:35). Jesus now declared that He had sheep among the despised heathen. ***one flock.*** This anticipates the salvation of the Gentiles and the formation of the church, in which converted Jews and Gentiles would form one spiritual body (Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:16).

10:19–21 ***many of them said . . . Others said.*** After Jesus' analogy of the good shepherd, the editorial comment by John is fitting. In the analogy, Jesus was the good shepherd whose sheep hear His voice, implying that there are sheep who do not hear His voice. John's comment indicates that some believe and others do not. This is the same division that occurred in 9:16.

10:22 ***the Feast of Dedication.*** This festival was celebrated for eight days. In 167 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple in Jerusalem, as prophesied in Daniel 11:31. The Maccabeans restored and purified the temple. In commemoration of the restoration, the Feast of Dedication was instituted. Today it is also known as the Feast of Lights or Hanukkah.

10:27–29 ***hear . . . follow.*** The following of the sheep is a metaphor for faith. Other metaphors for faith in this Gospel include drinking water (4:14), eating bread (6:50–51), eating flesh, and drinking blood (6:54).

10:30 ***I and My Father are one.*** The Jewish opponents understood that Jesus was claiming to be God (vv. 31,33).

10:34 ***You are gods.*** In the Old Testament, judges were called gods. They exercised godlike judicial sovereignty. Psalm 82:6, the verse quoted here, refers to judges who violate the law. Jesus' argument was that,

10:16 [j] Is. 42:6; 56:8 [k] Eph. 2:13–18 **10:17** [l] John 5:20 [m] [Heb. 2:9] **10:18** [n] [John 2:19; 5:26] [o] [John 6:38; 14:31; 17:4; Acts 2:24, 32] **10:19** [p] John 7:43; 9:16 **10:20** [q] John 7:20 **10:21** [r] [Ex. 4:11] [s] John 9:6, 7, 32, 33 **10:23** [t] Acts 3:11; 5:12 **10:25** [u] John 5:36; 10:38 [v] Matt. 11:4 **10:26** [w] [John 8:47] **10:27** [x] John 10:4, 14 **10:29** [y] John 14:28 [z] [John 17:2, 6, 12, 24] **10:30** [a] John 17:11, 21–24 **10:31** [b] John 8:59 **10:33** [c] Matt. 9:3 [d] John 5:18 **10:34** [e] Ps. 82:6 **10:35** [f] Matt. 5:17, 18 [g] 1 Pet. 1:25 **10:36** [h] John 6:27 [i] John 3:17 [j] John 5:17, 18 [k] Luke 1:35 **10:37** [l] John 10:25; 15:24 **10:38** [m] John 5:36 [n] John 14:10, 11 **10:39** [o] John 7:30, 44

The Believers Beyond Jordan

40And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place [p]where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. 41Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, [q]but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true." 42And many believed in Him there.

The Death of Lazarus

11 Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of [a]Mary and her sister Martha. 2[b]It was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

4When Jesus heard *that,* He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

5Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6So, when He heard that he was sick, [c]He stayed two more days in the place where He was. 7Then after this He said to *the* disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

8*The* disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to [d]stone You, and are You going there again?"

9Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? [e]If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the [f]light of this world. 10But [g]if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." 11These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus [h]sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."

12Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." 13However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

14Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

16Then [i]Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

17So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles* away. 19And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. 21Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22But even now I know that [j]whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

23Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24Martha said to Him, [k]"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

25Jesus said to her, "I am [l]the resurrection and the life. [m]He who believes in Me, though he may [n]die, he shall live. 26And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

27She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, [o]I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

Jesus and Death, the Last Enemy

28And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." 29As soon as she heard *that,* she arose quickly and came to Him. 30Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was* in the place where Martha met Him. 31[p]Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there."*

32Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she [q]fell down at His feet, saying to Him, [r]"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

33Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping,

* **11:18** Literally *fifteen stadia* * **11:30** NU-Text adds *still.* * **11:31** NU-Text reads *supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.*

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if the divine name had been applied by God to mere men, there could be neither blasphemy nor folly in its application to the incarnate Son of God Himself.

11:1 *Bethany.* This was a small village on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives. It was located about two miles from Jerusalem.

11:4 *not unto death.* This phrase means not having death as its final result.

11:6–8 *He stayed two more days.* God's purpose was to glorify His Son (v. 4) and to cause the disciples to grow (v. 15). Had Jesus immediately rushed to Lazarus' bedside and healed him, Lazarus would not have died and Jesus would not have been able to manifest His glory by raising Lazarus.

11:16 *Let us also go, that we may die with Him.* While the Lord saw their development in faith, Thomas saw their deaths. Yet, in his loyalty, he followed anyway.

11:33 *troubled.* This word means to be stirred up,

10:40 [p] John 1:28 **10:41** [q] [John 1:29, 36; 3:28–36; 5:33] **11:1** [a] Luke 10:38, 39 **11:2** [b] Matt. 26:7 **11:6** [c] John 10:40 **11:8** [d] John 8:59; 10:31 **11:9** [e] John 9:4; 12:35 [f] Is. 9:2 **11:10** [g] John 12:35 **11:11** [h] Matt. 9:24 **11:16** [i] John 14:5; 20:26–28 **11:22** [j] [John 9:31; 11:41] **11:24** [k] [John 5:29] **11:25** [l] John 5:21; 6:39, 40, 44 [m] 1 John 5:10 [n] 1 Cor. 15:22 **11:27** [o] Matt. 16:16 **11:31** [p] John 11:19, 33 **11:32** [q] Rev. 1:17 [r] John 11:21

He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.
34 And He said, "Where have you laid him?"
They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."
35 [s]Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"
37 And some of them said, "Could not this Man, [t]who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?"

Lazarus Raised from the Dead

38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a [u]stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone."
Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days."
40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would [v]see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead man was lying.* And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but [w]because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with [x]graveclothes, and [y]his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

The Plot to Kill Jesus

45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, [z]and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. 46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees and [a]told them the things Jesus did. 47 *b*Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, [c]"What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. 48 If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."
49 And one of them, [d]Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 [e]nor do you consider that it is expedient for us* that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." 51 Now this he did not say on his own *authority;* but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 and [f]not for that nation only, but [g]also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.
53 Then, from that day on, they plotted to [h]put Him to death. 54 [i]Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called [j]Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.
55 [k]And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to [l]purify themselves. 56 [m]Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?" 57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report *it*, that they might [n]seize Him.

The Anointing at Bethany

12 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, [a]where Lazarus was who had been dead,* whom He had raised from the dead. 2 *b*There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. 3 Then [c]Mary took a pound of very costly oil of [d]spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

* **11:41** NU-Text omits *from the place where the dead man was lying.* * **11:50** NU-Text reads *you.*
* **12:1** NU-Text omits *who had been dead.*

disturbed. Jesus was moved by the mourning of Mary and indignant at the hypocritical lamentations of His enemies.

11:37 ***Could not this Man.*** Some people misinterpreted Jesus' tears as powerlessness. They complained that He had healed others, but now was impotent.

11:43 ***Lazarus.*** Augustine once said that, if Jesus had not designated Lazarus by name, all the graves would have been emptied at His command (5:28). Raising Lazarus from the dead is the seventh sign of Jesus' messiahship, the greatest miracle of all, giving life back to the dead.

11:49–52 ***it is expedient.*** In the opinion of Caiaphas, Jesus should die rather than plunge the nation into destruction. John adds that by virtue of his office Caiaphas pronounced a message of God unconsciously. Caiaphas was a prophet in spite of himself. John also saw in Caiaphas' words a prophecy that Jesus should die not only for Israel but for the Gentiles as well.

11:53 ***they plotted to put Him to death.*** Humanly speaking, the resurrection of Lazarus was a major factor that led to the plot by the Jewish religious leaders to kill Christ. At this point the council decided informally, if not formally, to put Jesus to death. It is ironic that these men believed they could put to death permanently One who could raise the dead.

12:1 ***six days before the Passover.*** If the crucifixion took place on a Friday, this dinner occurred during the evening of the previous Saturday. Verse 12 seems to support this conclusion because the Jerusalem entry took place on Sunday.

12:3 ***very costly oil of spikenard.*** Judas Iscariot said

11:35 [s] Luke 19:41 **11:37** [t] John 9:6, 7 **11:38** [u] Matt. 27:60, 66 **11:40** [v] [John 11:4, 23] **11:42** [w] John 12:30; 17:21 **11:44** [x] John 19:40 [y] John 20:7 **11:45** [z] John 2:23; 10:42; 12:11, 18 **11:46** [a] John 5:15 **11:47** [b] Ps. 2:2 [c] Acts 4:16 **11:49** [d] Luke 3:2 **11:50** [e] John 18:14 **11:52** [f] Is. 49:6 [g] [Eph. 2:14–17] **11:53** [h] Matt. 26:4 **11:54** [i] John 4:1, 3; 7:1 [j] 2 Chr. 13:19 **11:55** [k] John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4 [l] Num. 9:10, 13; 31:19, 20 **11:56** [m] John 7:11 **11:57** [n] Matt. 26:14–16 **12:1** [a] John 11:1, 43 **12:2** [b] Mark 14:3; Luke 10:38–41 **12:3** [c] John 11:2 [d] Song 1:12

4But one of His disciples, [e]Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son,* who would betray Him, said, 5"Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii* and given to the poor?" 6This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and [f]had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

7But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept* this for the day of My burial. 8For [g]the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

9Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, [h]whom He had raised from the dead. 10[i]But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, 11[j]because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry

12[k]The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

"Hosanna!
[l]*'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'**
The King of Israel!"

14[m]Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

15 *"Fear[n] not, daughter of Zion;*
Behold, your King is coming,
*Sitting on a donkey's colt."**

16[o]His disciples did not understand these things at first; [p]but when Jesus was glorified, [q]then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him.

17Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. 18[r]For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. 19The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, [s]"You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"

The Fruitful Grain of Wheat

20Now there [t]were certain Greeks among those [u]who came up to worship at the feast. 21Then they came to Philip, [v]who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

22Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

23But Jesus answered them, saying, [w]"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24Most assuredly, I say to you, [x]unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25[y]He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26If anyone serves Me, let him [z]follow Me; and [a]where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him *My* Father will honor.

Jesus Predicts His Death on the Cross

27[b]"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? [c]But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28Father, glorify Your name."

* **12:5** About one year's wages for a worker
* **12:7** NU-Text reads *that she may keep.*
* **12:13** Psalm 118:26 * **12:15** Zechariah 9:9

that this perfume cost 300 denarii (v. 5). One denarius was a laborer's wage for one day. Thus, the perfume cost approximately a year's wages. ***anointed the feet.*** Mary also anointed Jesus' head. The custom of that time was to anoint the heads of guests. Anointing Jesus' head was an act of honor; anointing His feet was a display of devotion.

12:10–11 ***the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also.*** The chief priests were mostly Sadducees. They had an additional reason to kill Lazarus. He was a living refutation of their doctrine that there was no resurrection (11:57; Acts 23:8). Yet this was not a meeting of the Jewish council, nor was it a formal sentence of death. The ultimate motivation for wanting to kill Lazarus was that because of him many were believing in Jesus.

12:13–15 ***The King of Israel.*** Until this point, Jesus had discouraged expressions of support from the people (6:15; 7:1–8). Here, He allowed public enthusiasm. He entered Jerusalem on the back of a young donkey. This act fulfilled prophecy (Zech. 9:9) and as such was a symbolic proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah.

12:20 ***to worship at the feast.*** This verse indicates that these Greeks were Jewish proselytes. By recording this incident, perhaps John was hinting that the salvation rejected by many of the Jews was already passing to the Gentiles.

12:24 ***unless a grain of wheat . . . dies.*** When a seed dies, it produces fruit. Life comes by death. This principle is not only true in nature, but it is also true spiritually. Jesus was speaking first and foremost of Himself. He is the grain of wheat. His death would produce much fruit and would result in many living for God.

12:27 ***Now My soul is troubled.*** Jesus' agony over His impending death was not confined to Gethsemane,

12:4 [e] John 13:26 **12:6** [f] John 13:29 **12:8** [g] Mark 14:7 **12:9** [h] John 11:43, 44 **12:10** [i] Luke 16:31 **12:11** [j] John 11:45; 12:18 **12:12** [k] Matt. 21:4–9 **12:13** [l] Ps. 118:25, 26 **12:14** [m] Matt. 21:7 **12:15** [n] Is. 40:9; Zech. 9:9 **12:16** [o] Luke 18:34 [p] John 7:39; 12:23 [q] [John 14:26] **12:18** [r] John 12:11 **12:19** [s] John 11:47, 48 **12:20** [t] Acts 17:4 [u] 1 Kin. 8:41, 42 **12:21** [v] John 1:43, 44; 14:8–11 **12:23** [w] John 13:32 **12:24** [x] 1 Cor. 15:36 **12:25** [y] Mark 8:35 **12:26** [z] [Matt. 16:24] [a] John 14:3; 17:24 **12:27** [b] [Matt. 26:38, 39] [c] Luke 22:53

[d]Then a voice came from heaven, *saying,* "I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again."
29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him."
30 Jesus answered and said, [e]"This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now [f]the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, [g]if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw [h]all *peoples* to Myself." 33 [i]This He said, signifying by what death He would die.
34 The people answered Him, [j]"We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how *can* You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"
35 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer [k]the light is with you. [l]Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; [m]he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become [n]sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and [o]was hidden from them.

Who Has Believed Our Report?

37 But although He had done so many [p]signs before them, they did not believe in Him, 38 that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

> [q]*"Lord, who has believed our report?*
> *And to whom has the arm of the* LORD
> *been revealed?"**

39 Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

> 40 *"He[r] has blinded their eyes and*
> *hardened their hearts,*
> *[s]Lest they should see with their eyes,*
> *Lest they should understand with their*
> *hearts and turn,*
> *So that I should heal them."**

41 [t]These things Isaiah said when* he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

Walk in the Light

42 Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but [u]because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him,* lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 [v]for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.
44 Then Jesus cried out and said, [w]"He who believes in Me, [x]believes not in Me [y]but in Him who sent Me. 45 And [z]he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. 46 [a]I have come *as* a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if anyone hears My words and does not believe,* [b]I do not judge him; for [c]I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 [d]He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—[e]the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. 49 For [f]I have not spoken on My own *authority;* but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, [g]what I should say and what I should speak. 50 And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I [h]speak."

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

13 Now [a]before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that [b]His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He [c]loved them to the end.
2 And supper being ended,* [d]the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son,* to betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing [e]that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He [f]had come from God and [g]was going to God, 4 [h]rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and

* **12:38** Isaiah 53:1 * **12:40** Isaiah 6:10
* **12:41** NU-Text reads *because.* * **12:47** NU-Text reads *keep them.* * **13:2** NU-Text reads *And during supper.*

where He prayed for the cup to pass from Him (Matt. 26:39). He felt the agony and expressed it almost a week before Gethsemane.

12:35–36 ***while you have the light.*** Instead of answering the people's questions (v. 34), Jesus gave them a warning. Jesus is the light. He wanted the people to believe and abide in Him (v. 46).

12:42–43 ***Nevertheless.*** This word marks a stark contrast between these believers and the unbelief spoken of in verses 37–41. These men were genuine believers. Their problem was that they feared the opinions of their fellow leaders. Such believers will be ashamed at Christ's return (1 John 2:28).

12:47 ***I do not judge him.*** Christ will judge, but at His first coming He did not come to judge but to save (3:17).

13:1 ***to the end.*** This phrase means either "to the last" or "utterly and completely." What follows in verses 1–11 demonstrates Jesus' complete love. Jesus loved His disciples, even though He knew that one would betray Him, another would deny Him, and all would desert Him for a time.

12:28 [d] Matt. 3:17; 17:5 **12:30** [e] John 11:42 **12:31** [f] [2 Cor. 4:4] **12:32** [g] John 3:14; 8:28 [h] [Rom. 5:18] **12:33** [i] John 18:32; 21:19 **12:34** [j] Mic. 4:7 **12:35** [k] [John 1:9; 7:33; 8:12] [l] Eph. 5:8 [m] [1 John 2:9–11] **12:36** [n] Luke 16:8 [o] John 8:59 **12:37** [p] John 11:47 **12:38** [q] Is. 53:1 **12:40** [r] Is. 6:9, 10 [s] Matt. 13:14 **12:41** [t] Is. 6:1 **12:42** [u] John 7:13; 9:22 **12:43** [v] John 5:41, 44 **12:44** [w] Mark 9:37 [x] [John 3:16, 18, 36; 11:25, 26] [y] [John 5:24] **12:45** [z] [John 14:9] **12:46** [a] John 1:4, 5; 8:12; 12:35, 36 **12:47** [b] John 5:45 [c] John 3:17 **12:48** [d] [Luke 10:16] [e] Deut. 18:18, 19 **12:49** [f] John 8:38 [g] Deut. 18:18 **12:50** [h] John 5:19; 8:28 **13:1** [a] Matt. 26:2 [b] John 12:23; 17:1 [c] John 15:9 **13:2** [d] Luke 22:3 **13:3** [e] Acts 2:36 [f] John 8:42; 16:28 [g] John 17:11; 20:17 **13:4** [h] [Luke 22:27]

to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. 6Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, [i]"Lord, are You washing my feet?"

7Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you [j]do not understand now, [k]but you will know after this."

8Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, [l]"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

9Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!"

10Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and [m]you are clean, but not all of you." 11For [n]He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

12So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13[o]You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for *so* I am. 14[p]If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, [q]you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15For [r]I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16[s]Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17[t]If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Jesus Identifies His Betrayer

18"I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the [u]Scripture may be fulfilled, [v]'*He who eats bread with Me* has lifted up his heel against Me.*'* 19[w]Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am *He*. 20[x]Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

21[y]When Jesus had said these things, [z]He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, [a]one of you will betray Me." 22Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.

23Now [b]there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.

25Then, leaning back* on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

26Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped *it*." And having dipped the bread, He gave *it* to [c]Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. 27[d]Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." 28But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. 29For some thought, because [e]Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy *those things* we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

30Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

The New Commandment

31So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, [f]"Now the Son of Man is glorified, and [g]God is glorified in Him. 32If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and [h]glorify Him immediately. 33Little children, I shall be with you a [i]little while longer. You will seek Me; [j]and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. 34[k]A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35[l]By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

* **13:18** NU-Text reads *My bread*. • Psalm 41:9
* **13:25** NU-Text and M-Text add *thus*.

13:8 *no part with Me.* The washing was a symbol of spiritual cleansing (vv. 10–11). If Peter did not participate in the cleansing, he would not enjoy fellowship with Christ (1 John 1:9).

13:13 *Teacher and Lord.* These were the ordinary titles of respect given to a rabbi.

13:18 *has lifted up his heel.* Jesus quoted Psalm 41:9 to explain the action of Judas. Lifting up one's heel was a gesture of insult or a preparation to kick. The blow had not yet been given. This was the attitude of Judas at that moment. He was eating with the disciples, but he was ready to strike.

13:23 *leaning on Jesus' bosom.* At this time people did not generally sit at a table to eat. They reclined on the left side of a low platform, resting on the left elbow and eating with the right hand, their feet extended outward. Reclining in such a way, a man's head was near the chest of the person on his left. ***whom Jesus loved.*** The disciple is never named in Scripture, but the tradition of the early church designates him as John, the author of this Gospel.

13:33 *Little children* is an expression of tender affection used nowhere else in the Gospels. John did not forget the expression; he used it repeatedly in 1 John.

13:34 *love one another.* One of the dominant themes in the apostle John's writings is love. God loves the whole world (3:16). Jesus repeatedly demonstrates His compassion for people in general and His love for His disciples in particular (10:11; 11:3; 13:1; 15:9).

13:35 *By this.* Unbelievers recognize Jesus' disciples

13:6 [i] Matt. 3:14 **13:7** [j] John 12:16; 16:12 [k] John 13:19 **13:8** [l] [1 Cor. 6:11] **13:10** [m] [John 15:3] **13:11** [n] John 6:64; 18:4 **13:13** [o] Matt. 23:8, 10 **13:14** [p] Luke 22:27 [q] [Rom. 12:10] **13:15** [r] [1 Pet. 2:21–24] **13:16** [s] Matt. 10:24 **13:17** [t] [James 1:25] **13:18** [u] John 15:25; 17:12 [v] Ps. 41:9 **13:19** [w] John 14:29; 16:4 **13:20** [x] Matt. 10:40 **13:21** [y] Luke 22:21 [z] John 12:27 [a] 1 John 2:19 **13:23** [b] John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20 **13:26** [c] John 6:70, 71; 12:4 **13:27** [d] Luke 22:3 **13:29** [e] John 12:6 **13:31** [f] John 12:23 [g] [1 Pet. 4:11] **13:32** [h] John 12:23 **13:33** [i] John 12:35; 14:19; 16:16–19 [j] [John 7:34; 8:21] **13:34** [k] 1 Thess. 4:9 **13:35** [l] 1 John 2:5

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?"

Jesus answered him, "Where I [m]am going you cannot follow Me now, but [n]you shall follow Me afterward."

37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will [o]lay down my life for Your sake."

38 Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not [p]crow till you have denied Me three times.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

14 "Let [a]not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions;* if *it were* not so, I would have told you. [b]I go to prepare a place for you.* 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, [c]I will come again and receive you to Myself; that [d]where I am, *there* you may be also. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."

5 [e]Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"

6 Jesus said to him, "I am [f]the way, [g]the truth, and [h]the life. [i]No one comes to the Father [j]except through Me.

The Father Revealed

7 [k]"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? [l]He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that [m]I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you [n]I do not speak on My own *authority;* but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, [o]or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

The Answered Prayer

12 [p]"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father. 13 [q]And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be [r]glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask* anything in My name, I will do *it*.

Jesus Promises Another Helper

15 [s]"If you love Me, keep* My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and [t]He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 [u]the Spirit of truth, [v]whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you [w]and will be in you. 18 [x]I will not leave you orphans; [y]I will come to you.

* **14:2** Literally *dwellings* • NU-Text adds a word which would cause the text to read either *if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?* or *if it were not so I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.* * **14:14** NU-Text adds *Me.* * **14:15** NU-Text reads *you will keep.*

not by their doctrinal distinctives, nor by dramatic miracles, nor even by their love for the lost. They recognize His disciples by their deeds of love for one another.

13:36 ***Lord, where are You going?*** This question Jesus had already addressed twice before, indicating that Peter completely missed the point of what Jesus said in verses 34 and 35.

13:37 ***I will lay down my life for Your sake.*** Peter was ready to die for Jesus. Unfortunately, he was not ready, at this point, to live for Him. Later Peter would die for Christ (21:18–19). Church tradition states that Peter was crucified upside down, at his request, for he felt himself unworthy to be crucified like his Lord.

14:3 ***I will come again and receive you.*** Peter may have failed Jesus (13:38), but Christ will not fail to return for Peter and for everyone else who has believed in Him (1 Thess. 4:16–17).

14:6 ***the way, the truth, and the life.*** Through His death and resurrection, Jesus is the way to the Father. He is also the truth and the life. As truth, He is the revelation of God. As life, He is the source of our very beings.

14:12 ***greater works.*** Jesus had accomplished the greatest works possible, including raising the dead. How could He say that believers would do greater works? The answer is seen in the extent of what the apostles did. Jesus' work on earth was confined to Palestine; the apostles would preach everywhere and see the conversion of thousands. Peter's message at Pentecost brought more followers to Jesus than did Jesus' entire earthly ministry. The disciples were able to do this work because Christ would go to the Father and send the Holy Spirit to empower them.

14:17 ***the Spirit of truth.*** This is another name for the Holy Spirit because He is truth and guides us into all truth (1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:21).

14:18 ***orphans.*** He would not abandon them. He would come to them. There are three suggested interpretations as to when that statement would be fulfilled: (1) after the resurrection, (2) at Pentecost, in the person of the Holy Spirit, and (3) at the second coming.

13:36 [m] John 13:33; 14:2; 16:5 [n] 2 Pet. 1:14 **13:37** [o] Mark 14:29–31 **13:38** [p] John 18:25–27 **14:1** [a] [John 14:27; 16:22, 24] **14:2** [b] John 13:33, 36 **14:3** [c] [Acts 1:11] [d] [John 12:26] **14:5** [e] Matt. 10:3 **14:6** [f] [Heb. 9:8; 10:19, 20] [g] [John 1:14, 17; 8:32; 18:37] [h] [John 11:25] [i] 1 Tim. 2:5 [j] [John 10:7–9] **14:7** [k] John 8:19 **14:9** [l] Col. 1:15 **14:10** [m] John 10:38; 14:11, 20 [n] John 5:19; 14:24 **14:11** [o] John 5:36; 10:38 **14:12** [p] Luke 10:17 **14:13** [q] Matt. 7:7 [r] John 13:31 **14:15** [s] 1 John 5:3 **14:16** [t] Rom. 8:15 **14:17** [u] [1 John 4:6; 5:7] [v] [1 Cor. 2:14] [w] [1 John 2:27] **14:18** [x] [Matt. 28:20] [y] [John 14:3, 28]

Indwelling of the Father and the Son

19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but [z]you will see Me. [a]Because I live, you will live also. 20 At that day you will know that [b]I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 [c]He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

22 [d]Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, [e]and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and [f]the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

The Gift of His Peace

25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But [g]the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will [h]send in My name, [i]He will teach you all things, and bring to your [j]remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 [k]Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 You have heard Me [l]say to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said,* [m]'I am going to the Father,' for [n]My Father is greater than I.

29 "And [o]now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. 30 I will no longer talk much with you, [p]for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has [q]nothing in Me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father, and [r]as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

The True Vine

15 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 [a]Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away;* and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear [b]more fruit. 3 [c]You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 [d]Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much [e]fruit; for without Me you can do [f]nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, [g]he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words [h]abide in you, [i]you will* ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 [j]By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; [k]so you will be My disciples.

Love and Joy Perfected

9 "As the Father [l]loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 [m]If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and [n]*that* your joy may be full. 12 [o]This is My [p]commandment, that you love one another as I

* **14:28** NU-Text omits *I said.* * **15:2** Or *lifts up*
* **15:7** NU-Text omits *you will.*

14:23 ***If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word.*** In response to Judas' question (v. 22), Jesus explained that His manifestation to the disciples would be in response to their love and obedience. ***make Our home with him.*** If a believer loves and obeys the Lord, he or she will experience fellowship with God.

14:24 ***He who does not love Me.*** If a person does not love Jesus, he or she will not obey Him. Disobedience is a serious matter, for Jesus' words are the words of God.

14:30 ***has nothing in Me.*** These words indicate Jesus' sinlessness. Jesus' yielding to what was about to happen did not mean that Satan had any power over Him. Jesus would soon voluntarily yield to the death of the cross, in loving obedience to the Father (v. 31).

15:2 ***Every branch in Me.*** The emphasis of "in Me" in this passage is on deep, abiding fellowship. Jesus' purpose was to move His disciples from servants to friends (vv. 13–15). This would involve a process of discipline in regard to His commandments. ***prunes.*** This word means "cleanses." Once the fruit is on the vine, the vinedresser cleanses the fruit of bugs and diseases. The spiritual counterpart is cleansing which is done through the Word (v. 3).

15:6 ***If anyone does not abide.*** Not abiding in Christ has serious consequences: (1) the person *is cast out as a branch*, indicating the loss of fellowship; (2) the person *is withered,* indicating a loss of vitality; (3) the person is *burned,* indicating a loss of reward.

15:8 ***By this.*** Notice the striking parallel between this verse and 13:35. ***fruit.*** The love of 13:35 is pictured here. The text has come full circle in showing how strategic it is for disciples to love each other, as Christ's method of evangelizing the lost. Where there is good fruit, there are also seeds for propagation.

15:11 ***that your joy may be full.*** This phrase is an

14:19 [z] John 16:16, 22 [a] [1 Cor. 15:20] **14:20** [b] John 10:38; 14:11 **14:21** [c] 1 John 2:5 **14:22** [d] Luke 6:16 **14:23** [e] Rev. 3:20; 21:3 **14:24** [f] John 5:19 **14:26** [g] Luke 24:49 [h] John 15:26 [i] 1 Cor. 2:13 [j] John 2:22; 12:16 **14:27** [k] [Phil. 4:7] **14:28** [l] John 14:3, 18 [m] John 16:16 [n] [Phil. 2:6] **14:29** [o] John 13:19 **14:30** [p] [John 12:31] [q] [Heb. 4:15] **14:31** [r] Is. 50:5; John 10:18 **15:2** [a] Matt. 15:13 [b] [Matt. 13:12] **15:3** [c] [John 13:10; 17:17] **15:4** [d] [Col. 1:23] **15:5** [e] Hos. 14:8 [f] 2 Cor. 3:5 **15:6** [g] Matt. 3:10 **15:7** [h] 1 John 2:14 [i] John 14:13; 16:23 **15:8** [j] [Matt. 5:16] [k] John 8:31 **15:9** [l] John 5:20; 17:26 **15:10** [m] John 14:15 **15:11** [n] 1 John 1:4 **15:12** [o] 1 John 3:11 [p] Rom. 12:9

have loved you. 13[q]Greater love has no one
than this, than to lay down one's life for
his friends. 14[r]You are My friends if you do
whatever I command you. 15No longer do
I call you servants, for a servant does not
know what his master is doing; but I have
called you friends, [s]for all things that I
heard from My Father I have made known
to you. 16[t]You did not choose Me, but I chose
you and [u]appointed you that you should go
and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should
remain, that whatever you ask the Father [v]in
My name He may give you. 17These things
I command you, that you love one another.

The World's Hatred

18[w]"If the world hates you, you know that
it hated Me before *it hated* you. 19[x]If you
were of the world, the world would love its
own. Yet [y]because you are not of the world,
but I chose you out of the world, therefore
the world hates you. 20Remember the word
that I said to you, [z]'A servant is not great-
er than his master.' If they persecuted Me,
they will also persecute you. [a]If they kept
My word, they will keep yours also. 21But
[b]all these things they will do to you for My
name's sake, because they do not know Him
who sent Me. 22[c]If I had not come and spo-
ken to them, they would have no sin, [d]but
now they have no excuse for their sin. 23[e]He
who hates Me hates My Father also. 24If I
had not done among them [f]the works which
no one else did, they would have no sin; but
now they have [g]seen and also hated both Me
and My Father. 25But *this happened* that the
word might be fulfilled which is written in
their law, [h]'*They hated Me without a cause.*'*

The Coming Rejection

26[i]"But when the Helper comes, whom I
shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit
of truth who proceeds from the Father, [j]He
will testify of Me. 27And [k]you also will bear
witness, because [l]you have been with Me
from the beginning.

16 "These things I have spoken to you,
that you [a]should not be made to
stumble. 2[b]They will put you out of the
synagogues; yes, the time is coming [c]that
whoever kills you will think that he offers
God service. 3And [d]these things they will
do to you* because they have not known
the Father nor Me. 4But these things I have
told you, that when the* time comes, you
may remember that I told you of them.

"And these things I did not say to you
at the beginning, because I was with you.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

5"But now I [e]go away to Him who sent
Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are
You going?' 6But because I have said these
things to you, [f]sorrow has filled your heart.
7Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your
advantage that I go away; for if I do not go
away, the Helper will not come to you; but [g]if
I depart, I will send Him to you. 8And when
He has [h]come, He will convict the world of
sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
9[i]of sin, because they do not believe in Me;
10[j]of righteousness, [k]because I go to My Fa-
ther and you see Me no more; 11[l]of judgment,
because [m]the ruler of this world is judged.

* **15:25** Psalm 69:4 * **16:3** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to you*. * **16:4** NU-Text reads *their*.

expression peculiar to John (3:29; 16:24; 17:13; 1 John 1:4; 2 John 12). It describes a believer's experience of Christ's love: complete joy.

15:14 *if you do.* Jesus is our model for love (v. 13). Intimacy with Him is the motive for loving as He loves. If believers obey His command to love, they enjoy the intimacy of His friendship. Not that friendship, unlike sonship, is a once-for-all gift, but develops as the result of obeying Jesus' command to love.

15:15 *call you servants.* Until this point, Jesus had called His disciples servants (12:26; 13:13–16). A servant does what he is told and sees what his master does, but does not necessarily know the meaning or purpose of it. ***friends.*** A friend knows what is happening because friends develop deep fellowship by communicating with one another.

15:22–23 *have no sin . . . no excuse for their sin.* The world's hatred of Jesus was a sin against God, for He revealed the Father Himself to them.

15:26–27 *He will testify.* As the disciples spoke, the Holy Spirit would bring inner conviction to unbelievers concerning Christ. This in turn would make the disciples witnesses for Jesus.

16:2 *They will put you out of the synagogues.* The persecution that the disciples would face included excommunication and even execution. Excommunication had economic as well as religious implications because much of the life of an ancient Jew revolved around the synagogue.

16:7 *It is to your advantage.* The disciples must have thought, "How can it be advantageous for us to be alone? The Romans hate us because they see us as disturbers of the peace. The Jewish leaders hate us because they see us as blasphemers." Jesus explained the benefits of His departure. When Jesus left, the believers would have (1) the provision of the Holy Spirit (vv. 7–15); (2) the potential of full joy (vv. 16–24); (3) the possibility of fuller knowledge (vv. 25–28); and (4) the privilege of peace (vv. 29–33).

16:8 *convict.* The Holy Spirit would demonstrate the truth of Christ beyond the fear of contradiction. The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers through believers who witness about Christ (15:26–27). Believers are the mouthpiece for God's voice.

16:11 *of judgment.* Satan, the ruler of the world,

15:13 [q] 1 John 3:16 **15:14** [r] [Matt. 12:50; 28:20] **15:15** [s] Gen. 18:17 **15:16** [t] John 6:70; 13:18; 15:19 [u] [Col. 1:6] [v] John 14:13; 16:23, 24 **15:18** [w] 1 John 3:13 **15:19** [x] 1 John 4:5 [y] John 17:14 **15:20** [z] John 13:16 [a] Ezek. 3:7 **15:21** [b] Matt. 10:22; 24:9 **15:22** [c] John 9:41; 15:24 [d] [James 4:17] **15:23** [e] 1 John 2:23 **15:24** [f] John 3:2 [g] John 14:9 **15:25** [h] Ps. 35:19; 69:4; 109:3–5 **15:26** [i] Luke 24:49 [j] 1 John 5:6 **15:27** [k] Luke 24:48 [l] Luke 1:2 **16:1** [a] Matt. 11:6 **16:2** [b] John 9:22 [c] Acts 8:1 **16:3** [d] John 8:19; 15:21 **16:5** [e] John 7:33; 13:33; 14:28; 17:11 **16:6** [f] [John 16:20, 22] **16:7** [g] Acts 2:33 **16:8** [h] Acts 1:8; 2:1–4, 37 **16:9** [i] Acts 2:22 **16:10** [j] Acts 2:32 [k] John 5:32 **16:11** [l] Acts 26:18 [m] [Luke 10:18]

12 "I still have many things to say to you,
[n]but you cannot bear *them* now. 13However, when He, [o]the Spirit of truth, has come,
[p]He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14[q]He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. 15[r]All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.*

Sorrow Will Turn to Joy

16 "A [s]little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, [t]because I go to the Father."

17 Then *some* of His disciples said among themselves, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?" 18 They said therefore, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying."

19 Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'? 20 Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and [u]lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into [v]joy. 21[w]A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and [x]your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. [y]Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, [z]that your joy may be [a]full.

Jesus Christ Has Overcome the World

25 "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you [b]plainly about the Father. 26 In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; 27[c]for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and [d]have believed that I came forth from God. 28[e]I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."

29 His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! 30 Now we are sure that [f]You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this [g]we believe that You came forth from God."

31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? 32[h]Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, [i]each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And [j]yet I am not alone, because the Father

* **16:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *He takes of Mine and will declare it to you.*

rules in the hearts of unregenerate people and blinds their minds (1 Cor. 2:6–8). Satan was judged at the cross, and the Holy Spirit would convince people of the judgment to come. Satan has been judged, so all who side with him will be judged with him.

16:12 *you.* Here, this refers to the apostles. Technically, what the Lord says about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in verses 12–15 applies primarily to the apostles. That ministry was threefold: (1) He would guide them into all truth (v. 13); (2) He would tell them of the future (v. 13); and (3) He would help them glorify Christ (vv. 14–15). Jesus' words were fulfilled in the apostles' preaching and writings.

16:13 *Spirit of truth.* The phrase means that the Holy Spirit is the source of truth (14:17; 15:26). ***guide.*** The Holy Spirit would not compel or carry the disciples into truth. He would lead; their job was to follow.

16:14 *glorify Me.* The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by declaring Him or making Him known. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to throw light on Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. Christ is to be on center stage; that is the desire of both the Father and the Spirit. The apostles received truth from the Holy Spirit, truth about things to come, and truth about Christ. Then, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they wrote those truths in documents known today as the New Testament.

16:18 *A little while.* The biggest question weighing on the disciples' minds was the time factor. They simply did not understand the strange intervals marked by their separation from Jesus.

16:21 *A woman, when she is in labor.* Jesus used the example of a pregnant woman whose sorrow is transformed into joy in the birth of a child.

16:26 *I shall pray the Father for you.* Because Jesus provides forgiveness of sins through His death and now intercedes for all believers at the right hand of the Father (Heb. 7:25), we have direct access to the Father. We do not need the intercession of a priest, because Jesus acts as our High Priest before God.

16:31 *Do you now believe?* We continue in the Christian life the same way we begin, by believing in Jesus. The more we learn of Christ, the more we have to believe. The more we place our trust in Jesus, the more we receive. The more we receive, the more we can accomplish for His glory.

16:12 *n* Mark 4:33 **16:13** *o* [John 14:17] *p* John 14:26 **16:14** *q* John 15:26 **16:15** *r* Matt. 11:27 **16:16** *s* John 7:33; 12:35; 13:33; 14:19; 19:40–42; 20:19 *t* John 13:3 **16:20** *u* Mark 16:10 *v* Luke 24:32, 41 **16:21** *w* Is. 13:8; 26:17; 42:14 **16:22** *x* 1 Pet. 1:8 **16:23** *y* Matt. 7:7 **16:24** *z* John 17:13 *a* John 15:11 **16:25** *b* John 7:13 **16:27** *c* [John 14:21, 23] *d* John 3:13 **16:28** *e* John 13:1, 3; 16:5, 10, 17 **16:30** *f* John 21:17 *g* John 17:8 **16:32** *h* Matt. 26:31, 56 *i* John 20:10 *j* John 8:29

is with Me. 33These things I have spoken to you, that [k]in Me you may have peace. [l]In the world you will* have tribulation; but be of good cheer, [m]I have overcome the world."

Jesus Prays for Himself

17 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, [a]the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2[b]as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should* give eternal life to as many [c]as You have given Him. 3And [d]this is eternal life, that they may know You, [e]the only true God, and Jesus Christ [f]whom You have sent. 4[g]I have glorified You on the earth. [h]I have finished the work [i]which You have given Me to do. 5And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory [j]which I had with You before the world was.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

6[k]"I have manifested Your name to the men [l]whom You have given Me out of the world. [m]They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. 7Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8For I have given to them the words [n]which You have given Me; and they have received *them*, [o]and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that [p]You sent Me.

9"I pray for them. [q]I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. 10And all Mine are Yours, and [r]Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. 11[s]Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, [t]keep through Your name those whom You have given Me,* that they may be one [u]as We *are*. 12While I was with them in the world,* [v]I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept;* and [w]none of them is lost [x]except the son of perdition, [y]that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 14I have given them Your word; [z]and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, [a]just as I am not of the world. 15I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but [b]that You should keep them from the evil one. 16They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17[c]Sanctify them by Your truth. [d]Your word is truth. 18[e]As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19And [f]for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Jesus Prays for All Believers

20"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will* believe in Me through their word; 21[g]that they all may be one, as [h]You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22And the [i]glory which You gave Me I have given them, [j]that they may be one just as We are

* **16:33** NU-Text and M-Text omit *will*.
* **17:2** M-Text reads *shall*. * **17:11** NU-Text and M-Text read *keep them through Your name which You have given Me*. * **17:12** NU-Text omits *in the world*. • NU-Text reads *in Your name which You gave Me. And I guarded them;* (or *it;*).
* **17:20** NU-Text and M-Text omit *will*.

16:33 *tribulation.* This is literally "pressure" and figuratively means "affliction" or "distress."

17:1–2 *the hour has come.* Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus referred to the cross as His "hour" (2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1). The time for Him to die had arrived. ***Glorify Your Son.*** Jesus was asking that His mission to the world would be made known through the cross. The reasons for this request are twofold: (1) that *Your Son also may glorify You.* In the cross, Jesus reveals the Father to the world, that is, His love and justice, and (2) that, through Jesus' death on the cross, God would provide forgiveness of sins and *give eternal life* to all those who believe in His Son.

17:3 *that they may know You.* Eternal life consists of a growing knowledge of the only true God as opposed to false gods.

17:11 *keep through Your name.* This verse reveals Jesus' sensitivity to the plight of His disciples brought on by His departure. He was going to the Father, but they would be left behind. Jesus asked the Father to keep them true to the revelation of God that Jesus had given to them while He was with them. The disciples would have a new union with the Father and Son through the future indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

17:14–16 *of the world.* This verse has profound implications for discipleship. Our desire should not be to isolate ourselves from the world, but to use Christ's Word and the Holy Spirit's power to serve Him while our life lasts. Yet, at the same time, we should not become like the world, succumbing to the evil influences of the world.

17:17 *Sanctify them.* This means "to set apart." There are two ways to understand this statement: (1) as separate for holiness, or (2) as set apart for service. According to the first view, Jesus was praying not only that the disciples should be kept from evil, but that they should advance in holiness.

17:21 *that they all may be one.* The present tense of the verb "to be" indicates that Jesus was praying for the unity that takes place through the sanctification of believers. This is what Jesus was commanding in 13:34–35.

17:22 *the glory.* This is the revelation of Jesus Christ

16:33 [k] Eph. 2:14] [l] 2 Tim. 3:12 [m] Rom. 8:37 **17:1** [a] John 12:23 **17:2** [b] John 3:35 [c] John 6:37, 39; 17:6, 9, 24 **17:3** [d] Jer. 9:23, 24 [e] 1 Cor. 8:4 [f] John 3:34 **17:4** [g] John 13:31 [h] John 4:34; 19:30 [i] John 14:31 **17:5** [j] Phil. 2:6 **17:6** [k] Ps. 22:22 [l] John 6:37 [m] Ezek. 18:4 **17:8** [n] John 8:28 [o] John 8:42; 16:27, 30 [p] Deut. 18:15, 18 **17:9** [q] [1 John 5:19] **17:10** [r] John 16:15 **17:11** [s] John 13:1 [t] [1 Pet. 1:5] [u] John 10:30 **17:12** [v] Heb. 2:13 [w] 1 John 2:19 [x] John 6:70 [y] Ps. 41:9; 109:8 **17:14** [z] John 15:19 [a] John 8:23 **17:15** [b] 1 John 5:18 **17:17** [c] [Eph. 5:26] [d] Ps. 119:9, 142, 151 **17:18** [e] John 4:38; 20:21 **17:19** [f] [Heb. 10:10] **17:21** [g] [Gal. 3:28] [h] John 10:38; 17:11, 23 **17:22** [i] 1 John 1:3 [j] [2 Cor. 3:18]

one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; [k]that they
may be made perfect in one, and that the
world may know that You have sent Me,
and have loved them as You have loved Me.
24 [l]"Father, I desire that they also whom
You gave Me may be with Me where I am,
that they may behold My glory which You
have given Me; [m]for You loved Me before
the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous
Father! [n]The world has not known You, but
[o]I have known You; and [p]these have known
that You sent Me. 26 [q]And I have declared to
them Your name, and will declare *it,* that
the love [r]with which You loved Me may be
in them, and I in them."

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

18 When Jesus had spoken these words,
[a]He went out with His disciples over
[b]the Brook Kidron, where there was a gar-
den, which He and His disciples entered.
2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew
the place; [c]for Jesus often met there with
His disciples. 3 [d]Then Judas, having re-
ceived a detachment *of troops,* and officers
from the chief priests and Pharisees, came
there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.
4 Jesus therefore, [e]knowing all things that
would come upon Him, went forward and
said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"
5 They answered Him, [f]"Jesus of Nazareth."
Jesus said to them, "I am *He.*" And Judas, who [g]betrayed Him, also stood with
them. 6 Now when He said to them, "I am
He," they drew back and fell to the ground.
7 Then He asked them again, "Whom are
you seeking?"
And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."
8 Jesus answered, "I have told you that I
am *He.* Therefore, if you seek Me, let these
go their way," 9 that the saying might be
fulfilled which He spoke, [h]"Of those whom
You gave Me I have lost none."
10 [i]Then Simon Peter, having a sword,
drew it and struck the high priest's ser-
vant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's
name was Malchus.
11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword
into the sheath. Shall I not drink [j]the cup
which My Father has given Me?"

Before the High Priest

12 Then the detachment *of troops* and the
captain and the officers of the Jews arrest-
ed Jesus and bound Him. 13 And [k]they led
Him away to [l]Annas first, for he was the
father-in-law of [m]Caiaphas who was high
priest that year. 14 [n]Now it was Caiaphas
who advised the Jews that it was expedi-
ent that one man should die for the people.

Peter Denies Jesus

15 [o]And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and
so *did* [p]another* disciple. Now that disciple
was known to the high priest, and went with
Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.
16 [q]But Peter stood at the door outside. Then
the other disciple, who was known to the
high priest, went out and spoke to her who
kept the door, and brought Peter in. 17 Then
the servant girl who kept the door said to
Peter, "You are not also *one* of this Man's
disciples, are you?"
He said, "I am [r]not."
18 Now the servants and officers who had
made a fire of coals stood there, for it was
cold, and they warmed themselves. And
Peter stood with them and warmed him-
self.

Jesus Questioned by the High Priest

19 The high priest then asked Jesus about
His disciples and His doctrine.
20 Jesus answered him, [s]"I spoke open-
ly to the world. I always taught [t]in syna-
gogues and [u]in the temple, where the Jews
always meet,* and in secret I have said
nothing. 21 Why do you ask Me? Ask [v]those
who have heard Me what I said to them.
Indeed they know what I said."

* **18:15** M-Text reads *the other.* * **18:20** NU-Text reads *where all the Jews meet.*

through His disciples and is the means to unity. Such unity begins with belief and correct thinking about Jesus and God the Father, that is, with doctrine. But correct belief must bear fruit—a life that demonstrates God's love and produces unity between all believers.

17:23 ***I in them, and You in me.*** The mutual indwelling of the Father in the Son and the Son in the church is also the means to unity, the ultimate expression of God's love (13:35; Rom. 8:17).

18:1 ***Brook Kidron.*** A brook was located in a ravine that was between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

18:3 ***officers.*** These were members of the temple police under the command of the Jewish council, the Sanhedrin.

18:13 ***Annas.*** Annas was high priest from A.D. 7 to 14. He was deposed by the Romans. Then Caiaphas, Annas' son-in-law, was appointed to the position and served from A.D. 18 to 37. However, according to Jewish law the high priest was a lifetime position, so the Jews still considered Annas to be high priest. Therefore, they took Jesus to Annas first.

18:15 ***another disciple.*** Although this other disciple is never identified, the consensus is that he was John, the author of this Gospel.

18:21 ***Ask those who have heard.*** According to the law, the witnesses for the defense had to be called

17:23 [k] [Col. 3:14] **17:24** [l] [1 Thess. 4:17] [m] John 17:5 **17:25** [n] John 15:21 [o] John 7:29; 8:55; 10:15 [p] John 3:17; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23 **17:26** [q] John 17:6 [r] John 15:9 **18:1** [a] Mark 14:26, 32 [b] 2 Sam. 15:23 **18:2** [c] Luke 21:37; 22:39 **18:3** [d] Luke 22:47–53 **18:4** [e] John 6:64; 13:1, 3; 19:28 **18:5** [f] Matt. 21:11 [g] Ps. 41:9 **18:9** [h] [John 6:39; 17:12] **18:10** [i] Matt. 26:51 **18:11** [j] Matt. 20:22; 26:39 **18:13** [k] Matt. 26:57 [l] Luke 3:2 [m] Matt. 26:3 **18:14** [n] John 11:50 **18:15** [o] Mark 14:54 [p] John 20:2–5 **18:16** [q] Matt. 26:69 **18:17** [r] Matt. 26:34 **18:20** [s] Luke 4:15 [t] John 6:59 [u] Mark 14:49 **18:21** [v] Mark 12:37

22And when He had said these things,
one of the officers who stood by [w]struck
Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying,
"Do You answer the high priest like that?"
23Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken
evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well,
why do you strike Me?"
24[x]Then Annas sent Him bound to
[y]Caiaphas the high priest.

Peter Denies Twice More

25Now Simon Peter stood and warmed
himself. [z]Therefore they said to him, "You
are not also *one* of His disciples, are you?"
He denied *it* and said, "I am not!"
26One of the servants of the high priest, a
relative *of him* whose ear Peter cut off, said,
"Did I not see you in the garden with Him?"
27Peter then denied again; and [a]immediate-
ly a rooster crowed.

In Pilate's Court

28[b]Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to
the Praetorium, and it was early morning.
[c]But they themselves did not go into the
Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but
that they might eat the Passover. 29[d]Pilate
then went out to them and said, "What ac-
cusation do you bring against this Man?"
30They answered and said to him, "If He
were not an evildoer, we would not have
delivered Him up to you."
31Then Pilate said to them, "You take
Him and judge Him according to your law."
Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is
not lawful for us to put anyone to death,"
32[e]that the saying of Jesus might be ful-
filled which He spoke, [f]signifying by what
death He would die.

33[g]Then Pilate entered the Praetorium
again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are
You the King of the Jews?"
34Jesus answered him, "Are you speak-
ing for yourself about this, or did others tell
you this concerning Me?"
35Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your
own nation and the chief priests have de-
livered You to me. What have You done?"
36[h]Jesus answered, [i]"My kingdom is not
of this world. If My kingdom were of this
world, My servants would fight, so that I
should not be delivered to the Jews; but
now My kingdom is not from here."
37Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You
a king then?"
Jesus answered, "You say *rightly* that I
am a king. For this cause I was born, and
for this cause I have come into the world,
[j]that I should bear [k]witness to the truth.
Everyone who [l]is of the truth [m]hears My
voice."
38Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"
And when he had said this, he went out
again to the Jews, and said to them, [n]"I find
no fault in Him at all.

Taking the Place of Barabbas

39[o]"But you have a custom that I should
release someone to you at the Passover. Do
you therefore want me to release to you the
King of the Jews?"
40[p]Then they all cried again, saying,
"Not this Man, but Barabbas!" [q]Now
Barabbas was a robber.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

19 So then [a]Pilate took Jesus and
scourged *Him*. 2And the soldiers

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first. Jesus should not have been questioned until witnesses had testified.

18:27 ***Peter then denied again.*** For the third time, Peter denied the Lord, as Jesus had said he would (13:38). In the upper room, Peter had boasted that he would remain true to the Lord to the end (13:37; Matt. 26:33,35). In the garden he surrendered to the desires of his body by sleeping three times when the Lord had commanded the disciples to stay up in prayer (Mark 14:34–42). Now he submitted to the pressure of the world and denied the Lord three times.

18:28 ***the Praetorium.*** This was probably the Roman governor's official residence, the Fortress Antonia near the temple.

18:29–30 ***What accusation.*** Pilate was not ignorant of the accusation. He was merely requesting that it be formally stated.

18:31 ***It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.*** The Romans did not allow the Jews to impose capital punishment. These Jewish leaders had no interest in a just trial; they simply wanted permission from Rome to have Jesus executed.

18:34 ***Are you speaking for yourself.*** In reply to Pilate, Jesus gave no violent protest of innocence, nor was He sullenly defiant. Jesus politely but directly asked whether Pilate was asking on his own initiative or whether the charge was secondhand. If Pilate's question originated with him, he was using *king* in the Roman sense of political ruler. If not, then *king* was being used in the Jewish sense of the messianic king.

18:38 ***What is truth?*** This question has been interpreted as (1) a cynical denial of the possibility of knowing truth; (2) a contemptuous jest at anything so impractical as abstract truth; and (3) a desire to know what no one had been able to tell him. ***no fault.*** This is a legal term meaning that there were no grounds for a criminal charge.

18:39 ***you have a custom.*** It appears that some in the crowd suggested that a prisoner should be released in honor of the Passover (Mark 15:8,11). Pilate jumped at the possible compromise. By promising to release Jesus on account of the custom rather than by proclaiming Him innocent, Pilate would avoid insulting the Jewish leaders, who had already pronounced Him guilty.

18:22 [w] Jer. 20:2 **18:24** [x] Matt. 26:57 [y] John 11:49 **18:25** [z] Luke 22:58–62 **18:27** [a] John 13:38 **18:28** [b] Mark 15:1 [c] Acts 10:28; 11:3 **18:29** [d] Matt. 27:11–14 **18:32** [e] Matt. 20:17–19; 26:2 [f] John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 33 **18:33** [g] Matt. 27:11 **18:36** [h] 1 Tim. 6:13 [i] [Dan. 2:44; 7:14] **18:37** [j] [Matt. 5:17; 20:28] [k] Is. 55:4 [l] [John 14:6] [m] John 8:47; 10:27 **18:38** [n] John 19:4, 6 **18:39** [o] Luke 23:17–25 **18:40** [p] Acts 3:14 [q] Luke 23:19 **19:1** [a] Matt. 20:19; 27:26

twisted a crown of thorns and put *it* on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe.
3 Then they said,* "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they [b]struck Him with their hands.

4 Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, [c]that you may know that I find no fault in Him."

Pilate's Decision

5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And *Pilate* said to them, "Behold the Man!"

6 [d]Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify *Him,* crucify *Him!*"

Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify *Him,* for I find no fault in Him."

7 The Jews answered him, [e]"We have a law, and according to our* law He ought to die, because [f]He made Himself the Son of God."

8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, 9 and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" [g]But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"

11 Jesus answered, [h]"You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore [i]the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

12 From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. [j]Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

13 [k]When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The* Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.
14 Now [l]it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"

15 But they cried out, "Away with *Him,* away with *Him!* Crucify Him!"

Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?"

The chief priests answered, [m]"We have no king but Caesar!"

16 [n]Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away.*

The King on a Cross

17 [o]And He, bearing His cross, [p]went out to a place called *the Place* of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, 18 where they crucified Him, and [q]two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.
19 [r]Now Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING
OF THE JEWS.

20 Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, *and* Latin.

21 Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews."'"

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

23 [s]Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. 24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

* **19:3** NU-Text reads *And they came up to Him and said.* * **19:7** NU-Text reads *the law.*
* **19:16** NU-Text omits *and led Him away.*

19:4 ***I am bringing Him out to you.*** Perhaps Pilate was appealing to the people's compassion so that he could release Jesus.

19:7 ***We have a law.*** The Jewish leaders were telling Pilate, "If you are appealing to us, we say that, according to our law, He must die." As governor, Pilate was bound by Roman custom to respect Jewish law. ***He made Himself the Son of God.*** The Jewish leaders were accusing Jesus of violating the laws against blasphemy (Lev. 24:16).

19:9 ***Jesus gave him no answer.*** Three times Pilate had publicly pronounced Jesus innocent (18:38; 19:4,6).

19:12 ***you are not Caesar's friend.*** The Jews shifted their focus from the religious charge (v. 7) to the political charge (18:33), which they backed up with an appeal to Caesar's own political interest. This new plea forced Pilate to choose between yielding to an indefinite sense of right or escaping the danger of an accusation from Rome.

19:19 ***wrote a title.*** It was a Roman custom to write the name of the condemned person and his crime on a plaque to be placed above his head at execution.

19:20 ***written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.*** Multilingual inscriptions were common. The title was written in the local, common, and official languages of the day. Everyone could read the message in his or her own language.

19:23 ***the soldiers.*** According to Roman law, the garments of a condemned criminal belonged to the executioners. Jesus had two items of clothing. The cloak was a large, loose garment. The tunic was a close-fitting garment that went from the neck to the knees.

19:24 ***cast lots.*** The outer garment could be

19:3 [b] Is. 50:6 **19:4** [c] John 18:33, 38 **19:6** [d] Acts 3:13 **19:7** [e] Lev. 24:16 [f] Matt. 26:63–66 **19:9** [g] Is. 53:7 **19:11** [h] [Luke 22:53] [i] Rom. 13:1 **19:12** [j] Luke 23:2 **19:13** [k] 1 Sam. 15:24 **19:14** [l] Matt. 27:62 **19:15** [m] [Gen. 49:10] **19:16** [n] Luke 23:24 **19:17** [o] Mark 15:21, 22 [p] Num. 15:36 **19:18** [q] Is. 53:12 **19:19** [r] Matt. 27:37 **19:23** [s] Luke 23:34

[t]*"They divided My garments among*
them,
*And for My clothing they cast lots."**

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

Behold Your Mother

25[u]Now there stood by the cross of Jesus
His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary
the *wife* of [v]Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
26When Jesus therefore saw His mother,
and [w]the disciple whom He loved standing
by, He said to His mother, [x]"Woman, behold
your son!" **27**Then He said to the disciple,
"Behold your mother!" And from that hour
that disciple took her [y]to his own *home.*

It Is Finished

28After this, Jesus, knowing* that all
things were now accomplished, [z]that the
Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"
29Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting
there; and [a]they filled a sponge with sour
wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His
mouth. **30**So when Jesus had received the
sour wine, He said, [b]"It is finished!" And
bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Jesus' Side Is Pierced

31[c]Therefore, because it was the Prepa-
ration *Day,* [d]that the bodies should not
remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for
that Sabbath was a [e]high day), the Jews
asked Pilate that their legs might be bro-
ken, and *that* they might be taken away.
32Then the soldiers came and broke the
legs of the first and of the other who was
crucified with Him. **33**But when they came
to Jesus and saw that He was already dead,
[f]they did not break His legs. **34**But one of
the soldiers pierced His side with a spear,
and immediately [g]blood and water came
out. **35**And he who has seen has testified,
and his testimony is [h]true; and he knows
that he is telling the truth, so that you may
[i]believe. **36**For these things were done that
the Scripture should be fulfilled, [j]*"Not one
of His bones shall be broken."** **37**And again
another Scripture says, [k]*"They shall look
on Him whom they pierced."**

Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb

38[l]After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being
a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, [m]for fear of
the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take
away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave
him permission. So he came and took the
body of Jesus. **39**And [n]Nicodemus, who at
first came to Jesus by night, also came,
bringing a mixture of [o]myrrh and aloes,
about a hundred pounds. **40**Then they took
the body of Jesus, and [p]bound it in strips of
linen with the spices, as the custom of the
Jews is to bury. **41**Now in the place where
He was crucified there was a garden, and
in the garden a new tomb in which no one
had yet been laid. **42**So [q]there they laid
Jesus, [r]because of the Jews' Preparation
Day, for the tomb was nearby.

The Empty Tomb

20 Now the [a]first *day* of the week Mary
Magdalene went to the tomb early,
while it was still dark, and saw *that* the
[b]stone had been taken away from the tomb.
2Then she ran and came to Simon Peter,
and to the [c]other disciple, [d]whom Jesus
loved, and said to them, "They have taken
away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do
not know where they have laid Him."
3[e]Peter therefore went out, and the other
disciple, and were going to the tomb. **4**So
they both ran together, and the other dis-
ciple outran Peter and came to the tomb
first. **5**And he, stooping down and looking
in, saw [f]the linen cloths lying *there;* yet he

* **19:24** Psalm 22:18 * **19:28** M-Text reads *seeing.*
* **19:36** Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20
* **19:37** Zechariah 12:10

conveniently divided, but the inner garment could not. Thus, the soldiers divided the outer one and cast lots for the inner one. Unknowingly, the soldiers fulfilled David's prophecy in Psalm 22:18.

19:30 *It is finished.* Having fulfilled every command of the Father and every prophecy of Scripture, Jesus voluntarily died. This was not a cry of exhaustion, but of completion. Jesus had done what He had agreed to do.

19:31 *the Preparation Day.* This day was Friday, the day before the Sabbath. Bodies should not remain on the cross. It is ironic that in the midst of a deliberate judicial murder the Jews were scrupulous about keeping the ceremonial law. According to Jewish law (Deut. 21:23), it was necessary to remove the bodies of executed criminals before sunset. To avoid breaking the law, the Jews requested that the legs of the condemned be broken so that the men would die quickly and could be removed from their crosses. With his legs broken, a victim could no longer lift his body in order to breathe and would soon suffocate.

19:34 *one of the soldiers pierced His side.* After the soldier did this, blood and water came out, indicating that Jesus was already dead. Only blood would have flowed from a living body.

19:35 *he who has seen.* John's words can be trusted because he is giving an eyewitness account, so that his readers will believe that Jesus is the Savior.

20:2 *They have taken away the Lord.* Mary Magdalene jumped to the wrong conclusion.

20:5 *the linen cloths lying.* No one who came to

19:24 [t] Ps. 22:18 **19:25** [u] Mark 15:40 [v] Luke 24:18 **19:26** [w] John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20, 24 [x] John 2:4 **19:27** [y] John 1:11; 16:32 **19:28** [z] Ps. 22:15 **19:29** [a] Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:48, 50 **19:30** [b] John 17:4 **19:31** [c] Mark 15:42 [d] Deut. 21:23 [e] Ex. 12:16 **19:33** [f] [Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12]; Ps. 34:20 **19:34** [g] [1 John 5:6, 8] **19:35** [h] John 21:24 [i] [John 20:31] **19:36** [j] [Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12]; Ps. 34:20 **19:37** [k] Ps. 22:16, 17; Zech. 12:10; 13:6 **19:38** [l] Luke 23:50–56 [m] [John 7:13; 9:22; 12:42] **19:39** [n] John 3:1, 2; 7:50 [o] Matt. 2:11 **19:40** [p] John 20:5, 7 **19:42** [q] Is. 53:9 [r] John 19:14, 31 **20:1** [a] Matt. 28:1–8 [b] Matt. 27:60, 66; 28:2 **20:2** [c] John 21:23, 24 [d] John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20, 24 **20:3** [e] Luke 24:12 **20:5** [f] John 19:40

did not go in. 6Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying *there,* 7and [g]the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. 8Then the [h]other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. 9For as yet they did not know the [i]Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. 10Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord

11[j]But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. 12And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

14[k]Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there,* and [l]did not know that it was Jesus. 15Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

16Jesus said to her, [m]"Mary!"

She turned and said to Him,* "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

17Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet [n]ascended to My Father; but go to [o]My brethren and say to them, [p]'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and *to* [q]My God and your God.'"

18[r]Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord,* and *that* He had spoken these things to her.

The Apostles Commissioned

19[s]Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled,* for [t]fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, [u]"Peace *be* with you." 20When He had said this, He [v]showed them *His* hands and His side. [w]Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

21So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! [x]As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22And when He had said this, He breathed on *them,* and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23[y]If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained."

Seeing and Believing

24Now Thomas, [z]called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" 27Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and [a]reach your hand *here,* and put *it* into My side. Do not be [b]unbelieving, but believing."

28And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29Jesus said to him, "Thomas,* because you have seen Me, you have believed. [c]Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed."

That You May Believe

30And [d]truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are

*20:16 NU-Text adds *in Hebrew.* *20:18 NU-Text reads *disciples, "I have seen the Lord," …* *20:19 NU-Text omits *assembled.* *20:29 NU-Text and M-Text omit *Thomas.*

steal the body would have taken the time to unwrap it and leave the clothes behind.

20:6 *saw the linen cloths.* The Greek term implies an intense stare, in contrast to the more casual look described in verse 5. Peter went into the tomb to get a good look. He carefully examined the place where Jesus' body had been.

20:9 *they did not know the Scripture.* The disciples believed because of what they saw in the tomb (v. 8), not because of what they knew from Old Testament passages describing the Savior's resurrection (Luke 24:25–27). Jesus had prophesied His death and resurrection in the disciples' presence, but the disciples had not understood what He was talking about.

20:17 *Do not cling to Me.* This means "to fasten oneself to" or "to hold." Mary had grabbed Christ and was holding on to Him as if she would never turn Him loose.

20:19 *Jesus came and stood in the midst.* Christ's appearance was miraculous because the doors were shut. Jesus, as God, could perform a variety of miracles without requiring a change in His humanity. Here Christ's body was a physical body, the same body in which He died and was buried. The difference is that His flesh had been changed to take on immortality and incorruptibility (1 Cor. 15:53).

20:7 *g* John 11:44 **20:8** *h* John 21:23, 24 **20:9** *i* Ps. 16:10 **20:11** *j* Mark 16:5 **20:14** *k* Matt. 28:9 *l* John 21:4 **20:16** *m* John 10:3 **20:17** *n* Heb. 4:14 *o* Heb. 2:11 *p* John 16:28; 17:11 *q* Eph. 1:17 **20:18** *r* Luke 24:10, 23 **20:19** *s* Luke 24:36 *t* John 9:22; 19:38 *u* John 14:27; 16:33 **20:20** *v* Acts 1:3 *w* John 16:20, 22 **20:21** *x* John 17:18, 19 **20:23** *y* Matt. 16:19; 18:18 **20:24** *z* John 11:16 **20:27** *a* Ps. 22:16; Zech. 12:10; 13:16; 1 John 1:1 *b* Mark 16:14 **20:29** *c* 1 Pet. 1:8 **20:30** *d* John 21:25

not written in this book; 31[e]but these are written that [f]you may believe that Jesus [g]is the Christ, the Son of God, [h]and that believing you may have life in His name.

Breakfast by the Sea

21 After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the [a]Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed *Himself:* 2Simon Peter, [b]Thomas called the Twin, [c]Nathanael of [d]Cana in Galilee, [e]the *sons* of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. 3Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."

They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately* got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. 4But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples [f]did not know that it was Jesus. 5Then [g]Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?"

They answered Him, "No."

6And He said to them, [h]"Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find *some.*" So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

7Therefore [i]that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on *his* outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. 8But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. 9Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. 10Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught."

11Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. 12Jesus said to them, [j]"Come *and* eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord. 13Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.

14This *is* now [k]the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Jesus Restores Peter

15So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son* of Jonah,* do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, [l]"Feed My lambs."

16He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah,* do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

[m]He said to him, "Tend My [n]sheep."

17He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah,* do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?"

And he said to Him, "Lord, [o]You know all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. 18[p]Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry *you* where you do not wish." 19This He spoke, signifying [q]by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, [r]"Follow Me."

The Beloved Disciple and His Book

20Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple [s]whom Jesus loved following, [t]who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" 21Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what *about* this man?"

22Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain [u]till I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me."

23Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what *is that* to you?"

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* **21:3** NU-Text omits *immediately.* * **21:15** NU-Text reads *John.* * **21:16** NU-Text reads *John.* * **21:17** NU-Text reads *John.*

20:31 ***that you may believe.*** John states the purpose of his book, which was to convince his readers that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah who fulfilled God's promises to Israel. Jesus is the Son of God, God in the flesh. By believing these things, a person obtains eternal life (1:12).

21:4 ***the disciples did not know.*** Perhaps the apostles did not recognize Jesus because they were preoccupied with their work, as Mary Magdalene had been with her sorrow (20:14). In addition, there was not much light at this time of day.

21:7 ***Peter . . . plunged into the sea.*** John was the first to recognize the Lord; Peter was the first to act.

21:17 ***You know that I love You.*** Peter denied the Lord at least three times. Here, he affirmed his love for the third time.

21:20–21 ***the disciple whom Jesus loved.*** This is commonly considered to be John, the author of this Gospel.

20:31 [e] Luke 1:4 [f] 1 John 5:13 [g] Luke 2:11 [h] John 3:15, 16; 5:24 **21:1** [a] John 6:1 **21:2** [b] John 20:24 [c] John 1:45–51 [d] John 2:1 [e] Matt. 4:21 **21:4** [f] John 20:14 **21:5** [g] Luke 24:41 **21:6** [h] Luke 5:4, 6, 7 **21:7** [i] John 13:23; 20:2 **21:12** [j] Acts 10:41 **21:14** [k] John 20:19, 26 **21:15** [l] Acts 20:28 **21:16** [m] Heb. 13:20 [n] Ps. 79:13 **21:17** [o] John 2:24, 25; 16:30 **21:18** [p] Acts 12:3, 4 **21:19** [q] 2 Pet. 1:13, 14 [r] [Matt. 4:19; 16:24] **21:20** [s] John 13:23; 20:2 [t] John 13:25 **21:22** [u] [Rev. 2:25; 3:11; 22:7, 20]

24 This is the disciple who [v]testifies of
these things, and wrote these things; and
we know that his testimony is true.
25 [w]And there are also many other things
that Jesus did, which if they were written
one by one, [x]I suppose that even the world
itself could not contain the books that
would be written. Amen.

21:24 ***This is the disciple.*** This is basically John's signature to his Gospel.
21:25 ***there are also many other things that Jesus did.*** The Gospel of John is truthful (v. 24), but it is not exhaustive.

21:24 [v] John 19:35 **21:25** [w] John 20:30 [x] Amos 7:10

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

▶ **AUTHOR:** There are many "we" sections in Acts that imply the author was present for these events (16:10–17; 20:5—21:18; 27:1—28:16). These sections of Acts are the historical record of an eyewitness. For the remainder of this book, Luke no doubt followed the same careful investigative procedures that he used in writing his Gospel (Luke 1:1–4). As a close traveling companion of Paul, Luke had access to the principal eyewitness for chapters 13–18. It is also likely that he had opportunities to interview such key witnesses in Jerusalem as Peter and John for the information in chapters 13–28. Modern archaeological discoveries have strikingly confirmed the trustworthiness and precision of Luke as an historian.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 33–62 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Acts 2:42–47

▶ **THEME:** Acts is the record of how the events surrounding Jesus' life and death and resurrection resulted in this worldwide movement called the church. The book is certainly not a comprehensive history. Acts is more like a photo album of snapshots. It is the record of an eyewitness who wrote about what he saw and what seemed to be the critical events in the beginnings of the church and its movement out of Jerusalem to the rest of the world. One could say that the Book of Acts is an elaboration on Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Prologue

1 The former account I made, O [a]Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do
and teach, [2][b]until the day in which He was
taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit
[c]had given commandments to the apostles
whom He had chosen, [3][d]to whom He also
presented Himself alive after His suffering
by many infallible proofs, being seen by
them during forty days and speaking of the
things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit Promised

[4][e]And being assembled together with
them, He commanded them not to depart
from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise
of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have
[f]heard from Me; [5][g]for John truly baptized
with water, [h]but you shall be baptized with
the Holy Spirit not many days from now."
[6]Therefore, when they had come together,
they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at
this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"
[7]And He said to them, [i]"It is not for you to
[j]know times or seasons which the Father
has put in His own authority. [8][k]But you
shall receive power [l]when the Holy Spirit
has come upon you; and [m]you shall be wit-
nesses to Me* in Jerusalem, and in all Judea
and [n]Samaria, and to the [o]end of the earth."

* **1:8** NU-Text reads *My witnesses.*

1:3 *many infallible proofs.* This is the only time the Greek word *tekmerion* occurs, emphasizing the certainty of the resurrection.

1:5 Baptism—The promised Holy Spirit (Is. 32:15; Joel 2:28–32) is a gift to believers after the glorification of Jesus (John 7:39). John baptized for forgiveness of sins, but the outpouring of the Spirit resulted from Christ's victory and exaltation to God's right hand (2:33). Believers are sealed until redemption (Eph. 1:13), made one body, and caused to drink of one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). The baptism of the Spirit is the immersion in the Spirit and uniting of believers into one body.

1:8 Living by Faith—God designed the Christian life to be one lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers must appropriate daily, by faith, the power of the Holy Spirit to live as Christians (Rom. 8:4–5). This means that the believer trusts the Spirit to empower him in specific instances such as resisting temptation, being faithful, and sharing one's faith. There is no secret formula that makes the Spirit's power operational in our lives. Scripture tells us that the Spirit dwells and operates in us (1 Cor. 6:9). We have to learn by experience through interaction with God to understand how that dynamic works. First the disciples received the Holy Spirit. Then He gave them

1:1 [a] Luke 1:3 **1:2** [b] Mark 16:19 [c] Matt. 28:19
1:3 [d] Mark 16:12, 14 **1:4** [e] Luke 24:49 [f] [John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26] **1:5** [g] Matt. 3:11 [h] [Joel 2:28] **1:7** [i] 1 Thess. 5:1 [j] Matt. 24:36 **1:8** [k] [Acts 2:1, 4] [l] Luke 24:49 [m] Luke 24:48 [n] Acts 8:1, 5, 14 [o] Col. 1:23

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

9 [p]Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, [q]He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them [r]in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, [s]will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

The Upper Room Prayer Meeting

12 [t]Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they had entered, they went up [u]into the upper room where they were staying: [v]Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son* of Alphaeus and [w]Simon the Zealot; and [x]Judas *the son* of James. 14 [y]These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication,* with [z]the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with [a]His brothers.

Matthias Chosen

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples* (altogether the number [b]of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 "Men *and* brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, [c]which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, [d]who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17 for [e]he was numbered with us and obtained a part in [f]this ministry."

18 [g](Now this man purchased a field with [h]the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 "For it is written in the Book of Psalms:

> [i]*'Let his dwelling place be desolate,*
> *And let no one live in it';**

and,

> [j]*'Let* another take his office.'**

21 "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John to that day when [k]He was taken up from us, one of these must [l]become a witness with us of His resurrection."

23 And they proposed two: Joseph called [m]Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, [n]who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 [o]to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." 26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Coming of the Holy Spirit

2 When [a]the Day of Pentecost had fully come, [b]they were all with one accord* in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it [c]filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. 4 And [d]they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began [e]to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Crowd's Response

5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, [f]devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the [g]multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak [h]Galileans? 8 And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and [i]Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." 12 So they were all

* **1:14** NU-Text omits *and supplication.*
* **1:15** NU-Text reads *brethren.* * **1:20** Psalm 69:25 • Psalm 109:8 • Greek *episkopen,* position of overseer * **2:1** NU-Text reads *together.*

power and finally the disciples were told they would be Christ's witness to the very ends of the earth. Effective witness requires that we first learn to rely on the Spirit to help us.

1:14 ***with one accord.*** The disciples were like-minded; the people put aside personal positions and took on a common goal. True unity is an act of grace.

2:4 ***tongues.*** This means "diverse languages" and was essential to the rapid worldwide spread of the gospel. Those gathered for Pentecost came from around the known world and had various "mother tongues."

1:9 [p] Luke 24:50, 51 [q] Acts 1:2 **1:10** [r] John 20:12 **1:11** [s] Dan. 7:13 **1:12** [t] Luke 24:52 **1:13** [u] Acts 9:37, 39; 20:8 [v] Matt. 10:2–4 [w] Luke 6:15 [x] Jude 1 **1:14** [y] Acts 2:1, 46 [z] Luke 23:49, 55 [a] Matt. 13:55 **1:15** [b] Rev. 3:4 **1:16** [c] Ps. 41:9 [d] Luke 22:47 **1:17** [e] Matt. 10:4 [f] Acts 1:25 **1:18** [g] Matt. 27:3–10 [h] Mark 14:21 **1:20** [i] Ps. 69:25 [j] Ps. 109:8 **1:22** [k] Acts 1:9 [l] Acts 1:8; 2:32 **1:23** [m] Acts 15:22 **1:24** [n] 1 Sam. 16:7 **1:25** [o] Acts 1:17 **2:1** [a] Lev. 23:15 [b] Acts 1:14 **2:2** [c] Acts 4:31 **2:4** [d] Acts 1:5 [e] Mark 16:17 **2:5** [f] Acts 8:2 **2:6** [g] Acts 4:32 **2:7** [h] Acts 1:11 **2:9** [i] 1 Pet. 1:1

amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"
13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

Peter's Sermon

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.
15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, [j]since it is *only* the third hour of the day.
16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 *'And[k] it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,*
[l]That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and [m]your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.
18 *And on My menservants and on My maidservants*
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;
[n]And they shall prophesy.
19 *[o]I will show wonders in heaven above*
And signs in the earth beneath:
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
20 *[p]The sun shall be turned into darkness,*
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
21 *And it shall come to pass*
That [q]whoever calls on the name of the LORD
*Shall be saved.'**

22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you [r]by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— 23 Him, [s]being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, [t]you have taken* by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 [u]whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.
25 For David says concerning Him:

[v]'I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
26 *Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;*
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
27 *For You will not leave my soul in Hades,*
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see [w]corruption.
28 *You have made known to me the ways of life;*
*You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'**

29 "Men *and* brethren, let *me* speak freely to you [x]of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Therefore, being a prophet, [y]and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,* 31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, [z]that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.
32 [a]This Jesus God has raised up, [b]of which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore [c]being exalted to [d]the right hand of God, and [e]having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He [f]poured out this which you now see and hear.
34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

[g]'The LORD said to my Lord,
"Sit at My right hand,
35 *Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."'**

36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."
37 Now when they heard *this,* [h]they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?"
38 Then Peter said to them, [i]"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the

* **2:21** Joel 2:28–32 * **2:23** NU-Text omits *have taken.* * **2:28** Psalm 16:8–11 * **2:30** NU-Text omits *according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ* and completes the verse with *He would seat one on his throne.* * **2:35** Psalm 110:1

2:17 ***visions . . . dreams.*** The Holy Spirit was poured out on the church at the beginning of this final age of Scripture.

2:37 Conviction of the Holy Spirit—Peter's preaching was extremely effective, for it came "in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance" (1 Thess. 1:5). The result was they were "cut to the heart." Their response was, "brethren, what shall we do?" The reality was that conviction by the Holy Spirit brought about a real search for an answer. Such a consciousness of sin is an indispensable prerequisite to conversion.

2:38 ***Repent.*** Peter called the Jews to turn their backs on their former lives and change. Faith involves an action of belief by those who accept Jesus.

2:15 [j] 1 Thess. 5:7 **2:17** [k] Joel 2:28–32 [l] Acts 10:45 [m] Acts 21:9 **2:18** [n] 1 Cor. 12:10 **2:19** [o] Joel 2:30 **2:20** [p] Matt. 24:29 **2:21** [q] Rom. 10:13 **2:22** [r] John 3:2; 5:6 **2:23** [s] Luke 22:22 [t] Acts 5:30 **2:24** [u] [Rom. 8:11] **2:25** [v] Ps. 16:8–11 **2:27** [w] Acts 13:30–37 **2:29** [x] Acts 13:36 **2:30** [y] Ps. 132:11 **2:31** [z] Ps. 16:10 **2:32** [a] Acts 2:24 [b] Acts 1:8; 3:15 **2:33** [c] [Acts 5:31] [d] [Heb. 10:12] [e] [John 14:26] [f] Acts 2:1–11, 17; 10:45 **2:34** [g] Ps. 68:18; 110:1 **2:37** [h] Luke 3:10, 12, 14 **2:38** [i] Luke 24:47

Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is to you and [j]to your children, and [k]to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

A Vital Church Grows

40And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41Then those who gladly* received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them.* 42[l]And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43Then fear came upon every soul, and [m]many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44Now all who believed were together, and [n]had all things in common, 45and sold their possessions and goods, and [o]divided them among all, as anyone had need.

46[p]So continuing daily with one accord [q]in the temple, and [r]breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47praising God and having favor with all the people. And [s]the Lord added to the church* daily those who were being saved.

A Lame Man Healed

3 Now Peter and John went up together [q]to the temple at the hour of prayer, [b]the ninth *hour.* 2And [c]a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, [d]to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: [e]In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." 7And he took him by the right hand and lifted *him* up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8So he, [f]leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. 9[g]And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10Then they knew that it was he who [h]sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Preaching in Solomon's Portico

11Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch [i]which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. 12So when Peter saw *it,* he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? 13[j]The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, [k]glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you [l]delivered up and [m]denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go. 14But you denied [n]the Holy One [o]and the Just, and [p]asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15and killed the Prince of life, [q]whom God raised from the dead, [r]of which we are witnesses. 16[s]And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17"Yet now, brethren, I know that [t]you did *it* in ignorance, as *did* also your rulers. 18But [u]those things which God foretold [v]by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19[w]Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,* 21[x]whom heaven must receive until the times of [y]restoration of all things, [z]which God has spoken by the mouth of all His

* **2:41** NU-Text omits *gladly.* * **2:47** NU-Text omits *to the church.* * **3:20** NU-Text and M-Text read *Christ Jesus, who was ordained for you before.*

2:42–47 Being in the Church—Converts were apparently immediately incorporated into the body of believers that became the church. Being involved in the Jerusalem church clearly must have changed the lives of these new believers dramatically. This was manifested in several ways: (1) they devoted themselves to new teaching; (2) they thought differently about all their possessions; (3) they became people of prayer; and (4) they ate and worshiped together with unified hearts. They weren't just saved from sin. They were saved to Christ and to this new body called the church, which of course is also His. We are called to be a part of one another's lives. We are to learn, share, pray, and worship together. As a body of believers, God expects us to have great concern for our fellow believers and to help one another mature.

3:7 *strength.* This account is told by a physician who describes instant healing. Before their eyes strength is given to muscles and bones. The man's feet could instantly hold his weight.

3:19 *Repent therefore and be converted.* Peter challenges all to change their minds and change their courses. Not only is their sin addressed but their closed minds.

2:39 [j] Joel 2:28, 32 [k] Eph. 2:13 **2:42** [l] Acts 1:14 **2:43** [m] Acts 2:22 **2:44** [n] Acts 4:32, 34, 37; 5:2 **2:45** [o] Is. 58:7 **2:46** [p] Acts 1:14 [q] Luke 24:53 [r] Acts 2:42; 20:7 **2:47** [s] Acts 5:14 **3:1** [a] Acts 2:46 [b] Ps. 55:17 **3:2** [c] Acts 14:8 [d] John 9:8 **3:6** [e] Acts 4:10 **3:8** [f] Is. 35:6 **3:9** [g] Acts 4:16, 21 **3:10** [h] John 9:8 **3:11** [i] John 10:23 **3:13** [j] John 5:30 [k] John 7:39; 12:23; 13:31 [l] Matt. 27:2 [m] Matt. 27:20 **3:14** [n] Mark 1:24 [o] Acts 7:52 [p] John 18:40 **3:15** [q] Acts 2:24 [r] Acts 2:32 **3:16** [s] Matt. 9:22 **3:17** [t] Luke 23:34 **3:18** [u] Acts 26:22 [v] 1 Pet. 1:10 **3:19** [w] [Acts 2:38; 26:20] **3:21** [x] Acts 1:11 [y] Matt. 17:11 [z] Luke 1:70

holy prophets since the world began. 22For Moses truly said to the fathers, [a]*'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.* 23*And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'** 24Yes, and [b]all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold* these days. 25[c]You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, [d]*'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'** 26To you [e]first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, [f]in turning away every one *of you* from your iniquities."

Peter and John Arrested

4 Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the [a]Sadducees came upon them, 2being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. 4However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Addressing the Sanhedrin

5And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, 6as well as [b]Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, [c]"By what power or by what name have you done this?"

8[d]Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: 9If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 10let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, [e]that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, [f]whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11This is the [g]*'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'** 12[h]Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

The Name of Jesus Forbidden

13Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, [i]and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. 14And seeing the man who had been healed [j]standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16saying, [k]"What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them *is* [l]evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it*. 17But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name."

18[m]So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19But Peter and John answered and said to them, [n]"Whether it

* **3:23** Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, 19 * **3:24** NU-Text and M-Text read *proclaimed*. * **3:25** Genesis 22:18; 26:4; 28:14 * **4:11** Psalm 118:22

3:22 Messiah—Peter draws on the witness of the prophets who foretold the suffering of Christ. He quotes Moses, who spoke of a prophet like himself from among the Jews (Deut. 18:15–17). The crucified, risen, and ascended Jesus has fulfilled this role perfectly as God's anointed Servant sent to atone for humans. Jesus carried God's authority; the words of Jesus must be heeded since they give life to the dying sinner. A person greater than Moses has come to fulfill the prophets. Peter is proclaiming that Jesus is the deliberate fulfillment of God's promise for redemption.

4:1 *Sadducees.* The Sadducees were skeptics who rejected all of the Old Testament except the books of Moses, and who denied the resurrection from the dead. Peter's teaching about the resurrection challenged their beliefs and teaching.

4:5 *rulers, elders, and scribes.* The Sanhedrin, which consisted of 70 men plus the high priest, was the highest Jewish court. The group consisted of the wealthiest, most educated, and most powerful Jewish men in Israel.

4:8 The Filling of the Holy Spirit—This is the second description in the Book of Acts of someone being filled with the Holy Spirit (see 2:4; 4:31; 9:17; 13:9). The initial filling accompanies the baptism in the Spirit. This filling brought boldness for God's work. Jesus had promised His disciples that they would stand before kings and rulers and that the Spirit of God within them would implant in their minds exactly what to say to these leaders (Matt. 10:16–20).

4:19 *listen to you more than to God.* There is no authority apart from God. When human authority rejects God's authority, it becomes twisted and loses its right to demand compliance (5:29). God's people are responsible to obey the government because it has been set in place by God, but when government directs against God's will, the Author of authority has the higher claim on our allegiance. We must resist any command that is against God's will (Ex. 1; Dan. 3; Heb. 11:23).

3:22 [a] Deut. 18:15, 18, 19 **3:24** [b] Luke 24:25
3:25 [c] [Rom. 9:4, 8] [d] Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14
3:26 [e] [Rom. 1:16; 2:9] [f] Matt. 1:21 **4:1** [a] Matt. 22:23
4:6 [b] Luke 3:2 **4:7** [c] Matt. 21:23 **4:8** [d] Luke 12:11, 12
4:10 [e] Acts 2:22; 3:6, 16 [f] Acts 2:24 **4:11** [g] Ps. 118:22
4:12 [h] [1 Tim. 2:5, 6] **4:13** [i] [1 Cor. 1:27] **4:14** [j] Acts 3:11 **4:16** [k] John 11:47 [l] Acts 3:7–10 **4:18** [m] Acts 5:28, 40 **4:19** [n] Acts 5:29

is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20[o]For we cannot but speak the things which [p]we have seen and heard." 21So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, [q]because of the people, since they all [r]glorified God for [s]what had been done. 22For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

Prayer for Boldness

23And being let go, [t]they went to their own *companions* and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, [u]You *are* God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25who by the mouth of Your servant David* have said:

[v]'*Why did the nations rage,*
And the people plot vain things?
26 *The kings of the earth took their stand,*
And the rulers were gathered together
Against the LORD *and against His Christ.'**

27"For [w]truly against [x]Your holy Servant Jesus, [y]whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28[z]to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants [a]that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30by stretching out Your hand to heal, [b]and that signs and wonders may be done [c]through the name of [d]Your holy Servant Jesus."

31And when they had prayed, [e]the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, [f]and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Sharing in All Things

32Now the multitude of those who believed [g]were of one heart and one soul; [h]neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. 33And with [i]great power the apostles gave [j]witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And [k]great grace was upon them all. 34Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; [l]for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35[m]and laid *them* at the apostles' feet; [n]and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

36And Joses,* who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, 37[o]having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

Lying to the Holy Spirit

5 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2And he kept back *part* of the proceeds, his wife also being aware *of it*, and brought a certain part and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. 3[a]But Peter said, "Ananias, why has [b]Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? 4While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

5Then Ananias, hearing these words, [c]fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. 6And the young men arose and [d]wrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

7Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?"

She said, "Yes, for so much."

9Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together [e]to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out." 10[f]Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying

* **4:25** NU-Text reads *who through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father, Your servant David.*
* **4:26** Psalm 2:1, 2 * **4:36** NU-Text reads *Joseph.*

5:3 Filled with Satan—Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44). When Ananias and Sapphira deliberately lied, they took upon themselves the moral character of the one who is behind all lies, the devil himself. A person who is listening to Satan begins to act like Satan; his or her thoughts and actions are "filled with Satan" rather than reflecting the filling and direction of the Holy Spirit. Satan or a demon cannot possess someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit, but by listening to Satan rather than the Holy Spirit a believer can behave like one who belongs to Satan rather than one who belongs to God.

5:4 Holy Spirit—This passage confirms the deity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the triune Godhead. To lie to Him (v. 3) is to lie to God.

4:20 [o] Acts 1:8; 2:32 [p] [1 John 1:1, 3] **4:21** [q] Acts 5:26 [r] Matt. 15:31 [s] Acts 3:7, 8 **4:23** [t] Acts 2:44–46; 12:12 **4:24** [u] Ex. 20:11 **4:25** [v] Ps. 2:1, 2 **4:27** [w] Luke 22:2; 23:1, 8 [x] [Luke 1:35] [y] John 10:36 **4:28** [z] Acts 2:23; 3:18 **4:29** [a] Acts 4:13, 31; 9:27; 13:46; 14:3; 19:8; 26:26 **4:30** [b] Acts 2:43; 5:12 [c] Acts 3:6, 16 [d] Acts 4:27 **4:31** [e] Acts 2:2, 4; 16:26 [f] Acts 4:29 **4:32** [g] Rom. 15:5, 6 [h] Acts 2:44 **4:33** [i] [Acts 1:8] [j] Acts 1:22 [k] Rom. 6:15 **4:34** [l] Acts 2:45 **4:35** [m] Acts 4:37; 5:2 [n] Acts 2:45; 6:1 **4:37** [o] Acts 4:34, 35; 5:1, 2 **5:3** [a] Deut. 23:21 [b] Luke 22:3 **5:5** [c] Acts 5:10, 11 **5:6** [d] John 19:40 **5:9** [e] Acts 5:3, 4 **5:10** [f] Acts 5:5

her out, buried *her* by her husband. 11[g]So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

Continuing Power in the Church

12And [h]through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. [i]And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. 13Yet [j]none of the rest dared join them, [k]but the people esteemed them highly. 14And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 15so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, [l]that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. 16Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing [m]sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Imprisoned Apostles Freed

17[n]Then the high priest rose up, and all those who *were* with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, 18[o]and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. 19But at night [p]an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 20"Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people [q]all the words of this life."

21And when they heard *that,* they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. [r]But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

Apostles on Trial Again

22But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, 23saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside* before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!" 24Now when the high priest,* [s]the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be. 25So one came and told them, saying,* "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"

26Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, [t]for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. 27And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28saying, [u]"Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, [v]and intend to bring this Man's [w]blood on us!"

29But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: [x]"We ought to obey God rather than men. 30[y]The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by [z]hanging on a tree. 31[a]Him God has exalted to His right hand *to be* [b]Prince and [c]Savior, [d]to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32And [e]we are His witnesses to these things, and *so* also *is* the Holy Spirit [f]whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Gamaliel's Advice

33When they heard *this,* they were [g]furious and plotted to kill them. 34Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named [h]Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. 35And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men. 36For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. 37After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed. 38And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; 39[i]but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found [j]to fight against God."

* **5:23** NU-Text and M-Text omit *outside.*
* **5:24** NU-Text omits *the high priest.* * **5:25** NU-Text and M-Text omit *saying.*

5:12 ***signs and wonders.*** These are miraculous occurrences that point to a warning, instruction, or encouragement from God. The signs and wonders which were done among the people at this time gave credibility to the apostles as messengers from God.

5:19 Angels—The word "angel" simply means "messenger." The phrase "angel of the Lord" is commonly used in the Old Testament to refer to spiritual messengers of God.

5:32 ***witnesses to these things.*** The witness of the believer is vitally related to the Holy Spirit. Jesus had said that the Holy Spirit would be a witness and that the apostles would be witnesses. The apostles were conscious that they were indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, and that their witness depended upon this filling. There is a tremendous lesson here for every believer. No one can be a witness for Christ and a herald of the gospel by individual initiative. Empowerment must come from the Holy Spirit.

5:11 *g* Acts 2:43; 5:5; 19:17 **5:12** *h* Acts 2:43; 4:30; 6:8; 14:3; 15:12 *i* Acts 3:11; 4:32 **5:13** *j* John 9:22 *k* Acts 2:47; 4:21 **5:15** *l* Acts 19:12 **5:16** *m* Mark 16:17, 18 **5:17** *n* Acts 4:1, 2, 6 **5:18** *o* Luke 21:12 **5:19** *p* Acts 12:7; 16:26 **5:20** *q* [John 6:63, 68; 17:3] **5:21** *r* Acts 4:5, 6 **5:24** *s* Acts 4:1; 5:26 **5:26** *t* Matt. 21:26 **5:28** *u* Acts 4:17, 18 *v* Acts 2:23, 36 *w* Matt. 23:35 **5:29** *x* Acts 4:19 **5:30** *y* Acts 3:13, 15 *z* [1 Pet. 2:24] **5:31** *a* [Acts 2:33, 36] *b* Acts 3:15 *c* Matt. 1:21 *d* Luke 24:47 **5:32** *e* John 15:26, 27 *f* Acts 2:4; 10:44 **5:33** *g* Acts 2:37; 7:54 **5:34** *h* Acts 22:3 **5:39** *i* 1 Cor. 1:25 *j* Acts 7:51; 9:5

40 And they agreed with him, and when
they had [k]called for the apostles [l]and beat-
en *them*, they commanded that they should
not speak in the name of Jesus, and let
them go. 41 So they departed from the pres-
ence of the council, [m]rejoicing that they
were counted worthy to suffer shame for
His* name. 42 And daily [n]in the temple, and
in every house, [o]they did not cease teach-
ing and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.

Seven Chosen to Serve

6 Now in those days, [a]when *the number*
of the disciples was multiplying, there
arose a complaint against the Hebrews
by the [b]Hellenists,* because their widows
were neglected [c]in the daily distribution.
2 Then the twelve summoned the multi-
tude of the disciples and said, [d]"It is not
desirable that we should leave the word of
God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, breth-
ren, [e]seek out from among you seven men
of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit
and wisdom, whom we may appoint over
this [f]business; 4 but we [g]will give ourselves
continually to prayer and to the ministry
of the word."

5 And the saying pleased the whole mul-
titude. And they chose Stephen, [h]a man
full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and [i]Phil-
ip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas,
and [j]Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,
6 whom they set before the apostles; and
[k]when they had prayed, [l]they laid hands
on them.

7 Then [m]the word of God spread, and the
number of the disciples multiplied great-
ly in Jerusalem, and a great many [n]of the
priests were obedient to the faith.

Stephen Accused of Blasphemy

8 And Stephen, full of faith* and power,
did great [o]wonders and signs among the
people. 9 Then there arose some from what
is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen
(Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from
Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen.
10 And [p]they were not able to resist the
wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.
11 [q]Then they secretly induced men to say,
"We have heard him speak blasphemous
words against Moses and God." 12 And they
stirred up the people, the elders, and the
scribes; and they came upon *him*, seized
him, and brought *him* to the council.
13 They also set up false witnesses who
said, "This man does not cease to speak
blasphemous* words against this holy
place and the law; 14 [r]for we have heard him
say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy
this place and change the customs which
Moses delivered to us." 15 And all who sat in
the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw
his face as the face of an angel.

Stephen's Address: The Call of Abraham

7 Then the high priest said, "Are these
things so?"

2 And he said, [a]"Brethren and fathers,
listen: The [b]God of glory appeared to our
father Abraham when he was in Meso-
potamia, before he dwelt in [c]Haran, 3 and
said to him, [d]*'Get out of your country and*
from your relatives, and come to a land
*that I will show you.'** 4 Then [e]he came out
of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in
Haran. And from there, when his father
was [f]dead, He moved him to this land in
which you now dwell. 5 And *God* gave him
no inheritance in it, not even *enough* to set
his foot on. But even when *Abraham* had
no child, [g]He promised to give it to him for
a possession, and to his descendants after
him. 6 But God spoke in this way: [h]that his
descendants would dwell in a foreign land,
and that they would bring them into [i]bond-
age and oppress *them* four hundred years.
7 [j]*'And the nation to whom they will be in*
bondage I will [k]*judge,'** said God, [l]*'and af-*
ter that they shall come out and serve Me in
*this place.'** 8 [m]Then He gave him the cov-
enant of circumcision; [n]and so *Abraham*
begot Isaac and circumcised him on the
eighth day; [o]and Isaac *begot* Jacob, and
[p]Jacob *begot* the twelve patriarchs.

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* **5:41** NU-Text reads *the name*; M-Text reads *the name of Jesus.* * **6:1** That is, Greek-speaking Jews * **6:8** NU-Text reads *grace.* * **6:13** NU-Text omits *blasphemous.* * **7:3** Genesis 12:1 * **7:7** Genesis 15:14 • Exodus 3:12

6:3 ***full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.*** The men's lives were consistent with their confession of faith. They knew the will of God and understood how to carry it out in their lives (Eph. 5:15–18). They could be trusted with responsibility and authority.

6:6 ***laid hands on them.*** This was not done in order for the men to receive the Holy Spirit, because the seven men were already "full of the Holy Spirit" (vv. 3,5). Instead the apostles were conferring on these men the responsibility of carrying out the ministry. The laying on of hands was a meaningful tradition that dated back to the days of Moses (Num. 27:23); it identified people with the ministries to be performed.

6:8 ***full of faith and power.*** Stephen had the gifts, the boldness, and the brilliance to be a powerful witness; yet even his witness would be rejected by the religious leaders. Hearts are opened only by God, not by our gifts, boldness, or brilliance.

7:8 ***circumcision.*** This covenant and its outward

5:40 [k] Acts 4:18 [l] Matt. 10:17 **5:41** [m] [1 Pet. 4:13–16] **5:42** [n] Acts 2:46 [o] Acts 4:20, 29 **6:1** [a] Acts 2:41; 4:4 [b] Acts 9:29; 11:20 [c] Acts 4:35; 11:29 **6:2** [d] Ex. 18:17 **6:3** [e] 1 Tim. 3:7 [f] 1 Tim. 3:8–13 **6:4** [g] Acts 2:42 **6:5** [h] Acts 6:3; 11:24 [i] Acts 8:5, 26; 21:8 [j] Rev. 2:6, 15 **6:6** [k] Acts 1:24 [l] [2 Tim. 1:6] **6:7** [m] Acts 12:24 [n] John 12:42 **6:8** [o] Acts 2:43; 5:12; 8:15; 14:3 **6:10** [p] Luke 21:15 **6:11** [q] 1 Kin. 21:10, 13 **6:14** [r] Acts 10:38; 25:8 **7:2** [a] Acts 22:1 [b] Ps. 29:3 [c] Gen. 11:31, 32 **7:3** [d] Gen. 12:1 **7:4** [e] Gen. 11:31; 15:7 [f] Gen. 11:32 **7:5** [g] Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:3, 18; 17:8; 26:3 **7:6** [h] Gen. 15:13, 14, 16; 47:11, 12 [i] Ex. 1:8–14; 12:40, 41 **7:7** [j] Gen. 15:14 [k] Ex. 14:13–31 [l] Ex. 3:12 **7:8** [m] Gen. 17:9–14 [n] Gen. 21:1–5 [o] Gen. 25:21–26 [p] Gen. 29:31—30:24; 35:18, 22–26

The Patriarchs in Egypt

9 [q]"And the patriarchs, becoming envious, [r]sold Joseph into Egypt. [s]But God was with him 10 and delivered him out of all his troubles, [t]and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. 11 [u]Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 [v]But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. 13 And the [w]second *time* Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh. 14 [x]Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and [y]all his relatives to *him*, seventy-five* people. 15 [z]So Jacob went down to Egypt; [a]and he died, he and our fathers. 16 And [b]they were carried back to Shechem and laid in [c]the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, *the father* of Shechem.

God Delivers Israel by Moses

17 "But when [d]the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, [e]the people grew and multiplied in Egypt 18 till another king [f]arose who did not know Joseph. 19 This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, [g]making them expose their babies, so that they might not live. 20 [h]At this time Moses was born, and [i]was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months. 21 But [j]when he was set out, [k]Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. 22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was [l]mighty in words and deeds.

23 [m]"Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of *them* suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. 25 For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. 26 And the next day he appeared to *two of* them as they were fighting, and *tried to* reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?' 27 But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, [n]*'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?'** 29 [o]Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he [p]had two sons.

30 [q]"And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord* appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai. 31 When Moses saw *it*, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him, 32 *saying, [r]'I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'** And Moses trembled and dared not look. 33 [s]*'Then the LORD said to him, "Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. 34 I have surely [t]seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will [u]send you to Egypt."'** 35 "This Moses whom they rejected, saying, [v]*'Who made you a ruler and a judge?'** is the one God sent *to be* a ruler and a deliverer [w]by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. 36 [x]He brought them out, after he had [y]shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, [z]and in the Red Sea, [a]and in the wilderness forty years.

* **7:14** Or *seventy* (compare Exodus 1:5)
* **7:28** Exodus 2:14 * **7:30** NU-Text omits *of the Lord.* * **7:32** Exodus 3:6, 15 * **7:34** Exodus 3:5, 7, 8, 10 * **7:35** Exodus 2:14

symbol were given to Abraham that he might never forget God's promise to bless him. Abraham was saved by faith in God (Gen. 15:6); the symbol of circumcision was an outward sign of the inward reality of his faith. God's blessing was not based on the physical fact of circumcision but on genuine faith.

7:16 *Shechem.* At the time of Stephen's defense, Shechem was the center of Samaritan life. Mount Gerizim, the Samaritan worship center, was located nearby. Stephen's point was not to speak against the temple in Jerusalem, but to point out that God had been speaking and moving in the lives of His people not only in Jerusalem or the temple. The most important address God made to His people was at Mount Sinai, which is nowhere near Jerusalem.

7:19 Persecution—Pharaoh enslaved and mistreated the Hebrews, and at the same time he feared their strength. It was his fear that led him to seek their destruction, persecuting them and destroying their children. It is easy to recognize the enormity and evil of the Egyptian persecution of the Jews as a race and a nation, but the ancient Egyptians are not the only ones guilty of such sin. Some of those claiming the name of Christ in recent times have been guilty of mistreating or even enslaving those of a different ethnic background. Feelings of racial superiority have no place in the heart of a Christian.

7:9 [q] Gen. 37:4, 11, 28 [r] Gen. 37:28 [s] Gen. 39:2, 21, 23 **7:10** [t] Gen. 41:38–44 **7:11** [u] Gen. 41:54; 42:5 **7:12** [v] Gen. 42:1, 2 **7:13** [w] Gen. 45:4, 16 **7:14** [x] Gen. 45:9, 27 [y] Deut. 10:22 **7:15** [z] Gen. 46:1–7 [a] Gen. 49:33 **7:16** [b] Josh. 24:32 [c] Gen. 23:16 **7:17** [d] Gen. 15:13 [e] Ex. 1:7–9 **7:18** [f] Ex. 1:8 **7:19** [g] Ex. 1:22 **7:20** [h] Ex. 2:1, 2 [i] Heb. 11:23 **7:21** [j] Ex. 2:3, 4 [k] Ex. 2:5–10 **7:22** [l] Luke 24:19 **7:23** [m] Ex. 2:11, 12 **7:27** [n] Ex. 2:14 **7:29** [o] Heb. 11:27 [p] Ex. 2:15, 21, 22; 4:20; 18:3 **7:30** [q] Ex. 3:1–10 **7:32** [r] Ex. 3:6, 15 **7:33** [s] Ex. 3:5, 7, 8, 10 **7:34** [t] Ex. 2:24, 25 [u] Ps. 105:26 **7:35** [v] Ex. 2:14 [w] Ex. 14:21 **7:36** [x] Ex. 12:41; 33:1 [y] Ps. 105:27 [z] Ex. 14:21 [a] Ex. 16:1, 35

Israel Rebels Against God

37 "This is that Moses who said to the
children of Israel,* [b]'*The* LORD *your God*
will raise up for you a Prophet like me from
your brethren. [c]*Him you shall hear.*'*
38 [d]"This is he who was in the congrega-
tion in the wilderness with [e]the Angel who
spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and *with* our
fathers, [f]the one who received the living
[g]oracles to give to us, 39whom our fathers
[h]would not obey, but rejected. And in their
hearts they turned back to Egypt, 40[i]saying
to Aaron, '*Make us gods to go before us; as*
for this Moses who brought us out of the
land of Egypt, we do not know what has
become of him.'* 41[j]And they made a calf
in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol,
and [k]rejoiced in the works of their own
hands. 42Then [l]God turned and gave them
up to worship [m]the host of heaven, as it is
written in the book of the Prophets:

[n]'*Did you offer Me slaughtered animals*
and sacrifices during forty years
in the wilderness,
O house of Israel?
43 *You also took up the tabernacle of*
Moloch,
And the star of your god Remphan,
Images which you made to worship;
And [o]*I will carry you away beyond*
Babylon.'*

God's True Tabernacle

44 "Our fathers had the tabernacle of wit-
ness in the wilderness, as He appointed,
instructing Moses [p]to make it according
to the pattern that he had seen, 45[q]which
our fathers, having received it in turn, also
brought with Joshua into the land pos-
sessed by the Gentiles, [r]whom God drove
out before the face of our fathers until the
[s]days of David, 46[t]who found favor before
God and [u]asked to find a dwelling for the
God of Jacob. 47[v]But Solomon built Him a
house.
48 "However, [w]the Most High does not
dwell in temples made with hands, as the
prophet says:

49 '*Heaven*[x] *is My throne,*
And earth is My footstool.
What house will you build for Me?
says the LORD,
Or what is the place of My rest?
50 *Has My hand not* [y]*made all these*
things?'*

Israel Resists the Holy Spirit

51 "*You* [z]stiff-necked and [a]uncircumcised
in heart and ears! You always resist the
Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you.
52[b]Which of the prophets did your fathers
not persecute? And they killed those who
foretold the coming of [c]the Just One, of
whom you now have become the betrayers
and murderers, 53[d]who have received the
law by the direction of angels and have not
kept *it*."

Stephen the Martyr

54[e]When they heard these things they
were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at
him with *their* teeth. 55But he, [f]being full of
the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw
the [g]glory of God, and Jesus standing at the
right hand of God, 56and said, "Look! [h]I see
the heavens opened and the [i]Son of Man
standing at the right hand of God!"
57 Then they cried out with a loud voice,
stopped their ears, and ran at him with one
accord; 58and they cast *him* out of the city
and stoned *him*. And [j]the witnesses laid
down their clothes at the feet of a young

* **7:37** Deuteronomy 18:15 • NU-Text and M-Text omit *Him you shall hear.* * **7:40** Exodus 32:1, 23 * **7:43** Amos 5:25–27 * **7:50** Isaiah 66:1, 2

7:38 The Meaning of the Church—In modern English the word *church* is used five ways: (1) a building designated as a place of worship; (2) all who profess faith in Christ; (3) a denomination; (4) a single organized local church; and (5) the body of Christ, that is, the universal church. While all of these may be legitimate uses for modern English, the word *church* is used in the New Testament in only the last two senses—a local congregation or the body of Christ, the universal church. At its root, the word *church* means a "called-out group." It is used for the nation of Israel (7:38), which was a group of people who were called out of the rest of the world to have a special national relationship to God. It is used for a local church (1 Thess. 1:1; Rev. 2:1) and for the universal church, the body of Christ (Col. 1:18). The universal church comprises all believers from the Day of Pentecost until God completes His plan for the world. The local church is a local, visible, temporal manifestation of the universal church.

7:44 *tabernacle.* The ancient tabernacle had been the focus of the Israelites' national worship. Even after the miraculous deliverance from Egypt there was a tendency among the people to forget God. The tabernacle was a constant testimony of God's presence no matter where the people went. Paul tells us that we are the tabernacle, the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16). We can never move beyond God's reach, for we carry His presence with us.

7:58 *cast him out of the city.* Because Jewish law did not allow an execution within the walls of the holy city, the religious leaders took Stephen outside the city. Jerusalem is situated in a stony area and this made Stephen's hasty (and illegal) execution easy. His executioners had plenty of rocks at hand, they only had to bend over and pick them up (see John 10:31).

7:37 [b] Deut. 18:15, 18, 19 [c] Matt. 17:5 **7:38** [d] Ex. 19:3 [e] Gal. 3:19 [f] Deut. 5:27 [g] Heb. 5:12 **7:39** [h] Ps. 95:8–11 **7:40** [i] Ex. 32:1, 23 **7:41** [j] Deut. 9:16 [k] Ex. 32:6, 18, 19 **7:42** [l] [2 Thess. 2:11] [m] 2 Kin. 21:3 [n] Amos 5:25–27 **7:43** [o] Jer. 25:9–12 **7:44** [p] [Heb. 8:5] **7:45** [q] Josh. 3:14; 18:1; 23:9 [r] Ps. 44:2 [s] 2 Sam. 6:2–15 **7:46** [t] 2 Sam. 7:1–13 [u] 1 Chr. 22:7 **7:47** [v] 1 Kin. 6:1–38; 8:20, 21 **7:48** [w] 1 Kin. 8:27 **7:49** [x] Is. 66:1, 2 **7:50** [y] Ps. 102:25 **7:51** [z] Ex. 32:9 [a] Lev. 26:41 **7:52** [b] 2 Chr. 36:16 [c] Acts 3:14; 22:14 **7:53** [d] Ex. 20:1 **7:54** [e] Acts 5:33 **7:55** [f] Acts 6:5 [g] [Ex. 24:17] **7:56** [h] Matt. 3:16 [i] Dan. 7:13 **7:58** [j] Acts 22:20

man named Saul. 59And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, [k]receive my spirit." 60Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, [l]"Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Saul Persecutes the Church

8 Now Saul was consenting to his death.
At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and [a]they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial,* and [b]made great lamentation over him.

3As for Saul, [c]he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing *them* to prison.

Christ Is Preached in Samaria

4Therefore [d]those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. 5Then [e]Philip went down to the* city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. 6And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7For [f]unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. 8And there was great joy in that city.

The Sorcerer's Profession of Faith

9But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously [g]practiced sorcery in the city and [h]astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, 10to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." 11And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. 12But when they believed Philip as he preached the things [i]concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

The Sorcerer's Sin

14Now when the [j]apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15who, when they had come down, prayed for them [k]that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16For [l]as yet He had fallen upon none of them. [m]They had only been baptized in [n]the name of the Lord Jesus. 17Then [o]they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because [p]you thought that [q]the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your [r]heart is not right in the sight of God. 22Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God [s]if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23For I see that you are [t]poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."

24Then Simon answered and said, [u]"Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me."

25So when they had testified and

* **8:5** Or *a*

7:59–60 Death—Scripture affirms, and experience confirms, the universality of death. It comes to kings and commoners, saints and sinners alike. Christians die, as well as unbelievers. No one likes to think of dying violently, but Stephen's death shows that even this end can be met with courage and peace. In both life and death Stephen sought to imitate his Lord, and he departed without resentment, praying for the pardon of his foes.

8:5 *Samaria.* In the first century, the Jews and Samaritans despised one another. The Jews considered the Samaritans half-breeds and religious deviants. Following the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C., Samaria had been resettled by colonists brought to the land by the Assyrians. These colonists intermarried with the remaining Jews, and the Samaritans of the New Testament era were descendants of these mixed marriages. Because of their mixed heritage and their rejection of the temple in Jerusalem and most of the Old Testament Scriptures (the Samaritans only accepted the five books of Moses), the Jews considered them to be unclean. The amazing work of the Holy Spirit in forming one fellowship out of Jewish and Samaritan believers indicates that there is no room for racial or ethnic division in His church (Gal. 3:26–28).

8:14–15 *that they might receive the Holy Spirit.* This episode clearly showed the Samaritans that salvation did come through the Jews, and that the Scriptures they had previously rejected were actually God's message. It also showed the Jewish believers that God had accepted the Samaritan believers fully into His family. The dependence of the Samaritans upon the Jews to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit was the healing sign that the two sides were to become one.

7:59 [k] Ps. 31:5 **7:60** [l] Matt. 5:44 **8:1** [a] Acts 8:4; 11:19 **8:2** [b] Gen. 23:2 **8:3** [c] Phil. 3:6 **8:4** [d] Matt. 10:23 **8:5** [e] Acts 6:5; 8:26, 30 **8:7** [f] Mark 16:17 **8:9** [g] Acts 8:11; 13:6 [h] Acts 5:36 **8:12** [i] Acts 1:3; 8:4 **8:14** [j] Acts 5:12, 29, 40 **8:15** [k] Acts 2:38; 19:2 **8:16** [l] Acts 19:2 [m] Matt. 28:19 [n] Acts 10:48; 19:5 **8:17** [o] Acts 6:6; 19:6 **8:20** [p] [Matt. 10:8] [q] [Acts 2:38; 10:45; 11:17] **8:21** [r] Jer. 17:9 **8:22** [s] 2 Tim. 2:25 **8:23** [t] Heb. 12:15 **8:24** [u] James 5:16

preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

Christ Is Preached to an Ethiopian

26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to [v]Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. 27 So he arose and went. And behold, [w]a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and [x]had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

[y]"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
[z]So He opened not His mouth.
33 In His humiliation His [a]justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation?
For His life is [b]taken from the earth."*

34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, [c]and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, *here is* water. [d]What hinders me from being baptized?"

37 Then Philip said, [e]"If you believe with all your heart, you may."

And he answered and said, [f]"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*

38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water, [g]the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to [h]Caesarea.

The Damascus Road: Saul Converted

9 Then [a]Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked [b]letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

3 [c]As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, [d]why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.* It *is* hard for you to kick against the goads."

6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

Then the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

* **8:33** Isaiah 53:7, 8 * **8:37** NU-Text and M-Text omit this verse. It is found in Western texts, including the Latin tradition. * **9:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit the last sentence of verse 5 and begin verse 6 with *But arise and go.*

8:27 *had come to Jerusalem to worship.* Many Gentiles in the first century had grown weary of the multiple gods and loose morals of their own cultures. In their search for something more, some of them came to Judaism. One who accepted Judaism, obeying all the law of Moses (including circumcision and baptism), was called a *proselyte.* Gentiles who did not become proselytes but did attend the Jewish synagogues to listen to the Scriptures were called *God-fearers.* We cannot be sure which category the Ethiopian eunuch fell into.

8:35 *preached Jesus to him.* First-century Jews did not speak much about a suffering Messiah. The Jewish people, facing the yoke of Roman rule, believed that the Messiah would come as the Lion of Judah, a delivering king, not a weak lamb. They believed and taught that the suffering One spoken of by Isaiah was the suffering nation of Israel. Philip's explanation of the passage gave a very different view, showing Jesus as the Messiah who came to suffer and die in order to redeem sinners.

9:2 *synagogues.* The early Jewish believers in Jesus were still attending the synagogues, gathering places where Jews came together to hear the Scriptures read and expounded upon. Part of Saul's mission was apparently to let the Damascus synagogues know beyond any doubt that the followers of "the Way" did not have the approval of the Sanhedrin.

9:4–5 Messiah—Apparently unimpressed by the witness of the dying Stephen (7:59), Saul needed a more serious, personal jolt to awaken his spiritual awareness. The light that blinded Saul prepared him to receive the True Light that came into the world to dispel the darkness of sin. This personal encounter with the risen Christ changed Saul from a fire-breathing persecutor into a dynamic preacher who was not ashamed to publicly claim the crucified Man from Galilee as his Lord and Savior.

8:26 [v] Acts 6:5 **8:27** [w] Ps. 68:31; 87:4 [x] John 12:20 **8:32** [y] Is. 53:7, 8 [z] John 19:9 **8:33** [a] Luke 23:1–25 [b] Luke 23:33–46 **8:35** [c] Luke 24:27 **8:36** [d] Acts 10:47; 16:33 **8:37** [e] [Mark 16:16] [f] Matt. 16:16 **8:39** [g] Ezek. 3:12, 14 **8:40** [h] Acts 21:8 **9:1** [a] Acts 7:57; 8:1, 3; 26:10, 11 **9:2** [b] Acts 22:5 **9:3** [c] 1 Cor. 15:8 **9:4** [d] [Matt. 25:40]

7And [e]the men who journeyed with
him stood speechless, hearing a voice but
seeing no one. 8Then Saul arose from the
ground, and when his eyes were opened he
saw no one. But they led him by the hand
and brought *him* into Damascus. 9And he
was three days without sight, and neither
ate nor drank.

Ananias Baptizes Saul

10Now there was a certain disciple at
Damascus [f]named Ananias; and to him the
Lord said in a vision, "Ananias."

And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

11So the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go
to the street called Straight, and inquire at
the house of Judas for *one* called Saul [g]of
Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12And in
a vision he has seen a man named Ananias
coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so
that he might receive his sight."

13Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have
heard from many about this man, [h]how
much harm he has done to Your saints in
Jerusalem. 14And here he has authority
from the chief priests to bind all [i]who call
on Your name."

15But the Lord said to him, "Go, for [j]he is
a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name
before [k]Gentiles, [l]kings, and the [m]children
of Israel. 16For [n]I will show him how many
things he must suffer for My [o]name's sake."

17[p]And Ananias went his way and entered
the house; and [q]laying his hands on him he
said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus,* who
appeared to you on the road as you came,
has sent me that you may receive your sight
and [r]be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18Imme-
diately there fell from his eyes *something*
like scales, and he received his sight at once;
and he arose and was baptized.

19So when he had received food, he was
strengthened. [s]Then Saul spent some days
with the disciples at Damascus.

Saul Preaches Christ

20Immediately he preached the Christ* in
the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

21Then all who heard were amazed, and
said, [t]"Is this not he who destroyed those
who called on this name in Jerusalem, and
has come here for that purpose, so that he
might bring them bound to the chief priests?"

22But Saul increased all the more in
strength, [u]and confounded the Jews who
dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus*
is the Christ.

Saul Escapes Death

23Now after many days were past, [v]the
Jews plotted to kill him. 24[w]But their plot
became known to Saul. And they watched
the gates day and night, to kill him. 25Then
the disciples took him by night and [x]let *him*
down through the wall in a large basket.

Saul at Jerusalem

26And [y]when Saul had come to Jerusa-
lem, he tried to join the disciples; but they
were all afraid of him, and did not believe
that he was a disciple. 27[z]But Barnabas took
him and brought *him* to the apostles. And
he declared to them how he had seen the
Lord on the road, and that He had spoken
to him, [a]and how he had preached boldly
at Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28So
[b]he was with them at Jerusalem, coming
in and going out. 29And he spoke boldly in
the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed
against the [c]Hellenists, [d]but they attempted
to kill him. 30When the brethren found out,
they brought him down to Caesarea and
sent him out to Tarsus.

The Church Prospers

31[e]Then the churches* throughout all Ju-
dea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and
were [f]edified. And walking in the [g]fear of
the Lord and in the [h]comfort of the Holy
Spirit, they were [i]multiplied.

Aeneas Healed

32Now it came to pass, as Peter went
[j]through all *parts of the country,* that he
also came down to the saints who dwelt
in Lydda. 33There he found a certain man
named Aeneas, who had been bedridden
eight years and was paralyzed. 34And Pe-
ter said to him, "Aeneas, [k]Jesus the Christ
heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then
he arose immediately. 35So all who dwelt at

* **9:17** M-Text omits *Jesus.* * **9:20** NU-Text reads *Jesus.* * **9:31** NU-Text reads *church … was edified.*

9:17 ***Jesus, who appeared to you.*** Saul was not dreaming on the road to Damascus but instead had seen the resurrected Lord.

9:30 ***Tarsus.*** Saul's hometown was about three hundred miles north of Jerusalem and about ten miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea. Tarsus was a well-known university city, surpassed in educational opportunities only by Athens and Alexandria.

9:31 ***peace.*** This peace was not due solely to Saul's conversion. Tiberius, the emperor of Rome, died around this time. He was replaced by Caligula, who wanted to erect a statue of himself in the temple at Jerusalem. The attention of the Jewish religious leaders was directed towards this new threat, and the emerging church was given a short season of respite.

9:7 [e] [Acts 22:9; 26:13] **9:10** [f] Acts 22:12 **9:11** [g] Acts 21:39; 22:3 **9:13** [h] Acts 9:1 **9:14** [i] Acts 7:59; 9:2, 21 **9:15** [j] Eph. 3:7, 8 [k] Rom. 1:5; 11:13 [l] Acts 25:22, 23; 26:1 [m] Rom. 1:16; 9:1–5 **9:16** [n] Acts 20:23 [o] 2 Cor. 4:11 **9:17** [p] Acts 22:12, 13 [q] Acts 8:17 [r] Acts 2:4; 4:31; 8:17; 13:52 **9:19** [s] Acts 26:20 **9:21** [t] Gal. 1:13, 23 **9:22** [u] Acts 18:28 **9:23** [v] 2 Cor. 11:26 **9:24** [w] 2 Cor. 11:32 **9:25** [x] Josh. 2:15 **9:26** [y] Acts 22:17–20; 26:20 **9:27** [z] Acts 4:36; 13:2 [a] Acts 9:20, 22 **9:28** [b] Gal. 1:18 **9:29** [c] Acts 6:1; 11:20 [d] 2 Cor. 11:26 **9:31** [e] Acts 5:11; 8:1; 16:5 [f] [Eph. 4:16, 29] [g] Ps. 34:9 [h] John 14:16 [i] Acts 16:5 **9:32** [j] Acts 8:14 **9:34** [k] [Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10]

Lydda and [l]Sharon saw him and [m]turned to the Lord.

Dorcas Restored to Life

36At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full [n]of good works and charitable deeds which she did. **37**But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid *her* in [o]an upper room. **38**And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring *him* not to delay in coming to them. **39**Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought *him* to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. **40**But Peter [p]put them all out, and [q]knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he [r]said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. **41**Then he gave her *his* hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. **42**And it became known throughout all Joppa, [s]and many believed on the Lord. **43**So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with [t]Simon, a tanner.

Cornelius Sends a Delegation

10 There was a certain man in [a]Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, **2**[b]a devout *man* and one who [c]feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. **3**About the ninth hour of the day [d]he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

4And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"

So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. **5**Now [e]send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. **6**He is lodging with [f]Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea.* [g]He will tell you what you must do." **7**And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. **8**So when he had explained all *these* things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

9The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, [h]Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. **10**Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance **11**and [i]saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. **12**In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. **13**And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

14But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! [j]For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

15And a voice *spoke* to him again the second time, [k]"What God has cleansed you must not call common." **16**This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

Summoned to Caesarea

17Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. **18**And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.

19While Peter thought about the vision, [l]the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. **20**[m]Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

21Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius,* and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?"

22And they said, "Cornelius *the* centurion, a just man, one who fears God and [n]has a good reputation among all the nation of

* **10:6** NU-Text and M-Text omit the last sentence of this verse. * **10:21** NU-Text and M-Text omit *who had been sent to him from Cornelius.*

10:1—11:18 The following two chapters mark an important turning point in the Book of Acts. Those who were scattered by persecution from Jerusalem had been preaching the gospel only to Jews (11:19). At this point, they began to overcome their prejudices and carry the message of Christ to the Gentiles.

10:6 ***Simon, a tanner.*** God cut away Peter's prejudices by having him stay for many days with one whose trade Peter likely considered repulsive. Since a tanner (one who makes leather) is constantly working with animals dead from various causes, he would spend much of his life ceremonially "unclean."

10:15 ***What God has cleansed you must not call common.*** Food may have been his first consideration, but Peter would soon understand the greater message. The vision was a sign from heaven that Jews were no longer to call Gentiles unclean.

9:35 [l] 1 Chr. 5:16; 27:29 [m] Acts 11:21; 15:19 **9:36** [n] 1 Tim. 2:10 **9:37** [o] Acts 1:13; 9:39 **9:40** [p] Matt. 9:25 [q] Acts 7:60 [r] Mark 5:41, 42 **9:42** [s] John 11:45 **9:43** [t] Acts 10:6 **10:1** [a] Acts 8:40; 23:23 **10:2** [b] Acts 8:2; 9:22; 22:12 [c] [Acts 10:22, 35; 13:16, 26] **10:3** [d] Acts 10:30; 11:13 **10:5** [e] Acts 11:13, 14 **10:6** [f] Acts 9:43 [g] Acts 11:14 **10:9** [h] Acts 10:9–32; 11:5–14 **10:11** [i] Acts 7:56 **10:14** [j] Deut. 14:3, 7 **10:15** [k] [Rom. 14:14] **10:19** [l] Acts 11:12 **10:20** [m] Acts 15:7–9 **10:22** [n] Acts 22:12

the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you." 23Then he invited them in and lodged *them.*

On the next day Peter went away with them, [o]and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

Peter Meets Cornelius

24And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped *him.* 26But Peter lifted him up, saying, [p]"Stand up; I myself am also a man." 27And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. 28Then he said to them, "You know how [q]unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But [r]God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?"

30So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour* I prayed in my house, and behold, [s]a man stood before me [t]in bright clothing, 31and said, 'Cornelius, [u]your prayer has been heard, and [v]your alms are remembered in the sight of God. 32Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.* When he comes, he will speak to you.' 33So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."

Preaching to Cornelius' Household

34Then Peter opened *his* mouth and said: [w]"In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. 35But [x]in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is [y]accepted by Him. 36The word which *God* sent to the children of Israel, [z]preaching peace through Jesus Christ—[a]He is Lord of all— 37that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and [b]began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: 38how [c]God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who [d]went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, [e]for God was with Him. 39And we are [f]witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they* [g]killed by hanging on a tree. 40Him [h]God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41[i]not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, *even* to us [j]who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42And [k]He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify [l]that it is He who was ordained by God *to be* Judge [m]of the living and the dead. 43[n]To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, [o]whoever believes in Him will receive [p]remission of sins."

The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles

44While Peter was still speaking these words, [q]the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 45[r]And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, [s]because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

Then Peter answered, 47"Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit [t]just as we *have?*" 48[u]And he commanded them to be baptized [v]in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Peter Defends God's Grace

11 Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, [a]those of the circumcision contended with him, 3saying, [b]"You went in to uncircumcised men [c]and ate with them!"

4But Peter explained *it* to them [d]in order from the beginning, saying: 5[e]"I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by

* **10:30** NU-Text reads *Four days ago to this hour, at the ninth hour.* * **10:32** NU-Text omits the last sentence of this verse. * **10:39** NU-Text and M-Text add *also.*

10:44 ***the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.*** Following the plan laid out by Jesus before His ascension (1:8), the good news had reached the Jews, the Samaritans, and now the Gentiles. All were united by the same faith in the same Lord with the same gift of the Holy Spirit.

11:2 ***those of the circumcision.*** This term refers to Jewish believers in Jesus who taught that Gentiles had to become Jews (be circumcised and keep the law of Moses) in order to become Christians.

10:23 [o] Acts 10:45; 11:12 **10:26** [p] Acts 14:14, 15 **10:28** [q] John 4:9; 18:28 [r] [Acts 10:14, 35; 15:8, 9] **10:30** [s] Acts 1:10 [t] Matt. 28:3 **10:31** [u] Dan. 10:12 [v] Heb. 6:10 **10:34** [w] Deut. 10:17 **10:35** [x] [Eph. 2:13] [y] Ps. 15:1, 2 **10:36** [z] Is. 57:19 [a] Rom. 10:12 **10:37** [b] Luke 4:14 **10:38** [c] Luke 4:18 [d] Matt. 4:23 [e] John 3:2; 8:29 **10:39** [f] Acts 1:8 [g] Acts 2:23 **10:40** [h] Acts 2:24 **10:41** [i] [John 14:17, 19, 22; 15:27] [j] Luke 24:30, 41–43 **10:42** [k] Matt. 28:19 [l] John 5:22, 27 [m] 1 Pet. 4:5 **10:43** [n] Zech. 13:1 [o] Gal. 3:22 [p] Acts 13:38, 39 **10:44** [q] Acts 4:31 **10:45** [r] Acts 10:23 [s] Acts 11:18 **10:47** [t] Acts 2:4; 10:44; 11:17; 15:8 **10:48** [u] 1 Cor. 1:14–17 [v] Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5 **11:2** [a] Acts 10:45 **11:3** [b] Acts 10:28 [c] Gal. 2:12 **11:4** [d] Luke 1:3 **11:5** [e] Acts 10:9

four corners; and it came to me. 6When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. 7And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' 8But I said, 'Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.' 9But the voice answered me again from heaven, 'What God has cleansed you must not call common.' 10Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven. 11At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea. 12Then [f]the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover [g]these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. 13[h]And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.' 15And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, [i]as upon us at the beginning. 16Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, [j]'John indeed baptized with water, but [k]you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17[l]If therefore God gave them the same gift as *He gave* us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, [m]who was I that I could withstand God?"

18When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, [n]"Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

Barnabas and Saul at Antioch

19[o]Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. 20But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to [p]the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21And [q]the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and [r]turned to the Lord.

22Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out [s]Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. 23When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and [t]encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. 24For he was a good man, [u]full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. [v]And a great many people were added to the Lord.

25Then Barnabas departed for [w]Tarsus to seek Saul. 26And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Relief to Judea

27And in these days [x]prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28Then one of them, named [y]Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of [z]Claudius Caesar. 29Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send [a]relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. 30[b]This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Herod's Violence to the Church

12 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church. 2Then he killed James [a]the brother of John with the sword. 3And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* [b]the Days of Unleavened Bread. 4So [c]when he had arrested him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

11:16 ***baptized with the Holy Spirit.*** This is found seven times in the New Testament (1:5; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; 1 Cor. 12:13) and refers to an act by Christ for believers.

11:22–23 ***Antioch.*** Seleucus I founded the city of Antioch, naming it after his father. The city was cosmopolitan, attracting people of various cultures and ethnic backgrounds—including people from Persia, India, and even China. The gospel proclaimed in Antioch would have tremendous potential for reaching other areas of the world.

11:26 ***called Christians.*** Originally, the believers had called themselves "followers of the Way." Although the term "Christian" was apparently given to them by nonbelievers, they adopted it for themselves. Its essential meaning, "Christ-follower" is appropriate for those who have given their lives into the keeping of Jesus, the Messiah.

11:29–30 Benevolence—Christians must exercise responsibility and charity (love) towards all men, and especially to other believers (Gal. 6:10). The Christians at Antioch are an example of well implemented Christian giving. All gave in accordance with their means (2 Cor. 8:3). The gifts were placed in the charge of trustworthy Christians (2 Cor. 8:20–21), who could ensure a responsible delivery and administration of the gifts.

12:1–3 ***Herod the king.*** This is Herod Agrippa I, the nephew of Herod Antipas who murdered John the

11:12 [f] [John 16:13] [g] Acts 10:23 **11:13** [h] Acts 10:30 **11:15** [i] Acts 2:1–4; 15:7–9 **11:16** [j] John 1:26, 33 [k] Is. 44:3 **11:17** [l] [Acts 15:8, 9] [m] Acts 10:47 **11:18** [n] Rom. 10:12, 13; 15:9, 16 **11:19** [o] Acts 8:1, 4 **11:20** [p] Acts 6:1; 9:29 **11:21** [q] Luke 1:66 [r] Acts 9:35; 14:1 **11:22** [s] Acts 4:36; 9:27 **11:23** [t] Acts 13:43; 14:22 **11:24** [u] Acts 6:5 [v] Acts 5:14; 11:21 **11:25** [w] Acts 9:11, 30 **11:27** [x] 1 Cor. 12:28 **11:28** [y] Acts 21:10 [z] Acts 18:2 **11:29** [a] 1 Cor. 16:1 **11:30** [b] Acts 12:25 **12:2** [a] Matt. 4:21; 20:23 **12:3** [b] Ex. 12:15; 23:15 **12:4** [c] John 21:18

Peter Freed from Prison

5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant* prayer was offered to God for
him by the church. 6 And when Herod was
about to bring him out, that night Peter
was sleeping, bound with two chains be-
tween two soldiers; and the guards before
the door were keeping the prison. 7 Now
behold, [d]an angel of the Lord stood by
him, and a light shone in the prison; and
he struck Peter on the side and raised him
up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains
fell off *his* hands. 8 Then the angel said to
him, "Gird yourself and tie on your san-
dals"; and so he did. And he said to him,
"Put on your garment and follow me." 9 So
he went out and followed him, and [e]did not
know that what was done by the angel was
real, but thought [f]he was seeing a vision.
10 When they were past the first and the
second guard posts, they came to the iron
gate that leads to the city, [g]which opened
to them of its own accord; and they went out
and went down one street, and immediate-
ly the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter had come to himself,
he said, "Now I know for certain that [h]the
Lord has sent His angel, and [i]has delivered
me from the hand of Herod and *from* all the
expectation of the Jewish people."

12 So, when he had considered *this,* [j]he
came to the house of Mary, the mother of
[k]John whose surname was Mark, where
many were gathered together [l]praying.
13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the
gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer.
14 When she recognized Peter's voice, be-
cause of *her* gladness she did not open the
gate, but ran in and announced that Peter
stood before the gate. 15 But they said to her,
"You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept in-
sisting that it was so. So they said, [m]"It is
his angel."

16 Now Peter continued knocking; and
when they opened *the door* and saw him,
they were astonished. 17 But [n]motioning to
them with his hand to keep silent, he de-
clared to them how the Lord had brought
him out of the prison. And he said, "Go,
tell these things to James and to the
brethren." And he departed and went to
another place.

18 Then, as soon as it was day, there was
no small stir among the soldiers about what
had become of Peter. 19 But when Herod had
searched for him and not found him, he ex-
amined the guards and commanded that
they should be put to death.

And he went down from Judea to Caes-
area, and stayed *there.*

Herod's Violent Death

20 Now Herod had been very angry with
the people of [o]Tyre and Sidon; but they
came to him with one accord, and hav-
ing made Blastus the king's personal aide
their friend, they asked for peace, because
[p]their country was supplied with food by
the king's *country.*

21 So on a set day Herod, arrayed in
royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave
an oration to them. 22 And the people kept
shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a
man!" 23 Then immediately an angel of the
Lord [q]struck him, because [r]he did not give
glory to God. And he was eaten by worms
and died.

24 But [s]the word of God grew and mul-
tiplied.

Barnabas and Saul Appointed

25 And [t]Barnabas and Saul returned
from* Jerusalem when they had [u]fulfilled
their ministry, and they also [v]took with
them [w]John whose surname was Mark.

13 Now [a]in the church that was at An-
tioch there were certain prophets
and teachers: [b]Barnabas, Simeon who was
called Niger, [c]Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen
who had been brought up with Herod the
tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to
the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said,
[d]"Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul
for the work [e]to which I have called them."
3 Then, [f]having fasted and prayed, and laid
hands on them, they sent *them* away.

* **12:5** NU-Text reads *constantly* (or *earnestly*).
* **12:25** NU-Text and M-Text read *to.*

Baptist, and the grandson of Herod the Great who had the children of Bethlehem put to death in his search for Jesus. Herod was not a Jew but an Edomite. The Jews resented the fact that a son of Edom was given the position of king of the Jews.

12:11 *delivered me from the hand of Herod.* Why was Peter's life spared while James' life was taken? The answer is the sovereign will of God. If we believe that God is good and wise, we can trust that what He allowed to happen was part of His wise plan for the good of all His people.

12:22 *The voice of a god.* The Jewish historian Josephus also provides an account of this display, informing us that in an attempted appeasement of the king the people confessed that he was "more than mortal."

13:2–4 Holy Spirit—God reveals His will to those who are sensitive to His leading. The believers in Antioch heard from the Lord as they were praying and fasting. Most often, God does not speak to us out of the blue. He speaks to us when we are listening. The Holy Spirit gave distinct direction to the listening, sensitive believers of the first century, and He leads believers in the same way today.

13:3 *laid hands on them.* The laying on of hands was

12:7 [d] Acts 5:19 **12:9** [e] Ps. 126:1 [f] Acts 10:3, 17; 11:5 **12:10** [g] Acts 5:19; 16:26 **12:11** [h] [Ps. 34:7] [i] Job 5:19 **12:12** [j] Acts 4:23 [k] Acts 13:5, 13; 15:37 [l] Acts 12:5 **12:15** [m] [Matt. 18:10] **12:17** [n] Acts 13:16; 19:33; 21:40 **12:20** [o] Matt. 11:21 [p] Ezek. 27:17 **12:23** [q] 2 Sam. 24:16, 17 [r] Ps. 115:1 **12:24** [s] Acts 6:7; 19:20 **12:25** [t] Acts 11:30 [u] Acts 11:30 [v] Acts 13:5, 13 [w] Acts 12:12; 15:37 **13:1** [a] Acts 14:26 [b] Acts 11:22 [c] Rom. 16:21 **13:2** [d] Gal. 1:15; 2:9 [e] Heb. 5:4 **13:3** [f] Acts 6:6

Preaching in Cyprus

4So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit,
they went down to Seleucia, and from there
they sailed to [g]Cyprus. 5And when they ar-
rived in Salamis, [h]they preached the word
of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They
also had [i]John as *their* assistant.

6Now when they had gone through the
island* to Paphos, they found [j]a certain
sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose
name *was* Bar-Jesus, 7who was with the
proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent
man. This man called for Barnabas and
Saul and sought to hear the word of God.
8But [k]Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name
is translated) withstood them, seeking to
turn the proconsul away from the faith.
9Then Saul, who also *is called* Paul, [l]filled
with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at
him 10and said, "O full of all deceit and
all fraud, [m]*you* son of the devil, *you* ene-
my of all righteousness, will you not cease
perverting the straight ways of the Lord?
11And now, indeed, [n]the hand of the Lord *is*
upon you, and you shall be blind, not see-
ing the sun for a time."

And immediately a dark mist fell on
him, and he went around seeking someone
to lead him by the hand. 12Then the procon-
sul believed, when he saw what had been
done, being astonished at the teaching of
the Lord.

At Antioch in Pisidia

13Now when Paul and his party set sail
from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pam-
phylia; and [o]John, departing from them,
returned to Jerusalem. 14But when they de-
parted from Perga, they came to Antioch in
Pisidia, and [p]went into the synagogue on
the Sabbath day and sat down. 15And [q]after
the reading of the Law and the Prophets,
the rulers of the synagogue sent to them,
saying, "Men *and* brethren, if you have
[r]any word of exhortation for the people,
say on."

16Then Paul stood up, and motioning
with *his* hand said, "Men of Israel, and [s]you
who fear God, listen: 17The God of this peo-
ple Israel* [t]chose our fathers, and exalted
the people [u]when they dwelt as strangers
in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted
arm He [v]brought them out of it. 18Now [w]for
a time of about forty years He put up with
their ways in the wilderness. 19And when
He had destroyed [x]seven nations in the
land of Canaan, [y]He distributed their land
to them by allotment.

20"After that [z]He gave *them* judges for
about four hundred and fifty years, [a]until
Samuel the prophet. 21[b]And afterward they
asked for a king; so God gave them [c]Saul
the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Ben-
jamin, for forty years. 22And [d]when He had
removed him, [e]He raised up for them David
as king, to whom also He gave testimony
and said, [f]'*I have found David** the *son* of
Jesse, [g]*a man after My own heart,* who will
do all My will.'* 23[h]From this man's seed,
according [i]to *the* promise, God raised up
for Israel [j]a Savior—Jesus—* 24[k]after John
had first preached, before His coming, the
baptism of repentance to all the people of
Israel. 25And as John was finishing his
course, he said, [l]'Who do you think I am? I
am not *He.* But behold, [m]there comes One
after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not
worthy to loose.'

26"Men *and* brethren, sons of the family
of Abraham, and [n]those among you who
fear God, [o]to you the word of this salvation
has been sent. 27For those who dwell in Je-
rusalem, and their rulers, [p]because they
did not know Him, nor even the voices of
the Prophets which are read every Sab-
bath, have fulfilled *them* in condemning
Him. 28[q]And though they found no cause
for death *in Him,* they asked Pilate that
He should be put to death. 29[r]Now when
they had fulfilled all that was written con-
cerning Him, [s]they took *Him* down from
the tree and laid *Him* in a tomb. 30[t]But
God raised Him from the dead. 31[u]He was
seen for many days by those who came up
with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who
are His witnesses to the people. 32And we
declare to you glad tidings—[v]that promise
which was made to the fathers. 33God has
fulfilled this for us their children, in that
He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written
in the second Psalm:

[w]'You are My Son,
*Today I have begotten You.'**

* **13:6** NU-Text reads *the whole island.*
* **13:17** M-Text omits *Israel.* * **13:22** Psalm 89:20 • 1 Samuel 13:14 * **13:23** M-Text reads *for Israel salvation.* * **13:33** Psalm 2:7

the church's way of identifying with and affirming the mission to which God had called a particular person.

13:6–12 *Sergius Paulus.* Luke presents this man as the first Gentile ruler to believe the gospel. There is no evidence that Sergius Paulus was a God-fearer or had ever shown any interest in Judaism prior to this time. This pagan government official was amazed at the power of God and believed the truth.

13:4 [g] Acts 4:36 **13:5** [h] [Acts 13:46] [i] Acts 12:25; 15:37 **13:6** [j] Acts 8:9 **13:8** [k] Ex. 7:11 **13:9** [l] Acts 2:4; 4:8

13:10 [m] Matt. 13:38 **13:11** [n] 1 Sam. 5:6 **13:13** [o] Acts 15:38 **13:14** [p] Acts 16:13 **13:15** [q] Luke 4:16 [r] Heb. 13:22 **13:16** [s] Acts 10:35 **13:17** [t] Deut. 7:6–8 [u] Acts 7:17 [v] Ex. 14:8 **13:18** [w] Num. 14:34 **13:19** [x] Deut. 7:1 [y] Josh. 14:1, 2; 19:51 **13:20** [z] Judg. 2:16 [a] 1 Sam. 3:20 **13:21** [b] 1 Sam. 8:5 [c] 1 Sam. 10:20–24 **13:22** [d] 1 Sam. 15:23, 26, 28 [e] 1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13 [f] Ps. 89:20 [g] 1 Sam. 13:14 **13:23** [h] Is. 11:1 [i] Ps. 132:11 [j] [Matt. 1:21] **13:24** [k] [Luke 3:3] **13:25** [l] Mark 1:7 [m] John 1:20, 27 **13:26** [n] Ps. 66:16 [o] Matt. 10:6 **13:27** [p] Luke 23:34 **13:28** [q] Matt. 27:22, 23 **13:29** [r] Luke 18:31 [s] Matt. 27:57–61 **13:30** [t] Matt. 12:39, 40; 28:6 **13:31** [u] Acts 1:3, 11 **13:32** [v] [Gen. 3:15] **13:33** [w] Ps. 2:7

34 And that He raised Him from the dead,
no more to return to corruption, He has
spoken thus:

[x] *'I will give you the sure mercies of*
*David.'**

35 Therefore He also says in another *Psalm:*

[y] *'You will not allow Your Holy One to*
*see corruption.'**

36 "For David, after he had served his
own generation by the will of God, [z] fell
asleep, was buried with his fathers, and
saw corruption; 37 but He whom God raised
up saw no corruption. 38 Therefore let it be
known to you, brethren, that [a] through this
Man is preached to you the forgiveness of
sins; 39 and [b] by Him everyone who believes
is justified from all things from which you
could not be justified by the law of Moses.
40 Beware therefore, lest what has been spo-
ken in the prophets come upon you:

41 *'Behold,[c] you despisers,*
Marvel and perish!
For I work a work in your days,
A work which you will by no means
believe,
Though one were to declare it to
*you.'"**

Blessing and Conflict at Antioch

42 So when the Jews went out of the syn-
agogue,* the Gentiles begged that these
words might be preached to them the next
Sabbath. 43 Now when the congregation
had broken up, many of the Jews and de-
vout proselytes followed Paul and Bar-
nabas, who, speaking to them, [d] persuaded
them to continue in [e] the grace of God.

44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole
city came together to hear the word of God.
45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes,
they were filled with envy; and contra-
dicting and blaspheming, they [f] opposed
the things spoken by Paul. 46 Then Paul
and Barnabas grew bold and said, [g] "It was
necessary that the word of God should be
spoken to you first; but [h] since you reject
it, and judge yourselves unworthy of ever-
lasting life, behold, [i] we turn to the Gentiles.
47 For so the Lord has commanded us:

[j] *'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,*
That you should be for salvation to the
*ends of the earth.'"**

48 Now when the Gentiles heard this,
they were glad and glorified the word of
the Lord. [k] And as many as had been ap-
pointed to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was being
spread throughout all the region. 50 But
the Jews stirred up the devout and prom-
inent women and the chief men of the city,
[l] raised up persecution against Paul and
Barnabas, and expelled them from their
region. 51 [m] But they shook off the dust from
their feet against them, and came to Ico-
nium. 52 And the disciples [n] were filled with
joy and [o] with the Holy Spirit.

At Iconium

14 Now it happened in Iconium that they
went together to the synagogue of the
Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude
both of the Jews and of the [a] Greeks be-
lieved. 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred
up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds
against the brethren. 3 Therefore they
stayed there a long time, speaking boldly
in the Lord, [b] who was bearing witness to
the word of His grace, granting signs and
[c] wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was [d] divid-
ed: part sided with the Jews, and part with
the [e] apostles. 5 And when a violent attempt
was made by both the Gentiles and Jews,
with their rulers, [f] to abuse and stone them,
6 they became aware of it and [g] fled to Ly-
stra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to
the surrounding region. 7 And they were
preaching the gospel there.

Idolatry at Lystra

8 [h] And in Lystra a certain man without
strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple
from his mother's womb, who had never
walked. 9 *This* man heard Paul speaking.

* **13:34** Isaiah 55:3 * **13:35** Psalm 16:10
* **13:41** Habakkuk 1:5 * **13:42** Or *And when they went out of the synagogue of the Jews;* NU-Text reads *And when they went out, they begged.*
* **13:47** Isaiah 49:6

13:39 ***everyone who believes is justified from all things.*** "Justified" is a technical legal term declaring that a person is acquitted and absolved. Because of Jesus' death on the cross, our sin debt has been paid. Everyone who accepts this payment is justified before God, considered righteous through the blood of Christ.

13:45 ***the Jews.*** When Luke refers to "the Jews," he is not speaking of all Jewish people, but rather of the Jewish religious establishment, which opposed the gospel.

13:52 Joy—The pursuit of happiness doesn't always lead to the possession of joy. Joy does not come from circumstances but from the presence of God. It is a fruit of the Spirit, poured into a believer's life by the grace of God. The believers in this passage were not filled with joy because their lives were comfortable, or because they were wealthy or powerful, but because they saw God working and had His Holy Spirit in their lives.

13:34 [x] Is. 55:3 **13:35** [y] Ps. 16:10 **13:36** [z] Acts 2:29 **13:38** [a] Jer. 31:34 **13:39** [b] [Is. 53:11] **13:41** [c] Hab. 1:5 **13:43** [d] Acts 11:23 [e] Titus 2:11 **13:45** [f] 1 Pet. 4:4 **13:46** [g] Rom. 1:16 [h] Ex. 32:10 [i] Acts 18:6 **13:47** [j] Is. 42:6; 49:6 **13:48** [k] [Acts 2:47] **13:50** [l] 2 Tim. 3:11 **13:51** [m] Matt. 10:14 **13:52** [n] John 16:22 [o] Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 13:9 **14:1** [a] Acts 18:4 **14:3** [b] Heb. 2:4 [c] Acts 5:12 **14:4** [d] Luke 12:51 [e] Acts 13:2, 3 **14:5** [f] 2 Tim. 3:11 **14:6** [g] Matt. 10:23 **14:8** [h] Acts 3:2

Paul, observing him intently and seeing
that he had faith to be healed, 10said with
a loud voice, [i]"Stand up straight on your
feet!" And he leaped and walked. 11Now
when the people saw what Paul had done,
they raised their voices, saying in the Ly-
caonian *language*, [j]"The gods have come
down to us in the likeness of men!" 12And
Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Her-
mes, because he was the chief speaker.
13Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple
was in front of their city, brought oxen and
garlands to the gates, [k]intending to sacri-
fice with the multitudes.

14But when the apostles Barnabas and
Paul heard this, [l]they tore their clothes
and ran in among the multitude, crying
out 15and saying, "Men, [m]why are you do-
ing these things? [n]We also are men with
the same nature as you, and preach to you
that you should turn from [o]these useless
things [p]to the living God, [q]who made the
heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things
that are in them, 16[r]who in bygone gener-
ations allowed all nations to walk in their
own ways. 17[s]Nevertheless He did not leave
Himself without witness, in that He did
good, [t]gave us rain from heaven and fruit-
ful seasons, filling our hearts with [u]food
and gladness." 18And with these sayings
they could scarcely restrain the multitudes
from sacrificing to them.

Stoning, Escape to Derbe

19[v]Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium
came there; and having persuaded the mul-
titudes, [w]they stoned Paul *and* dragged *him*
out of the city, supposing him to be [x]dead.
20However, when the disciples gathered
around him, he rose up and went into the
city. And the next day he departed with
Barnabas to Derbe.

Strengthening the Converts

21And when they had preached the gos-
pel to that city [y]and made many disciples,
they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and An-
tioch, 22strengthening the souls of the dis-
ciples, [z]exhorting *them* to continue in the
faith, and *saying*, [a]"We must through many
tribulations enter the kingdom of God."
23So when they had [b]appointed elders in
every church, and prayed with fasting, they
commended them to the Lord in whom they
had believed. 24And after they had passed
through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.
25Now when they had preached the word in
Perga, they went down to Attalia. 26From
there they sailed to Antioch, where they
had been commended to the grace of God
for the work which they had completed.

27Now when they had come and gath-
ered the church together, [c]they reported all
that God had done with them, and that He
had [d]opened the door of faith to the Gen-
tiles. 28So they stayed there a long time
with the disciples.

Conflict over Circumcision

15 And [a]certain *men* came down from
Judea and taught the brethren, [b]"Un-
less you are circumcised according to the
custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."
2Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had
no small dissension and dispute with them,
they determined that [c]Paul and Barnabas
and certain others of them should go up
to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders,
about this question.

3So, [d]being sent on their way by the
church, they passed through Phoenicia
and Samaria, [e]describing the conversion
of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy
to all the brethren. 4And when they had
come to Jerusalem, they were received by
the church and the apostles and the elders;
and they reported all things that God had
done with them. 5But some of the sect of the
Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It
is necessary to circumcise them, and to
command *them* to keep the law of Moses."

The Jerusalem Council

6Now the apostles and elders came to-
gether to consider this matter. 7And when
there had been much dispute, Peter rose
up *and* said to them: [f]"Men *and* brethren,
you know that a good while ago God chose
among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles
should hear the word of the gospel and be-
lieve. 8So God, [g]who knows the heart, ac-
knowledged them by [h]giving them the Holy
Spirit, just as *He did* to us, 9[i]and made no
distinction between us and them, [j]purify-
ing their hearts by faith. 10Now therefore,

14:11 ***The gods have come down.*** The Roman poet Ovid told of an ancient legend in which Zeus and Hermes came to the Phrygian hill country disguised as mortals seeking lodging. After being turned away from a thousand homes, they found refuge in the humble cottage of an elderly couple. In appreciation for the couple's hospitality, the gods transformed the cottage into a splendid temple and then destroyed all the houses of the inhospitable people. The people probably remembered this ancient legend, and wanted to make sure they did not make the same mistake their ancestors did.

14:23 ***appointed elders.*** The process outlined in 6:1–7 for selecting the seven men to serve the Jerusalem believers may provide a clue to the process used for selecting elders here. Both the assembly and the apostles were involved in the selection process.

14:10 *i* [Is. 35:6] **14:11** *j* Acts 8:10; 28:6 **14:13** *k* Dan. 2:46 **14:14** *l* Matt. 26:65 **14:15** *m* Acts 10:26 *n* James 5:17 *o* 1 Cor. 8:4 *p* 1 Thess. 1:9 *q* Rev. 14:7 **14:16** *r* Ps. 81:12 **14:17** *s* Rom. 1:19, 20 *t* Deut. 11:14 *u* Ps. 145:16 **14:19** *v* Acts 13:45, 50; 14:2–5 *w* 2 Cor. 11:25 *x* [2 Cor. 12:1–4] **14:21** *y* Matt. 28:19 **14:22** *z* Acts 11:23 *a* [2 Tim. 2:12; 3:12] **14:23** *b* Titus 1:5 **14:27** *c* Acts 15:4, 12 *d* 2 Cor. 2:12 **15:1** *a* Gal. 2:12 *b* Phil. 3:2 **15:2** *c* Gal. 2:1 **15:3** *d* Rom. 15:24 *e* Acts 14:27; 15:4, 12 **15:7** *f* Acts 10:20 **15:8** *g* Acts 1:24 *h* Acts 2:4; 10:44, 47 **15:9** *i* Rom. 10:12 *j* Acts 10:15, 28

why do you test God [k]by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11But [l]we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ* we shall be saved in the same manner as they."

12Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had [m]worked through them among the Gentiles. 13And after they had become silent, [n]James answered, saying, "Men *and* brethren, listen to me: 14[o]Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. 15And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:

16 *'After[p] this I will return*
And will rebuild the tabernacle of
David, which has fallen down;
I will rebuild its ruins,
And I will set it up;
17 *So that the rest of mankind may seek*
the LORD,
Even all the Gentiles who are called by
My name,
Says the LORD who does all these
*things.'**

18"Known to God from eternity are all His works.* 19Therefore [q]I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who [r]are turning to God, 20but that we [s]write to them to abstain [t]from things polluted by idols, [u]*from* sexual immorality,* [v]*from* things strangled, and *from* blood. 21For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, [w]being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

The Jerusalem Decree

22Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely,* Judas who was also named [x]Barsabas,* and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

23They wrote this *letter* by them:

The apostles, the elders, and the brethren,

To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:

Greetings.

24 Since we have heard that [y]some who went out from us have troubled you with words, [z]unsettling your souls, saying, "*You must* be circumcised and keep the law"*—to whom we gave no *such* commandment— 25it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26[a]men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. 28For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29[b]that you abstain from things offered to idols, [c]from blood, from things strangled, and from [d]sexual immorality.* If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.

Farewell.

Continuing Ministry in Syria

30So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered

* **15:11** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Christ*.
* **15:17** Amos 9:11, 12 * **15:18** NU-Text (combining with verse 17) reads *Says the Lord, who makes these things known from eternity (of old).*
* **15:20** Or *fornication* * **15:22** NU-Text and M-Text read *Barsabbas*. * **15:24** NU-Text omits *saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law."* * **15:29** Or *fornication*

15:11 *through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.* These are the last words of Peter in the Book of Acts. He leaves us with the eternal truth that we are saved through faith by grace alone. The emphasis in the narrative now moves from Peter to Paul, and his outreach to the Gentiles.

15:13 *James.* James was the leader of the church in Jerusalem until he was stoned to death at the insistence of the high priest in A.D. 62. It is believed that this James is the Lord's brother, the son of Mary and Joseph, who did not believe until the Lord appeared to him privately after the Resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7).

15:19–20 *abstain from things polluted by idols.* The Jerusalem council understood that it was not necessary for Gentiles to keep the whole of the law in order to be believers in Jesus, but also recognized that they did not have the background of moral teaching the Jewish believers had. They needed both reassurance as to their acceptance as true Christians and teaching for a godly life. In looking at the present application of these requirements, it is important to remember that Acts is a transitional book, documenting the beginning of the Christian movement. Sexual purity and food regulations are both addressed more thoroughly elsewhere in the New Testament (1 Cor. 6–8).

15:20 Fornication—Illicit sexual relationships were not a matter of shame or sin among the Gentiles as they were among the Jews. In fact, many pagan religious practices included prostitution and sexual orgies. This made the need for teaching on sexual purity doubly urgent for the new Gentile believers. They would be constantly presented with temptation, not only for sexual sin but for returning to their old ways of worship. They needed to hear God's strict prohibition of such behavior.

15:10 [k] Matt. 23:4 **15:11** [l] Rom. 3:4; 5:15 **15:12** [m] Acts 14:27; 15:3, 4 **15:13** [n] Acts 12:17 **15:14** [o] Acts 15:7 **15:16** [p] Amos 9:11, 12 **15:19** [q] Acts 15:28; 21:25 [r] 1 Thess. 1:9 **15:20** [s] Acts 21:25 [t] [1 Cor. 8:1; 10:20, 28] [u] [1 Cor. 6:9] [v] Lev. 3:17 **15:21** [w] Acts 13:15, 27 **15:22** [x] Acts 1:23 **15:24** [y] Titus 1:10, 11 [z] Gal. 1:7; 5:10 **15:26** [a] Acts 13:50; 14:19 **15:29** [b] Acts 15:20; 21:25 [c] Lev. 17:14 [d] Col. 3:5

the multitude together, they delivered the letter. 31When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. 32Now Judas and Silas, themselves being [e]prophets also, [f]exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words. 33And after they had stayed *there* for a time, they were [g]sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles.*

34However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there.* 35[h]Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

Division over John Mark

36Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are doing." 37Now Barnabas was determined to take with them [i]John called Mark. 38But Paul insisted that they should not take with them [j]the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. 39Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to [k]Cyprus; 40but Paul chose Silas and departed, [l]being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. 41And he went through Syria and Cilicia, [m]strengthening the churches.

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

16 Then he came to [a]Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, [b]named Timothy, [c]*the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. 2He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. 3Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he [d]took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. 4And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the [e]decrees to keep, [f]which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. 5[g]So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

The Macedonian Call

6Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of [h]Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. 7After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit* did not permit them. 8So passing by Mysia, they [i]came down to Troas. 9And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A [j]man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go [k]to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Lydia Baptized at Philippi

11Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next *day* came to Neapolis, 12and from there to [l]Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days. 13And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met *there.* 14Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us.* She was a seller of purple from the city of [m]Thyatira, who worshiped God. [n]The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15And when she and her household were baptized, she begged *us,* saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So [o]she persuaded us.

* **15:33** NU-Text reads *to those who had sent them.*
* **15:34** NU-Text and M-Text omit this verse.
* **16:7** NU-Text adds *of Jesus.*

15:39 *that they parted from one another.* Even though Paul and Barnabas had a heated disagreement, it is important to note that they did not bring their disagreement into the church fellowship, forcing others to take sides and causing more dissension. Instead, they simply parted ways, each continuing to faithfully serve the Lord. Later, the disagreement was apparently resolved, for Paul wrote to Timothy when he was imprisoned, asking for Mark to be sent to him, "for he is useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11).

16:3 *circumcised him.* According to Jewish law, Timothy should have been circumcised and raised a Jew, even with a Gentile father. For whatever reason, this had not happened, and the fact that he was an uncircumcised Jew would limit his effectiveness with Jewish Christians. The issue was not law but effectiveness.

16:12 *Philippi.* Named after the father of Alexander the Great, Philippi was a Roman colony loyal to the empire. The city itself was organized by the state of Rome and functioned as a military outpost. Because of its proximity to the sea as well as to one of the major roads to Europe, Philippi was a commercial center in Macedonia. Its influence throughout the region made it a good place to begin preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

16:13 *where prayer was customarily made.* According to Jewish custom, a congregation consisted of ten households. If ten male household heads could be found in a city, a synagogue was formed. If not, a place of prayer was established. Philippi did not have a synagogue, but Paul was still able to find the God-fearers of the city.

15:32 [e] Eph. 4:11 [f] Acts 14:22; 18:23 **15:33** [g] Heb. 11:31 **15:35** [h] Acts 13:1 **15:37** [i] Acts 12:12, 25 **15:38** [j] Acts 13:13 **15:39** [k] Acts 4:36; 13:4 **15:40** [l] Acts 11:23; 14:26 **15:41** [m] Acts 16:5 **16:1** [a] Acts 14:6 [b] Rom. 16:21 [c] 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15 **16:3** [d] [Gal. 2:3; 5:2] **16:4** [e] Acts 15:19–21 [f] Acts 15:28, 29 **16:5** [g] Acts 2:47; 15:41 **16:6** [h] Gal. 1:1, 2 **16:8** [i] 2 Cor. 2:12 **16:9** [j] Acts 10:30 **16:10** [k] 2 Cor. 2:13 **16:12** [l] Phil. 1:1 **16:14** [m] Rev. 1:11; 2:18, 24 [n] Luke 24:45 **16:15** [o] Judg. 19:21

Paul and Silas Imprisoned

16 Now it happened, as we went to prayer,
that a certain slave girl [p]possessed with a
spirit of divination met us, who brought her
masters [q]much profit by fortune-telling.
17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried
out, saying, "These men are the servants
of the Most High God, who proclaim to us
the way of salvation." 18 And this she did for
many days.

But Paul, [r]greatly annoyed, turned and
said to the spirit, "I command you in the
name of Jesus Christ to come out of her."
[s]And he came out that very hour. 19 But
[t]when her masters saw that their hope of
profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas
and [u]dragged *them* into the marketplace to
the authorities.

20 And they brought them to the magis-
trates, and said, "These men, being Jews,
[v]exceedingly trouble our city; 21 and they
teach customs which are not lawful for
us, being Romans, to receive or observe."
22 Then the multitude rose up together
against them; and the magistrates tore
off their clothes [w]and commanded *them*
to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they
had laid many stripes on them, they threw
them into prison, commanding the jailer
to keep them securely. 24 Having received
such a charge, he put them into the inner
prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

The Philippian Jailer Saved

25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were
praying and singing hymns to God, and the
prisoners were listening to them. 26 [x]Sud-
denly there was a great earthquake, so that
the foundations of the prison were shaken;
and immediately [y]all the doors were opened
and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And
the keeper of the prison, awaking from
sleep and seeing the prison doors open,
supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his
sword and was about to kill himself. 28 But
Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do
yourself no harm, for we are all here."

29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and
fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.
30 And he brought them out and said, [z]"Sirs,
what must I do to be saved?"

31 So they said, [a]"Believe on the Lord
Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you
and your household." 32 Then they spoke
the word of the Lord to him and to all who
were in his house. 33 And he took them the
same hour of the night and washed *their*
stripes. And immediately he and all his
family were baptized. 34 Now when he had
brought them into his house, [b]he set food
before them; and he rejoiced, having be-
lieved in God with all his household.

Paul Refuses to Depart Secretly

35 And when it was day, the magistrates
sent the officers, saying, "Let those men go."

36 So the keeper of the prison reported
these words to Paul, saying, "The magis-
trates have sent to let you go. Now there-
fore depart, and go in peace."

37 But Paul said to them, "They have beat-
en us openly, uncondemned [c]Romans, *and*
have thrown *us* into prison. And now do
they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let
them come themselves and get us out."

38 And the officers told these words to
the magistrates, and they were afraid
when they heard that they were Romans.
39 Then they came and pleaded with them
and brought *them* out, and [d]asked *them* to
depart from the city. 40 So they went out of
the prison [e]and entered *the house of* Lydia;
and when they had seen the brethren, they
encouraged them and departed.

16:25 Praise—Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God at midnight in spite of the fact that they had been arrested, stripped naked, and beaten, confined to an inner cell and clamped into an uncomfortable position. They could praise God because their joy was not based on circumstances but on a relationship. Jesus Christ and His love and grace are the same, no matter where you are or what is happening to you.

16:31 It Begins with Faith—Paul and Silas's answer to the Philippian jailer's question is the essence of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." This verse raises two questions: What does it mean to believe, and what does it mean to be saved? Belief includes but is more than just an intellectual assent. Belief includes the idea of total trust, dependence, and submission of oneself to Christ as Lord (King, Master). To be saved is to be delivered. We are delivered from the very presence of sin and evil (Satan and hell) and will be delivered into the very presence of God (Christ and heaven). We receive this new life by faith—believing that we are sinful, that Jesus died for our sins, that His death was in our place, and that His payment for sin is fully acceptable in God's sight. Faith can be summarized in the acrostic:

Forsaking
All
I
Take
Him

16:33–34 Family—This man assumed spiritual leadership of his family by being the first to repent, to humble himself before God and ask for forgiveness and a change of life. By his example, the rest of his family was won. In the same way, every believing father has the responsibility to set the example of spiritual commitment, and to teach his family all he knows of following Christ.

16:37 *Romans.* Paul was not simply seeking self-justification, he was protecting the infant church in

16:16 [p] 1 Sam. 28:3, 7 [q] Acts 19:24 **16:18** [r] Mark 1:25, 34 [s] Mark 16:17 **16:19** [t] Acts 16:16; 19:25, 26 [u] Matt. 10:18 **16:20** [v] Acts 17:8 **16:22** [w] 1 Thess. 2:2 **16:26** [x] Acts 4:31 [y] Acts 5:19; 12:7, 10 **16:30** [z] Acts 2:37; 9:6; 22:10 **16:31** [a] [John 3:16, 36; 6:47] **16:34** [b] Luke 5:29; 19:6 **16:37** [c] Acts 22:25–29 **16:39** [d] Matt. 8:34 **16:40** [e] Acts 16:14

Preaching Christ at Thessalonica

17 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to [a]Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. **2**Then Paul, as his custom was, [b]went in to them, and for three Sabbaths [c]reasoned with them from the Scriptures, **3**explaining and demonstrating [d]that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." **4**[e]And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and [f]Silas.

Assault on Jason's House

5But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming [g]envious,* took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of [h]Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. **6**But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, [i]"These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. **7**Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, [j]saying there is another king—Jesus." **8**And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. **9**So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Ministering at Berea

10Then [k]the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. **11**These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and [l]searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so. **12**Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. **13**But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. **14**[m]Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. **15**So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and [n]receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed.

The Philosophers at Athens

16Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, [o]his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. **17**Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the *Gentile* worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. **18**Then* certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, "What does this babbler want to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods," because he preached to them [p]Jesus and the resurrection.

19And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine *is* of which you speak? **20**For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean." **21**For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

Addressing the Areopagus

22Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; **23**for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:

* **17:5** NU-Text omits *who were not persuaded;* M-Text omits *becoming envious.* * **17:18** NU-Text and M-Text add *also.*

Philippi. By forcing a public statement of their innocence, he minimized the possibility that the new believers would be regarded as "friends of criminals and troublemakers."

17:7 ***acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar.*** In A.D. 49 the Roman emperor Caligula expelled all Jews from Rome due to riots ignited by a group of zealous Jews. Paul's accusers were trying to paint him as a revolutionary who was bringing sedition to Thessalonica.

17:18 ***this babbler.*** This word is literally "seed picker." The philosophers were saying that Paul was like a gutter sparrow, picking up bits and scraps of knowledge without fully digesting or thinking about what he taught.

17:19 ***Areopagus.*** Just southwest of the Acropolis in Athens was a hill called the Hill of Ares (Mars, in Latin), the god of war. This was where court was held concerning questions of religion and morals. In Athens, the gospel message was examined by the supposed experts of philosophy and religion.

17:23 An Unknown God—In the sixth century B.C. it was said that a poet from Crete name Epimenides turned aside a horrible plague from the people of Athens by appealing to a god of whom the people had never heard. An altar was built to honor this god, and its inscription caught Paul's attention. Knowing that the Athenians had no background in

17:1 [a] 1 Thess. 1:1 **17:2** [b] Luke 4:16 [c] 1 Thess. 2:1–16 **17:3** [d] Acts 18:5, 28 **17:4** [e] Acts 28:24 [f] Acts 15:22, 27, 32, 40 **17:5** [g] Acts 13:45 [h] Rom. 16:21 **17:6** [i] [Acts 16:20] **17:7** [j] 1 Pet. 2:13 **17:10** [k] Acts 9:25; 17:14 **17:11** [l] John 5:39 **17:14** [m] Matt. 10:23 **17:15** [n] Acts 18:5 **17:16** [o] 2 Pet. 2:8 **17:18** [p] 1 Cor. 15:12

24 [q]God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is [r]Lord of heaven and earth, [s]does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He [t]gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 And He has made from one blood* every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and [u]the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 [v]so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, [w]though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for [x]in Him we live and move and have our being, [y]as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' 29 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, [z]we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. 30 Truly, [a]these times of ignorance God overlooked, but [b]now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which [c]He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by [d]raising Him from the dead."

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this *matter.*" 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Ministering at Corinth

18 After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. 2 And he found a certain Jew named [a]Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. 3 So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them [b]and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers. 4 [c]And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

5 [d]When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was [e]compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus *is* the Christ. 6 But [f]when they opposed him and blasphemed, [g]he shook *his* garments and said to them, [h]"Your blood *be* upon your *own* heads; [i]I *am* clean. [j]From now on I will go to the Gentiles." 7 And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain *man* named Justus,* *one* who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 [k]Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

9 Now [l]the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 [m]for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city." 11 And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, 13 saying, "This *fellow* persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

14 And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should

* **17:26** NU-Text omits *blood.* * **18:7** NU-Text reads *Titius Justus.*

the Old Testament Scriptures as did the Jews in the synagogues, Paul began his discourse with what they were already familiar with: their own legends and observation.

17:31 Resurrection—Christ has been raised from the dead not only for the purpose of returning to heaven and resuming His fellowship with the Father, a fellowship interrupted only by the alienation and abandonment at the cross; He has gone from His tomb to the right hand of His Father to intercede for us. And one day the mantle of Judge will be placed on Him, and everyone will stand before Him. The world has yet to see the last of Jesus Christ.

17:32 *some mocked.* Though they embraced the idea of the soul living on, the Greeks were repulsed by the idea of a bodily resurrection because they considered the body to be evil. This idea, known as *dualism,* was derived from the teachings of Socrates and Plato. It held that everything physical is evil and everything spiritual is good. Therefore, they believed the body and what is done with it is not important because it will be discarded at the end of life.

18:1 *Corinth.* Corinth was the political capital of Achaia. It was also a center for the worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of fertility, and it housed the major temple of Apollo. Because of the sensuous nature of the religious cult of Aphrodite, Corinth had a reputation for being a city of immorality. Beginning in the fifth century B.C., the Greeks used a word meaning "to act like a Corinthian" as a symbol for sexual immorality.

18:3 *tentmakers.* All young rabbinical students had to learn a trade. The province of Cilicia, from which Paul came, was noted for its cloth made from goats' hair. It is likely that Paul's skill involved making such cloth.

18:7 *Justus.* Most Romans had three names. This man's name was Titius Justus. Based on Paul's letter to the Corinthians, it is likely that Justus was the man called Gaius mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:14.

17:24 [q] Acts 14:15 [r] Matt. 11:25 [s] Acts 7:48–50
17:25 [t] Is. 42:5 **17:26** [u] Deut. 32:8 **17:27** [v] [Rom. 1:20] [w] Jer. 23:23, 24 **17:28** [x] [Heb. 1:3] [y] Titus 1:12
17:29 [z] Is. 40:18, 19 **17:30** [a] [Rom. 3:25] [b] [Titus 2:11, 12] **17:31** [c] Acts 10:42 [d] Acts 2:24 **18:2** [a] 1 Cor. 16:19 **18:3** [b] Acts 20:34 **18:4** [c] Acts 17:2 **18:5** [d] Acts 17:14, 15 [e] Acts 18:28 **18:6** [f] Acts 13:45 [g] Neh. 5:13 [h] 2 Sam. 1:16 [i] [Ezek. 3:18, 19] [j] Acts 13:46–48; 28:28
18:8 [k] 1 Cor. 1:14 **18:9** [l] Acts 23:11 **18:10** [m] Jer. 1:18, 19

bear with you. 15But if it is a [n]question of words and names and your own law, look *to it* yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such *matters*." 16And he drove them from the judgment seat. 17Then all the Greeks* took [o]Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

Paul Returns to Antioch

18So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. [p]He had *his* hair cut off at [q]Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. 19And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, 21but took leave of them, saying, [r]"I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem;* but I will return again to you, [s]God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus.

22And when he had landed at [t]Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. 23After he had spent some time *there,* he departed and went over the region of [u]Galatia and Phrygia in order, [v]strengthening all the disciples.

Ministry of Apollos

24[w]Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being [x]fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, [y]though he knew only the baptism of John. 26So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. 27And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, [z]he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; 28for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, [a]showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Paul at Ephesus

19 And it happened, while [a]Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through [b]the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

So they said to him, [c]"We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

3And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?"

So they said, [d]"Into John's baptism."

4Then Paul said, [e]"John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

5When they heard *this,* they were baptized [f]in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6And when Paul had [g]laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and [h]they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7Now the men were about twelve in all.

8[i]And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading [j]concerning the things of the kingdom of God. 9But [k]when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil [l]of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 10And [m]this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

* **18:17** NU-Text reads *they all.* * **18:21** NU-Text omits *I must* through *Jerusalem.*

18:18 ***had his hair cut off.*** Paul had his hair cut as part of a Nazirite vow he had made (see Num. 6:5). Such a vow had to be fulfilled in Jerusalem where the hair would be presented to God.

18:24 ***Apollos, born at Alexandria.*** This Jew with a Greek name was from the second largest city in the Roman Empire. Alexandria was a seaport on the northern coast of Egypt. Founded by Alexander the Great, the city was very cosmopolitan. Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks all lived there; over one quarter of the population was Jewish. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures had been produced in that city about 150 years before the birth of Jesus. The city was famous for its great library and was considered the cultural and educational center of the world.

19:3 ***John's baptism.*** Baptism was a ritual used by the Jews as a picture of cleansing and purification. Gentiles who converted to Judaism would go through the rite of purification as their first act of worship. They would dip themselves in water as a sign of being cleansed from their old way of life. Before entering into the temple to worship, Jews would dip themselves in ritual bathing pools to show their desire for purification. John's baptism was a symbol of repentance from sin and a looking ahead to the coming of the Messiah.

19:6 ***laid hands on them.*** The Holy Spirit was received without the laying on of hands in 10:44–48. By laying on his hands here, Paul was demonstrating his apostolic authority. He was also affirming the unity of the new church in Ephesus with the church in Jerusalem. Both were empowered by the Holy Spirit to speak in foreign tongues.

19:10 ***all who dwelt in Asia heard.*** From Ephesus, other churches were born in Asia Minor—in Colosse,

18:15 *n* Acts 23:29; 25:19 **18:17** *o* 1 Cor. 1:1 **18:18** *p* Acts 21:24 *q* Rom. 16:1 **18:21** *r* Acts 19:21; 20:16 *s* 1 Cor. 4:19 **18:22** *t* Acts 8:40 **18:23** *u* Gal. 1:2 *v* Acts 14:22; 15:32, 41 **18:24** *w* Titus 3:13 **18:25** *x* Rom. 12:11 *y* Acts 19:3 **18:27** *z* 1 Cor. 3:6 **18:28** *a* Acts 9:22; 17:3; 18:5 **19:1** *a* 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:5, 6 *b* Acts 18:23 **19:2** *c* 1 Sam. 3:7 **19:3** *d* Acts 18:25 **19:4** *e* Matt. 3:11 **19:5** *f* Acts 8:12, 16; 10:48 **19:6** *g* Acts 6:6; 8:17 *h* Acts 2:4; 10:46 **19:8** *i* Acts 17:2; 18:4 *j* Acts 1:3; 28:23 **19:9** *k* 2 Tim. 1:15 *l* Acts 9:2; 19:23; 22:4; 24:14 **19:10** *m* Acts 19:8; 20:31

Miracles Glorify Christ

11 Now [n]God worked unusual miracles
by the hands of Paul, 12 [o]so that even hand-
kerchiefs or aprons were brought from
his body to the sick, and the diseases left
them and the evil spirits went out of them.
13 [p]Then some of the itinerant Jewish exor-
cists [q]took it upon themselves to call the
name of the Lord Jesus over those who
had evil spirits, saying, "We* exorcise you
by the Jesus whom Paul [r]preaches." 14 Also
there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish
chief priest, who did so.
15 And the evil spirit answered and said,
"Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who
are you?"
16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit
was leaped on them, overpowered* them,
and prevailed against them,* so that they
fled out of that house naked and wound-
ed. 17 This became known both to all Jews
and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and [s]fear
fell on them all, and the name of the Lord
Jesus was magnified. 18 And many who had
believed came [t]confessing and telling their
deeds. 19 Also, many of those who had prac-
ticed magic brought their books together
and burned *them* in the sight of all. And
they counted up the value of them, and
it totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver.
20 [u]So the word of the Lord grew mightily
and prevailed.

The Riot at Ephesus

21 [v]When these things were accomplished,
Paul [w]purposed in the Spirit, when he had
passed through [x]Macedonia and Achaia, to
go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been
there, [y]I must also see Rome." 22 So he sent
into Macedonia two of those who minis-
tered to him, [z]Timothy and [a]Erastus, but he
himself stayed in Asia for a time.
23 And [b]about that time there arose a
great commotion about [c]the Way. 24 For a
certain man named Demetrius, a silver-
smith, who made silver shrines of Diana,*
brought [d]no small profit to the craftsmen.
25 He called them together with the workers
of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you
know that we have our prosperity by this
trade. 26 Moreover you see and hear that not
only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all
Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned
away many people, saying that [e]they are
not gods which are made with hands. 27 So
not only is this trade of ours in danger of
falling into disrepute, but also the temple of
the great goddess Diana may be despised
and her magnificence destroyed,* whom
all Asia and the world worship."
28 Now when they heard *this,* they were
full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great
is Diana of the Ephesians!" 29 So the whole
city was filled with confusion, and rushed
into the theater with one accord, having
seized [f]Gaius and [g]Aristarchus, Macedo-
nians, Paul's travel companions. 30 And
when Paul wanted to go in to the people,
the disciples would not allow him. 31 Then
some of the officials of Asia, who were his
friends, sent to him pleading that he would
not venture into the theater. 32 Some there-
fore cried one thing and some another,
for the assembly was confused, and most
of them did not know why they had come
together. 33 And they drew Alexander out
of the multitude, the Jews putting him for-
ward. And [h]Alexander [i]motioned with his
hand, and wanted to make his defense to
the people. 34 But when they found out that
he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out
for about two hours, "Great *is* Diana of the
Ephesians!"
35 And when the city clerk had quieted
the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what
man is there who does not know that the
city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of
the great goddess Diana, and of the *image*
which fell down from Zeus? 36 Therefore,
since these things cannot be denied, you
ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly.
37 For you have brought these men here who
are neither robbers of temples nor blas-
phemers of your* goddess. 38 Therefore, if
Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have
a case against anyone, the courts are open
and there are proconsuls. Let them bring
charges against one another. 39 But if you
have any other inquiry to make, it shall be
determined in the lawful assembly. 40 For we
are in danger of being called in question for
today's uproar, there being no reason which
we may give to account for this disorderly
gathering." 41 And when he had said these
things, he dismissed the assembly.

* **19:13** NU-Text reads *I.* * **19:16** M-Text reads *and they overpowered.* • NU-Text reads *both of them.* * **19:24** Greek *Artemis* * **19:27** NU-Text reads *she be deposed from her magnificence.* * **19:37** NU-Text reads *our.*

Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Paul and his students clearly did more than study. They must have actively evangelized as well.

19:13 ***the name of the Lord Jesus.*** The use of magical names in incantations was common in the ancient world. These practitioners had latched onto the name of Jesus to use as an incantation, but they discovered that it was not enough to know the name of Jesus; they needed to know Jesus personally.

19:29 ***the theater.*** This amphitheater seated 25,000 people.

19:40 ***we are in danger.*** The riot at Ephesus could have brought the discipline of Rome down upon the city. The Pax Romana, the peace that the Roman Empire brought to the Mediterranean world, was

19:11 [n] Mark 16:20 **19:12** [o] Acts 5:15 **19:13** [p] Matt. 12:27 [q] Mark 9:38 [r] 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2 **19:17** [s] Luke 1:65; 7:16 **19:18** [t] Matt. 3:6 **19:20** [u] Acts 6:7; 12:24 **19:21** [v] Rom. 15:25 [w] Acts 20:22 [x] Acts 20:1 [y] Rom. 1:13; 15:22–29 **19:22** [z] 1 Tim. 1:2 [a] Rom. 16:23 **19:23** [b] 2 Cor. 1:8 [c] Acts 9:2 **19:24** [d] Acts 16:16, 19 **19:26** [e] Is. 44:10–20 **19:29** [f] Rom. 16:23 [g] Col. 4:10 **19:33** [h] 2 Tim. 4:14 [i] Acts 12:17

Journeys in Greece

20 After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to *himself,* embraced *them,* and [a]departed to go to Macedonia. **2**Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to [b]Greece **3**and stayed three months. And [c]when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. **4**And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia—also [d]Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and [e]Gaius of Derbe, and [f]Timothy, and [g]Tychicus and [h]Trophimus of Asia. **5**These men, going ahead, waited for us at [i]Troas. **6**But we sailed away from Philippi after [j]the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them [k]at Troas, where we stayed seven days.

Ministering at Troas

7Now on [l]the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together [m]to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. **8**There were many lamps [n]in the upper room where they* were gathered together. **9**And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. **10**But Paul went down, [o]fell on him, and embracing *him* said, [p]"Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him." **11**Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. **12**And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted.

From Troas to Miletus

13Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take Paul on board; for so he had given orders, intending himself to go on foot. **14**And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. **15**We sailed from there, and the next *day* came opposite Chios. The following *day* we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. The next *day* we came to Miletus. **16**For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for [q]he was hurrying [r]to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on [s]the Day of Pentecost.

The Ephesian Elders Exhorted

17From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. **18**And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, [t]from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, **19**serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me [u]by the plotting of the Jews; **20**how [v]I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, **21**[w]testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, [x]repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. **22**And see, now [y]I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, **23**except that [z]the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. **24**But [a]none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself,* [b]so that I may finish my race with joy, [c]and the ministry [d]which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

25"And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. **26**Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* [e]innocent of the blood of all *men.* **27**For I have not shunned to declare to you [f]the

*__20:8__ NU-Text and M-Text read *we.* *__20:24__ NU-Text reads *But I do not count my life of any value or dear to myself.*

very important to Rome. The Romans would not tolerate any kind of uprising or rebellion. Ephesus risked losing its freedom and being ruled directly by the Roman army.

20:2 *encouraged.* This word has a full range of meanings, from rebuking to comforting. It includes instruction, appeal, affirmation, exhortation, warning, and correction.

20:7 The Lord's Supper—Although the phrase "to break bread" could mean an ordinary meal, it more likely refers to the observance of the Lord's Supper in obedience to Christ's command. The "breaking of bread" appears to be the primary purpose for the gathering, with Paul's sermon rising naturally in a group of people who had gathered to remember Christ.

20:13–16 *to go on foot.* The distance between Troas and Assos was about thirty miles by sea, but Paul chose to go over land on foot.

20:17 *elders.* The words "elder" (literally, one who is older) and "overseer" (v. 28) appear to be used in the New Testament as interchangeable terms for the leaders of a particular fellowship.

20:22 *bound in the spirit.* Some say that Paul was out of the will of God in going to Jerusalem after the warnings of bonds and afflictions. But there is no evidence that Paul was rebelling against God. On the contrary, Jesus Himself confirmed that the trip was part of His good and perfect will (23:11).

20:1 [a] 1 Tim. 1:3 **20:2** [b] Acts 17:15; 18:1 **20:3** [c] 2 Cor. 11:26 **20:4** [d] Col. 4:10 [e] Acts 19:29 [f] Acts 16:1 [g] Eph. 6:21 [h] 2 Tim. 4:20 **20:5** [i] 2 Tim. 4:13 **20:6** [j] Ex. 12:14, 15 [k] 2 Tim. 4:13 **20:7** [l] 1 Cor. 16:2 [m] Acts 2:42, 46; 20:11 **20:8** [n] Acts 1:13 **20:10** [o] 1 Kin. 17:21 [p] Matt. 9:23, 24 **20:16** [q] Acts 18:21; 19:21; 21:4 [r] Acts 24:17 [s] Acts 2:1 **20:18** [t] Acts 18:19; 19:1, 10; 20:4, 16 **20:19** [u] Acts 20:3 **20:20** [v] Acts 20:27 **20:21** [w] Acts 18:5; 19:10 [x] Mark 1:15 **20:22** [y] Acts 19:21 **20:23** [z] Acts 21:4, 11 **20:24** [a] Acts 21:13 [b] 2 Tim. 4:7 [c] Acts 1:17 [d] Gal. 1:1 **20:26** [e] Acts 18:6 **20:27** [f] Luke 7:30

whole counsel of God. 28[g]Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit [h]has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God* [i]which He purchased [j]with His own blood. 29For I know this, that after my departure [k]savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30Also [l]from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31Therefore watch, and remember that [m]for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

32"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and [n]to the word of His grace, which is able [o]to build you up and give you [p]an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34Yes,* you yourselves know [q]that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. 35I have shown you in every way, [r]by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

36And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37Then they all [s]wept freely, and [t]fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Warnings on the Journey to Jerusalem

21 Now it came to pass, that when we had departed from them and set sail, running a straight course we came to Cos, the following *day* to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. 2And finding a ship sailing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. 3When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her cargo. 4And finding disciples,* we stayed there seven days. [a]They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem. 5When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city. And [b]we knelt down on the shore and prayed. 6When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned [c]home.

7And when we had finished *our* voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. 8On the next *day* we who were Paul's companions* departed and came to [d]Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip [e]the evangelist, [f]who was *one* of the seven, and stayed with him. 9Now this man had four virgin daughters [g]who prophesied. 10And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named [h]Agabus came down from Judea. 11When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, [i]'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

12Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13Then Paul answered, [j]"What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

14So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, [k]"The will of the Lord be done."

Paul Urged to Make Peace

15And after those days we packed and went up to Jerusalem. 16Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge.

* **20:28** M-Text reads *of the Lord and God.*
* **20:34** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Yes.* * **21:4** NU-Text reads *the disciples.* * **21:8** NU-Text omits *who were Paul's companions.*

20:28 Church—The elders or overseers of God's flock must be men who are appointed not just by other men, but by the Holy Spirit of God. The leadership of the church is a solemn responsibility, and it should only be accepted by those who are convinced that they have been both called and equipped by the Holy Spirit to do this work. An elder has the responsibility to follow the example of our Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, as a servant leader.

20:35 ***It is more blessed to give.*** This saying of Jesus is not found in the Gospels, but it has been recorded here through Paul's knowledge of it.

21:2 ***a ship sailing over to Phoenicia.*** In the summer months, the wind of the Aegean Sea blows from the north, beginning very early in the morning. In the late afternoon the wind dies away. Sunset brings a dead calm, and later a gentle southerly breeze blows. If a ship was heading down the coast, it would typically anchor at evening and wait for the winds of the morning.

21:4 ***through the Spirit.*** Because of this warning, many have thought that Paul's insistence in going to Jerusalem was disobedience to God's will. However, it is more likely that this was simply a warning to let him know what to expect in the future. Paul was obviously very sensitive to the Holy Spirit (16:6), and felt that he had received specific instructions to go to Jerusalem (20:22). Later Jesus Himself encouraged Paul concerning his decision to go (23:11).

21:10–14 ***bound his own hands and feet.*** The Holy Spirit did not forbid Paul to go to Jerusalem, but warned him of what it would cost him.

20:28 *g* 1 Pet. 5:2 *h* 1 Cor. 12:28 *i* Eph. 1:7, 14 *j* Heb. 9:14
20:29 *k* Matt. 7:15 **20:30** *l* 1 Tim. 1:20 **20:31** *m* Acts 19:8, 10; 24:17 **20:32** *n* Heb. 13:9 *o* Acts 9:31 *p* [Heb. 9:15] **20:34** *q* Acts 18:3 **20:35** *r* Rom. 15:1
20:37 *s* Acts 21:13 *t* Gen. 45:14 **21:4** *a* [Acts 20:23; 21:12]
21:5 *b* Acts 9:40; 20:36 **21:6** *c* John 1:11 **21:8** *d* Acts 8:40; 21:16 *e* Eph. 4:11 *f* Acts 6:5 **21:9** *g* Joel 2:28
21:10 *h* Acts 11:28 **21:11** *i* Acts 20:23; 21:33; 22:25
21:13 *j* Acts 20:24, 37 **21:14** *k* Luke 11:2; 22:42

17 [l]And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 On the following *day* Paul went in with us to [m]James, and all the elders were present. 19 When he had greeted them, [n]he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles [o]through his ministry. 20 And when they heard *it,* they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all [p]zealous for the law; 21 but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children nor to walk according to the customs. 22 What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will* hear that you have come. 23 Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. 24 Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may [q]shave *their* heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but *that* you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law. 25 But concerning the Gentiles who believe, [r]we have written *and* decided that they should observe no such thing, except* that they should keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality."

Arrested in the Temple

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, [s]entered the temple [t]to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.

27 Now when the seven days were almost ended, [u]the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and [v]laid hands on him, 28 crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man [w]who teaches all *men* everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." 29 (For they had previously* seen [x]Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And [y]all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut. 31 Now as they were [z]seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 [a]He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33 Then the [b]commander came near and took him, and [c]commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and he asked who he was and what he had done. 34 And some among the multitude cried one thing and some another.

So when he could not ascertain the truth because of the tumult, he commanded him to be taken into the barracks. 35 When he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob. 36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, [d]"Away with him!"

Addressing the Jerusalem Mob

37 Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks, he said to the commander, "May I speak to you?"

He replied, "Can you speak Greek? 38 [e]Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?"

39 But Paul said, [f]"I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people."

40 So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and [g]motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to *them* in the [h]Hebrew language, saying,

* **21:22** NU-Text reads *What then is to be done? They will certainly.* * **21:25** NU-Text omits *that they should observe no such thing, except.*
* **21:29** M-Text omits *previously.*

21:17 Fellowship—Fellowship means more than chatting over coffee and cookies, or sharing a potluck supper. Christian fellowship essentially means sharing one another's lives, participating in both the joy and sorrow of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Christian community extends beyond geography, class, color, and gender. As parts of one glorious whole, the body of Christ, believers rejoice in one another's joy, and reach out a helping hand for another's need.

21:25 *keep themselves from.* The spiritual unity of the body of believers is realized in its diversity, not in its conformity. From our diverse backgrounds and cultures we honor the same Lord.

21:28 *defiled this holy place.* The temple in New Testament times was surrounded by three courts. The innermost court was the Court of Israel, where Jewish men could offer sacrifices. The second court was the Court of Women where Jewish families could gather for prayer and worship. The outer court was the Court of Gentiles, open to all who would worship God. The penalty for any Gentile who went beyond this court was death.

21:38 *Are you not the Egyptian.* An assassin claiming to be a prophet had come to Jerusalem in A.D. 54, and led four thousand Jews up to the Mount of

21:17 [l] Acts 15:4 **21:18** [m] Gal. 1:19; 2:9 **21:19** [n] Rom. 15:18, 19 [o] Acts 1:17; 20:24 **21:20** [p] Acts 15:1; 22:3 **21:24** [q] Acts 18:18 **21:25** [r] Acts 15:19, 20, 29 **21:26** [s] Acts 21:24; 24:18 [t] Num. 6:13 **21:27** [u] Acts 20:19; 24:18 [v] Acts 26:21 **21:28** [w] Acts 6:13; 24:6 **21:29** [x] Acts 20:4 **21:30** [y] Acts 16:19; 26:21 **21:31** [z] 2 Cor. 11:23 **21:32** [a] Acts 23:27; 24:7 **21:33** [b] Acts 24:7 [c] Acts 20:23; 21:11 **21:36** [d] John 19:15 **21:38** [e] Acts 5:36 **21:39** [f] Acts 9:11; 22:3 **21:40** [g] Acts 12:17 [h] Acts 22:2

22 "Brethren[a] and fathers, hear my defense before you now." **2**And when they heard that he spoke to them in the [b]Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent.

Then he said: **3**[c]"I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city [d]at the feet of [e]Gamaliel, taught [f]according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and [g]was zealous toward God [h]as you all are today. **4**[i]I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, **5**as also the high priest bears me witness, and [j]all the council of the elders, [k]from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus [l]to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.

6"Now [m]it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. **7**And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' **8**So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

9"And [n]those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid,* but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. **10**So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.' **11**And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

12"Then [o]a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, [p]having a good testimony with all the [q]Jews who dwelt *there,* **13**came to me; and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. **14**Then he said, [r]"The God of our fathers [s]has chosen you that you should [t]know His will, and [u]see the Just One, [v]and hear the voice of His mouth. **15**[w]For you will be His witness to all men of [x]what you have seen and heard. **16**And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, [y]and wash away your sins, [z]calling on the name of the Lord.'

17"Now [a]it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance **18**and [b]saw Him saying to me, [c]'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.' **19**So I said, 'Lord, [d]they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and [e]beat those who believe on You. **20**[f]And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by [g]consenting to his death,* and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' **21**Then He said to me, 'Depart, [h]for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.' "

Paul's Roman Citizenship

22And they listened to him until this word, and *then* they raised their voices and said, [i]"Away with such a *fellow* from the earth, for [j]he is not fit to live!" **23**Then, as they cried out and tore off *their* clothes and threw dust into the air, **24**the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him. **25**And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, [k]"Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?"

26When the centurion heard *that,* he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman."

27Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?"

He said, "Yes."

28The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship."

And Paul said, "But I was born *a citizen.*"

29Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

* **22:9** NU-Text omits *and were afraid.*
* **22:20** NU-Text omits *to his death.*

Olives, promising that at his word the walls of Jerusalem would fall and the Roman Empire would be destroyed. The uprising was crushed, leaving four hundred Jews dead and another two hundred as prisoners. The Egyptian escaped into the desert with some of his followers.

22:16 ***calling on the name of the Lord.*** Calling on the name of the Lord is what brings salvation, not the physical act of baptism (Rom. 10:9–13). Baptism is the public declaration of one's repentance and new life.

22:24 ***under scourging.*** The scourge was a leather whip, studded with pieces of metal or bone, fastened to a wooden handle. The victim was stretched out on the floor or bound to a pillar to be beaten. Scourging was a cruel torture, designed to maim or kill the victim.

22:28 ***born a citizen.*** Roman citizenship was originally limited to free Romans, but later it was offered to many others in the empire, either as a reward for outstanding service, or in exchange for a high price. Because Paul's father was a Roman citizen (how he became a citizen is unknown), Paul was born

22:1 [a] Acts 7:2 **22:2** [b] Acts 21:40 **22:3** [c] 2 Cor. 11:22 [d] Deut. 33:3 [e] Acts 5:34 [f] Acts 23:6; 26:5 [g] Gal. 1:14 [h] [Rom. 10:2] **22:4** [i] 1 Tim. 1:13 **22:5** [j] Acts 23:14; 24:1; 25:15 [k] Luke 22:66 [l] Acts 9:2 **22:6** [m] Acts 9:3; 26:12, 13 **22:9** [n] Acts 9:7 **22:12** [o] Acts 9:17 [p] Acts 10:22 [q] 1 Tim. 3:7 **22:14** [r] Acts 3:13; 5:30 [s] Acts 9:15; 26:16 [t] Acts 3:14; 7:52 [u] 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8 [v] Gal. 1:12 **22:15** [w] Acts 23:11 [x] Acts 4:20; 26:16 **22:16** [y] Heb. 10:22 [z] Rom. 10:13 **22:17** [a] Acts 9:26; 26:20 **22:18** [b] Acts 22:14 [c] Matt. 10:14 **22:19** [d] Acts 8:3; 22:4 [e] Matt. 10:17 **22:20** [f] Acts 7:54—8:1 [g] Luke 11:48 **22:21** [h] Acts 9:15 **22:22** [i] Acts 21:36 [j] Acts 25:24 **22:25** [k] Acts 16:37

The Sanhedrin Divided

30 The next day, because he wanted to
know for certain why he was accused by
the Jews, he released him from *his* bonds,
and commanded the chief priests and all
their council to appear, and brought Paul
down and set him before them.

23 Then Paul, looking earnestly at the
council, said, "Men *and* brethren, [a]I
have lived in all good conscience before
God until this day." 2 And the high priest
Ananias commanded those who stood by
him [b]to strike him on the mouth. 3 Then
Paul said to him, "God will strike you, *you*
whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me
according to the law, and [c]do you com-
mand me to be struck contrary to the law?"

4 And those who stood by said, "Do you
revile God's high priest?"

5 Then Paul said, [d]"I did not know, breth-
ren, that he was the high priest; for it is
written, [e]'*You shall not speak evil of a ruler
of your people.*' "*

6 But when Paul perceived that one part
were Sadducees and the other Pharisees,
he cried out in the council, "Men *and* breth-
ren, [f]I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee;
[g]concerning the hope and resurrection of
the dead I am being judged!"

7 And when he had said this, a dissen-
sion arose between the Pharisees and the
Sadducees; and the assembly was divid-
ed. 8 [h]For Sadducees say that there is no
resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but
the Pharisees confess both. 9 Then there
arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the
Pharisees' party arose and protested, say-
ing, [i]"We find no evil in this man; but [j]if a
spirit or an angel has spoken to him, [k]let us
not fight against God."*

10 Now when there arose a great dissen-
sion, the commander, fearing lest Paul
might be pulled to pieces by them, com-
manded the soldiers to go down and take
him by force from among them, and bring
him into the barracks.

The Plot Against Paul

11 But [l]the following night the Lord stood
by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for
as you have testified for Me in [m]Jerusalem,
so you must also bear witness at [n]Rome."

12 And when it was day, [o]some of the Jews
banded together and bound themselves
under an oath, saying that they would nei-
ther eat nor drink till they had [p]killed Paul.
13 Now there were more than forty who
had formed this conspiracy. 14 They came
to the chief priests and [q]elders, and said,
"We have bound ourselves under a great
oath that we will eat nothing until we have
killed Paul. 15 Now you, therefore, together
with the council, suggest to the comman-
der that he be brought down to you tomor-
row,* as though you were going to make
further inquiries concerning him; but we
are ready to kill him before he comes near."

16 So when Paul's sister's son heard of
their ambush, he went and entered the bar-
racks and told Paul. 17 Then Paul called one
of the centurions to *him* and said, "Take
this young man to the commander, for he
has something to tell him." 18 So he took
him and brought *him* to the commander
and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to
him and asked *me* to bring this young man
to you. He has something to say to you."

19 Then the commander took him by
the hand, went aside, and asked privately,
"What is it that you have to tell me?"

20 And he said, [r]"The Jews have agreed to
ask that you bring Paul down to the coun-
cil tomorrow, as though they were going to
inquire more fully about him. 21 But do not
yield to them, for more than forty of them
lie in wait for him, men who have bound
themselves by an oath that they will nei-
ther eat nor drink till they have killed him;
and now they are ready, waiting for the
promise from you."

22 So the commander let the young man
depart, and commanded *him,* "Tell no one
that you have revealed these things to me."

Sent to Felix

23 And he called for two centurions, say-
ing, "Prepare two hundred soldiers, seven-
ty horsemen, and two hundred spearmen
to go to [s]Caesarea at the third hour of the
night; 24 and provide mounts to set Paul on,
and bring *him* safely to Felix the governor."
25 He wrote a letter in the following manner:

*** 23:5** Exodus 22:28 ***23:9** NU-Text omits last clause and reads *what if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?* ***23:15** NU-Text omits *tomorrow.*

a citizen. Ultimately, God used Paul's Roman citizenship to spread the gospel to Rome.

23:1 Conscience—The human conscience is given as a tool, enabling us to tell right from wrong, and to evaluate our own actions. The problem is that the conscience of fallen humans is not a reliable guide. Because humans are not "basically good," an untrained conscience will not necessarily lead toward right. The conscience must be trained by good teaching. It can be rendered useless if it is seared or defiled, it can be deadened by constantly ignoring it. In order to provide useful guidance, the conscience must be recharged by the Holy Spirit. It must be kept clear by confession of sins, and refusing to accept violations.

23:11 *witness at Rome.* Because of the earlier warnings of his friends (21:4,10–14), Paul may have begun to doubt his decision. The Lord gave Paul special encouragement at this time, that he was indeed doing just what God wanted him to do.

23:1 [a] 2 Tim. 1:3 **23:2** [b] John 18:22 **23:3** [c] Deut. 25:1, 2 **23:5** [d] Lev. 5:17, 18 [e] Ex. 22:28 **23:6** [f] Phil. 3:5 [g] Acts 24:15, 21; 26:6; 28:20 **23:8** [h] Matt. 22:23 **23:9** [i] Acts 25:25; 26:31 [j] Acts 22:6, 7, 17, 18 [k] Acts 5:39 **23:11** [l] Acts 18:9; 27:23, 24 [m] Acts 21:18, 19; 22:1–21 [n] Acts 28:16, 17, 23 **23:12** [o] Acts 23:21, 30; 25:3 [p] Acts 9:23, 24; 25:3; 26:21; 27:42 **23:14** [q] Acts 4:5, 23; 6:12; 22:5; 24:1; 25:15 **23:20** [r] Acts 23:12 **23:23** [s] Acts 8:40; 23:33

26 Claudius Lysias,

To the most excellent governor Felix:

Greetings.

27 [t]This man was seized by the Jews and
was about to be killed by them. Coming
with the troops I rescued him, having
learned that he was a Roman. 28[u]And
when I wanted to know the reason they
accused him, I brought him before
their council. 29I found out that he was
accused [v]concerning questions of their
law, [w]but had nothing charged against
him deserving of death or chains.
30And [x]when it was told me that the
Jews lay in wait for the man,* I sent
him immediately to you, and [y]also com-
manded his accusers to state before you
the charges against him.

Farewell.

31Then the soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought *him* by night to Antipatris. 32The next day they left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks. 33When they came to [z]Caesarea and had delivered the [a]letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. 34And when the governor had read *it*, he asked what province he was from. And when he understood that *he was* from [b]Cilicia, 35he said, [c]"I will hear you when your accusers also have come." And he commanded him to be kept in [d]Herod's Praetorium.

Accused of Sedition

24 Now after [a]five days [b]Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator *named* Tertullus. These gave evidence to the governor against Paul.

2And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: "Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight, 3we accept *it* always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. 4Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us. 5[c]For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. 6[d]He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him,* and wanted [e]to judge him according to our law. 7[f]But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took *him* out of our hands, 8[g]commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." 9And the Jews also assented,* maintaining that these things were so.

The Defense Before Felix

10Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself, 11because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem [h]to worship. 12[i]And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. 13Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me. 14But this I confess to you, that according to [j]the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the [k]God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in [l]the Law and in the Prophets. 15[m]I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, [n]that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead,* both of *the* just and *the* unjust. 16[o]This *being* so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

17"Now after many years [p]I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, 18[q]in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me [r]purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. 19[s]They ought to have been here before you to

* **23:30** NU-Text reads *there would be a plot against the man.* * **24:6** NU-Text ends the sentence here and omits the rest of verse 6, all of verse 7, and the first clause of verse 8. * **24:9** NU-Text and M-Text read *joined the attack.* * **24:15** NU-Text omits *of the dead.*

23:33 *the governor.* Antonius Felix governed Judea from A.D. 52 to 60. Felix had been a slave, but had gained the status of freedman under the emperor Claudius. Because Felix's brother was a friend of the emperor, Felix's political career blossomed, even though he was not popular among his peers. The writer Tacitus described him as "exercising the powers of a king with the character of a slave."

24:14 *the Way.* Paul openly admitted that he was a follower of "the Way" (those who followed Jesus), but he contended that he still believed the Law and the Prophets. That is, he was a follower of Judaism, a religion which enjoyed the protection of Rome.

24:16 Conscience—There is a connection between Paul's belief in future judgment and his desire to maintain a clear conscience before God and man. The intensity of Paul's desire may be seen from the verb translated "always strive," which occurs only here in the New Testament. Paul's desire to have a

23:27 [t] Acts 21:30, 33; 24:7 **23:28** [u] Acts 22:30 **23:29** [v] Acts 18:15; 25:19 [w] Acts 25:25; 26:31 **23:30** [x] Acts 23:20 [y] Acts 24:8; 25:6 **23:33** [z] Acts 8:40 [a] Acts 23:26–30 **23:34** [b] Acts 6:9; 21:39 **23:35** [c] Acts 24:1, 10; 25:16 [d] Matt. 27:27 **24:1** [a] Acts 21:27 [b] Acts 23:2, 30, 35; 25:2 **24:5** [c] 1 Pet. 2:12, 15 **24:6** [d] Acts 21:28 [e] John 18:31 **24:7** [f] Acts 21:33; 23:10 **24:8** [g] Acts 23:30 **24:11** [h] Acts 21:15, 18, 26, 27; 24:17 **24:12** [i] Acts 25:8; 28:17 **24:14** [j] Acts 9:2; 24:22 [k] 2 Tim. 1:3 [l] Acts 26:22; 28:23 **24:15** [m] Acts 23:6; 26:6, 7; 28:20 [n] [Dan. 12:2] **24:16** [o] Acts 23:1 **24:17** [p] Rom. 15:25–28 **24:18** [q] Acts 21:27; 26:21 [r] Acts 21:26 **24:19** [s] [Acts 23:30; 25:16]

object if they had anything against me.
20Or else let those who are *here* themselves
say if they found any wrongdoing* in me
while I stood before the council, 21unless *it*
is for this one statement which I cried out,
standing among them, [t]"Concerning the
resurrection of the dead I am being judged
by you this day.'"

Felix Procrastinates

22But when Felix heard these things,
having more accurate knowledge of *the*
[u]Way, he adjourned the proceedings and
said, "When [v]Lysias the commander comes
down, I will make a decision on your case."
23So he commanded the centurion to keep
Paul and to let *him* have liberty, and [w]told
him not to forbid any of his friends to pro-
vide for or visit him.
24And after some days, when Felix came
with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he
sent for Paul and heard him concerning
the [x]faith in Christ. 25Now as he reasoned
about righteousness, self-control, and the
judgment to come, Felix was afraid and an-
swered, "Go away for now; when I have a
convenient time I will call for you." 26Mean-
while he also hoped that [y]money would be
given him by Paul, that he might release
him.* Therefore he sent for him more often
and conversed with him.
27But after two years Porcius Festus suc-
ceeded Felix; and Felix, [z]wanting to do the
Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

Paul Appeals to Caesar

25 Now when Festus had come to the
province, after three days he went
up from [a]Caesarea to Jerusalem. 2[b]Then
the high priest* and the chief men of the
Jews informed him against Paul; and they
petitioned him, 3asking a favor against
him, that he would summon him to Jeru-
salem—[c]while *they* lay in ambush along
the road to kill him. 4But Festus answered
that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and
that he himself was going *there* shortly.
5"Therefore," he said, "let those who have
authority among you go down with *me* and
accuse this man, to see [d]if there is any fault
in him."

6And when he had remained among
them more than ten days, he went down
to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on
the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to
be brought. 7When he had come, the Jews
who had come down from Jerusalem stood
about [e]and laid many serious complaints
against Paul, which they could not prove,
8while he answered for himself, [f]"Neither
against the law of the Jews, nor against the
temple, nor against Caesar have I offended
in anything at all."
9But Festus, [g]wanting to do the Jews a
favor, answered Paul and said, [h]"Are you
willing to go up to Jerusalem and there
be judged before me concerning these
things?"
10So Paul said, "I stand at Caesar's judg-
ment seat, where I ought to be judged. To
the Jews I have done no wrong, as you
very well know. 11[i]For if I am an offender,
or have committed anything deserving of
death, I do not object to dying; but if there
is nothing in these things of which these
men accuse me, no one can deliver me to
them. [j]I appeal to Caesar."
12Then Festus, when he had conferred
with the council, answered, "You have ap-
pealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!"

Paul Before Agrippa

13And after some days King Agrippa
and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet
Festus. 14When they had been there many
days, Festus laid Paul's case before the
king, saying: [k]"There is a certain man left
a prisoner by Felix, 15[l]about whom the chief
priests and the elders of the Jews informed
me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for
a judgment against him. 16[m]To them I an-
swered, 'It is not the custom of the Romans
to deliver any man to destruction* before
the accused meets the accusers face to
face, and has opportunity to answer for
himself concerning the charge against

* **24:20** NU-Text and M-Text read *say what wrongdoing they found.* * **24:26** NU-Text omits *that he might release him.* * **25:2** NU-Text reads *chief priests.* * **25:16** NU-Text omits *to destruction,* although it is implied.

good conscience toward God and man reflects the summary of duties of the law of love toward God and neighbor. The conscience needs to be enlightened and purified by Scripture in regard to our responsibilities toward God and man.

24:22 ***having more accurate knowledge of the Way.*** Felix's wife Drusilla was Jewish, and part of the Herodian family. Felix had governed Judea and Samaria for six years. He had ample opportunity to understand both Judaism and "the Way" as he must have observed the workings of the early church in Jerusalem.

24:27 ***after two years.*** Around A.D. 60, a riot broke out in Caesarea. Felix crushed it with such force that he was removed from office.

25:11 ***appeal to Caesar.*** If a Roman citizen thought he was not getting justice in a provincial court, he could appeal to the emperor himself. If the appeal was declared valid, all other proceedings in the lower courts ceased and the prisoner was sent to Rome for the disposition of his case.

24:21 [t] [Acts 23:6; 24:15; 28:20] **24:22** [u] Acts 9:2; 18:26; 19:9, 23; 22:4 [v] Acts 23:26; 24:7 **24:23** [w] Acts 23:16; 27:3; 28:16 **24:24** [x] [Rom. 10:9] **24:26** [y] Ex. 23:8 **24:27** [z] Acts 12:3; 23:35; 25:9, 14 **25:1** [a] Acts 8:40; 25:4, 6, 13 **25:2** [b] Acts 24:1; 25:15 **25:3** [c] Acts 23:12, 15 **25:5** [d] Acts 18:14; 25:18 **25:7** [e] Acts 24:5, 13 **25:8** [f] Acts 6:13; 24:12; 28:17 **25:9** [g] Acts 12:2; 24:27 [h] Acts 25:20 **25:11** [i] Acts 18:14; 23:29; 25:25; 26:31 [j] Acts 26:32; 28:19 **25:14** [k] Acts 24:27 **25:15** [l] Acts 24:1; 25:2, 3 **25:16** [m] Acts 25:4, 5

him.' 17Therefore when they had come together, [n]without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. 18When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed, 19[o]but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. 20And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. 21But when Paul [p]appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar."

22Then [q]Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."

"Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."

23So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command [r]Paul was brought in. 24And Festus said: "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom [s]the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he was [t]not fit to live any longer. 25But when I found that [u]he had committed nothing deserving of death, [v]and that he himself had appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him. 26I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place I may have something to write. 27For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him."

Paul's Early Life

26 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself."

So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: 2"I think myself [a]happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer [b]for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am [c]accused by the Jews, 3especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.

4"My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. 5They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to [d]the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. 6[e]And now I stand and am judged for the hope of [f]the promise made by God to our fathers. 7To this *promise* [g]our twelve tribes, earnestly serving *God* [h]night and day, [i]hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. 8Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?

9[j]"Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of [k]Jesus of Nazareth. 10[l]This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority [m]from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against *them*. 11[n]And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted *them* even to foreign cities.

Paul Recounts His Conversion

12[o]"While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. 14And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? *It is* hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, [p]to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as *from* the Gentiles, [q]to whom I now* send you, 18[r]to open their eyes, *in order* [s]to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, [t]that they may receive forgiveness of sins and [u]an inheritance among those who are [v]sanctified by faith in Me.'

* **26:17** NU-Text and M-Text omit *now*.

26:5 *I lived a Pharisee.* Paul was not some stranger or foreigner trying to start a new religion. He was a Jew, and a member of the religious body which took God's law most seriously.

26:6–7 Hope—Paul faced a real paradox in his trial before Agrippa. He had been a faithful Pharisee, looking forward to the fulfillment of their common hope, the coming of the Messiah, and eventually the resurrection of the dead. Now that the Messiah had come, and Paul began proclaiming the truth of His atonement and resurrection, he was being persecuted by the very ones who had once shared his hope.

25:17 [n] Acts 25:6, 10 **25:19** [o] Acts 18:14, 15; 23:29 **25:21** [p] Acts 25:11, 12 **25:22** [q] Acts 9:15 **25:23** [r] Acts 9:15 **25:24** [s] Acts 25:2, 3, 7 [t] Acts 21:36; 22:22 **25:25** [u] Acts 23:9, 29; 26:31 [v] Acts 25:11, 12 **26:2** [a] [1 Pet. 3:14; 4:14] [b] [1 Pet. 3:15, 16] [c] Acts 21:28; 24:5, 6 **26:5** [d] Phil. 3:5 **26:6** [e] Acts 23:6 [f] Acts 13:32 **26:7** [g] James 1:1 [h] 1 Thess. 3:10 [i] Phil. 3:11 **26:9** [j] 1 Tim. 1:12, 13 [k] Acts 2:22; 10:38 **26:10** [l] Acts 8:1–3; 9:13 [m] Acts 9:14 **26:11** [n] Acts 22:19 **26:12** [o] Acts 9:3–8; 22:6–11; 26:12–18 **26:16** [p] Acts 22:15 **26:17** [q] Acts 22:21 **26:18** [r] Is. 35:5; 42:7, 16 [s] 1 Pet. 2:9 [t] Luke 1:77 [u] Col. 1:12 [v] Acts 20:32

Paul's Post-Conversion Life

19"Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not
disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20but
[w]declared first to those in Damascus and
in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region
of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they
should repent, turn to God, and do [x]works
befitting repentance. 21For these reasons
the Jews seized me in the temple and tried
to kill *me*. 22Therefore, having obtained
help from God, to this day I stand, witness-
ing both to small and great, saying no oth-
er things than those [y]which the prophets
and [z]Moses said would come— 23[a]that the
Christ would suffer, [b]that He would be the
first to rise from the dead, and [c]would pro-
claim light to the *Jewish* people and to the
Gentiles."

Agrippa Parries Paul's Challenge

24Now as he thus made his defense, Fes-
tus said with a loud voice, "Paul, [d]you are
beside yourself! Much learning is driving
you mad!"
25But he said, "I am not mad, most no-
ble Festus, but speak the words of truth
and reason. 26For the king, before whom I
also speak freely, [e]knows these things; for
I am convinced that none of these things
escapes his attention, since this thing was
not done in a corner. 27King Agrippa, do
you believe the prophets? I know that you
do believe."
28Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You
almost persuade me to become a Chris-
tian."
29And Paul said, [f]"I would to God that
not only you, but also all who hear me
today, might become both almost and
altogether such as I am, except for these
chains."
30When he had said these things, the
king stood up, as well as the governor
and Bernice and those who sat with them;
31and when they had gone aside, they
talked among themselves, saying, [g]"This
man is doing nothing deserving of death
or chains."
32Then Agrippa said to Festus, "This
man might have been set [h]free [i]if he had
not appealed to Caesar."

The Voyage to Rome Begins

27 And when [a]it was decided that we
should sail to Italy, they delivered
Paul and some other prisoners to *one*
named Julius, a centurion of the Augus-
tan Regiment. 2So, entering a ship of
Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning
to sail along the coasts of Asia. [b]Aris-
tarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica,
was with us. 3And the next *day* we land-
ed at Sidon. And Julius [c]treated Paul
kindly and gave *him* liberty to go to his
friends and receive care. 4When we had
put to sea from there, we sailed under
the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds
were contrary. 5And when we had sailed
over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pam-
phylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia.
6There the centurion found [d]an Alexan-
drian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on
board.
7When we had sailed slowly many days,
and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus,
the wind not permitting us to proceed, we
sailed under *the shelter of* [e]Crete off Sal-
mone. 8Passing it with difficulty, we came
to a place called Fair Havens, near the city
of Lasea.

Paul's Warning Ignored

9Now when much time had been spent,
and sailing was now dangerous [f]because
the Fast was already over, Paul advised
them, 10saying, "Men, I perceive that this
voyage will end with disaster and much
loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also
our lives." 11Nevertheless the centurion
was more persuaded by the helmsman and
the owner of the ship than by the things
spoken by Paul. 12And because the harbor
was not suitable to winter in, the majority
advised to set sail from there also, if by any
means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor
of Crete opening toward the southwest and
northwest, *and* winter *there*.

In the Tempest

13When the south wind blew softly, sup-
posing that they had obtained *their* desire,
putting out to sea, they sailed close by
Crete. 14But not long after, a tempestuous

26:20 *that they should repent.* Repentance indicates a complete change in thinking, an "about face" of the mind and heart. Genuine repentance is evidenced by changed behavior.

26:22–23 Christ—Paul makes it clear that Jesus stood firmly in the tradition of the Hebrew Law and Prophets, and specifically identifies Him as the promised Messiah. The suffering and death of the Messiah were ordained by God and proclaimed by His prophets. The resurrection of Jesus provided evidence of the control God was exercising over the process of redemption. This triumphant event removed the purely local and national character of Christ's work, and gave His message of salvation worldwide dimensions, as had been prophesied (Is. 60:3; Mal. 1:11).

27:4 *the winds were contrary.* This happened just before the winter storms increased, and sailing became difficult. Paul was being sent to Rome by ship at the worst time of year for sailing.

26:20 [w] Acts 9:19, 20, 22; 11:26 [x] Matt. 3:8 **26:22** [y] Rom. 3:21 [z] John 5:46 **26:23** [a] Luke 24:26 [b] 1 Cor. 15:20, 23 [c] Luke 2:32 **26:24** [d] [1 Cor. 1:23; 2:13, 14; 4:10] **26:26** [e] Acts 26:3 **26:29** [f] 1 Cor. 7:7 **26:31** [g] Acts 23:9, 29; 25:25 **26:32** [h] Acts 28:18 [i] Acts 25:11 **27:1** [a] Acts 25:12, 25 **27:2** [b] Acts 19:29 **27:3** [c] Acts 24:23; 28:16 **27:6** [d] Acts 28:11 **27:7** [e] Titus 1:5, 12 **27:9** [f] Lev. 16:29–31; 23:27–29

head wind arose, called Euroclydon.* 15So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let *her* drive. 16And running under *the shelter of* an island called Clauda,* we secured the skiff with difficulty. 17When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis* *Sands*, they struck sail and so were driven. 18And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next *day* they lightened the ship. 19On the third *day* [g]we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. 20Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on *us*, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.

21But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss. 22And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23[h]For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and [i]whom I serve, 24saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' 25Therefore take heart, men, [j]for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. 26However, [k]we must run aground on a certain island."

27Now when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic *Sea,* about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. 28And they took soundings and found *it* to be twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found *it* to be fifteen fathoms. 29Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come. 30And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, 31Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." 32Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

33And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored *them* all to take food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. 34Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, [l]since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you." 35And when he had said these things, he took bread and [m]gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken *it* he began to eat. 36Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. 37And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six [n]persons on the ship. 38So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea.

Shipwrecked on Malta

39When it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. 40And they let go the anchors and left *them* in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. 41But striking a place where two seas met, [o]they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves.

42And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. 43But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump *overboard* first and get to land, 44and the rest, some on boards and some on *parts* of the ship. And so it was [p]that they all escaped safely to land.

Paul's Ministry on Malta

28 Now when they had escaped, they then found out that [q]the island was called Malta. 2And the [b]natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold. 3But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid *them* on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. 4So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live." 5But he shook off the creature into the fire and [c]suffered no harm. 6However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and [d]said that he was a god.

*27:14 NU-Text reads *Euraquilon.* *27:16 NU-Text reads *Cauda.* *27:17 M-Text reads *Syrtes.*

27:14 ***Euroclydon.*** This was a name given to the northeasterly storms which blow up on the Mediterranean Sea at this time of year.

27:19 *g* Jon. 1:5 **27:23** *h* Acts 18:9; 23:11 *i* Dan. 6:16 **27:25** *j* Rom. 4:20, 21 **27:26** *k* Acts 28:1 **27:34** *l* [Matt. 10:30] **27:35** *m* [1 Tim. 4:3, 4] **27:37** *n* Acts 2:41; 7:14 **27:41** *o* 2 Cor. 11:25 **27:44** *p* Acts 27:22, 31 **28:1** *q* Acts 27:26 **28:2** *b* Col. 3:11 **28:5** *c* Mark 16:18 **28:6** *d* Acts 12:22; 14:11

7 In that region there was an estate of the
leading citizen of the island, whose name
was Publius, who received us and enter-
tained us courteously for three days. 8 And
it happened that the father of Publius lay
sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in
to him and [e]prayed, and [f]he laid his hands
on him and healed him. 9 So when this was
done, the rest of those on the island who
had diseases also came and were healed.
10 They also honored us in many [g]ways;
and when we departed, they provided such
things as were [h]necessary.

Arrival at Rome

11 After three months we sailed in [i]an
Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was
the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at
the island. 12 And landing at Syracuse, we
stayed three days. 13 From there we circled
round and reached Rhegium. And after
one day the south wind blew; and the next
day we came to Puteoli, 14 where we found
[j]brethren, and were invited to stay with
them seven days. And so we went toward
Rome. 15 And from there, when the breth-
ren heard about us, they came to meet us as
far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When
Paul saw them, he thanked God and took
courage.

16 Now when we came to Rome, the cen-
turion delivered the prisoners to the cap-
tain of the guard; but [k]Paul was permitted
to dwell by himself with the soldier who
guarded him.

Paul's Ministry at Rome

17 And it came to pass after three days
that Paul called the leaders of the Jews to-
gether. So when they had come together, he
said to them: "Men *and* brethren, [l]though I
have done nothing against our people or
the customs of our fathers, yet [m]I was deliv-
ered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the
hands of the Romans, 18 who, [n]when they
had examined me, wanted to let *me* go, be-
cause there was no cause for putting me to
death. 19 But when the Jews* spoke against
it, [o]I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not
that I had anything of which to accuse my
nation. 20 For this reason therefore I have
called for you, to see *you* and speak with
you, because [p]for the hope of Israel I am
bound with [q]this chain."

21 Then they said to him, "We neither re-
ceived letters from Judea concerning you,
nor have any of the brethren who came
reported or spoken any evil of you. 22 But
we desire to hear from you what you think;
for concerning this sect, we know that [r]it is
spoken against everywhere."

23 So when they had appointed him a
day, many came to him at *his* lodging, [s]to
whom he explained and solemnly testified
of the kingdom of God, persuading them
concerning Jesus [t]from both the Law of
Moses and the Prophets, from morning till
evening. 24 And [u]some were persuaded by
the things which were spoken, and some
disbelieved. 25 So when they did not agree
among themselves, they departed after
Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit
spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet
to our* fathers, 26 saying,

> [v]'Go to this people and say:
> "Hearing you will hear, and shall not
> understand;
> And seeing you will see, and not
> perceive;
> 27 For the hearts of this people have
> grown dull.
> Their ears are hard of hearing,
> And their eyes they have closed,
> Lest they should see with their eyes
> and hear with their ears,
> Lest they should understand with their
> hearts and turn,
> So that I should heal them."'*

28 "Therefore let it be known to you that
the salvation of God has been sent [w]to
the Gentiles, and they will hear it!" 29 And
when he had said these words, the Jews
departed and had a great dispute among
themselves.*

* **28:19** That is, the ruling authorities * **28:25** NU-Text reads *your*. * **28:27** Isaiah 6:9, 10
* **28:29** NU-Text omits this verse.

28:8 ***lay sick of a fever.*** This fever was possibly Malta fever, which was common in Malta, Gibraltar, and other Mediterranean islands. The microorganism has since been traced to the milk of the Maltese goats. The fever usually lasted four months, but sometimes could last as long as two or three years.

28:17 ***leaders of the Jews.*** By this time, the decree of the emperor Claudius (18:2) had been allowed to lapse, and Jews had returned to Rome.

28:20 Hope—The hope of Israel and the hope which Paul had found in Christ were not two different things. Wherever he went, he proclaimed Christ to the Jews as the fulfillment of their hope. That hope included not only the resurrection; it also included the Messiah and His kingdom. Paul is careful to emphasize that the hope which he now proclaims does not undermine the hope of Israel but rather is its divine fulfillment. His devotion to the hope of the fathers was the cause that brought about his imprisonment and put him in chains. His demeanor before these Jewish leaders in Rome must have been impressive. As he stood before these men whose influence could result in life or death for him, there

28:8 [e] [James 5:14, 15] [f] Mark 5:23; 6:5; 7:32; 16:18 **28:10** [g] Matt. 15:6 [h] [Phil. 4:19] **28:11** [i] Acts 27:6 **28:14** [j] Rom. 1:8 **28:16** [k] Acts 23:11; 24:25; 27:3 **28:17** [l] Acts 23:29; 24:12, 13; 26:31 [m] Acts 21:33 **28:18** [n] Acts 22:24; 24:10; 25:8; 26:32 **28:19** [o] Acts 25:11, 21, 25 **28:20** [p] Acts 26:6, 7 [q] Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20 **28:22** [r] [1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16; 4:14, 16] **28:23** [s] Luke 24:27 [t] Acts 26:6, 22 **28:24** [u] Acts 14:4; 19:9 **28:26** [v] Is. 6:9, 10 **28:28** [w] Rom. 11:11

30 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in
his own rented house, and received all who
came to him, 31[x] preaching the kingdom of
God and teaching the things which con-
cern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confi-
dence, no one forbidding him.

was no quaking or fear. He had that hope which made him secure, whatever happened.

28:30 ***two whole years.*** Paul wrote four of the New Testament letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) during this period.

28:31 ***preaching . . . teaching.*** Apparently Paul's case had not been decided when Luke finished this book. It is thought that Paul was in fact released (there was really no case against him), and actually went to Spain as he desired (Rom. 15:24). Titus 1:5 implies that Paul ministered on the island of Crete (something not mentioned in Acts), and many believe that Paul resumed his missionary travel for a few more years before his final arrest, condemnation, and execution, sometime around A.D. 67.

28:31 [x] Eph. 6:19

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
ROMANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** All critical schools agree on the Pauline authorship of this foundational book. The vocabulary, style, logic, and theological development are consistent with Paul's other epistles. He wrote Romans in A.D. 57, near the end of his third missionary journey, evidently during his three-month stay in Greece (Acts 20:3–6), more specifically, in Corinth. The church in Rome was well known (Rom. 1:8), and it had been established for several years by the time of this letter. The believers were probably numerous, and evidently they met in several places (16:1–16). The historian Tacitus even referred to the Christians who were persecuted there under Nero in A.D. 64 as an "immense multitude," as the gospel filled the gap left by the practically defunct polytheism of Roman religion.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 57 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Rom. 1:16–17

▶ **THEME:** Most scholars think that Paul probably wrote this letter from Corinth, shortly before going to Jerusalem with the relief funds for the believers there. At this point in his life and ministry, his theology has been fully developed through years of study and interaction with people as he preached the gospel. Romans systematically explains what Christ did, why He did it, and what has happened as a result. It speaks to what we are as humans and how God has interacted with us through Christ. It lays out God's plan for the world, clarifying what has happened and is still happening in biblical history. In this way, Paul forces us to deal with all the false versions of reality inspired by our fallen human nature as opposed to God's gracious, sustaining plan.

Greeting

1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ,
[a]called *to be* an apostle, [b]separated to
the gospel of God **2**[c]which He promised
before [d]through His prophets in the Holy
Scriptures, **3**concerning His Son Jesus
Christ our Lord, who was [e]born of the
seed of David according to the flesh, **4***and*
[f]declared *to be* the Son of God with power according [g]to the Spirit of holiness, by
the resurrection from the dead. **5**Through
Him [h]we have received grace and apostleship for [i]obedience to the faith among all
nations [j]for His name, **6**among whom you
also are the called of Jesus Christ;

7To all who are in Rome, beloved of God,
[k]called *to be* saints:

[l]Grace to you and peace from God our
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Desire to Visit Rome

8First, [m]I thank my God through Jesus
Christ for you all, that [n]your faith is spoken
of throughout the whole world. **9**For [o]God
is my witness, [p]whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that [q]without
ceasing I make mention of you always in
my prayers, **10**making request if, by some
means, now at last I may find a way in the
will of God to come to you. **11**For I long to see
you, that [r]I may impart to you some spiritual
gift, so that you may be established— **12**that
is, that I may be encouraged together with
you by [s]the mutual faith both of you and me.

13Now I do not want you to be unaware,
brethren, that I often planned to come to
you (but [t]was hindered until now), that I
might have some [u]fruit among you also,
just as among the other Gentiles. **14**I am a
debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians,

1:1 ***bondservant.*** A bondservant is a slave. Paul is talking about a slavery taken voluntarily out of love (see Ex. 21:1–6), unlike the forced slavery known to so many in the Roman Empire.
1:4 ***declared.*** The word translated "declared" means "designated." Jesus did not become the Son of God by the resurrection. Instead, the resurrection proved that Jesus was the Son of God.
1:14 ***barbarians.*** Paul is referring to the non-Greek Gentile populations, such as the northern European peoples, the Britons, the Gauls, and the Celts.

1:1 [a] 1 Tim. 1:11 [b] Acts 9:15; 13:2 **1:2** [c] Acts 26:6 [d] Gal. 3:8 **1:3** [e] Gal. 4:4 **1:4** [f] Acts 9:20; 13:33 [g] [Heb. 9:14] **1:5** [h] Eph. 3:8 [i] Acts 6:7 [j] Acts 9:15 **1:7** [k] 1 Cor. 1:2, 24 [l] 1 Cor. 1:3 **1:8** [m] 1 Cor. 1:4 [n] Rom. 16:19 **1:9** [o] Rom. 9:1 [p] Acts 27:23 [q] 1 Thess. 3:10 **1:11** [r] Rom. 15:29 **1:12** [s] Titus 1:4 **1:13** [t] [1 Thess. 2:18] [u] Phil. 4:17

both to wise and to unwise. 15So, as much as is in me, *I am* ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

The Just Live by Faith

16For [v]I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,* for [w]it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, [x]for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17For [y]in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, [z]*"The just shall live by faith."**

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

18[a]For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and [b]unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19because [c]what may be known of God is manifest in them, for [d]God has shown *it* to them. 20For since the creation of the world [e]His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but [f]became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22[g]Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23and changed the glory of the [h]incorruptible [i]God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

24[j]Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, [k]to dishonor their bodies [l]among themselves, 25who exchanged [m]the truth of God [n]for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

26For this reason God gave them up to [o]vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

28And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things [p]which are not fitting; 29being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality,* wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, 30backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving,* unmerciful; 32who, [q]knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things [r]are deserving of death, not only do the same but also [s]approve of those who practice them.

God's Righteous Judgment

2 Therefore you are [a]inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, [b]for in whatever you judge another you condemn

* **1:16** NU-Text omits *of Christ*. * **1:17** Habakkuk 2:4 * **1:29** NU-Text omits *sexual immorality*. * **1:31** NU-Text omits *unforgiving*.

1:17 *faith to faith.* Faith is at the beginning of the salvation process, and it is the goal as well. Paul had faith that God, through the Holy Spirit, could and would build true righteousness in him. For the believer this means prayerful self-examination, prayer to do better, and careful response to those inner nudges that say, "don't say that . . . have pity . . . encourage him . . . ," etc.

1:18–19 There Are No Excuses—Someone once said there were two points they understood about God: (1) "There is a God"; and (2) "I am not Him." Theologians use the term "general revelation" to describe the concept Paul is teaching here in Romans 1. God has revealed Himself through His creation so that everyone can understand that He exists and that He has created the world and man with a purpose. God created man with an inner sense that there is something bigger out there, something that transcends mankind. That something is God and He requires recognition. The created world points us to God, but we suppress that truth, preferring to put ourselves in the place of God, in effect saying, "There is no God but me." Paul further says that, because the revelation is so clear, we have no excuse for missing it, no legitimate reason for our blindness. People who do not see it are guilty of not acknowledging the most basic reality there is.

1:25 *lie.* This refers to the kind of wrong thinking that led to idol worship. This "lie" refuses to honor both God's law and His authority. When people stop knowing that God created the universe, that it is His, they adopt all kinds of wrong thinking about sin, society, morality, and especially, the role of God Himself.

1:27 *what is shameful.* Homosexuality is sin (Lev. 18:22), and the actions that are part of this lifestyle are called "shameful" by God. In this passage Paul explains that homosexual sin is the result of men having rejected God and exchanged what is natural for the unnatural. The problems from this way of living are themselves the "penalty" for this choice.

1:29–32 *being filled with all unrighteousness.* These verses contain one of the most complete lists of sin in all of Scripture. This passage addresses not only the fact that God judges rightly that these sins are deserving of death, but it also addresses the idea that approving of these sins is something God judges.

2:1–4 *judge.* Paul points out in this passage that anyone who judges others condemns himself, for in this list of sins is something that everyone has been guilty

1:16 [v] Ps. 40:9, 10 [w] 1 Cor. 1:18, 24 [x] Acts 3:26 **1:17** [y] Rom. 3:21; 9:30 [z] Hab. 2:4 **1:18** [a] [Acts 17:30] [b] 2 Thess. 2:10 **1:19** [c] [Acts 14:17; 17:24] [d] [John 1:9] **1:20** [e] Ps. 19:1–6 **1:21** [f] Jer. 2:5 **1:22** [g] Jer. 10:14 **1:23** [h] 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15, 16 [i] Deut. 4:16–18 **1:24** [j] Eph. 4:18, 19 [k] 1 Cor. 6:18 [l] Lev. 18:22 **1:25** [m] 1 Thess. 1:9 [n] Is. 44:20 **1:26** [o] Lev. 18:22 **1:28** [p] Eph. 5:4 **1:32** [q] [Rom. 2:2] [r] [Rom. 6:21] [s] Hos. 7:3 **2:1** [a] [Rom. 1:20] [b] [Matt. 7:1–5]

yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. 3And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4Or do you despise [c]the riches of His goodness, [d]forbearance, and [e]longsuffering, [f]not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? 5But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart [g]you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6who [h]*"will render to each one according to his deeds":** 7eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8but to those who are self-seeking and [i]do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, 9tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew [j]first and also of the Greek; 10[k]but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11For [l]there is no partiality with God.

12For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law 13(for [m]not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; 14for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15who show the [n]work of the law written in their hearts, their [o]conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) 16[p]in the day when God will judge the secrets of men [q]by Jesus Christ, [r]according to my gospel.

The Jews Guilty as the Gentiles

17Indeed* [s]you are called a Jew, and [t]rest on the law, [u]and make your boast in God, 18and [v]know *His* will, and [w]approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, 19and [x]are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, [y]having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. 21[z]You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, [a]do you rob temples? 23You who [b]make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24For [c]*"the name of God is [d]blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,"** as it is written.

Circumcision of No Avail

25[e]For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26Therefore, [f]if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? 27And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, [g]judge you who, *even* with *your* written *code* and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of the law? 28For [h]he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly,

* **2:6** Psalm 62:12; Proverbs 24:12 * **2:17** NU-Text reads *But if.* * **2:24** Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:22

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of in one way or another. Paul asks if the judgers realize that it is God in His goodness who leads one to repentance, and that only God can judge rightly. Only He can judge the actions of the heart and person without condemning Himself, for only He is without sin.

2:4 *repentance.* Literally, this means "to change one's mind." In this context it means to reject one's sinful habits and turn to God.

2:7–8 *eternal life . . . doing good.* According to these verses it might seem that "eternal life" can be gained by "doing good." But Romans clearly teaches justification by faith (3:22). The subject of this verse is judgment, not justification. Jesus said that "every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). Even Christians will see both the good and the evil that they have done. They are justified (considered righteous and therefore not punished for their sins because they have accepted Christ's death on their behalf) but they still have to see what they have done according to God's righteous judgment. Good works are a "foundation for the time to come [eternity]" (1 Tim. 6:17–19).

2:12 *without law.* Gentiles, who did not receive the Mosaic law, were sometimes described by this term.

2:14 *by nature do the things in the law.* Gentiles who still do such things as honor their parents, respond in kindness, or live honestly, show that they do have the idea of a basic moral law and the concepts of right and wrong.

2:16 *secrets.* According to the gospel that Paul preached, God will judge not only people's actions, but their motives, or "secrets."

2:17–25 Self-Righteousness—Paul speaks of the lamentable disparity between the truth that the Jews knew, and their practice of the truth. Boasting about having God's law, while breaking the law in their lives, brings upon them the strongest condemnation, and establishes the truth that the law can only condemn.

2:4 [c] [Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7] [d] [Rom. 3:25] [e] Ex. 34:6 [f] Is. 30:18 **2:5** [g] [Deut. 32:34] **2:6** [h] Ps. 62:12; Prov. 24:12 **2:8** [i] [2 Thess. 1:8] **2:9** [j] 1 Pet. 4:17 **2:10** [k] [1 Pet. 1:7] **2:11** [l] Deut. 10:17 **2:13** [m] [James 1:22, 25] **2:15** [n] 1 Cor. 5:1 [o] Acts 24:25 **2:16** [p] [Matt. 25:31] [q] Acts 10:42; 17:31 [r] 1 Tim. 1:11 **2:17** [s] John 8:33 [t] Mic. 3:11 [u] Is. 48:1, 2 **2:18** [v] Deut. 4:8 [w] Phil. 1:10 **2:19** [x] Matt. 15:14 **2:20** [y] [2 Tim. 3:5] **2:21** [z] Matt. 23:3 **2:22** [a] Mal. 3:8 **2:23** [b] Rom. 2:17; 9:4 **2:24** [c] Ezek. 16:27 [d] Is. 52:5; Ezek. 36:22 **2:25** [e] [Gal. 5:3] **2:26** [f] [Acts 10:34] **2:27** [g] Matt. 12:41 **2:28** [h] [Gal. 6:15]

nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; 29but *he is* a Jew [i]who *is one* inwardly; and [j]circumcision *is that* of the heart, [k]in the Spirit, not in the letter; [l]whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

God's Judgment Defended

3 What advantage then has the Jew, or what *is* the profit of circumcision? 2Much in every way! Chiefly because [a]to them were committed the oracles of God. 3For what if [b]some did not believe? [c]Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? 4[d]Certainly not! Indeed, let [e]God be true but [f]every man a liar. As it is written:

[g]*"That You may be justified in Your words,*
*And may overcome when You are judged."**

5But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unjust who inflicts wrath? [h](I speak as a man.) 6Certainly not! For then [i]how will God judge the world?

7For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? 8And *why* not *say*, [j]"Let us do evil that good may come"?—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

All Have Sinned

9What then? Are we better *than they?* Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that [k]they are all under sin.

10As it is written:

[l]*"There is none righteous, no, not one;*
11 *There is none who understands;*
There is none who seeks after God.
12 *They have all turned aside;*
They have together become unprofitable;
*There is none who does good, no, not one."**
13 *"Their[m] throat is an open tomb;*
*With their tongues they have practiced deceit";**
[n]*"The poison of asps is under their lips";**
14 *"Whose[o] mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."**
15 *"Their[p] feet are swift to shed blood;*
16 *Destruction and misery are in their ways;*
17 *And the way of peace they have not known."**
18 *"There[q] is no fear of God before their eyes."**

19Now we know that whatever [r]the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that [s]every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20Therefore [t]by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

God's Righteousness Through Faith

21But now [u]the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, [v]being witnessed by the Law [w]and the Prophets, 22even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all* who believe. For [x]there is no difference; 23for [y]all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24being justified freely [z]by His grace [a]through the redemption that is in

* **3:4** Psalm 51:4 * **3:12** Psalms 14:1–3; 53:1–3; Ecclesiastes 7:20 * **3:13** Psalm 5:9 • Psalm 140:3 * **3:14** Psalm 10:7 * **3:17** Isaiah 59:7, 8 * **3:18** Psalm 36:1 * **3:22** NU-Text omits *and on all.*

2:29 ***in the Spirit, not in the letter.*** The internal circumcision of the heart is the work of the Holy Spirit. God condemns external observance if it is not the product of a righteous heart (Is. 1:10–18).

3:2 ***oracles of God.*** The entire Old Testament, the laws and the covenants that have been given by God Himself to the nation of Israel are the "oracles," or the things that God has spoken.

3:16 ***Destruction and misery.*** In verses 10–18, Paul quotes without formal introduction a number of different verses from the Old Testament. In these passages it is shown that man not only does not seek God, but apart from Him they lack true goodness and will treat each other with violence, cursing, being quick to kill, and finding only destruction and misery.

3:18 ***fear of God.*** This is an Old Testament expression for respect and reverence for God.

3:20 ***justified.*** A legal term used of the defendant in a trial, "justified" means "declared righteous." No one will be declared righteous by doing what God requires in the law.

3:23 Universal Sin—We generally avoid the word *sin*. We want to call it something other than what it is because we don't like the implications of the word. We don't like being told we're rebels, that we're flawed and bent in our very natures, and that there is nothing we can do about it on our own (Gen. 3:6–7). We have this innate sense that we can overcome the problem with a little more effort or maturity. Even that innate sense is an illustration of the problem. The bold hard facts always point us back to Paul's conclusions; "we're sinners," period.

3:24 ***redemption.*** Those who believe are *justified*, that is, declared righteous, freely, by God's grace or favor. Christ Jesus died to provide *redemption*, (or to "buy back," in the same way we "redeem" a promissory note). He died to pay the price required to ransom sinners. He transfers His righteousness to those who believe in Him, and on the basis of Christ's

2:29 [i] [1 Pet. 3:4] [j] Phil. 3:3 [k] Deut. 30:6 [l] [1 Cor. 4:5]
3:2 [a] Deut. 4:5–8 **3:3** [b] Heb. 4:2 [c] [2 Tim. 2:13]
3:4 [d] Job 40:8 [e] [John 3:33] [f] Ps. 62:9 [g] Ps. 51:4
3:5 [h] Gal. 3:15 **3:6** [i] [Gen. 18:25] **3:8** [j] Rom. 5:20
3:9 [k] Gal. 3:22 **3:10** [l] Ps. 14:1–3; 53:1–3; Eccl. 7:20
3:13 [m] Ps. 5:9 [n] Ps. 140:3 **3:14** [o] Ps. 10:7 **3:15** [p] Prov. 1:16; Is. 59:7, 8 **3:18** [q] Ps. 36:1 **3:19** [r] John 10:34
[s] Job 5:16 **3:20** [t] [Gal. 2:16] **3:21** [u] Acts 15:11 [v] John 5:46 [w] 1 Pet. 1:10 **3:22** [x] [Col. 3:11] **3:23** [y] Gal. 3:22
3:24 [z] [Eph. 2:8] [a] [Heb. 9:12, 15]

Christ Jesus, 25whom God set forth [b]*as* a propitiation [c]by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over [d]the sins that were previously committed, 26to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Boasting Excluded

27[e]Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28Therefore we conclude [f]that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. 29Or *is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, 30since [g]*there is* one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Abraham Justified by Faith

4 What then shall we say that [a]Abraham our [b]father has found according to the flesh?* 2For if Abraham was [c]justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God. 3For what does the Scripture say? [d]*"Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."** 4Now [e]to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

David Celebrates the Same Truth

5But to him who [f]does not work but believes on Him who justifies [g]the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6just as David also [h]describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

7 *"Blessed[i] are those whose lawless*
deeds are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered;
8 *Blessed is the man to whom the* LORD
*shall not impute sin."**

Abraham Justified Before Circumcision

9*Does* this blessedness then *come* upon the circumcised *only,* or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. 10How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. 11And [j]he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that [k]he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, 12and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father [l]Abraham *had while still* uncircumcised.

The Promise Granted Through Faith

13For the promise that he would be the [m]heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14For [n]if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, 15because [o]the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.

16Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* [p]according to grace, [q]so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, [r]who is the father of us all 17(as it is written, [s]*"I have made you a father of many nations"**) in

* **4:1** Or *Abraham our (fore)father according to the flesh has found?* * **4:3** Genesis 15:6 * **4:8** Psalm 32:1, 2 * **4:17** Genesis 17:5

righteousness alone, believers can approach God's throne with praise.

3:25 *propitiation.* By His death, Christ satisfied the justice of God. The word translated "propitiation" refers to appeasement. No man can ever appease God, for His wrath over sin and His judgment of sin are totally just. But God in His mercy provided that appeasement through Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to pay for the sins of the world and to open the way for sinners to come before our Holy God.

3:27 *law of faith.* The "law of faith" is a kind of play on words. Paul has been talking about the fact that the law does not give people a right relationship with God. The only "law" about having this relationship is that it must be by "faith," not by deeds, whether people are Jewish or Gentile. We can never earn our salvation.

3:31 *make void the law.* In this passage the question of either making the law void or establishing the law means that if salvation is received by faith, it would seem like the law was of no value. But actually the fact that Christ came, which was promised through the whole Old Testament, and that He kept the law perfectly, establishes the law as being valid. Only after salvation can people keep the law at all, as Jesus explained in Matthew 22:40, for the law is summed up in loving God and loving our neighbor.

4:1 *according to the flesh.* Or "by his own labor."

4:16 *Abraham, who is the father of us all.* God's promises to Abraham were not based on any performance or ritual, but on Abraham's belief, so Abraham is the "father" of all who believe.

4:17 *gives life to the dead.* The description of God

3:25 [b] Lev. 16:15 [c] Col. 1:20 [d] Acts 14:16; 17:30 **3:27** [e] [1 Cor. 1:29] **3:28** [f] Gal. 2:16 **3:30** [g] [Gal. 3:8, 20] **4:1** [a] Is. 51:2 [b] James 2:21 **4:2** [c] Rom. 3:20, 27 **4:3** [d] Gen. 15:6 **4:4** [e] Rom. 11:6 **4:5** [f] [Eph. 2:8, 9] [g] Josh. 24:2 **4:6** [h] Ps. 32:1, 2 **4:7** [i] Ps. 32:1, 2 **4:11** [j] Gen. 17:10 [k] Luke 19:9 **4:12** [l] Rom. 4:18–22 **4:13** [m] Gen. 17:4–6; 22:17 **4:14** [n] Gal. 3:18 **4:15** [o] Rom. 3:20 **4:16** [p] [Rom. 3:24] [q] [Gal. 3:22] [r] Is. 51:2 **4:17** [s] Gen. 17:5

the presence of Him whom he believed—
God, [t]who gives life to the dead and
calls those [u]things which do not exist as
though they did; [18]who, contrary to hope,
in hope believed, so that he became the
father of many nations, according to what
was spoken, [v]*"So shall your descendants
be."** [19]And not being weak in faith, [w]he
did not consider his own body, already
dead (since he was about a hundred years
old), [x]and the deadness of Sarah's womb.
[20]He did not waver at the promise of God
through unbelief, but was strengthened
in faith, giving glory to God, [21]and being
fully convinced that what He had pro-
mised [y]He was also able to perform. [22]And
therefore [z]*"it was accounted to him for
righteousness."**

[23]Now [a]it was not written for his sake
alone that it was imputed to him, [24]but also
for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe
[b]in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from
the dead, [25][c]who was delivered up because
of our offenses, and [d]was raised because of
our justification.

Faith Triumphs in Trouble

5 Therefore, [a]having been justified
by faith, we have* [b]peace with God
through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2][c]through
whom also we have access by faith into
this grace [d]in which we stand, and [e]rejoice
in hope of the glory of God. [3]And not only
that, but [f]we also glory in tribulations,
[g]knowing that tribulation produces per-
severance; [4][h]and perseverance, character;
and character, hope. [5][i]Now hope does not
disappoint, [j]because the love of God has
been poured out in our hearts by the Holy
Spirit who was given to us.

Christ in Our Place

[6]For when we were still without
strength, in due time [k]Christ died for the
ungodly. [7]For scarcely for a righteous man
will one die; yet perhaps for a good man
someone would even dare to die. [8]But
[l]God demonstrates His own love toward
us, in that while we were still sinners,
Christ died for us. [9]Much more then, hav-
ing now been justified [m]by His blood, we
shall be saved [n]from wrath through Him.
[10]For [o]if when we were enemies [p]we were
reconciled to God through the death of
His Son, much more, having been rec-
onciled, we shall be saved [q]by His life.
[11]And not only *that*, but we also [r]rejoice
in God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have now received the
reconciliation.

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

[12]Therefore, just as [s]through one man
sin entered the world, and [t]death through
sin, and thus death spread to all men, be-
cause all sinned— [13](For until the law sin
was in the world, but [u]sin is not imputed
when there is no law. [14]Nevertheless death
reigned from Adam to Moses, even over
those who had not sinned according to
the likeness of the transgression of Adam,
[v]who is a type of Him who was to come.
[15]But the free gift *is* not like the offense.
For if by the one man's offense many died,
much more the grace of God and the gift
by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ,
abounded [w]to many. [16]And the gift *is* not
like *that which came* through the one who
sinned. For the judgment *which came* from
one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but
the free gift *which came* from many offens-
es *resulted* in justification. [17]For if by the
one man's offense death reigned through
the one, much more those who receive
abundance of grace and of the gift of right-
eousness will reign in life through the
One, Jesus Christ.)

[18]Therefore, as through one man's of-
fense *judgment came* to all men, resulting
in condemnation, even so through [x]one
Man's righteous act *the free gift came* [y]to
all men, resulting in justification of life.

* **4:18** Genesis 15:5 * **4:22** Genesis 15:6
* **5:1** Another ancient reading is, *let us have peace.*

as one who "gives life to the dead" refers not only to God making Abraham and Sarah's dead reproductive systems alive, but also to the fact that God could and did resurrect Jesus. That is the kind of God He is; belief in the resurrection is central to Christianity, and also to our belief in our own eternal life through Christ.

5:1 Justification—God's gracious justification of the believer does not take place by stages or degrees. It is an instantaneous judicial "not guilty" declaration, based on the perfect obedience and the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. The believer now has peace with God through Jesus Christ, full pardon of his sins, and the title to eternal life. The crowning gift is an abiding joy and peace in the Lord, which remains in spite of outside circumstances.

5:12 *one man.* The "one man" is Adam.

5:13 *imputed.* "Imputed" means "to charge to one's account," as by an entry made into a ledger. In other words, sin was present in the world from Adam to Moses, but God did not keep an account of sins before the giving of the law because there was no law to obey or disobey. Those after Adam and before Moses did not sin like Adam because there were no prohibitions similar to the law of Moses. But they did sin, and the way we know this is that "death reigned." They all died.

4:17 [t] [Rom. 8:11] [u] Rom. 9:26 **4:18** [v] Gen. 15:5 **4:19** [w] Gen. 17:17 [x] Heb. 11:11 **4:21** [y] [Heb. 11:19] **4:22** [z] Gen. 15:6 **4:23** [a] Rom. 15:4 **4:24** [b] Acts 2:24 **4:25** [c] Is. 53:4, 5 [d] [1 Cor. 15:17] **5:1** [a] Is. 32:17 [b] [Eph. 2:14] **5:2** [c] [Eph. 2:18; 3:12] [d] 1 Cor. 15:1 [e] Heb. 3:6 **5:3** [f] Matt. 5:11, 12 [g] James 1:3 **5:4** [h] [James 1:12] **5:5** [i] Phil. 1:20 [j] 2 Cor. 1:22 **5:6** [k] [Rom. 4:25; 5:8; 8:32] **5:8** [l] [John 3:16; 15:13] **5:9** [m] Eph. 2:13 [n] 1 Thess. 1:10 **5:10** [o] [Rom. 8:32] [p] 2 Cor. 5:18 [q] John 14:19 **5:11** [r] [Gal. 4:9] **5:12** [s] [1 Cor. 15:21] [t] Gen. 2:17 **5:13** [u] 1 John 3:4 **5:14** [v] [1 Cor. 15:21, 22] **5:15** [w] [Is. 53:11] **5:18** [x] [1 Cor. 15:21, 45] [y] [John 12:32]

19For as by one man's disobedience many
were made sinners, so also by [z]one Man's
obedience many will be made righteous.
20Moreover [a]the law entered that the
offense might abound. But where sin
abounded, grace [b]abounded much more,
21so that as sin reigned in death, even so
grace might reign through righteousness
to eternal life through Jesus Christ our
Lord.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

6 What shall we say then? [a]Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?
2Certainly not! How shall we who [b]died
to sin live any longer in it? 3Or do you not
know that [c]as many of us as were baptized
into Christ Jesus [d]were baptized into His
death? 4Therefore we were [e]buried with
Him through baptism into death, that [f]just
as Christ was raised from the dead by [g]the
glory of the Father, [h]even so we also should
walk in newness of life.
5[i]For if we have been united together in
the likeness of His death, certainly we also
shall be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection, 6knowing this, that [j]our old man was
crucified with *Him*, that [k]the body of sin
might be done away with, that we should
no longer be slaves of sin. 7For [l]he who has
died has been freed from sin. 8Now [m]if we
died with Christ, we believe that we shall
also live with Him, 9knowing that [n]Christ,
having been raised from the dead, dies no
more. Death no longer has dominion over
Him. 10For *the death* that He died, [o]He died
to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives,
[p]He lives to God. 11Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be [q]dead indeed to sin, but
[r]alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
12[s]Therefore do not let sin reign in your
mortal body, that you should obey it in its
lusts. 13And do not present your [t]members
as instruments of unrighteousness to sin,
but [u]present yourselves to God as being
alive from the dead, and your members *as*
instruments of righteousness to God. 14For
[v]sin shall not have dominion over you, for
you are not under law but under grace.

From Slaves of Sin to Slaves of God

15What then? Shall we sin [w]because
we are not under law but under grace?
Certainly not! 16Do you not know that [x]to
whom you present yourselves slaves to
obey, you are that one's slaves whom you
obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of
obedience *leading* to righteousness? 17But
God be thanked that *though* you were
slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart
[y]that form of doctrine to which you were
delivered. 18And [z]having been set free from
sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
19I speak in human *terms* because of the
weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading* to *more*
lawlessness, so now present your members
as slaves *of* righteousness for holiness.
20For when you were [a]slaves of sin,
you were free in regard to righteousness.
21[b]What fruit did you have then in the
things of which you are now ashamed? For
[c]the end of those things *is* death. 22But now
[d]having been set free from sin, and having
become slaves of God, you have your fruit
to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.
23For [e]the wages of sin *is* death, but [f]the
gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus
our Lord.

Freed from the Law

7 Or do you not know, brethren (for I
speak to those who know the law), that
the law has dominion over a man as long
as he lives? 2For [a]the woman who has a
husband is bound by the law to *her* husband as long as he lives. But if the husband
dies, she is released from the law of *her*
husband. 3So then [b]if, while *her* husband
lives, she marries another man, she will

5:19 ***many will be made righteous.*** Through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the believer who has been declared righteous by God is continually becoming more righteous in thought and action.
5:20 ***where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.*** Once the law had been revealed, the sin which was already there became much more obvious because it had been explicitly illustrated how wrong it was. But grace was even bigger than the sin. Sin can never exceed the grace provided by God, and it loses its threat when compared to the infinite grace of God.
6:6 ***crucified with Him.*** Simply put, a believer is not the same person he or she was before conversion. A believer is a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).
6:23 New Life: A Free Gift—This passage gets at the central point of the Christian gospel. When we are separated from God, sin directs our lives and there is a wage, a consequence, for that sin: death and permanent separation from God. In stark contrast, we do not earn a wage from God. His gifts are free and abundant—the gift of eternal life. There is nothing that one can do to earn this incredible gift. Eternal life is just that—eternal—it never ceases. All fear of death and its effects can end. Instead of being separated from God for all eternity, Christians will have union with Him. Jesus Christ accomplished all of this on the cross once and for all.
7:3 Adultery—In this passage Paul uses the marriage relationship as an illustration of the believer's relationship to the law and Christ. A wife cannot

5:19 [z] [Phil. 2:8] **5:20** [a] John 15:22 [b] 1 Tim. 1:14
6:1 [a] Rom. 3:8; 6:15 **6:2** [b] [Gal. 2:19] **6:3** [c] [Gal. 3:27] [d] [1 Cor. 15:29] **6:4** [e] Col. 2:12 [f] 1 Cor. 6:14 [g] John 2:11 [h] [Gal. 6:15] **6:5** [i] Phil. 3:10 **6:6** [j] Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14 [k] Col. 2:11 **6:7** [l] 1 Pet. 4:1 **6:8** [m] 2 Tim. 2:11 **6:9** [n] Rev. 1:18 **6:10** [o] Heb. 9:27 [p] Luke 20:38 **6:11** [q] [Rom. 6:2; 7:4, 6] [r] [Gal. 2:19] **6:12** [s] Ps. 19:13 **6:13** [t] Col. 3:5 [u] 1 Pet. 2:24; 4:2 **6:14** [v] [Gal. 5:18] **6:15** [w] 1 Cor. 9:21 **6:16** [x] 2 Pet. 2:19 **6:17** [y] 2 Tim. 1:13 **6:18** [z] John 8:32 **6:20** [a] John 8:34 **6:21** [b] Rom. 7:5 [c] Rom. 1:32 **6:22** [d] Rom. 6:18; 8:2 **6:23** [e] Gen. 2:17 [f] 1 Pet. 1:4
7:2 [a] 1 Cor. 7:39 **7:3** [b] [Matt. 5:32]

be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. 4Therefore, my brethren, you also have become [c]dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should [d]bear fruit to God. 5For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law [e]were at work in our members [f]to bear fruit to death. 6But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve [g]in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

Sin's Advantage in the Law

7What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, [h]I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, [i]*"You shall not covet."** 8But [j]sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For [k]apart from the law sin *was* dead. 9I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. 10And the commandment, [l]which *was* to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death. 11For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. 12Therefore [m]the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Law Cannot Save from Sin

13Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. 14For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, [n]sold under sin. 15For what I am doing, I do not understand. [o]For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. 17But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18For I know that [p]in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. 19For the good that I will *to do,* I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do,* that I practice. 20Now if I do what I will not *to do,* it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

21I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22For I [q]delight in the law of God according to [r]the inward man. 23But [s]I see another law in [t]my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me [u]from this body of death? 25[v]I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Free from Indwelling Sin

8 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,* [a]who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2For [b]the law of [c]the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from [d]the law of sin and death. 3For [e]what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, [f]God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who [g]do not walk according to the flesh

* **7:7** Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21 * **8:1** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

marry another without committing adultery, but if her husband is dead, she is free to marry another. In the same way, believers must count the law (reconciliation with God by works) dead, in order to "marry" Christ and have a new life. Believers cannot live by the law and by grace, any more than a woman can have two husbands.

7:6 ***newness of the Spirit . . . oldness of the letter.*** Believers have a new life in the Holy Spirit, not in trying to gain life by obeying ancient or old laws.

7:8 ***apart from the law sin was dead.*** Sin can exist without the law, but without a standard of right and wrong, there can be no judgment of what is sin and what is not.

7:9 ***when the commandment came, sin revived.*** Oddly enough, the very rules against certain behaviors arouse the desire to perform those evil acts.

7:13 ***become death to me.*** The problem is not the law; the problem is sin. Through the law, sin is shown for what it is, and realization that we are "dead" in sin. We cannot really "be good," even when we know what that is.

8:1 **Condemnation**—God's justification ("not guilty"), once pronounced, is final. Christ's death blots out the sins of His people, and when His work is applied to the believer, there is no room for condemnation, for God's justice has removed all grounds for it forever. This does not mean that the believer does not still deal with overcoming sin on a regular basis, but through the work of the Holy Spirit, he can be free from the tyranny of sin, and for the love of Christ, live in a way that pleases his Savior.

8:3 ***the law could not do.*** The law can point out sin, but it cannot do anything about sin itself.

8:4 ***the righteous requirement of the law might***

7:4 [c] Gal. 2:19; 5:18 [d] Gal. 5:22 **7:5** [e] Rom. 6:13 [f] James 1:15 **7:6** [g] Rom. 2:29 **7:7** [h] Rom. 3:20 [i] Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21; Acts 20:33 **7:8** [j] Rom. 4:15 [k] 1 Cor. 15:56 **7:10** [l] Lev. 18:5 **7:12** [m] Ps. 19:8 **7:14** [n] 2 Kin. 17:17 **7:15** [o] [Gal. 5:17] **7:18** [p] [Gen. 6:5; 8:21] **7:22** [q] Ps. 1:2 [r] [2 Cor. 4:16] **7:23** [s] [Gal. 5:17] [t] Rom. 6:13, 19 **7:24** [u] [1 Cor. 15:51, 52] **7:25** [v] 1 Cor. 15:57 **8:1** [a] Gal. 5:16 **8:2** [b] Rom. 6:18, 22 [c] [1 Cor. 15:45] [d] Rom. 7:24, 25 **8:3** [e] Acts 13:39 [f] [2 Cor. 5:21] **8:4** [g] Gal. 5:16, 25

but according to the Spirit. 5For [h]those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, [i]the things of the Spirit. 6For [j]to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. 7Because [k]the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, [l]nor indeed can be. 8So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11But if the Spirit of [m]Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, [n]He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Sonship Through the Spirit

12[o]Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13For [p]if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you [q]put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14For [r]as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15For [s]you did not receive the spirit of bondage again [t]to fear, but you received the [u]Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, [v]"Abba, Father." 16[w]The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, then [x]heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, [y]if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

From Suffering to Glory

18For I consider that [z]the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19For [a]the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20For [b]the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; 21because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious [c]liberty of the children of God. 22For we know that the whole creation [d]groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23Not only *that,* but we also who have [e]the firstfruits of the Spirit, [f]even we ourselves groan [g]within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the [h]redemption of our body. 24For we were saved in this hope, but [i]hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

26Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For [j]we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but [k]the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27Now [l]He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is,* because He makes intercession for the saints [m]according to *the will of* God.

28And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those [n]who are the called according to *His* purpose. 29For whom [o]He foreknew, [p]He also predestined [q]*to be* conformed to the image of His Son, [r]that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30Moreover whom He predestined, these He also [s]called; whom He called, these He also [t]justified; and whom He justified, these He also [u]glorified.

God's Everlasting Love

31What then shall we say to these things? [v]If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

* **8:26** NU-Text omits *for us.*

be fulfilled in us. The believer gains the righteous standard of the law—love—not by means of the law, but by being in Christ and walking "according to the Spirit."

8:15 God the Father—God is the Father of all who believe in Christ in a special sense not shared by unbelievers. God is called their Father, first of all, because they have a new standing before Him. While unbelievers are the offspring of God because He created them (Acts 17:28–29), they do not have the standing of sons or daughters. Their standing is rather as condemned sinners before God the Judge (John 3:18; Rev. 20:11). When a person believes in Christ as Savior, his estate is changed from condemnation to sonship. This new standing grants to all believers the legal right and spiritual privileges of divine sonship: "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). He gives them new life (John 3:3). This relationship then is a family one involving many of the same realities that exist between an earthly father and child: birth of the child (John 3:3); partaking of the father's nature (2 Pet. 1:4); the father's care for the child (Matt. 6:32–33; 7:9–11); and the father's discipline of the child (Heb. 12:6–8). This new Father-child relationship carries with it new brothers and sisters (Heb. 13:1). The one who believes in Christ as Savior enters into the Father-child relationship with God on the grounds of Christ's sonship (Rom. 8:17; Heb. 2:17).

8:5 [h] John 3:6 [i] [Gal. 5:22–25] **8:6** [j] Gal. 6:8 **8:7** [k] James 4:4 [l] 1 Cor. 2:14 **8:11** [m] Acts 2:24 [n] 1 Cor. 6:14 **8:12** [o] [Rom. 6:7, 14] **8:13** [p] Gal. 6:8 [q] Eph. 4:22 **8:14** [r] [Gal. 5:18] **8:15** [s] Heb. 2:15 [t] 2 Tim. 1:7 [u] [Is. 56:5] [v] Mark 14:36 **8:16** [w] Eph. 1:13 **8:17** [x] Acts 26:18 [y] Phil. 1:29 **8:18** [z] 2 Cor. 4:17 **8:19** [a] [2 Pet. 3:13] **8:20** [b] Gen. 3:17–19 **8:21** [c] [2 Cor. 3:17] **8:22** [d] Jer. 12:4, 11 **8:23** [e] 2 Cor. 5:5 [f] 2 Cor. 5:2, 4 [g] [Luke 20:36] [h] Eph. 1:14; 4:30 **8:24** [i] Heb. 11:1 **8:26** [j] Matt. 20:22 [k] Eph. 6:18 **8:27** [l] 1 Chr. 28:9 [m] 1 John 5:14 **8:28** [n] 2 Tim. 1:9 **8:29** [o] 2 Tim. 2:19 [p] Eph. 1:5, 11 [q] [2 Cor. 3:18] [r] Heb. 1:6 **8:30** [s] [1 Pet. 2:9; 3:9] [t] [Gal. 2:16] [u] John 17:22 **8:31** [v] Num. 14:9

32 [w]He who did not spare His own Son, but [x]delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?
33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? [y]*It is* God who justifies. 34 [z]Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, [a]who is even at the right hand of God, [b]who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written:

> [c]*"For Your sake we are killed all day long;*
> *We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."**

37 [d]Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor [e]principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Israel's Rejection of Christ

9 I [a]tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 [b]that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For [c]I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen* according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, [d]to whom *pertain* the adoption, [e]the glory, [f]the covenants, [g]the giving of the law, [h]the service *of God*, and [i]the promises; 5 [j]of whom *are* the fathers and from [k]whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, [l]who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.

Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose

6 [m]But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For [n]they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, 7 nor *are they* all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, [p]*"In Isaac your seed shall be called."** 8 That is, those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but [q]the children of the promise are counted as the seed. 9 For this *is* the word of promise: [r]*"At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."**

10 And not only *this*, but when [s]Rebecca also had conceived by one man, *even* by our father Isaac 11 (for *the children* not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of [t]Him who calls), 12 it was said to her, [u]*"The older shall serve the younger."** 13 As it is written, [v]*"Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."**

Israel's Rejection and God's Justice

14 What shall we say then? [w]*Is there* unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, [x]*"I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."** 16 So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. 17 For [y]the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, [z]*"For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be*

* **8:36** Psalm 44:22 * **9:3** Or *relatives* * **9:7** Genesis 21:12 * **9:9** Genesis 18:10, 14 * **9:12** Genesis 25:23 * **9:13** Malachi 1:2, 3 * **9:15** Exodus 33:19

8:38–39 The Ultimate Security—The first chapters of Romans contain the most complete and systematic presentation of the gospel in the Scriptures. This passage is the bottom-line statement. Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ. Sadly, too often we hear those words and aren't able to apply them to how we live on a day-to-day basis. Satan is known as a deceiver. He will always try to persuade us that God's love is less than what it is. No matter what the circumstances, no matter how much we mess up, no matter how many powerful forces there are that would try to damage our relationship with Him, God will be there for us with His love.

8:39 *shall be able to separate us.* Christ created all things, "in heaven and . . . on earth, visible and invisible," and He was "before all things, and in Him all things consist" (Col. 1:16–17). If God, who was from the beginning, is for us, no created thing can separate us from His love. Our security in Him is absolute.

9:1 Conscience—This word is used by Paul for the witness within a person which scrutinizes, examines, and renders a verdict on behavior. Paul is saying in the passage that his conscience verifies the truthfulness of his statement that he has great grief over the Jews' rejection of the gospel. The Holy Spirit is the revealer of truth to the soul, and only as the mind and heart are taught by Scripture and governed by the Holy Spirit is the voice of conscience a reliable guide in life.

9:6 *not all Israel.* What about the Jewish people? They had the law, the covenants, and the promises. God has not changed His mind about His chosen people. He always intended for them to understand His whole message, up to and including the Messiah (Christ), as Paul has just explained. But God has, throughout history, always worked with those who believed, not just according to bloodline.

9:15 *I will have mercy.* God does not "owe" any of us salvation. He has mercy on us in spite of the way we act, not because of the way we act.

8:32 [w] Rom. 5:6, 10 [x] [Rom. 4:25] **8:33** [y] Is. 50:8, 9 **8:34** [z] John 3:18 [a] Mark 16:19 [b] Heb. 7:25; 9:24 **8:36** [c] Ps. 44:22 **8:37** [d] 1 Cor. 15:57 **8:38** [e] [Eph. 1:21] **9:1** [a] 2 Cor. 1:23 **9:2** [b] Rom. 10:1 **9:3** [c] Ex. 32:32 **9:4** [d] Ex. 4:22 [e] 1 Sam. 4:21 [f] Acts 3:25 [g] Ps. 147:19 [h] Heb. 9:1, 6 [i] [Acts 2:39; 13:32] **9:5** [j] Deut. 10:15 [k] [Luke 1:34, 35; 3:23] [l] Jer. 23:6 **9:6** [m] Num. 23:19 [n] [Gal. 6:16] **9:7** [o] [Gal. 4:23] [p] Gen. 21:12 **9:8** [q] Gal. 4:28 **9:9** [r] Gen. 18:10, 14 **9:10** [s] Gen. 25:21 **9:11** [t] [Rom. 4:17; 8:28] **9:12** [u] Gen. 25:23 **9:13** [v] Mal. 1:2, 3 **9:14** [w] Deut. 32:4 **9:15** [x] Ex. 33:19 **9:17** [y] Gal. 3:8 [z] Ex. 9:16

*declared in all the earth."** 18Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He [a]hardens.

19You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For [b]who has resisted His will?" 20But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? [c]Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, "Why have you made me like this?" 21Does not the [d]potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make [e]one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

22*What* if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering [f]the vessels of wrath [g]prepared for destruction, 23and that He might make known [h]the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had [i]prepared beforehand for glory, 24even us whom He [j]called, [k]not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

25As He says also in Hosea:

[l]*"I will call them My people, who were not My people,*
*And her beloved, who was not beloved."**

26 *"And[m] it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,*
'You are not My people,'
*There they shall be called sons of the living God."**

27Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel:*

[n]*"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea,*
[o]*The remnant will be saved.*
28 *For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness,*
[p]*Because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth."**

29And as Isaiah said before:

[q]*"Unless the LORD of Sabaoth* had left us a seed,*
[r]*We would have become like Sodom,*
*And we would have been made like Gomorrah."**

Present Condition of Israel

30What shall we say then? [s]That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, [t]even the righteousness of faith; 31but Israel, [u]pursuing the law of righteousness, [v]has not attained to the law of righteousness.* 32Why? Because *they did* not *seek it* by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law.* For [w]they stumbled at that stumbling stone. 33As it is written:

[x]*"Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense,*
*And [y]whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."**

Israel Needs the Gospel

10 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel* is that they may be saved. 2For I bear them witness [a]that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3For they being ignorant of [b]God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own [c]righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. 4For [d]Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

5For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, [e]*"The man who does those things shall live by them."** 6But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, [f]*"Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'"** (that is, to bring

* **9:17** Exodus 9:16 * **9:25** Hosea 2:23
* **9:26** Hosea 1:10 * **9:27** Isaiah 10:22, 23
* **9:28** NU-Text reads *For the LORD will finish the work and cut it short upon the earth.* * **9:29** Literally, in Hebrew, *Hosts* • Isaiah 1:9 * **9:31** NU-Text omits *of righteousness.* * **9:32** NU-Text reads *by works.* * **9:33** Isaiah 8:14; 28:16
* **10:1** NU-Text reads *them.* * **10:5** Leviticus 18:5
* **10:6** Deuteronomy 30:12

9:20 ***reply against God.*** Herein lies the divine tension. The Lord says that He does not wish for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). But He also says that no one comes to Jesus unless the Father draws him (John 6:44). He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires (v. 18). Paul insists on God's right to do as He pleases. Even though God both draws and hardens, He also says that who He is and His worthiness to be worshiped are made plain in creation, so man is without excuse (Rom. 1:18–21). The question is not, "Why are some saved and some condemned?" Everyone deserves condemnation and it is only by God's grace that anyone is saved. We can be sure that whatever God does, it will be righteous, and there is a bigger picture than we can understand from our finite point of view. The only real question is, "How can I be saved?"

9:32 ***stumbled.*** Being committed to righteousness by works, Israel "stumbled" over the righteousness of faith offered in Christ, just as God had already seen they would and declared through the prophet Isaiah (v. 33).

10:3 Self-Righteousness—There are two things which hinder people from submitting themselves to God's plan of salvation. The first is ignorance of God's own righteous character, and the second is human pride. No one is ever a candidate for Christ's righteousness unless he sees himself as utterly devoid of all possibility of attaining it on his own merits.

10:4 ***For Christ is the end of the law.*** Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the law, and He is also the

9:18 [a] Ex. 4:21 **9:19** [b] 2 Chr. 20:6 **9:20** [c] Is. 29:16 **9:21** [d] Prov. 16:4 [e] 2 Tim. 2:20 **9:22** [f] [1 Thess. 5:9] [g] [1 Pet. 2:8] **9:23** [h] [Col. 1:27] [i] [Rom. 8:28–30] **9:24** [j] [Rom. 8:28] [k] Rom. 3:29 **9:25** [l] Hos. 2:23 **9:26** [m] Hos. 1:10 **9:27** [n] Is. 10:22, 23 [o] Rom. 11:5 **9:28** [p] Is. 10:23; 28:22 **9:29** [q] Is. 1:9 [r] Is. 13:19 **9:30** [s] Rom. 4:11 [t] Rom. 1:17; 3:21; 10:6 **9:31** [u] [Rom. 10:2–4] [v] [Gal. 5:4] **9:32** [w] [1 Cor. 1:23] **9:33** [x] Is. 8:14; 28:16 [y] Rom. 5:5; 10:11 **10:2** [a] Acts 21:20 **10:3** [b] [Rom. 1:17] [c] [Phil. 3:9] **10:4** [d] [Gal. 3:24; 4:5] **10:5** [e] Lev. 18:5 **10:6** [f] Deut. 30:12–14

Christ down *from above*) 7or, g"'*Who will descend into the abyss?*'"* (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8But what does it say? h*"The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"** (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9that iif you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11For the Scripture says, j*"Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."** 12For kthere is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for lthe same Lord over all mis rich to all who call upon Him. 13For n*"whoever calls oon the name of the* LORD *shall be saved."**

Israel Rejects the Gospel

14How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear pwithout a preacher? 15And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

q*"How beautiful are the feet of those*
*who preach the gospel of peace,**
Who bring glad tidings of good
*things!"**

16But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, r*"*LORD*, who has believed our report?"** 17So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

s*"Their sound has gone out to all the earth,*
And their words to the ends of the
*world."**

19But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

t*"I will provoke you to jealousy by those*
who are not a nation,
I will move you to anger by a ufoolish
*nation."**

20But Isaiah is very bold and says:

v*"I was found by those who did not seek*
Me;
I was made manifest to those who did
*not ask for Me."**

21But to Israel he says:

w*"All day long I have stretched out My*
hands
*To a disobedient and contrary people."**

Israel's Rejection Not Total

11 I say then, ahas God cast away His people? bCertainly not! For cI also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin. 2God has not cast away His people whom dHe foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, 3e*"*LORD*, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"*?* 4But what does the divine response say to him? f*"I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."** 5gEven so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6And hif by grace, then *it is* no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.* But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

7What then? iIsrael has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were jblinded. 8Just as it is written:

k*"God has given them a spirit of stupor,*
l*Eyes that they should not see*
And ears that they should not hear,
*To this very day."**

9And David says:

m*"Let their table become a snare and a*
trap,
A stumbling block and a recompense
to them.
10 *Let their eyes be darkened, so that*
they do not see,
*And bow down their back always."**

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* **10:7** Deuteronomy 30:13 * **10:8** Deuteronomy 30:14 * **10:11** Isaiah 28:16 * **10:13** Joel 2:32 * **10:15** NU-Text omits *preach the gospel of peace, Who.* • Isaiah 52:7; Nahum 1:15 * **10:16** Isaiah 53:1 * **10:18** Psalm 19:4 * **10:19** Deuteronomy 32:21 * **10:20** Isaiah 65:1 * **10:21** Isaiah 65:2 * **11:3** 1 Kings 19:10, 14 * **11:4** 1 Kings 19:18 * **11:6** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **11:8** Deuteronomy 29:4; Isaiah 29:10 * **11:10** Psalm 69:22, 23

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opening to the only way of righteousness we can ever have.

10:8 ***The word is near you.*** Righteousness by faith is not far off and inaccessible, but it is as near as a person's mouth and heart.

10:11 ***Whoever.*** Paul emphasizes the universal offer of salvation.

11:1 ***Has God cast away His people?*** Paul points out that he himself is an Israelite, and was chosen by God to be a believer and an apostle. As he develops this thought, Paul reminds us that there has always been a remnant of Israelites whom God has kept true to Himself.

11:8–10 ***ears that they should not hear.*** Paul quotes Isaiah and David to show that Israel's spiritual indifference was a continual pattern.

10:7 *g* Deut. 30:13 **10:8** *h* Deut. 30:14 **10:9** *i* Luke 12:8 **10:11** *j* Is. 28:16 **10:12** *k* Rom. 3:22, 29 *l* Acts 10:36 *m* Eph. 1:7 **10:13** *n* Joel 2:32 *o* Acts 9:14 **10:14** *p* Titus 1:3 **10:15** *q* Is. 52:7; Nah. 1:15 **10:16** *r* Is. 53:1 **10:18** *s* Ps. 19:4 **10:19** *t* Deut. 32:21 *u* Titus 3:3 **10:20** *v* Is. 65:1 **10:21** *w* Is. 65:2 **11:1** *a* Jer. 46:28 *b* 1 Sam. 12:22 *c* 2 Cor. 11:22 **11:2** *d* [Rom. 8:29] **11:3** *e* 1 Kin. 19:10, 14 **11:4** *f* 1 Kin. 19:18 **11:5** *g* Rom. 9:27 **11:6** *h* Rom. 4:4 **11:7** *i* Rom. 9:31 *j* 2 Cor. 3:14 **11:8** *k* Is. 29:10, 13 *l* Deut. 29:3, 4 **11:9** *m* Ps. 69:22, 23

Israel's Rejection Not Final

11 I say then, have they stumbled that they
should fall? Certainly not! But [n]through
their fall, to provoke them to [o]jealousy, sal-
vation *has come* to the Gentiles. 12 Now if
their fall *is* riches for the world, and their
failure riches for the Gentiles, how much
more their fullness!

13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch
as [p]I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I mag-
nify my ministry, 14 if by any means I may
provoke to jealousy *those who are* my flesh
and [q]save some of them. 15 For if their being
cast away *is* the reconciling of the world,
what *will* their acceptance *be* [r]but life from
the dead?

16 For if [s]the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is*
also *holy;* and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the
branches. 17 And if [t]some of the branches
were broken off, [u]and you, being a wild ol-
ive tree, were grafted in among them, and
with them became a partaker of the root
and fatness of the olive tree, 18 [v]do not boast
against the branches. But if you do boast,
remember that you do not support the root,
but the root *supports* you.

19 You will say then, "Branches were bro-
ken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well
said. Because of [w]unbelief they were bro-
ken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be
haughty, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare
the natural branches, He may not spare
you either. 22 Therefore consider the good-
ness and severity of God: on those who fell,
severity; but toward you, goodness,* [x]if you
continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise [y]you
also will be cut off. 23 And they also, [z]if they
do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted
in, for God is able to graft them in again.
24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree
which is wild by nature, and were grafted
contrary to nature into a cultivated olive
tree, how much more will these, who *are*
natural *branches,* be grafted into their own
olive tree?

25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you
should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you
should be [a]wise in your own opinion, that
[b]blindness in part has happened to Israel
[c]until the fullness of the Gentiles has come
in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved,* as it
is written:

[d]"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness
from Jacob;
27 For [e]this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins."*

28 Concerning the gospel *they are* en-
emies for your sake, but concerning the
election *they are* [f]beloved for the sake of
the fathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling
of God *are* [g]irrevocable. 30 For as you [h]were
once disobedient to God, yet have now ob-
tained mercy through their disobedience,
31 even so these also have now been disobe-
dient, that through the mercy shown you
they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God has
committed them [i]all to disobedience, that
He might have mercy on all.

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of
the wisdom and knowledge of God! How
unsearchable *are* His judgments and His
ways past finding out!

34 "For who has known the [j]mind of the
LORD?
Or [k]who has become His counselor?"*
35 "Or[l] who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?"*

36 For [m]of Him and through Him and to
Him *are* all things, [n]to whom *be* glory for-
ever. Amen.

Living Sacrifices to God

12 I [a]beseech you therefore, brethren, by
the mercies of God, that you present
your bodies [b]a living sacrifice, holy, ac-
ceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable
service. 2 And [c]do not be conformed to this
world, but [d]be transformed by the renew-
ing of your mind, that you may [e]prove what
is that good and acceptable and perfect will
of God.

* **11:22** NU-Text adds *of God.* * **11:26** Or *delivered*
* **11:27** Isaiah 59:20, 21 * **11:34** Isaiah 40:13; Jeremiah 23:18 * **11:35** Job 41:11

11:25 *mystery.* The mystery is that Israel has been temporarily and partially hardened, but God has not rejected them.

11:26 *all Israel.* "All Israel" does not mean that every individual in the nation will turn to the Lord. It means that the nation as a whole will be saved, just as the nation as a whole (but not every individual in it) is now rejecting the Lord.

12:1 *living sacrifice.* In the Old Testament sacrificial system, the "job" of the sacrificial lamb was ended with its death. An individual or household selected an animal according to the dictated forms, and it was sacrificed to cover sins. Since Christ became the final atonement for sin, we no longer need the old system. But Paul is calling believers to consider their whole life as a sacrifice dedicated to God and His purposes, a "living" sacrifice, both holy and single-minded.

12:2 Walking in the Spirit—Confession of sin in itself is not enough to enable the believer to automatically walk in the Spirit. He or she must learn to yield their whole self to God (Rom. 6:13; James 4:7). This involves both the body (Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:20) and the mind (Rom. 12:2), since what is conceived

11:11 [n] Is. 42:6, 7 [o] Rom. 10:19 **11:13** [p] Acts 9:15; 22:21 **11:14** [q] 1 Cor. 9:22 **11:15** [r] [Is. 26:16–19] **11:16** [s] Lev. 23:10 **11:17** [t] Jer. 11:16 [u] [Eph. 2:12] **11:18** [v] [1 Cor. 10:12] **11:20** [w] Heb. 3:19 **11:22** [x] 1 Cor. 15:2 [y] [John 15:2] **11:23** [z] [2 Cor. 3:16] **11:25** [a] Rom. 12:16 [b] 2 Cor. 3:14 [c] Luke 21:24 **11:26** [d] Is. 59:20, 21 **11:27** [e] Is. 27:9 **11:28** [f] Deut. 7:8; 10:15 **11:29** [g] Num. 23:19 **11:30** [h] [Eph. 2:2] **11:32** [i] [Gal. 3:22] **11:34** [j] Is. 40:13; Jer. 23:18 [k] Job 36:22 **11:35** [l] Job 41:11 **11:36** [m] Heb. 2:10 [n] Heb. 13:21 **12:1** [a] 2 Cor. 10:1–4 [b] Heb. 10:18, 20 **12:2** [c] 1 John 2:15 [d] Eph. 4:23 [e] [1 Thess. 4:3]

Serve God with Spiritual Gifts

3For I say, [f]through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, [g]not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt [h]to each one a measure of faith. 4For [i]as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5so [j]we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. 6Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is [k]given to us, *let us use them:* if prophecy, *let us* [l]*prophesy* in proportion to our faith; 7or ministry, *let us use it* in *our* ministering; [m]he who teaches, in teaching; 8[n]he who exhorts, in exhortation; [o]he who gives, with liberality; [p]he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, [q]with cheerfulness.

Behave Like a Christian

9[r]*Let* love *be* without hypocrisy. [s]Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10[t]*Be* kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, [u]in honor giving preference to one another; 11not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12[v]rejoicing in hope, [w]patient in tribulation, [x]continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13[y]distributing to the needs of the saints, [z]given to hospitality.

14[a]Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15[b]Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16[c]Be of the same mind toward one another. [d]Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

17[e]Repay no one evil for evil. [f]Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18If it is possible, as much as depends on you, [g]live peaceably with all men. 19Beloved, [h]do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, [i]*"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,"** says the Lord. 20Therefore

[j]*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;*
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;
*For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."**

21Do not be overcome by evil, but [k]overcome evil with good.

Submit to Government

13 Let every soul be [a]subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2Therefore whoever resists [b]the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. 3For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? [c]Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to *execute* wrath on him who practices evil. 5Therefore [d]*you* must be subject, not only because of wrath [e]but also for conscience' sake. 6For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. 7[f]Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes *are due,* customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Love Your Neighbor

8Owe no one anything except to love one another, for [g]he who loves another

* **12:19** Deuteronomy 32:35 * **12:20** Proverbs 25:21, 22

in the mind is carried out by the body. One's whole being must be presented by a decisive act of the will to God for His service. Yielding leads not only to dedication but also can result in separation: "do not be conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). Finally, yielding includes transformation of the mind. This work is said to be accomplished through a lifetime of "renewing" the mind. Man's mind has been darkened by sin (8:7; Col. 1:21) and must be brought to the place where it thinks as God thinks (Eph. 4:23). This renewing is said to come especially through prayer in everything (Phil. 4:6–7) and through constant meditation on the Word of God (Ps. 119:1). This transformation is a lifelong process that will not be completed until we are with Christ (Phil. 1:6; 1 John 3:2).

12:4–5 Fellowship—A believer must not view himself exclusively as an individual, but must also see himself as part of the whole, as a member of "one body." Fellowship in the New Testament sense is not merely companionship, but a partnership, a responsibility to one another that is financial, practical, and spiritual.

12:6 *prophecy.* In its narrower sense, "prophecy" means the revealing of God's will in a particular situation (Acts 13:1–3).

12:9 *love.* There are three words used for love in the New Testament: "self-sacrificial love," "brotherly love," and "kindly affection," the last of which is used in this verse. The greatest proof of the truth of the gospel message and of the reality of Jesus' love is the love believers show to each other.

12:20 *coals of fire.* Freed from vengeance, believers can give themselves to mercy, even toward their enemies. Such unexpected acts of mercy might even bring enemies to shame and repentance.

12:3 [f] Gal. 2:9 [g] Prov. 25:27 [h] [Eph. 4:7] **12:4** [i] 1 Cor. 12:12–14 **12:5** [j] [1 Cor. 10:17] **12:6** [k] [John 3:27] [l] Acts 11:27 **12:7** [m] Eph. 4:11 **12:8** [n] Acts 15:32 [o] [Matt. 6:1–3] [p] [Acts 20:28] [q] 2 Cor. 9:7
12:9 [r] 1 Tim. 1:5 [s] Ps. 34:14 **12:10** [t] Heb. 13:1 [u] Phil. 2:3 **12:12** [v] Luke 10:20 [w] Luke 21:19 [x] Luke 18:1
12:13 [y] 1 Cor. 16:1 [z] 1 Tim. 3:2 **12:14** [a] [Matt. 5:44]
12:15 [b] [1 Cor. 12:26] **12:16** [c] [Phil. 2:2; 4:2] [d] Jer. 45:5
12:17 [e] [Matt. 5:39] [f] 2 Cor. 8:21 **12:18** [g] Heb. 12:14
12:19 [h] Lev. 19:18 [i] Deut. 32:35 **12:20** [j] Prov. 25:21, 22
12:21 [k] [Rom. 12:1, 2] **13:1** [a] 1 Pet. 2:13 **13:2** [b] [Titus 3:1] **13:3** [c] 1 Pet. 2:14 **13:5** [d] Eccl. 8:2 [e] [1 Pet. 2:13, 19]
13:7 [f] Matt. 22:21 **13:8** [g] [Gal. 5:13, 14]

has fulfilled the law. 9For the commandments, [h]"*You shall not commit adultery,*" "*You shall not murder,*" "*You shall not steal,*" "*You shall not bear false witness,*"* "*You shall not covet,*"* and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, [i]"*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"* 10Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore [j]love *is* the fulfillment of the law.

Put on Christ

11And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time [k]to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. 12The night is far spent, the day is at hand. [l]Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and [m]let us put on the armor of light. 13[n]Let us walk properly, as in the day, [o]not in revelry and drunkenness, [p]not in lewdness and lust, [q]not in strife and envy. 14But [r]put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and [s]make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

The Law of Liberty

14 Receive[a] one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things. 2For one believes he [b]may eat all things, but he who is weak eats *only* vegetables. 3Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and [c]let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. 4[d]Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

5[e]One person esteems *one* day above another; another esteems every day *alike*. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. 6He who [f]observes the day, observes *it* to the Lord;* and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe *it*. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for [g]he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks. 7For [h]none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. 8For if we [i]live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. 9For [j]to this end Christ died and rose* and lived again, that He might be [k]Lord of both the dead and the living. 10But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For [l]we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.* 11For it is written:

> [m]"*As I live, says the* LORD,
> *Every knee shall bow to Me,*
> *And every tongue shall confess to God.*"*

12So then [n]each of us shall give account of himself to God. 13Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, [o]not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in *our* brother's way.

The Law of Love

14I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus [p]that *there is* nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. 15Yet if your brother is grieved because of *your* food, you are no longer walking in love. [q]Do not destroy with your food the one for

* **13:9** NU-Text omits "*You shall not bear false witness.*" • Exodus 20:13–15, 17; Deuteronomy 5:17–19, 21 • Leviticus 19:18 * **14:6** NU-Text omits the rest of this sentence. * **14:9** NU-Text omits *and rose*. * **14:10** NU-Text reads *of God*. * **14:11** Isaiah 45:23

13:9 ***as yourself.*** This is not a command to love ourselves. It is a recognition that we do love ourselves, and a command to love others just as genuinely and sincerely.

13:10 ***Love.*** "Love" excludes murder, adultery, stealing, and lying. Therefore when we love, we automatically fulfill the prohibitions of the law.

14:1 ***weak in the faith.*** Those who are weak in the faith are not unbelievers, but they have not yet understood (or are not able to understand) some of the deeper thinking about the not so clearly defined situations that a Christian faces.

14:5 ***one day above another.*** This verse probably relates to the holy days of the Old Testament ceremonial law. The exhortation does not mean it is wrong to have strong convictions, but that all people must have their own convictions. Concerning "doubtful things" (v. 1), things that are not clearly defined as sin, we as Christians are supposed to think deeply about these things, and decide what we think best pleases the Lord. We are not supposed to live by default, doing what most others are doing, or being swayed by the strongest voice. We may find that we need to change our original conclusions, but we must do so thoughtfully, not impulsively. We must not condemn others who come to a different conclusion.

14:12 ***account of himself to God.*** We must give an account to God for these conclusions we have reached about how to live, and in light of that, we want to be sure that our conclusions do not cause someone else to stumble.

14:14 ***unclean.*** "Unclean" means common, and refers to the things prohibited by the Jewish ceremonial law. If anyone considers some activity to be wrong, then for him it is wrong to engage in that activity.

14:15 Selfishness—This chapter concerns weak and strong Christians and their attitudes toward each other in practical matters within the church. If a stronger brother fails to consider the scruples of the weaker brother, the stronger brother violates the

13:9 [h] Ex. 20:13–17; Deut. 5:17–21 [i] Lev. 19:18 **13:10** [j] [Matt. 7:12; 22:39, 40] **13:11** [k] [1 Cor. 15:34] **13:12** [l] Eph. 5:11 [m] [Eph. 6:11, 13] **13:13** [n] Phil. 4:8 [o] Prov. 23:20 [p] [1 Cor. 6:9] [q] James 3:14 **13:14** [r] Gal. 3:27 [s] [Gal. 5:16] **14:1** [a] [1 Cor. 8:9; 9:22] **14:2** [b] [Titus 1:15] **14:3** [c] [Col. 2:16] **14:4** [d] James 4:11, 12 **14:5** [e] Gal. 4:10 **14:6** [f] Gal. 4:10 [g] [1 Tim. 4:3] **14:7** [h] [Gal. 2:20] **14:8** [i] 2 Cor. 5:14, 15 **14:9** [j] 2 Cor. 5:15 [k] Acts 10:36 **14:10** [l] 2 Cor. 5:10 **14:11** [m] Is. 45:23 **14:12** [n] 1 Pet. 4:5 **14:13** [o] 1 Cor. 8:9 **14:14** [p] 1 Cor. 10:25 **14:15** [q] 1 Cor. 8:11

whom Christ died. 16[r]Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; 17[s]for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and [t]peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18For he who serves Christ in these things* [u]*is* acceptable to God and approved by men.

19[v]Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which [w]one may edify another. 20[x]Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. [y]All things indeed *are* pure, [z]but *it is* evil for the man who eats with offense. 21*It is* good neither to eat [a]meat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.* 22Do you have faith?* Have *it* to yourself before God. [b]Happy *is* he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. 23But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he does* not *eat* from faith; for [c]whatever *is* not from faith is sin.*

Bearing Others' Burdens

15 We [a]then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2[b]Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to edification. 3[c]For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, [d]*"The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."** 4For [e]whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. 5[f]Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6that you may [g]with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Glorify God Together

7Therefore [h]receive one another, just [i]as Christ also received us,* to the glory of God. 8Now I say that [j]Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, [k]to confirm the promises *made* to the fathers, 9and [l]that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, as it is written:

[m]*"For this reason I will confess to You*
among the Gentiles,
*And sing to Your name."**

10And again he says:

[n]*"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!"**

11And again:

[o]*"Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles!*
*Laud Him, all you peoples!"**

12And again, Isaiah says:

[p]*"There shall be a root of Jesse;*
And He who shall rise to reign over
the Gentiles,
*In Him the Gentiles shall hope."**

13Now may the God of hope fill you with all [q]joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

From Jerusalem to Illyricum

14Now [r]I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, [s]filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.* 15Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on *some* points, as reminding you, [t]because of the grace given to me by God, 16that [u]I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the [v]offering of the Gentiles

* **14:18** NU-Text reads *this.* * **14:21** NU-Text omits *or is offended or is made weak.* * **14:22** NU-Text reads *The faith which you have—have.* * **14:23** M-Text puts Romans 16:25–27 here. * **15:3** Psalm 69:9 * **15:7** NU-Text and M-Text read *you.* * **15:9** 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49 * **15:10** Deuteronomy 32:43 * **15:11** Psalm 117:1 * **15:12** Isaiah 11:10 * **15:14** M-Text reads *others.*

obligations of love. He is selfishly putting his own desires above the real needs of one who is weak in faith.

14:16 *good be spoken of as evil.* Even if you have decided that eating certain foods is in accord with your understanding of what is pleasing to God, if it causes another believer to be grieved by the choice you have made, you should be eager to change. Your freedom should not look like license or gluttony. The kingdom of God is a lot more important than the things we eat and drink.

14:21 *stumbles.* A believer does not have to abandon his own convictions, but love should cause him to carefully observe how what he does affects others. It is a sin (v. 23) to do something that you are really convinced is wrong, even if others think it is all right. In light of this, if a believer is influencing another to violate his conscience, even if the believer is not violating his own conscience, he has caused the other brother to "stumble," and that should not happen.

15:3 *Christ.* Jesus Christ is the ultimate model for the strong believer. He "did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation" (Phil. 2:5–7) so that He could clearly represent God and His cause.

15:9 *as it is written.* Paul quotes from all three divisions of the Old Testament (the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms) and from three great Jewish leaders (Moses, David, and Isaiah) to demonstrate that God's purpose was always to bless the Gentiles through Israel.

15:12 *root of Jesse.* This is a title for the Messiah (Christ). Jesse was the father of David, and the

14:16 [r] [Rom. 12:17] **14:17** [s] 1 Cor. 8:8 [t] [Rom. 8:6] **14:18** [u] 2 Cor. 8:21 **14:19** [v] Rom. 12:18 [w] 1 Cor. 14:12 **14:20** [x] Rom. 14:15 [y] Acts 10:15 [z] 1 Cor. 8:9–12 **14:21** [a] 1 Cor. 8:13 **14:22** [b] [1 John 3:21] **14:23** [c] Titus 1:15 **15:1** [d] [Gal. 6:1, 2] **15:2** [b] 1 Cor. 9:22; 10:24, 33 **15:3** [c] Matt. 26:39 [d] Ps. 69:9 **15:4** [e] 1 Cor. 10:11 **15:5** [f] 1 Cor. 1:10 **15:6** [g] Acts 4:24 **15:7** [h] Rom. 14:1, 3 [i] Rom. 5:2 **15:8** [j] Matt. 15:24 [k] 2 Cor. 1:20 **15:9** [l] John 10:16 [m] 2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 18:49 **15:10** [n] Deut. 32:43 **15:11** [o] Ps. 117:1 **15:12** [p] Is. 11:1, 10 **15:13** [q] Rom. 12:12; 14:17 **15:14** [r] 2 Pet. 1:12 [s] 1 Cor. 1:5; 8:1, 7, 10 **15:15** [t] Rom. 1:5; 12:3 **15:16** [u] Rom. 11:13 [v] [Is. 66:20]

might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus [w]in the things *which pertain* to God. 18For I will not dare to speak of any of those things [x]which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, [y]to make the Gentiles obedient— 19[z]in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. 20And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, [a]lest I should build on another man's foundation, 21but as it is written:

> [b]"To whom He was not announced, they shall see;
> And those who have not heard shall understand."*

Plan to Visit Rome

22For this reason [c]I also have been much hindered from coming to you. 23But now no longer having a place in these parts, and [d]having a great desire these many years to come to you, 24whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you.* For I hope to see you on my journey, [e]and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may [f]enjoy your *company* for a while. 25But now [g]I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. 26For [h]it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. 27It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For [i]if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, [j]their duty is also to minister to them in material things. 28Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them [k]this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. 29[l]But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel* of Christ.

30Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and [m]through the love of the Spirit, [n]that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, 31[o]that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that [p]my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32[q]that I may come to you with joy [r]by the will of God, and may [s]be refreshed together with you. 33Now [t]the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

Sister Phoebe Commended

16 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in [a]Cenchrea, 2[b]that you may receive her in the Lord [c]in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

Greeting Roman Saints

3Greet [d]Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5Likewise *greet* [e]the church that is in their house.

Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is [f]the firstfruits of Achaia* to Christ. 6Greet Mary, who labored much for us. 7Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the [g]apostles, who also [h]were in Christ before me.

8Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. 9Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved. 10Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the *household* of Aristobulus. 11Greet Herodion, my countryman.* Greet those who are of the *household* of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

12Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much

* **15:21** Isaiah 52:15 * **15:24** NU-Text omits *I shall come to you* (and joins *Spain* with the next sentence). * **15:29** NU-Text omits *of the gospel.* * **16:5** NU-Text reads *Asia.* * **16:11** Or *relative*

Messiah was to be the Son of David. The Messiah is both the Origin and the Offspring of David.

15:25–26 Kindness—One of the New Testament commands is that Christians display kindness toward other believers (12:10). The Macedonian believers had just gathered a love offering for the needy saints in Jerusalem. Such kindness is a response to God's wonderful kindness to us. In fact, wanting to reach out to others is an evidence of our new birth, and as we bless others in this way, we will find ourselves receiving similar blessings of kindness (Luke 6:38).

15:28 *Spain*. No one knows for sure if Paul ever got to Spain, but he had it on his travel itinerary.

15:29 *when I come to you*. Paul did get to Rome, but not in the time frame or way he had thought. God had a special plan for Paul. The Lord would give him the opportunity to testify of his faith in the emperor's court, but he would do so as a prisoner (Acts 28).

16:3–4 *Priscilla and Aquila*. This married couple is never mentioned separately, perhaps because they ministered so effectively together. Like Paul, they were tentmakers, and worked with him in Corinth and Ephesus (Acts 18:1–3,18,26).

16:8–10 *Amplias . . . Urbanus . . . Stachys . . . Apelles*.

15:17 [w] Heb. 2:17; 5:1 **15:18** [x] Acts 15:12; 21:19 [y] Rom. 1:5 **15:19** [z] Acts 19:11 **15:20** [a] [2 Cor. 10:13, 15, 16] **15:21** [b] Is. 52:15 **15:22** [c] Rom. 1:13 **15:23** [d] Acts 19:21; 23:11 **15:24** [e] Acts 15:3 [f] Rom. 1:12 **15:25** [g] Acts 19:21 **15:26** [h] 1 Cor. 16:1 **15:27** [i] Rom. 11:17 [j] 1 Cor. 9:11 **15:28** [k] Phil. 4:17 **15:29** [l] [Rom. 1:11] **15:30** [m] Phil. 2:1 [n] 2 Cor. 1:11 **15:31** [o] 2 Tim. 3:11; 4:17 [p] 2 Cor. 8:4 **15:32** [q] Rom. 1:10 [r] Acts 18:21 [s] 1 Cor. 16:18 **15:33** [t] 1 Cor. 14:33 **16:1** [a] Acts 18:18 **16:2** [b] Phil. 2:29 [c] Phil. 1:27 **16:3** [d] Acts 18:2, 18, 26 **16:5** [e] 1 Cor. 16:19 [f] 1 Cor. 16:15 **16:7** [g] Acts 1:13, 26 [h] Gal. 1:22

in the Lord. 13Greet Rufus, [i]chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them. 15Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

16[j]Greet one another with a holy kiss. The* churches of Christ greet you.

Avoid Divisive Persons

17Now I urge you, brethren, note those [k]who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and [l]avoid them. 18For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus* Christ, but [m]their own belly, and [n]by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple. 19For [o]your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be [p]wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. 20And [q]the God of peace [r]will crush Satan under your feet shortly.

[s]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

Greetings from Paul's Friends

21[t]Timothy, my fellow worker, and [u]Lucius, [v]Jason, and [w]Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you.

22I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord.

23[x]Gaius, my host and *the host* of the whole church, greets you. [y]Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother. 24[z]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.*

Benediction

25Now [a]to Him who is able to establish you [b]according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, [c]according to the revelation of the mystery [d]kept secret since the world began 26but [e]now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for [f]obedience to the faith— 27to [g]God, alone wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.*

* **16:16** NU-Text reads *All the churches.*
* **16:18** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Jesus.*
* **16:24** NU-Text omits this verse. * **16:27** M-Text puts Romans 16:25–27 after Romans 14:23.

These were common slave names. ***Aristobulus.*** This was a familiar Greek name, and this man may have been the owner of the previously mentioned men, if they were indeed slaves.

16:23 ***Gaius.*** "Gaius" of Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14) not only gave Paul lodging, but offered his house as a meeting place for the church.

16:25 ***mystery.*** Paul speaks of his message as a "mystery" (see 11:25) because God's complete plan of salvation was at first hidden but now was being revealed. Part of the mystery is that the church will consist of both Jews and Gentiles united in one body of Christ (Eph. 3:1–13).

16:13 [i] 2 John 1 **16:16** [j] 1 Cor. 16:20 **16:17** [k] [Acts 15:1] [l] [1 Cor. 5:9] **16:18** [m] Phil. 3:19 [n] Col. 2:4 **16:19** [o] Rom. 1:8 [p] Matt. 10:16 **16:20** [q] Rom. 15:33 [r] Gen. 3:15 [s] 1 Cor. 16:23 **16:21** [t] Acts 16:1 [u] Acts 13:1 [v] Acts 17:5 [w] Acts 20:4 **16:23** [x] 1 Cor. 1:14 [y] Acts 19:22 **16:24** [z] 1 Thess. 5:28 **16:25** [a] [Eph. 3:20] [b] Rom. 2:16 [c] Eph. 1:9 [d] Col. 1:26; 2:2; 4:3 **16:26** [e] Eph. 1:9 [f] Rom. 1:5 **16:27** [g] Jude 25

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
CORINTHIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Pauline authorship of 1 Corinthians is almost universally accepted. Instances of this widely held belief can be found as early as A.D. 95, when Clement of Rome wrote to the Corinthian church and cited this epistle in regard to the continuing problem of factions among themselves. Paul taught the word of God in Corinth for eighteen months in A.D. 51 and 52, leaving Apollos to preach and teach in his absence. When Paul was in Ephesus during his third missionary journey, he became disturbed by reports of discord in the church of Corinth. First Corinthians is a record of Paul's initial response to these problems.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 56 ▶ **KEY VERSE:** 1 Cor. 1:10

▶ **THEME:** The basic theme of this epistle is the application of Christian principles to carnality in the individual as well as in the church. Paul is responding to a letter he received from the Corinthians concerning five behavioral problems that are causing dissension in one way or another: (1) divisions in the church; (2) a case of incest; (3) court cases between members; (4) the abuse of Christian "freedom"; and (5) the chaos occurring in connection with celebration of the Lord's Supper. Paul's ethical responses to the various behaviors of the Corinthian church are based on a theological understanding of what it means to be a part of the people of God in a complex multicultural, pagan environment.

Greeting

1 Paul, [a]called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ [b]through the will of God, and [c]Sosthenes *our* brother,

2To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who [d]are sanctified in Christ Jesus, [e]called *to be* saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ [f]our Lord, [g]both theirs and ours:

3[h]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Gifts at Corinth

4[i]I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, **5**that you were enriched in everything by Him [j]in all utterance and all knowledge, **6**even as [k]the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, **7**so that you come short in no gift, eagerly [l]waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, **8**[m]who will also confirm you to the end, [n]*that you may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9**[o]God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into [p]the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sectarianism Is Sin

10Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [q]that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. **11**For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's *household*, that there are contentions among you. **12**Now I say this, that [r]each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of [s]Apollos," or "I am of [t]Cephas,"

1:1 *through the will of God.* The Corinthian church greatly valued human wisdom. This misplaced emphasis had caused some in the church to challenge Paul's authority. They forgot that Jesus Christ Himself had called him to his ministry as an apostle of Christ.

1:2 *sanctified in Christ Jesus.* Holiness comes from our position in Christ, not from our own goodness. Jesus' death in payment for our sins makes a believer holy forever in God's eyes (Heb. 10:14). But in everyday living, sanctification involves small daily changes.

1:7 *come short in no gift.* The Corinthians were richly blessed with spiritual gifts because God was giving them everything they needed to do His will (12:14–27).

1:10 *in the same mind.* Christian unity is not uniformity of appearance, but unity of direction, and the bond of mutual love and esteem (Eph. 4:14–16).

1:1 [a] Rom. 1:1 [b] 2 Cor. 1:1 [c] Acts 18:17 **1:2** [d] [Acts 15:9] [e] Rom. 1:7 [f] [1 Cor. 8:6] [g] [Rom. 3:22] **1:3** [h] Rom. 1:7 **1:4** [i] Rom. 1:8 **1:5** [j] [1 Cor. 12:8] **1:6** [k] 2 Tim. 1:8 **1:7** [l] Phil. 3:20 **1:8** [m] 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23 [n] Col. 1:22; 2:7 **1:9** [o] Is. 49:7 [p] [John 15:4] **1:10** [q] 2 Cor. 13:11 **1:12** [r] 1 Cor. 3:4 [s] Acts 18:24 [t] John 1:42

or "I am of Christ." 13[u]Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

14I thank God that I baptized [v]none of you except [w]Crispus and [x]Gaius, 15lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. 16Yes, I also baptized the household of [y]Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. 17For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, [z]not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

Christ the Power and Wisdom of God

18For the message of the cross is [a]foolishness to [b]those who are perishing, but to us [c]who are being saved it is the [d]power of God. 19For it is written:

> [e]*"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,*
> *And bring to nothing the*
> *understanding of the prudent."**

20[f]Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? [g]Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21For since, in the [h]wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22For [i]Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23but we preach Christ crucified, [j]to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks* [k]foolishness, 24but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ [l]the power of God and [m]the wisdom of God. 25Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Glory Only in the Lord

26For you see your calling, brethren, [n]that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called.* 27But [o]God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29that no flesh should glory in His presence. 30But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and [p]righteousness and sanctification and redemption—31that, as it is written, [q]*"He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."**

Christ Crucified

2 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony* of God. 2For I determined not to know anything among you [a]except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3[b]I was with you [c]in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4And my speech and my preaching [d]*were* not with persuasive words of human* wisdom, [e]but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the [f]power of God.

Spiritual Wisdom

6However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8which none of the rulers of this age knew; for [g]had they known, they would not have [h]crucified the Lord of glory.

* **1:19** Isaiah 29:14 * **1:23** NU-Text reads *Gentiles.*
* **1:31** Jeremiah 9:24 * **2:1** NU-Text reads *mystery.* * **2:4** NU-Text omits *human.*

1:14 *Crispus and Gaius.* Crispus was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth when Paul began to preach there (Acts 18:8). He was instrumental in the conversion of many other Christians. Gaius may be the same person who hosted Paul and the entire church (Rom. 16:23).

1:16 *Stephanas.* Stephanas was one of Paul's first converts in Achaia, the region of which Corinth was the capital. Paul praised him and his household for their devotion to the ministry and for their assistance (16:15). Stephanas was one of the couriers who took correspondence to and from Corinth.

1:17 *not . . . to baptize, but to preach the gospel.* Paul's primary ministry was not baptism, but preaching the truth. Baptism naturally follows conversion, but is secondary in importance.

1:20 *Where is the wise?* All human efforts to find favor with God fall woefully short (Rom. 3:9–28). Only through faith in Christ can we be saved from our sins.

1:27 *the foolish things of the world.* God's plan of salvation does not conform to the world's priorities. Yet in reality, eternal salvation is more valuable than anything else.

1:28 *and the base . . . are despised.* Corinth had a large slave population, and many of these slaves became followers of Christ. Slaves were despised by the free-born and the well-to-do.

2:6 *the rulers of this age.* In some passages Paul uses the word "rulers" to refer to spiritual beings (Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15); here it seems to be a reference to earthly rulers.

2:7 *mystery.* God's plan was kept hidden, known only to Him, until He chose to reveal it (Eph. 3:1–11). This is in contrast to the teachings of the Gnostics, a

1:13 [u] 2 Cor. 11:4 **1:14** [v] John 4:2 [w] Acts 18:8 [x] Rom. 16:23 **1:16** [y] 1 Cor. 16:15, 17 **1:17** [z] [1 Cor. 2:1, 4, 13] **1:18** [a] 1 Cor. 2:14 [b] 2 Cor. 2:15 [c] [1 Cor. 15:2] [d] Rom. 1:16 **1:19** [e] Is. 29:14 **1:20** [f] Is. 19:12; 33:18 [g] Job 12:17 **1:21** [h] Dan. 2:20 **1:22** [i] Matt. 12:38 **1:23** [j] Luke 2:34 [k] [1 Cor. 2:14] **1:24** [l] [Rom. 1:4] [m] Col. 2:3 **1:26** [n] John 7:48 **1:27** [o] Matt. 11:25 **1:30** [p] [2 Cor. 5:21] **1:31** [q] Jer. 9:23, 24 **2:2** [a] Gal. 6:14 **2:3** [b] Acts 18:1 [c] [2 Cor. 4:7] **2:4** [d] 2 Pet. 1:16 [e] Rom. 15:19 **2:5** [f] 1 Thess. 1:5 **2:8** [g] Luke 23:34 [h] Matt. 27:33–50

9But as it is written:

[i]"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,
Nor have entered into the heart of man
The things which God has prepared
*for those who love Him."**

10But [j]God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11For what man knows the things of a man except the [k]spirit of the man which is in him? [l]Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but [m]the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

13These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy* Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14[n]But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one. 16For [o]*"who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?"** [p]But we have the mind of Christ.

Sectarianism Is Carnal

3 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual *people* but as to carnal, as to [a]babes in Christ. 2I fed you with [b]milk and not with solid food; [c]for until now you were not able *to receive it*, and even now you are still not able; 3for you are still carnal. For where *there are* envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like *mere* men? 4For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I *am* of Apollos," are you not carnal?

Watering, Working, Warning

5Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but [d]ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 6[e]I planted, [f]Apollos watered, [g]but God gave the increase. 7So then [h]neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. 8Now he who plants and he who waters are one, [i]and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

9For [j]we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, *you are* [k]God's building. 10[l]According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid [m]the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11For no other foundation can anyone lay than [n]that which is laid, [o]which is Jesus Christ. 12Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13each one's work will become clear; for the Day [p]will declare it, because [q]it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. 15If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

16[r]Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

Avoid Worldly Wisdom

18[s]Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 19For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, [t]*"He catches the wise in their own craftiness"*;* 20and again, [u]*"The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."**

* **2:9** Isaiah 64:4 * **2:13** NU-Text omits *Holy*.
* **2:16** Isaiah 40:13 * **3:19** Job 5:13 * **3:20** Psalm 94:11

group of false religious teachers who would infiltrate the early church (1 John 2:18–27). They claimed that there existed a body of secret knowledge that was only available to those initiated into an inner circle of spiritual teachers.

2:13 ***comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*** These words are difficult to translate and interpret. The Greek term translated "comparing" can also mean "combining," or "interpreting." The two references to "spiritual" may mean interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual persons, or else combining spiritual truths with spiritual words (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20–21).

3:2 ***I fed you with milk.*** Paul did not expect the Corinthians to be mature when they first accepted Christ. Yet they should have grown in their faith—that is, become sanctified. The behavior of Christians should begin to line up with their righteous position in Christ.

3:3 ***for you are still carnal.*** An immature Christian naturally lacks many Christian traits, but no one should expect this condition to last. Paul was surprised that the Corinthians had not yet grown into spiritual maturity or become able to distinguish between good and evil (Heb. 5:14).

3:13 ***the Day.*** This is the time when Christ will judge the merits of His servants' work (2 Cor. 5:10), not whether they receive forgiveness of sin. Likewise, the fire does not refer to the eternal fire of damnation (Rev. 20:10) but to the evaluation of believers' works (Rev. 22:12).

2:9 [i] [Is. 64:4; 65:17] **2:10** [j] Matt. 11:25; 13:11; 16:17 **2:11** [k] [James 2:26] [l] Rom. 11:33 **2:12** [m] [Rom. 8:15] **2:14** [n] Matt. 16:23 **2:16** [o] Is. 40:13 [p] [John 15:15] **3:1** [a] Heb. 5:13 **3:2** [b] 1 Pet. 2:2 [c] John 16:12 **3:5** [d] 2 Cor. 3:3, 6; 4:1; 5:18; 6:4 **3:6** [e] Acts 18:4 [f] Acts 18:24–27 [g] [2 Cor. 3:5] **3:7** [h] [Gal. 6:3] **3:8** [i] Ps. 62:12 **3:9** [j] 2 Cor. 6:1 [k] [Eph. 2:20–22] **3:10** [l] Rom. 1:5 [m] 1 Cor. 4:15 **3:11** [n] Is. 28:16 [o] Eph. 2:20 **3:13** [p] 1 Pet. 1:7 [q] Luke 2:35 **3:16** [r] 2 Cor. 6:16 **3:18** [s] Prov. 3:7 **3:19** [t] Job 5:13 **3:20** [u] Ps. 94:11

21 Therefore let no one boast in men. For [v]all
things are yours: 22 whether Paul or Apollos
or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or
things present or things to come—all are
yours. 23 And [w]you *are* Christ's, and Christ
is God's.

Stewards of the Mysteries of God

4 Let a man so consider us, as [a]servants
of Christ [b]and stewards of the mysteries
of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards
that one be found faithful. 3 But with me it is
a very small thing that I should be judged
by you or by a human court.* In fact, I do
not even judge myself. 4 For I know of noth-
ing against myself, yet I am not justified
by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.
5 [c]Therefore judge nothing before the time,
until the Lord comes, who will both bring
to [d]light the hidden things of darkness and
[e]reveal the counsels of the hearts. [f]Then
each one's praise will come from God.

Fools for Christ's Sake

6 Now these things, brethren, I have figu-
ratively transferred to myself and Apollos
for your sakes, that you may learn in us not
to think beyond what is written, that none
of you may be puffed up on behalf of one
against the other. 7 For who makes you dif-
fer *from another?* And [g]what do you have
that you did not receive? Now if you did in-
deed receive *it,* why do you boast as if you
had not received *it?*
8 You are already full! [h]You are already
rich! You have reigned as kings with-
out us—and indeed I could wish you did
reign, that we also might reign with you!
9 For I think that God has displayed us, the
apostles, last, as men condemned to death;
for we have been made a [i]spectacle to the
world, both to angels and to men. 10 We *are*
[j]fools for Christ's sake, but you *are* wise in
Christ! [k]We *are* weak, but you *are* strong!
You *are* distinguished, but we *are* dishon-
ored! 11 To the present hour we both hunger
and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and
beaten, and homeless. 12 [l]And we labor,
working with our own hands. [m]Being re-
viled, we bless; being persecuted, we en-
dure; 13 being defamed, we entreat. [n]We
have been made as the filth of the world,
the offscouring of all things until now.

Paul's Paternal Care

14 I do not write these things to shame
you, but [o]as my beloved children I warn
you. 15 For though you might have ten thou-
sand instructors in Christ, yet *you do* not
have many fathers; for [p]in Christ Jesus I
have begotten you through the gospel.
16 Therefore I urge you, [q]imitate me. 17 For
this reason I have sent [r]Timothy to you,
[s]who is my beloved and faithful son in the
Lord, who will [t]remind you of my ways in
Christ, as I [u]teach everywhere [v]in every
church.
18 [w]Now some are puffed up, as though I
were not coming to you. 19 [x]But I will come
to you shortly, [y]if the Lord wills, and I will
know, not the word of those who are puffed
up, but the power. 20 For [z]the kingdom of
God *is* not in word but in [a]power. 21 What
do you want? [b]Shall I come to you with a
rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

Immorality Defiles the Church

5 It is actually reported *that there is* sex-
ual immorality among you, and such
sexual immorality as is not even named*
among the Gentiles—that a man has his
father's [a]wife! 2 [b]And you are puffed up,
and have not rather [c]mourned, that he who
has done this deed might be taken away
from among you. 3 [d]For I indeed, as absent
in body but present in spirit, have already
judged (as though I were present) him who
has so done this deed. 4 In the [e]name of our
Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered
together, along with my spirit, [f]with the

* **4:3** Literally *day* * **5:1** NU-Text omits *named.*

3:21 ***all things are yours.*** The Stoic literature of the time, which the Corinthians would have known, often spoke of the wise man as possessing everything. Everything God has done in the church, and in the entire universe, benefits all believers. There is no place for foolish boasting or competition among Christians.
4:5 ***judge nothing.*** While believers can benefit from the constructive evaluations of other believers, their ultimate Judge is the Lord Himself. We cannot know the whole picture, and we must be careful not to make premature evaluations of others.
4:6 ***puffed up.*** Greeks considered humility to be a fault, a characteristic of slaves. To the Christian, however, it exemplifies the attitude of Christ (Phil. 2:5–8).
4:10 ***fools for Christ's sake.*** True strength is found in understanding our weakness and Christ's sufficiency (2 Cor. 12:7–10; Phil. 4:11–13).
5:1 ***sexual immorality.*** The sexual immorality of incest was forbidden by Old Testament law (Lev. 18:8; Deut. 22:30) and by Roman law. The phrase "his father's wife" probably indicates that the woman was the offender's stepmother. Paul does not specify any discipline for the woman, which may indicate that she was not a believer.
5:2 ***puffed up, and have not rather mourned.*** The Corinthian Christians had a twisted view of grace that caused them to be proud of their tolerance of the sexual offender. They believed that, because God's grace is limitless, living in sin was no problem.

3:21 [v] [2 Cor. 4:5] **3:23** [w] 2 Cor. 10:7 **4:1** [a] Col. 1:25 [b] Titus 1:7 **4:5** [c] Matt. 7:1 [d] Matt. 10:26 [e] 1 Cor. 3:13 [f] Rom. 2:29 **4:7** [g] John 3:27 **4:8** [h] Rev. 3:17 **4:9** [i] Heb. 10:33 **4:10** [j] Acts 17:18; 26:24 [k] 2 Cor. 13:9 **4:12** [l] Acts 18:3; 20:34 [m] Matt. 5:44 **4:13** [n] Lam. 3:45 **4:14** [o] 1 Thess. 2:11 **4:15** [p] Gal. 4:19 **4:16** [q] [1 Cor. 11:1] **4:17** [r] Acts 19:22 [s] 1 Tim. 1:2, 18 [t] 1 Cor. 11:2 [u] 1 Cor. 7:17 [v] 1 Cor. 14:33 **4:18** [w] 1 Cor. 5:2 **4:19** [x] Acts 19:21; 20:2 [y] Acts 18:21 **4:20** [z] 1 Thess. 1:5 [a] 1 Cor. 2:4 **4:21** [b] 2 Cor. 10:2 **5:1** [a] Lev. 18:6–8 **5:2** [b] 1 Cor. 4:18 [c] 2 Cor. 7:7–10 **5:3** [d] Col. 2:5 **5:4** [e] [Matt. 18:20] [f] [John 20:23]

power of our Lord Jesus Christ, [5][g]deliver such a one to [h]Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

[6][i]Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that [j]a little leaven leavens the whole lump? [7]Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed [k]Christ, our [l]Passover, was sacrificed for us.* [8]Therefore [m]let us keep the feast, [n]not with old leaven, nor [o]with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

Immorality Must Be Judged

[9]I wrote to you in my epistle [p]not to keep company with sexually immoral people. [10]Yet *I* certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go [q]out of the world. [11]But now I have written to you not to keep company [r]with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—[s]not even to eat with such a person.

[12]For what *have* I *to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? [13]But those who are outside God judges. Therefore [t]*"put away from yourselves the evil person."**

Do Not Sue the Brethren

6 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the [a]saints? [2]Do you not know that [b]the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? [3]Do you not know that we shall [c]judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? [4]If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? [5]I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? [6]But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!

[7]Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. [d]Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated? [8]No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and *you do* these things *to your* brethren! [9]Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. [e]Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals,* nor sodomites, [10]nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. [11]And such were [f]some of you. [g]But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Glorify God in Body and Spirit

[12][h]All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the

* **5:5** NU-Text omits *Jesus.* * **5:7** NU-Text omits *for us.* * **5:13** Deuteronomy 17:7; 19:19; 22:21, 24; 24:7 * **6:9** That is, catamites

5:6 *a little leaven.* The backdrop for this passage is the Passover (Ex. 12). In commemoration of their ancestors' hurried departure from Egypt, Jewish families would carefully remove all leaven (yeast) from their homes in preparation for the celebration of the Passover. In the New Testament, leaven is often used as a symbol of sin. Yeast spreads through a batch of dough, and unchallenged sin can soon contaminate the whole church. The sexual offender was guilty of sin, but the whole congregation was also guilty of ignoring the man's disobedience.

5:9 *my epistle.* It is believed that this refers to an earlier letter which has not been preserved.

5:10 *of this world.* Christians are called to influence the world, not to run away from it (Matt. 5:13–16). They are agents of God to carry the light of Jesus Christ into a dark world (Phil. 2:14–16; 1 Pet. 2:11–12).

6:9 *kingdom of God.* This term seems to refer to a future time when God will rule the earth in righteousness (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2).

6:11 Changed Life—The greatest proof of the new birth is a changed life. The child of God now suddenly loves the following:

1. *He loves Jesus.* Before conversion the sinner might hold Christ in high esteem, but after conversion he loves the Savior (1 John 5:1–2).
2. *He loves the Bible.* We should love God's Word as the psalmist did in Psalm 119. There he expresses his great love for God's Word 17 times.
3. *He loves other Christians.* "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14).
4. *He loves his enemies* (Matt. 5:43–45).
5. *He loves the souls of all people.* Like Paul, he too can cry out for the conversion of loved ones. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1).
6. *He loves the pure life.* John says that if one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him (1 John 2:15–17).
7. *He loves to talk to God.* "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19).

5:5 [g] 1 Tim. 1:20 [h] [Acts 26:18] **5:6** [i] 1 Cor. 3:21 [j] Gal. 5:9 **5:7** [k] Is. 53:7 [l] John 19:14 **5:8** [m] Ex. 12:15 [n] Deut. 16:3 [o] Matt. 16:6 **5:9** [p] 2 Cor. 6:14 **5:10** [q] John 17:15 **5:11** [r] Matt. 18:17 [s] Gal. 2:12 **5:13** [t] Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 24; 24:7 **6:1** [a] Dan. 7:22 **6:2** [b] Ps. 49:14 **6:3** [c] 2 Pet. 2:4 **6:7** [d] [Prov. 20:22] **6:9** [e] Gal. 5:21 **6:11** [f] [1 Cor. 12:2] [g] Heb. 10:22 **6:12** [h] 1 Cor. 10:23

power of any. 13[i]Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for [j]sexual immorality but [k]for the Lord, [l]and the Lord for the body. 14And [m]God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up [n]by His power.

15Do you not know that [o]your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not! 16Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For [p]*"the two,"* He says, *"shall become one flesh."** 17[q]But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

18[r]Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins [s]against his own body. 19Or [t]do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, [u]and you are not your own? 20For [v]you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body* and in your spirit, which are God's.

Principles of Marriage

7 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me:

[a]*It is* good for a man not to touch a woman. 2Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 3[b]Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*. 5[c]Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that [d]Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6But I say this as a concession, [e]not as a commandment. 7For [f]I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

8But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: [g]It is good for them if they remain even as I am; 9but [h]if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*.

Keep Your Marriage Vows

10Now to the married I command, *yet* not I but the [i]Lord: [j]A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. 11But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife.

* **6:16** Genesis 2:24 * **6:20** NU-Text ends the verse at *body*.

6:13 ***Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods.*** The stomach's purpose is to digest food, but it is not the purpose of the body to commit immorality. Furthermore, by design God put restrictions on both eating and sexual activity. Eating to the point of gluttony and having sex outside of marriage both violate God's intent and are sinful.

6:15 ***your bodies are the members of Christ.*** Becoming a Christ follower is not just a "spiritual experience." Our bodies belong to Jesus as well as our souls, and nothing that we do with our bodies is apart from our relationship with Jesus Christ.

6:16 ***one body.*** God designed sex as part of the intense "one flesh" bond between husband and wife, so sex is not a one-dimensional physical act. It involves soul, spirit, and emotions as well. Broken sexual relationships tear away at a person's very being in a way that nothing else does.

6:19 The Work of the Holy Spirit—The Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to as the *Paraclete.* The first part of that word, *para,* is a preposition that means "coming alongside." As the Spirit comes alongside of us, He ministers in the following ways:

1. *The Holy Spirit indwells Christians.* The Bible teaches that believers are indwelt and are the "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19). The purpose of this indwelling ministry is to empower the newly created nature (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 3:16).
2. *The Holy Spirit fills believers.* We are admonished to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). We are then to be subject to the control of the Spirit in contrast to being controlled by the lures of the world.
3. *The Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer* (Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13).
4. *The Holy Spirit produces fruit in the life of the believer.* This fruit is described by Paul: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22–23).
5. *The Holy Spirit gives gifts to Christians* (Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Cor. 12:1–11; Eph. 4:7–12). These are abilities given to every Christian (1 Cor. 7:7; 1 Pet. 4:10). The purpose of these gifts is to glorify God (Rev. 4:11) and to edify the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12–13).
6. *The Holy Spirit teaches believers.* He will instruct us in all spiritual things as we read the Word of God (John 14:26) and abide in the Son of God (1 John 2:24–27).

6:20 ***bought at a price.*** With His death, Jesus Christ paid the cost to redeem us from our slavery to sin (Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18–19).

7:6 ***concession, not as a commandment.*** The Corinthians seemed to be caught by two extreme false positions: the false concept that physical activity does not affect the spirit, and the opposite incorrect idea that any kind of physical relationship is evil. Sexual relationships in marriage are good and God given, yet Paul also outlines the value of celibacy.

7:11 ***remain unmarried.*** This statement is consistent with Jesus' teaching (Mark 10:9–12).

6:13 [i] Matt. 15:17 [j] Gal. 5:19 [k] 1 Thess. 4:3 [l] [Eph. 5:23] **6:14** [m] 2 Cor. 4:14 [n] Eph. 1:19 **6:15** [o] Rom. 12:5 **6:16** [p] Gen. 2:24 **6:17** [q] [John 17:21–23] **6:18** [r] Heb. 13:4 [s] Rom. 1:24 **6:19** [t] 2 Cor. 6:16 [u] Rom. 14:7 **6:20** [v] 2 Pet. 2:1 **7:1** [a] 1 Cor. 7:8, 26 **7:3** [b] Ex. 21:10 **7:5** [c] Joel 2:16 [d] 1 Thess. 3:5 **7:6** [e] 2 Cor. 8:8 **7:7** [f] Acts 26:29 **7:8** [g] 1 Cor. 7:1, 26 **7:9** [h] 1 Tim. 5:14 **7:10** [i] Mark 10:6–10 [j] [Matt. 5:32]

12But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. 13And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. 14For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise [k]your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. 15But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*. But God has called us [l]to peace. 16For how do you know, O wife, whether you will [m]save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?

Live as You Are Called

17But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And [n]so I ordain in all the churches. 18Was anyone called while circumcised? [o]Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. 19[p]Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but [q]keeping the commandments of God *is what matters*. 20Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. 21Were you called *while* a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use *it*. 22For he who is called in the Lord *while* a slave is [r]the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called *while* free is [s]Christ's slave. 23[t]You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24Brethren, let each one remain with [u]God in that *state* in which he was called.

To the Unmarried and Widows

25Now concerning virgins: [v]I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one [w]whom the Lord in His mercy has made [x]trustworthy. 26I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—[y]that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is: 27Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.

29But [z]this I say, brethren, the time *is* short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, 30those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, 31and those who use this world as not [a]misusing *it*. For [b]the form of this world is passing away.

32But I want you to be without care. [c]He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. 33But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please *his* wife. 34There is* a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman [d]cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please *her* husband. 35And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

36But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry. 37Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin,* does well. 38[e]So then he who gives *her** in marriage does well, but he who does not give *her* in marriage does better.

39[f]A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, [g]only in the Lord. 40But she is happier if she remains as she is, [h]according to my judgment—and [i]I think I also have the Spirit of God.

*7:34 M-Text adds *also*. *7:37 Or *virgin daughter* *7:38 NU-Text reads *his own virgin*.

7:16 *how do you know.* First Peter 3:1–6 reminds us that consistent obedience to God can make a skeptical spouse into a believing one, but there are no guarantees.

7:17 *as the Lord has called . . . let him walk.* Social status is unimportant to God. He is interested in faithfulness.

7:27 *bound to a wife . . . loosed.* Considering the clear prohibition in verses 10–11, this verse is most likely referring to couples who are betrothed but not yet married.

7:36–38 *his virgin.* One interpretation of this verse is that this refers to a virgin daughter, although the word "daughter" is not actually in the Greek text. A second interpretation suggests that the "any man" of verse 36 refers to a fiancé who is maintaining, although with difficulty, a celibate state with a virgin he is (or has been) engaged to.

7:40 *I think I also have the Spirit of God.* The Holy Spirit enabled Paul to speak with apostolic authority and also with spiritual wisdom.

7:14 [k] Mal. 2:15 **7:15** [l] Rom. 12:18 **7:16** [m] 1 Pet. 3:1 **7:17** [n] 1 Cor. 4:17 **7:18** [o] Acts 15:1 **7:19** [p] [Gal. 3:28; 5:6; 6:15] [q] [John 15:14] **7:22** [r] [John 8:36] [s] 1 Pet. 2:16 **7:23** [t] 1 Pet. 1:18, 19 **7:24** [u] [Col. 3:22–24] **7:25** [v] 2 Cor. 8:8 [w] 1 Tim. 1:13, 16 [x] 1 Tim. 1:12 **7:26** [y] 1 Cor. 7:1, 8 **7:29** [z] 1 Pet. 4:7 **7:31** [a] 1 Cor. 9:18 [b] [1 John 2:17] **7:32** [c] 1 Tim. 5:5 **7:34** [d] Luke 10:40 **7:38** [e] Heb. 13:4 **7:39** [f] Rom. 7:2 [g] 2 Cor. 6:14 **7:40** [h] 1 Cor. 7:6, 25 [i] 1 Thess. 4:8

Be Sensitive to Conscience

8 Now [a]concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have [b]knowledge. [c]Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. **2**And [d]if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. **3**But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

4Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that [e]an idol *is* nothing in the world, [f]and that *there is* no other God but one. **5**For even if there are [g]so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), **6**yet [h]for us *there is* one God, the Father, [i]of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and [j]one Lord Jesus Christ, [k]through whom *are* all things, and [l]through whom we *live*.

7However, *there is* not in everyone that knowledge; for some, [m]with consciousness of the idol, until now eat *it* as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is [n]defiled. **8**But [o]food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

9But [p]beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become [q]a stumbling block to those who are weak. **10**For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not [r]the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? **11**And [s]because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? **12**But [t]when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. **13**Therefore, [u]if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

A Pattern of Self-Denial

9 Am [a]I not an apostle? Am I not free? [b]Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? [c]Are you not my work in the Lord? **2**If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are [d]the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

3My defense to those who examine me is this: **4**[e]Do we have no right to eat and drink? **5**Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as *do* also the other apostles, [f]the brothers of the Lord, and [g]Cephas? **6**Or *is it* only Barnabas and I [h]*who* have no right to refrain from working? **7**Who ever [i]goes to war at his own expense? Who [j]plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who [k]tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

8Do I say these things as a *mere* man? Or does not the law say the same also? **9**For it is written in the law of Moses, [l]*"You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain."** Is it oxen God is concerned about? **10**Or does He say *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written, that [m]he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. **11**[n]If we have sown spiritual things for you, *is it* a great thing if we reap your material things? **12**If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are* we not even more?

[o]Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things [p]lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. **13**[q]Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the [r]temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the offerings of* the altar? **14**Even so [s]the Lord has commanded [t]that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

15But [u]I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for [v]it *would be* better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. **16**For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for [w]necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if

* **9:9** Deuteronomy 25:4

8:4 *there is no other God but one.* The Corinthian believers who claimed to have knowledge readily admitted that an idol is nothing (Is. 37:19; Jer. 16:20; Gal. 4:8) and that there is only one God (Deut. 6:4). Therefore, since an idol is nothing, and since the whole world belongs to God, food which has been offered to idols is not contaminated (10:19,25–26).

8:7 *with consciousness of the idol.* Even though it is true that an idol is not a real god, a new believer leaving a life of idol worship is still accustomed to thinking of the idol as real. Because of this strong association, eating meat sacrificed to an idol might still feel like paying honor to the idol, and thus seem vile and contaminating. A person who still feels the pull of the old worship is right to flee from all remembrances of it (10:20–23).

8:12 *wound their weak conscience.* The believer is given responsibility for a weaker brother's conscience. It is sin to cause another to fall or to be wounded in the conscience. God is warning believers to stay away from questionable things.

9:1 *an apostle.* Paul could claim the title of apostle because he had seen the resurrected Lord (Acts 1:21–22), and the church in Corinth was his work in the Lord, a seal of his apostleship.

9:14 *live from the gospel.* God commands that ministers of the gospel be supported. Even as the priests in Israel were supported for their work, New

8:1 [a] Acts 15:20 [b] Rom. 14:14 [c] Rom. 14:3 **8:2** [d] [1 Cor. 13:8–12] **8:4** [e] Is. 41:24 [f] Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4 **8:5** [g] [John 10:34] **8:6** [h] Mal. 2:10 [i] Acts 17:28 [j] John 13:13 [k] John 1:3 [l] Rom. 5:11 **8:7** [m] [1 Cor. 10:28] [n] Rom. 14:14, 22 **8:8** [o] [Rom. 14:17] **8:9** [p] Gal. 5:13 [q] Rom. 14:13, 21 **8:10** [r] 1 Cor. 10:28 **8:11** [s] Rom. 14:15, 20 **8:12** [t] Matt. 25:40 **8:13** [u] Rom. 14:21 **9:1** [a] Acts 9:15 [b] 1 Cor. 15:8 [c] 1 Cor. 3:6; 4:15 **9:2** [d] 2 Cor. 12:12 **9:4** [e] [1 Thess. 2:6, 9] **9:5** [f] Matt. 13:55 [g] Matt. 8:14 **9:6** [h] Acts 4:36 **9:7** [i] 2 Cor. 10:4 [j] Deut. 20:6 [k] John 21:15 **9:9** [l] Deut. 25:4 **9:10** [m] 2 Tim. 2:6 **9:11** [n] Rom. 15:27 **9:12** [o] [Acts 18:3; 20:33] [p] 2 Cor. 11:12 **9:13** [q] Lev. 6:16, 26; 7:6, 31 [r] Num. 18:8–31 **9:14** [s] Matt. 10:10 [t] Rom. 10:15 **9:15** [u] Acts 18:3; 20:33 [v] 2 Cor. 11:10 **9:16** [w] [Rom. 1:14]

I do not preach the gospel! 17For if I do this willingly, [x]I have a reward; but if against my will, [y]I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 18What is my reward then? That [z]when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ* without charge, that I [a]may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

Serving All Men

19For though I am [b]free from all *men*, [c]I have made myself a servant to all, [d]that I might win the more; 20and [e]to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the law,* that I might win those *who are* under the law; 21[f]to [g]those *who are* without law, as without law [h](not being without law toward God,* but under law toward Christ*), that I might win those *who are* without law; 22[i]to the weak I became as* weak, that I might win the weak. [j]I have become all things to all *men*, [k]that I might by all means save some. 23Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you*.

Striving for a Crown

24Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? [l]Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*. 25And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* [m]an imperishable *crown*. 26Therefore I run thus: [n]not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. 27[o]But I discipline my body and [p]bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become [q]disqualified.

Old Testament Examples

10 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under [a]the cloud, all passed through [b]the sea, 2all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3all ate the same [c]spiritual food, 4and all drank the same [d]spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* [e]were scattered in the wilderness.

6Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as [f]they also lusted. 7[g]And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, [h]*"The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."* 8[i]Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as [j]some of them did, and [k]in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9nor let us tempt Christ, as [l]some of them also tempted, and [m]were destroyed by serpents; 10nor complain, as [n]some of them also complained, and [o]were destroyed by [p]the destroyer. 11Now all* these things happened to them as examples, and [q]they were written for our admonition, [r]upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

12Therefore [s]let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 13No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but [t]God *is* faithful, [u]who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

Flee from Idolatry

14Therefore, my beloved, [v]flee from idolatry. 15I speak as to [w]wise men; judge for

* **9:18** NU-Text omits *of Christ*. * **9:20** NU-Text adds *though not being myself under the law*. * **9:21** NU-Text reads *God's law*. • NU-Text reads *Christ's law*. * **9:22** NU-Text omits *as*. * **10:7** Exodus 32:6 * **10:11** NU-Text omits *all*.

Testament ministers were to be provided for as well (1 Tim. 5:17–18).

9:20 *to the Jews I became as a Jew.* In order to relate to the Jews in Jerusalem, Paul made a Nazirite vow in the temple (Acts 21:23–24).

9:21 *under law toward Christ.* Paul was not lawless; he was differentiating between the law of the old covenant and the broader law of Christ which includes great freedom and flexibility for the believer whose heart is obedient to Christ's will (11:1; Rom. 13:8; Gal. 6:2).

9:27 *should become disqualified.* A careful distinction should be made between the *prize* and the *gift*. The free gift of justification cannot be the result of good works (Rom. 4:1–8). The prize or crown, however, is the reward for endurance and suffering for the cause of Christ (Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 2:12).

10:1 *under the cloud.* When the ancient Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, the pillar of cloud was the visible manifestation of God's presence with them.

10:6 *lust after evil things.* The first failure of the Israelites was that they were not satisfied with God's provision (Num. 11:4–34). It is not that the food they craved was evil in itself, but their lack of trust in God was sin.

10:7 *idolaters.* The Israelites had seen God's mighty hand work on their behalf, yet they still fell into idolatry and sexual immorality. Knowledge alone does not protect against sin—obedience is a heart issue.

10:12 *take heed lest he fall.* The Corinthians may have had the attitude that, since they were justified by God, nothing could happen to them. The discipline of God, however, is not to be taken lightly. No one can sin without consequences (Gal. 6:7–8).

10:14 *flee from idolatry.* This was not a simple thing to do in ancient Greek culture, where the worship of

9:17 [x] 1 Cor. 3:8, 14; 9:18 [y] Gal. 2:7 **9:18** [z] 1 Cor. 10:33 [a] 1 Cor. 7:31; 9:12 **9:19** [b] 1 Cor. 9:1 [c] Gal. 5:13 [d] Matt. 18:15 **9:20** [e] Acts 16:3; 21:23–26 **9:21** [f] [Gal. 2:3; 3:2] [g] [Rom. 2:12, 14] [h] [1 Cor. 7:22] **9:22** [i] Rom. 14:1; 15:1 [j] 1 Cor. 10:33 [k] Rom. 11:14 **9:24** [l] Gal. 2:2 **9:25** [m] James 1:12 **9:26** [n] 2 Tim. 2:5 **9:27** [o] [Rom. 8:13] [p] [Rom. 6:18] [q] Jer. 6:30 **10:1** [a] Ex. 13:21, 22 [b] Ex. 14:21, 22, 29 **10:3** [c] Ex. 16:4, 15, 35 **10:4** [d] Ex. 17:5–7 **10:5** [e] Num. 14:29, 37; 26:65 **10:6** [f] Num. 11:4, 34 **10:7** [g] 1 Cor. 5:11; 10:14 [h] Ex. 32:6 **10:8** [i] Rev. 2:14 [j] Num. 25:1–9 [k] Ps. 106:29 **10:9** [l] Ex. 17:2, 7 [m] Num. 21:6–9 **10:10** [n] Ex. 16:2 [o] Num. 14:37 [p] Ex. 12:23 **10:11** [q] Rom. 15:4 [r] Phil. 4:5 **10:12** [s] Rom. 11:20 **10:13** [t] 1 Cor. 1:9 [u] Ps. 125:3 **10:14** [v] 2 Cor. 6:17 **10:15** [w] 1 Cor. 8:1

yourselves what I say. 16[x]The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? [y]The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17For [z]we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

18Observe [a]Israel [b]after the flesh: [c]Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? 19What am I saying then? [d]That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? 20Rather, that the things which the Gentiles [e]sacrifice [f]they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21[g]You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and [h]the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the [i]Lord's table and of the table of demons. 22Or do we [j]provoke the Lord to jealousy? [k]Are we stronger than He?

All to the Glory of God

23All things are lawful for me,* but not all things are [l]helpful; all things are lawful for me,* but not all things edify. 24Let no one seek his own, but each one [m]the other's *well-being*.

25[n]Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; 26for [o]"*the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness.*"*

27If any of those who do not believe invites you *to dinner,* and you desire to go, [p]eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. 28But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it [q]for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake;* for [r]"*the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness.*"* 29"Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For [s]why is my liberty judged by another *man's* conscience? 30But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for *the food* [t]over which I give thanks?

31[u]Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 32[v]Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, 33just [w]as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

11 Imitate[a] me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.

Head Coverings

2Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered *them* to you. 3But I want you to know that [b]the head of every man is Christ, [c]the head of woman *is* man, and [d]the head of Christ *is* God. 4Every man praying or [e]prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonors his head. 5But every woman who prays or prophesies with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were [f]shaved. 6For if a woman is not covered, let

* **10:23** NU-Text omits *for me.* • NU-Text omits *for me.* * **10:26** Psalm 24:1 * **10:28** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. • Psalm 24:1

multiple gods was deeply ingrained. There were idols on street corners and in houses. Various civic societies paid homage to their favorite gods. Cities adopted certain gods as their special protectors. The pagan temples were frequented often, especially in Corinth with its temple prostitution. Most of the food in the marketplace had been offered in worship to different gods.

10:20 ***sacrifice to demons.*** While the idols themselves are worthless, powerless, and certainly not gods, behind the statues and images is the very real evil and power of Satan and his demons. Anytime that worship is being directed at something that is not God, we can be sure that Satan is behind it.

10:22 ***provoke the Lord to jealousy.*** To participate in idolatrous activity is to deny that God is the only one worthy of worship.

10:23 ***All things are lawful.*** Though we have freedom, we also have a responsibility to help others in their Christian growth. Our first duty is to others, not to ourselves.

10:25 ***Eat whatever is sold.*** Paul himself did not ask whether meat was sacrificed in the temple, because pagan worship could not contaminate what God had made clean (Ps. 24:1; Acts 10:15).

10:28 ***for conscience' sake.*** Believers do not need to fearfully ask whether the meat they are eating has been sacrificed to idols—it doesn't make any difference to the food itself. However, a Christian may give the impression to others, by eating sacrificed food, that he himself is also still involved in idol worship.

11:3 ***the head.*** The term "head" primarily means "authority" when used in the context of human relationships, but it can also mean "source" or "origin." The relationship between men and women does not involve inferiority; in the parallel clause Christ is not inferior to God the Father. Just as Christ and God are equally divine, men and women are equal in God's image. But Jesus and God the Father have different roles in God's plan of salvation, and so also men and women are given different roles in life and in the church.

11:4 ***praying or prophesying.*** This may refer to intercessory prayer similar to that of Old Testament prophets (Gen. 20:7; 1 Sam. 12:23; Jer. 27:18) or Anna (Luke 2:36–38), or to the combination of tongues and prayer (14:13–16; Acts 2:4; 10:46). The term "prophesy" means to speak forth the words of God (14:3).

11:5 ***every woman who prays or prophesies.*** It is difficult from this passage alone to tell exactly what

10:16 [x] Matt. 26:26–28 [y] Acts 2:42 **10:17** [z] 1 Cor. 12:12, 27 **10:18** [a] Rom. 4:12 [b] Rom. 4:1 [c] Lev. 3:3; 7:6, 14 **10:19** [d] 1 Cor. 8:4 **10:20** [e] Lev. 17:7 [f] Deut. 32:17 **10:21** [g] 2 Cor. 6:15, 16 [h] Deut. 32:38 [i] [1 Cor. 11:23–29] **10:22** [j] Deut. 32:21 [k] Ezek. 22:14 **10:23** [l] 1 Cor. 6:12 **10:24** [m] Phil. 2:4 **10:25** [n] [1 Tim. 4:4] **10:26** [o] Ps. 24:1 **10:27** [p] Luke 10:7, 8 **10:28** [q] [1 Cor. 8:7, 10, 12] [r] Ps. 24:1 **10:29** [s] Rom. 14:16 **10:30** [t] Rom. 14:6 **10:31** [u] Col. 3:17 **10:32** [v] Rom. 14:13 **10:33** [w] Rom. 15:2 **11:1** [a] Eph. 5:1 **11:3** [b] Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23 [c] Gen. 3:16 [d] John 14:28 **11:4** [e] 1 Cor. 12:10 **11:5** [f] Deut. 21:12

her also be shorn. But if it is [g]shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. 7For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, since [h]he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. 8For man is not from woman, but woman [i]from man. 9Nor was man created for the woman, but woman [j]for the man. 10For this reason the woman ought to have *a symbol of* authority on *her* head, because of the angels. 11Nevertheless, [k]neither *is* man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. 12For as woman *came* from man, even so man also *comes* through woman; but all things are from God.

13Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? 15But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for *her* hair is given to her* for a covering. 16But [l]if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, [m]nor *do* the churches of God.

Conduct at the Lord's Supper

17Now in giving these instructions I do not praise *you,* since you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18For first of all, when you come together as a church, [n]I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. 19For [o]there must also be factions among you, [p]that those who are approved may be recognized among you. 20Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. 21For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others;* and one is hungry and [q]another is drunk. 22What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise [r]the church of God and [s]shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you.*

Institution of the Lord's Supper

23For [t]I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: [u]that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat;* this is My body which is broken* for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it,* in remembrance of Me."

26For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death [v]till He comes.

Examine Yourself

27Therefore whoever eats [w]this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood* of the Lord. 28But [x]let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner* eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's* body. 30For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31For [y]if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32But when we are judged, [z]we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

* **11:15** M-Text omits *to her.* * **11:24** NU-Text omits *Take, eat.* • NU-Text omits *broken.*
* **11:27** NU-Text and M-Text read *the blood.*
* **11:29** NU-Text omits *in an unworthy manner.* • NU-Text omits *Lord's.*

a woman's role is to be in the Christian assembly, but it appears that women did minister to other believers through prayer and prophecy (see also 1 Tim. 2:11–14). ***shaved.*** For a woman to have her head shaved was a sign of public disgrace.

11:9 ***woman for the man.*** This does not mean that women are inferior to men; it refers only to the purposes of God for men and women in the creative order, and the woman's God-given role of helper (Gen. 2:20).

11:10 ***authority.*** Some think that this might be a symbol of the woman's authority to prophesy in the new church age; others believe that it might refer to a symbol of the man's authority over the woman and her willingness to submit to God's order. ***because of the angels.*** Evidently God's angels are present at the meetings of the church and actually learn of God's work of grace through the lives and worship of God's people (Eph. 3:10).

11:11 ***neither . . . independent.*** Men and women need each other, and as creatures of God, both depend on Him. Neither man nor woman can have any claim to special status other than what God has purposed for them as their Creator.

11:19 ***those who are approved.*** Paul is here being sarcastic, suggesting that some individuals within the church felt that they alone were truly approved of by the Lord, and trying to separate themselves from other believers whom they felt to be unapproved or less approved by God than themselves. He condemns this attitude in these verses.

11:20 ***the Lord's Supper.*** The Lord's Supper was the centerpiece of early Christian worship. Gathered around one table, fellow believers met with the Lord and with each other in unity. Christ had expressed this type of humility and unity when He instituted the Supper (Matt. 26:26–30; Mark 14:22–26; Luke 22:14–23).

11:26 ***you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*** The Lord's Supper looks back to Christ's death and forward to His second coming (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18).

11:30 ***sleep.*** The death of Christians is often referred

11:6 *g* Num. 5:18 **11:7** *h* Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1; 9:6 **11:8** *i* Gen. 2:21–23 **11:9** *j* Gen. 2:18 **11:11** *k* [Gal. 3:28] **11:16** *l* 1 Tim. 6:4 *m* 1 Cor. 7:17 **11:18** *n* 1 Cor. 1:10–12; 3:3 **11:19** *o* 1 Tim. 4:1 *p* [Deut. 13:3] **11:21** *q* Jude 12 **11:22** *r* 1 Cor. 10:32 *s* James 2:6 **11:23** *t* 1 Cor. 15:3 *u* Matt. 26:26–28 **11:26** *v* John 14:3 **11:27** *w* [John 6:51] **11:28** *x* 2 Cor. 13:5 **11:31** *y* [1 John 1:9] **11:32** *z* Ps. 94:12

33 Therefore, my brethren, when you [a]come together to eat, wait for one another. 34 But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Spiritual Gifts: Unity in Diversity

12 Now [a]concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: 2 You know [b]that* you were Gentiles, carried away to these [c]dumb idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and [d]no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

4 [e]There are diversities of gifts, but [f]the same Spirit. 5 [g]There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God [h]who works all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all:* 8 for to one is given [i]the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another [j]the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 [k]to another faith by the same Spirit, to another [l]gifts of healings by the same* Spirit, 10 [m]to another the working of miracles, to another [n]prophecy, to another [o]discerning of spirits, to another [p]*different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, [q]distributing to each one individually [r]as He wills.

Unity and Diversity in One Body

12 For [s]as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, [t]so also *is* Christ. 13 For [u]by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—[v]whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and [w]have all been made to drink into* one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling? 18 But now [x]God has set the members, each one of them, in the body [y]just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where *would* the body *be?*

20 But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable *parts* have greater modesty, 24 but our presentable *parts* have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it, 25 that there should be no schism in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it;* or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it.*

27 Now [z]you are the body of Christ, and [a]members individually. 28 And [b]God has appointed these in the church: first [c]apostles, second [d]prophets, third teachers, after that [e]miracles, then [f]gifts of healings, [g]helps, [h]administrations, varieties of tongues. 29 *Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are*

* **12:2** NU-Text and M-Text add *when.* * **12:9** NU-Text reads *one.* * **12:13** NU-Text omits *into.*

to as "sleep" (15:18; 1 Thess. 4:15–16). In this passage, it refers to untimely death, a punishment suffered by some Christians who failed to examine themselves at the Lord's Supper (v. 28).

12:1–10 Using Spiritual Gifts—Spiritual gifts are discussed in detail in four passages of the New Testament: Romans 12:3–8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–10; Ephesians 4:11–12; and 1 Peter 4:10–11. These lists are not exhaustive but are to be regarded as representative of spiritual gifts. They are given by the Spirit of God to accomplish God's purpose in the world and for the edification of the church, the body of Christ. Every believer has been given spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:5–6; 1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Pet. 4:10). The gifts belong to God and are given for the believer to use for the glory of God (1 Pet. 4:11).

12:3 *accursed . . . Lord.* A person speaking by the Holy Spirit will never curse Jesus; by the same token, no one can genuinely proclaim the lordship of Jesus without the enabling of the Spirit.

12:4 *gifts.* These gifts are spiritual capacities that God gives to individual Christians, through which He may strengthen His people.

12:13 *by one Spirit.* "By" here may also be translated "in," speaking of location. Christ places each new member of the body in the Holy Spirit for His care and safekeeping (2 Cor. 1:22).

12:18 *God has set the members.* We should neither boast in what we do nor think too little of ourselves. Each one of us is important to God and has a mission to accomplish here on earth.

12:28 *apostles.* The term "apostle" or "sent one" refers generally to missionaries (15:7; Rom. 16:7; 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11; Gal. 1:17–19). Other times the term is limited to the small group who witnessed the

11:33 [a] 1 Cor. 14:26 **12:1** [a] 1 Cor. 12:4; 14:1, 37
12:2 [b] Eph. 2:11 [c] Ps. 115:5 **12:3** [d] Matt. 16:17
12:4 [e] Rom. 12:3–8 [f] Eph. 4:4 **12:5** [g] Rom. 12:6
12:6 [h] 1 Cor. 15:28 **12:8** [i] 1 Cor. 2:6, 7 [j] Rom. 15:14
12:9 [k] 2 Cor. 4:13 [l] Mark 3:15; 16:18 **12:10** [m] Mark 16:17
[n] Rom. 12:6 [o] 1 John 4:1 [p] Acts 2:4–11 **12:11** [q] Rom. 12:6 [r] [John 3:8] **12:12** [s] Rom. 12:4, 5 [t] [Gal. 3:16]
12:13 [u] [Rom. 6:5] [v] Col. 3:11 [w] [John 7:37–39]
12:18 [x] 1 Cor. 12:28 [y] Rom. 12:3 **12:27** [z] Rom. 12:5 [a] Eph. 5:30 **12:28** [b] Eph. 4:11 [c] [Eph. 2:20; 3:5] [d] Acts 13:1
[e] 1 Cor. 12:10, 29 [f] 1 Cor. 12:9, 30 [g] Num. 11:17 [h] Rom. 12:8

all teachers? *Are* all workers of miracles?
30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all
speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But
[i]earnestly desire the best* gifts. And yet I
show you a more excellent way.

The Greatest Gift

13 Though I speak with the tongues of
men and of angels, but have not love,
I have become sounding brass or a clang-
ing cymbal. 2 And though I have *the gift of*
[a]prophecy, and understand all mysteries
and all knowledge, and though I have all
faith, [b]so that I could remove mountains, but
have not love, I am nothing. 3 And [c]though
I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor,* and
though I give my body to be burned,* but
have not love, it profits me nothing.

4 [d]Love suffers long *and* is [e]kind; love
[f]does not envy; love does not parade itself,
is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely,
[g]does not seek its own, is not provoked,
thinks no evil; 6 [h]does not rejoice in iniq-
uity, but [i]rejoices in the truth; 7 [j]bears all
things, believes all things, hopes all things,
endures all things.

8 Love never fails. But whether *there are*
prophecies, they will fail; whether *there*
are tongues, they will cease; whether
there is knowledge, it will vanish away.
9 [k]For we know in part and we prophesy
in part. 10 But when that which is perfect
has come, then that which is in part will
be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I
understood as a child, I thought as a child;
but when I became a man, I put away child-
ish things. 12 For [l]now we see in a mirror,
dimly, but then [m]face to face. Now I know
in part, but then I shall know just as I also
am known.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these
three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

Prophecy and Tongues

14 Pursue love, and [a]desire spiritual
gifts, [b]but especially that you may
prophesy. 2 For he who [c]speaks in a tongue
does not speak to men but to God, for no
one understands *him;* however, in the spirit
he speaks mysteries. 3 But he who proph-
esies speaks [d]edification and [e]exhortation
and comfort to men. 4 He who speaks in a
tongue edifies himself, but he who proph-
esies edifies the church. 5 I wish you all
spoke with tongues, but even more that
you prophesied; for* he who prophesies *is*
greater than he who speaks with tongues,
unless indeed he interprets, that the church
may receive edification.

Tongues Must Be Interpreted

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you
speaking with tongues, what shall I profit
you unless I speak to you either by [f]reve-
lation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or
by teaching? 7 Even things without life,
whether flute or harp, when they make a
sound, unless they make a distinction in
the sounds, how will it be known what is
piped or played? 8 For if the trumpet makes
an uncertain sound, who will prepare for
battle? 9 So likewise you, unless you utter
by the tongue words easy to understand,
how will it be known what is spoken? For
you will be speaking into the air. 10 There
are, it may be, so many kinds of languages
in the world, and none of them *is* without
significance. 11 Therefore, if I do not know
the meaning of the language, I shall be a
foreigner to him who speaks, and he who
speaks *will be* a foreigner to me. 12 Even
so you, since you are zealous for spiritu-
al *gifts, let it be* for the edification of the
church *that* you seek to excel.

* **12:31** NU-Text reads *greater.* * **13:3** NU-Text reads *so I may boast.* * **14:5** NU-Text reads *and.*

resurrected Christ and were given a special mission by Him as His representatives (9:1; 15:5,8).

12:31 ***earnestly desire the best gifts.*** This phrase has generally been interpreted as Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to seek after the more spiritually profitable gifts, yet it is possible that Paul is stating that the Corinthians were improperly desiring the gifts that would bring attention to themselves. In other words, he would be telling them that, although they desire this sort of gift, he wants to show them a more excellent way.

13:1–13 Love—The more one reads 1 Corinthians 13, the more one has to face the fact that we don't naturally have that kind of love in us. The only way to get it is to get it from God. Love comes from God (1 John 4:7). We're not very good at this kind of loving, and the only way we can be is through the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. It is tough because it means dependency on God for that which we cannot do by ourselves. It is tough because the objects of our love often act in unlovable ways or they reject our love when we give it. It is tough because we have to keep coming back with more love, even when it is rejected.

13:8 ***Love never fails.*** This uncompromising and bold affirmation introduces the contrast with the spiritual gifts which will not last. Paul wants the Corinthians to know that all the gifts would one day no longer be needed, but love.

13:10 ***when that which is perfect has come.*** The Greek word for "perfect" means "end" or "completion." Most likely, this is a reference to the second coming of Christ and the completion of all things, but some have interpreted this as referring to the completion of the New Testament canon.

14:3 ***prophesies.*** In this sense, prophecy incorporates all speaking gifts that edify the church (Rom. 12:6; 1 Pet. 4:11).

14:11 ***I do not know the meaning.*** Paul underlines the original purpose of all spiritual gifts: they must

12:31 [i] 1 Cor. 14:1, 39 **13:2** [a] 1 Cor. 12:8–10, 28; 14:1 [b] Matt. 17:20; 21:21 **13:3** [c] Matt. 6:1, 2 **13:4** [d] Prov. 10:12; 17:9 [e] Eph. 4:32 [f] Gal. 5:26 **13:5** [g] 1 Cor. 10:24 **13:6** [h] Rom. 1:32 [i] 2 John 4 **13:7** [j] Gal. 6:2 **13:9** [k] 1 Cor. 8:2; 13:12 **13:12** [l] Phil. 3:12 [m] [1 John 3:2] **14:1** [a] 1 Cor. 12:31; 14:39 [b] Num. 11:25, 29 **14:2** [c] Acts 2:4; 10:46 **14:3** [d] Rom. 14:19; 15:2 [e] 1 Tim. 4:13 **14:6** [f] 1 Cor. 14:26

13 Therefore let him who speaks in a
tongue pray that he may [g]interpret. 14 For
if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but
my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is
the conclusion then? I will pray with the
spirit, and I will also pray with the under-
standing. [h]I will sing with the spirit, and
I will also sing [i]with the understanding.
16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit,
how will he who occupies the place of the
uninformed say "Amen" [j]at your giving of
thanks, since he does not understand what
you say? 17 For you indeed give thanks well,
but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God I speak with tongues
more than you all; 19 yet in the church I
would rather speak five words with my un-
derstanding, that I may teach others also,
than ten thousand words in a tongue.

Tongues a Sign to Unbelievers

20 Brethren, [k]do not be children in under-
standing; however, in malice [l]be babes, but
in understanding be mature.

21 [m]In the law it is written:

> [n]"With men of other tongues and other
> lips
> I will speak to this people;
> And yet, for all that, they will not hear
> Me,"*

says the Lord.

22 Therefore tongues are for a [o]sign, not
to those who believe but to unbelievers; but
prophesying is not for unbelievers but for
those who believe. 23 Therefore if the whole
church comes together in one place, and
all speak with tongues, and there come in
those who are uninformed or unbelievers,
[p]will they not say that you are out of your
mind? 24 But if all prophesy, and an unbe-
liever or an uninformed person comes in,
he is convinced by all, he is convicted by
all. 25 And thus* the secrets of his heart are
revealed; and so, falling down on *his* face,
he will worship God and report [q]that God
is truly among you.

Order in Church Meetings

26 How is it then, brethren? Whenev-
er you come together, each of you has a
psalm, [r]has a teaching, has a tongue, has
a revelation, has an interpretation. [s]Let all
things be done for edification. 27 If anyone
speaks in a tongue, *let there be* two or at
the most three, *each* in turn, and let one
interpret. 28 But if there is no interpreter,
let him keep silent in church, and let him
speak to himself and to God. 29 Let two or
three prophets speak, and [t]let the others
judge. 30 But if *anything* is revealed to an-
other who sits by, [u]let the first keep silent.
31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that
all may learn and all may be encouraged.
32 And [v]the spirits of the prophets are sub-
ject to the prophets. 33 For God is not *the
author* of confusion but of peace, [w]as in all
the churches of the saints.

34 [x]Let your* women keep silent in the
churches, for they are not permitted to
speak; but *they are* to be submissive, as
the [y]law also says. 35 And if they want to
learn something, let them ask their own
husbands at home; for it is shameful for
women to speak in church.

36 Or did the word of God come *origi-
nally* from you? Or *was it* you only that it
reached? 37 [z]If anyone thinks himself to be
a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge
that the things which I write to you are the
commandments of the Lord. 38 But if any-
one is ignorant, let him be ignorant.*

39 Therefore, brethren, [a]desire earnest-
ly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak
with tongues. 40 [b]Let all things be done de-
cently and in order.

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* **14:21** Isaiah 28:11, 12 * **14:25** NU-Text omits *And thus.* * **14:34** NU-Text omits *your.* * **14:38** NU-Text reads *if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.*

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serve the church (vv. 13–14; 12:7). Tongues must convey meaning or else they fail to help those who listen.

14:16 *Amen.* The word "amen" means "truly" or "so be it" (John 3:5). Saying "amen" indicated agreement with what was being said (Deut. 27:14–26; Rev. 5:14).

14:29 *two or three.* The meetings of the church should be characterized by orderliness and moderation. ***judge.*** No one, not even a person exercising a spiritual gift, is exempt from accountability to the church (6:5; 11:29–31).

14:32 *subject to the prophets.* Paul anticipated that some might excuse disorder by claiming that they could not prevent themselves from prophesying when God brought a revelation to them. He explained that the Holy Spirit does not overpower the person through whom He speaks.

14:34 *women keep silent.* This command is the subject of much debate, for it seems to contradict the fact that Paul spoke of women prophesying in 1 Corinthians 11:5. It has been suggested that Paul was addressing a particular problem in the Corinthian church, a group of women who were disruptive, but the prohibition is repeated at a different time to a different group of people (1 Tim. 2:11–12). This verse has also been interpreted as a prohibition on women interpreting prophecy, judging the prophets, or speaking in tongues. Others believe that women do prophesy and minister, but only to other women, or in a setting other than public church meetings, such as Priscilla and Aquila instructing Apollos (Acts 18:24–28).

14:40 *decently and in order.* This verse is the key to all church practice. In worship and teaching, as in all of life, believers should demonstrate self-control and consideration.

14:13 [g] 1 Cor. 12:10 **14:15** [h] Col. 3:16 [i] Ps. 47:7
14:16 [j] 1 Cor. 11:24 **14:20** [k] Ps. 131:2 [l] [1 Pet. 2:2]
14:21 [m] John 10:34 [n] Is. 28:11, 12 **14:22** [o] Mark 16:17
14:23 [p] Acts 2:13 **14:25** [q] Is. 45:14 **14:26** [r] 1 Cor. 12:8–10; 14:6 [s] [2 Cor. 12:19] **14:29** [t] 1 Cor. 12:10 **14:30** [u] [1 Thess. 5:19, 20] **14:32** [v] 1 John 4:1 **14:33** [w] 1 Cor. 11:16
14:34 [x] 1 Tim. 2:11 [y] Gen. 3:16 **14:37** [z] 2 Cor. 10:7
14:39 [a] 1 Cor. 12:31 **14:40** [b] 1 Cor. 14:33

The Risen Christ, Faith's Reality

15 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you
the gospel [a]which I preached to you,
which also you received and [b]in which you
stand, **2**[c]by which also you are saved, if
you hold fast that word which I preached
to you—unless [d]you believed in vain.

3For [e]I delivered to you first of all that
[f]which I also received: that Christ died for
our sins [g]according to the Scriptures, **4**and
that He was buried, and that He rose again
the third day [h]according to the Scriptures,
5[i]and that He was seen by Cephas, then [j]by
the twelve. **6**After that He was seen by over
five hundred brethren at once, of whom
the greater part remain to the present, but
some have fallen asleep. **7**After that He was
seen by James, then [k]by all the apostles.
8[l]Then last of all He was seen by me also,
as by one born out of due time.

9For I am [m]the least of the apostles, who
am not worthy to be called an apostle,
because [n]I persecuted the church of God.
10But [o]by the grace of God I am what I am,
and His grace toward me was not in vain;
but I labored more abundantly than they
all, [p]yet not I, but the grace of God *which*
was with me. **11**Therefore, whether *it was* I
or they, so we preach and so you believed.

The Risen Christ, Our Hope

12Now if Christ is preached that He has
been raised from the dead, how do some
among you say that there is no resurrec-
tion of the dead? **13**But if there is no res-
urrection of the dead, [q]then Christ is not
risen. **14**And if Christ is not risen, then our
preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also
empty. **15**Yes, and we are found false wit-
nesses of God, because [r]we have testified of
God that He raised up Christ, whom He did
not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.
16For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is
not risen. **17**And if Christ is not risen, your
faith *is* futile; [s]you are still in your sins!
18Then also those who have fallen [t]asleep
in Christ have perished. **19**[u]If in this life
only we have hope in Christ, we are of all
men the most pitiable.

The Last Enemy Destroyed

20But now [v]Christ is risen from the dead,
and has become [w]the firstfruits of those
who have fallen asleep. **21**For [x]since by
man *came* death, [y]by Man also *came* the
resurrection of the dead. **22**For as in Adam
all die, even so in Christ all shall [z]be made
alive. **23**But [a]each one in his own order:

15:3–4 Gospel Message—Paul makes it clear here that evangelism should be centered on the gospel of Christ. The central point of the good news is Christ's death and resurrection. The four key points about that gospel are:

1. God's Word says all are sinners, condemned to hell (Is. 53:6; Rom. 3:10–11,23; 5:8,12; Rev. 20:15).
2. There is nothing a sinner can do on his own to save himself (Is. 64:6; Eph. 2:9).
3. Christ was born, crucified, and resurrected to save lost people from their sin (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:15).
4. To be saved, a sinner must believe God's Word and invite Christ into his or her heart by faith (John 5:24; Acts 16:31).

15:3 *according to the Scriptures.* Christ lived and died in accordance with the prophecies about Him in the Old Testament (Ps. 16:10; Is. 53:8–10).

15:8 *born out of due time.* This is probably Paul's comment on the unique way that he became an apostle. Unlike the other apostles, who had the benefit of an initial training period with Christ, Paul became an apostle abruptly, with no opportunity for earthly contact with Christ or His teaching.

15:9 *persecuted the church.* The story of Paul's persecuting and conversion is told in Acts 9; 22; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Timothy 1:15–16.

15:12 *no resurrection.* These opponents of Paul may have been denying the reality of Christ's resurrection. They may also have been teaching that resurrection is only spiritual and not physical; or they may have been teaching that the resurrection had already happened (2 Tim. 2:18). Whatever the case, they contradicted the essential teaching that Christ had been physically raised from the dead and that all believers in Him will someday also be resurrected.

15:15 *false witnesses.* In verses 5–8 Paul listed several people, including himself, who had witnessed the resurrected Christ. To deny the resurrection was to call these people liars.

15:17 Resurrection—There are many biblical scholars these days who say that the resurrection was an invented story out of some kind of "faith" process. They relegate the critical event that defines Christianity to the imaginations of some well-meaning but deluded Palestinian peasants. Paul goes to great pains to put the resurrection in the realm of fact, not opinion or imagination. He talks about the eyewitness testimony of hundreds (v. 6). He references his own story of personal confrontation with Christ (v. 8). In the end he says that if the resurrection isn't a fact, then he is absolutely lost (v. 19). This sounds like a man who staked his entire life on an indisputable fact.

15:19 *pitiable.* If Christ did not rise, then He is just another dead prophet with no power over sin or death, and the Christian's hope of eternal life is a lie.

15:20 *firstfruits.* The "firstfruits" is the first installment of a crop, which anticipates and guarantees the ultimate offering of the whole crop (16:15; Rom. 8:23). Because Christ rose from the dead, those who are asleep in Christ (1 Thess. 4:15–16) have a guarantee of their own resurrection.

15:21 *by man came death.* The first man, Adam, transgressed God's law and brought sin and death into the world (Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12–21); the second man, Jesus Christ, was the perfect sacrifice to take away sin and to bring life and resurrection to those who believe in Him (Rom. 5:15–21).

15:23 *each one in his own order.* The believers who

15:1 [a] [Gal. 1:11] [b] [Rom. 5:2; 11:20] **15:2** [c] Rom. 1:16 [d] Gal. 3:4 **15:3** [e] 1 Cor. 11:2, 23 [f] [Gal. 1:12] [g] Ps. 22:15 **15:4** [h] Ps. 16:9–11; 68:18; 110:1 **15:5** [i] Luke 24:34 [j] Matt. 28:17 **15:7** [k] Acts 1:3, 4 **15:8** [l] [Acts 9:3–8; 22:6–11; 26:12–18] **15:9** [m] Eph. 3:8 [n] Acts 8:3 **15:10** [o] Eph. 3:7, 8 [p] Phil. 2:13 **15:13** [q] [1 Thess. 4:14] **15:15** [r] Acts 2:24 **15:17** [s] [Rom. 4:25] **15:18** [t] Job 14:12 **15:19** [u] 2 Tim. 3:12 **15:20** [v] 1 Pet. 1:3 [w] Acts 26:23 **15:21** [x] Rom. 5:12; 6:23 [y] John 11:25 **15:22** [z] [John 5:28, 29] **15:23** [a] [1 Thess. 4:15–17]

Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. 24Then *comes* the end, when He delivers [b]the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25For He must reign [c]till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26[d]The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death. 27For [e]*"He has put all things under His feet."** But when He says "all things are put under *Him*," *it is* evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28[f]Now when all things are made subject to Him, then [g]the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Effects of Denying the Resurrection

29Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead? 30And [h]why do we stand in jeopardy every hour? 31I affirm, by [i]the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, [j]I die daily. 32If, in the manner of men, [k]I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage *is it* to me? If *the* dead do not rise, [l]*"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"**

33Do not be deceived: [m]"Evil company corrupts good habits." 34[n]Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; [o]for some do not have the knowledge of God. [p]I speak *this* to your shame.

A Glorious Body

35But someone will say, [q]"How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" 36Foolish one, [r]what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. 37And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other *grain*. 38But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.

39All flesh *is* not the same flesh, but *there is* one *kind of* flesh* of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, *and* another of birds.

40*There are* also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another. 41*There is* one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory.

42[s]So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43[t]It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45And so it is written, [u]*"The first man Adam became a living being."** [v]The last Adam *became* [w]a life-giving spirit.

46However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. 47[x]The first man *was* of the earth, [y]*made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord* [z]from heaven. 48As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; [a]and as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly. 49And [b]as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, [c]we shall also bear* the image of the heavenly *Man*.

Our Final Victory

50Now this I say, brethren, that [d]flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51Behold, I tell you a mystery: [e]We shall not all sleep, [f]but we shall all be changed—52in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. [g]For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and [h]this mortal *must* put on immortality.

* **15:27** Psalm 8:6 * **15:32** Isaiah 22:13
* **15:39** NU-Text and M-Text omit *of flesh*.
* **15:45** Genesis 2:7 * **15:47** NU-Text omits *the Lord*. * **15:49** M-Text reads *let us also bear*.

have died will be the first to rise at Christ's coming and be reunited with their physical bodies. Following this is the removal of all living Christians from the earth (1 Thess. 4:13–18).

15:29 *baptized for the dead.* It may be that some of the Corinthians had for some reason been baptized on behalf of others who had died without baptism. Paul does not address whether this practice was right or wrong (although his use of "they" rather than "we" indicates that he did not participate), but makes the point that their own actions are inconsistent with their beliefs. There would be no point in doing anything for the dead if there is no resurrection.

15:30 *in jeopardy.* If this life is all there is, it would make more sense to take the position of the Epicureans, seeking pleasure and avoiding pain.

15:32 *beasts at Ephesus.* This may be a figurative reference to Paul's enemies at Ephesus (Acts 19).

15:36 *unless it dies.* Difficulty understanding the nature of the resurrection should not cause a person to doubt its reality any more than not understanding how a seed becomes a plant should cause disbelief in the coming harvest.

15:44 *natural body . . . spiritual body.* The contrast is not between a material body and an immaterial body, but between a body subject to death and a body that is immortal.

15:24 [b] [Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27] **15:25** [c] Ps. 110:1
15:26 [d] [2 Tim. 1:10] **15:27** [e] Ps. 8:6 **15:28** [f] [Phil. 3:21] [g] 1 Cor. 3:23; 11:3; 12:6 **15:30** [h] 2 Cor. 11:26
15:31 [i] 1 Thess. 2:19 [j] Rom. 8:36 **15:32** [k] 2 Cor. 1:8 [l] Is. 22:13; 56:12 **15:33** [m] [1 Cor. 5:6] **15:34** [n] Rom. 13:11 [o] [1 Thess. 4:5] [p] 1 Cor. 6:5 **15:35** [q] Ezek. 37:3
15:36 [r] John 12:24 **15:42** [s] [Dan. 12:3] **15:43** [t] [Phil. 3:21] **15:45** [u] Gen. 2:7 [v] [Rom. 5:14] [w] John 5:21; 6:57 **15:47** [x] John 3:31 [y] Gen. 2:7; 3:19 [z] John 3:13 **15:48** [a] Phil. 3:20 **15:49** [b] Gen. 5:3 [c] Rom. 8:29
15:50 [d] [John 3:3, 5] **15:51** [e] [1 Thess. 4:15] [f] [Phil. 3:21]
15:52 [g] Matt. 24:31 **15:53** [h] 2 Cor. 5:4

54So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: [i]*"Death is swallowed up in victory."**

55 *"O[j] Death, where is your sting?**
*O Hades, where is your victory?"**

56The sting of death *is* sin, and [k]the strength of sin *is* the law. 57[l]But thanks *be* to God, who gives us [m]the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58[n]Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing [o]that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Collection for the Saints

16 Now concerning [a]the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2[b]On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. 3And when I come, [c]whomever you approve by *your* letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. 4[d]But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.

Personal Plans

5Now I will come to you [e]when I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia). 6And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may [f]send me on my journey, wherever I go. 7For I do not wish to see you now on the way; but I hope to stay a while with you, [g]if the Lord permits.

8But I will tarry in Ephesus until [h]Pentecost. 9For [i]a great and effective door has opened to me, and *i*[i]*there are* many adversaries.

10And [k]if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for [l]he does the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. 11[m]Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey [n]in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.

12Now concerning *our* brother [o]Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however, he will come when he has a convenient time.

Final Exhortations

13[p]Watch, [q]stand fast in the faith, be brave, [r]be strong. 14[s]Let all *that* you *do* be done with love.

15I urge you, brethren—you know [t]the household of Stephanas, that it is [u]the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have devoted themselves to [v]the ministry of the saints— 16[w]that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and [x]labors with *us*.

17I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, [y]for what was lacking on your part they supplied. 18[z]For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore [a]acknowledge such men.

Greetings and a Solemn Farewell

19The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, [b]with the church that is in their house. 20All the brethren greet you.

[c]Greet one another with a holy kiss.

21[d]The salutation with my own hand—Paul's.

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* **15:54** Isaiah 25:8 * **15:55** Hosea 13:14 • NU-Text reads *O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?*

15:54 ***Death is swallowed up in victory.*** Satan's apparent victories in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:13) and at the cross (Mark 15:22–24) were reversed by Jesus' death and resurrection (Co1. 2:13–15).

15:58 ***your labor is not in vain.*** We are looking forward to eternal life because of the hope of the resurrection; everything we do on this earth matters for eternity.

16:2 ***the first day of the week.*** It appears that the custom of believers meeting on the first day of the week began early in Christian history. ***lay something aside.*** The Old Testament tithe was not adopted by the New Testament church, though certainly Christ practiced it. New Testament believers were encouraged to give liberally, but never a specified amount or percentage (Rom. 12:8). Considering the New Testament teachings on generosity and self-sacrifice, believers should probably expect to give much more than ten percent.

16:13 ***be brave.*** This emphasizes courage as well as maturity. Paul's command to do everything with love serves as a balance to these strong exhortations.

16:17 ***Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus.*** These were probably the ones who confirmed the bad report brought by Chloe's household in 1 Corinthians 1:11.

16:19 ***Aquila and Priscilla.*** Aquila and Priscilla were tentmakers who had met Paul in Corinth. They followed him to Ephesus and made their house available for the meetings of the church (Rom. 16:3–5). They would have been known to many in the Corinthian church.

16:20 ***holy kiss.*** In the ancient world (as in many

15:54 [i] Is. 25:8 **15:55** [j] Hos. 13:14 **15:56** [k] [Rom. 3:20; 4:15; 7:8] **15:57** [l] [Rom. 7:25] [m] [1 John 5:4] **15:58** [n] 2 Pet. 3:14 [o] [1 Cor. 3:8] **16:1** [a] Gal. 2:10 **16:2** [b] Acts 20:7 **16:3** [c] 2 Cor. 3:1; 8:18 **16:4** [d] 2 Cor. 8:4, 19 **16:5** [e] 2 Cor. 1:15, 16 **16:6** [f] Acts 15:3 **16:7** [g] James 4:15 **16:8** [h] Lev. 23:15–22 **16:9** [i] Acts 14:27 [j] Acts 19:9 **16:10** [k] Acts 19:22 [l] Phil. 2:20 **16:11** [m] 1 Tim. 4:12 [n] Acts 15:33 **16:12** [o] 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:5 **16:13** [p] Matt. 24:42 [q] Phil. 1:27; 4:1 [r] [Eph. 3:16; 6:10] **16:14** [s] [1 Pet. 4:8] **16:15** [t] 1 Cor. 1:16 [u] Rom. 16:5 [v] 2 Cor. 8:4 **16:16** [w] Heb. 13:17 [x] [Heb. 6:10] **16:17** [y] 2 Cor. 11:9 **16:18** [z] Col. 4:8 [a] Phil. 2:29 **16:19** [b] Rom. 16:5 **16:20** [c] Rom. 16:16 **16:21** [d] Col. 4:18

22 If anyone [e]does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, [f]let him be accursed.* [g]O Lord, come!*
23 [h]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. 24 My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

* **16:22** Greek *anathema* • Aramaic *Maranatha*

cultures still today), a kiss was a common form of friendly or affectionate greeting.

16:22 ***accursed.*** Paul does not condemn unbelievers, but rather unbelievers condemn themselves by ignoring the claims of the Creator on their lives.

16:22 [e] Eph. 6:24 [f] Gal. 1:8, 9 [g] Jude 14, 15 **16:23** [h] Rom. 16:20

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** External and internal evidence amply support the Pauline authorship of this letter. There is an interval of about a year between these two letters to the Corinthians. Since Paul's first letter, the Corinthian church had been swayed by false teachers who stirred the people against Paul. They claimed he was fickle, arrogant, unimpressive in appearance and speech, and unqualified to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. During this time Paul has paid them what must have been an unpleasant visit and then wrote them another letter, which we do not have (2:1–4). Paul wrote 2 Corinthians in A.D. 56 in Macedonia and sent the letter to the church with Titus and another brother (8:16).

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 56 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 Cor. 4:5–6

▶ **THEME:** As Paul writes this letter, he is looking forward to yet another visit, and it appears that the Corinthians have listened to him and things are getting on the right track. But there are still some problems. The key issue seems to be Paul's leadership. He spends a good deal of the letter establishing his authority and the need to exercise it, which makes the letter intensely personal. In it we can see the depth of his relationship with the Corinthians, and we get an understanding of the hardships Paul went through for these people on his missionary journeys. Most importantly we see a faith that is so focused that Paul is ready to endure anything to see it spread.

Greeting

1 Paul, [a]an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and [b]Timothy *our* brother,

To the church of God which is at Corinth, [c]with all the saints who are in all Achaia:

2[d]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Comfort in Suffering

3[e]Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, **4**who [f]comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. **5**For as [g]the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. **6**Now if we are afflicted, [h]*it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. **7**And our hope for you *is* steadfast, because we know that [i]as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation.

Delivered from Suffering

8For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of [j]our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. **9**Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should [k]not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, **10**[l]who delivered us from so great a death, and does* deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver *us*, **11**you also [m]helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our* behalf [n]for the gift *granted* to us through many.

* **1:10** NU-Text reads *shall.* * **1:11** M-Text reads *your behalf.*

1:4 ***comforts us in all our tribulation.*** God comforts us for our own encouragement and also to make us comforters of others. The comfort that God gives to us becomes a gift that we can give to others (7:6; Acts 9:10–19).

1:5 ***the sufferings of Christ.*** Jesus warned His disciples that they would experience the same kind of suffering that He did for the sake of the gospel (John 15:20).

1:8 ***Asia.*** This is the Roman province in western Asia Minor, present day Turkey. The trouble that Paul speaks of is likely the riots in Ephesus (Acts 19:23–41).

1:1 [a] 2 Tim. 1:1 [b] 1 Cor. 16:10 [c] Col. 1:2 **1:2** [d] Rom. 1:7 **1:3** [e] 1 Pet. 1:3 **1:4** [f] Is. 51:12; 66:13 **1:5** [g] 2 Cor. 4:10 **1:6** [h] 2 Cor. 4:15; 12:15 **1:7** [i] [Rom. 8:17] **1:8** [j] Acts 19:23 **1:9** [k] Jer. 17:5, 7 **1:10** [l] [2 Pet. 2:9] **1:11** [m] Rom. 15:30 [n] 2 Cor. 4:15; 9:11

Paul's Sincerity

12For our boasting is this: the testimony
of our conscience that we conducted our-
selves in the world in simplicity and [o]god-
ly sincerity, [p]not with fleshly wisdom but
by the grace of God, and more abundantly
toward you. 13For we are not writing any
other things to you than what you read or
understand. Now I trust you will under-
stand, even to the end 14(as also you have
understood us in part), [q]that we are your
boast as [r]you also *are* ours, in the day of
the Lord Jesus.

Sparing the Church

15And in this confidence [s]I intended to
come to you before, that you might have [t]a
second benefit— 16to pass by way of you to
Macedonia, [u]to come again from Macedo-
nia to you, and be helped by you on my way
to Judea. 17Therefore, when I was planning
this, did I do it lightly? Or the things I plan,
do I plan [v]according to the flesh, that with
me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No?
18But *as* God *is* [w]faithful, our word to you
was not Yes and No. 19For [x]the Son of God,
Jesus Christ, who was preached among you
by us—by me, [y]Silvanus, and [z]Timothy—
was not Yes and No, [a]but in Him was Yes.
20[b]For all the promises of God in Him *are*
Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God
through us. 21Now He who establishes us
with you in Christ and [c]has anointed us *is*
God, 22who [d]also has sealed us and [e]given
us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.
23Moreover [f]I call God as witness against
my soul, [g]that to spare you I came no more
to Corinth. 24Not [h]that we have dominion
over your faith, but are fellow workers for
your joy; for [i]by faith you stand.

2 But I determined this within myself,
[a]that I would not come again to you in
sorrow. 2For if I make you [b]sorrowful, then
who is he who makes me glad but the one
who is made sorrowful by me?

Forgive the Offender

3And I wrote this very thing to you,
lest, when I came, [c]I should have sorrow
over those from whom I ought to have joy,
[d]having confidence in you all that my joy
is *the joy* of you all. 4For out of much afflic-
tion and anguish of heart I wrote to you,
with many tears, [e]not that you should be
grieved, but that you might know the love
which I have so abundantly for you.
5But [f]if anyone has caused grief, he has
not [g]grieved me, but all of you to some
extent—not to be too severe. 6This punish-
ment which *was inflicted* [h]by the majority
is sufficient for such a man, 7[i]so that, on
the contrary, you *ought* rather to forgive
and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one
be swallowed up with too much sorrow.
8Therefore I urge you to reaffirm *your* love
to him. 9For to this end I also wrote, that
I might put you to the test, whether you
are [j]obedient in all things. 10Now whom
you forgive anything, I also *forgive*. For
if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have
forgiven that one* for your sakes in the
presence of Christ, 11lest Satan should take
advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of
his devices.

Triumph in Christ

12Furthermore, [k]when I came to Troas
to *preach* Christ's gospel, and [l]a door was
opened to me by the Lord, 13[m]I had no rest
in my spirit, because I did not find Titus
my brother; but taking my leave of them, I
departed for Macedonia.
14Now thanks *be* to God who always
leads us in triumph in Christ, and through
us diffuses the fragrance of His knowl-
edge in every place. 15For we are to God
the fragrance of Christ [n]among those who
are being saved and [o]among those who are
perishing. 16[p]To the one *we are* the aroma

* **2:10** NU-Text reads *For indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it.*

1:12 ***godly sincerity.*** The Corinthians certainly were well acquainted with Paul's character, since he had spent 18 months with them (Acts 18:11).

1:19 ***not Yes and No.*** Paul's preaching was not inconsistent or contradictory. Instead, his preaching reflected the truthfulness and faithfulness of God, because his teaching was based on the Scriptures and the teachings of Christ.

1:21 ***anointed us.*** God confirmed Paul and his fellow workers by anointing them, the special mark of service to God which was given to kings and priests in the Old Testament. This anointing probably refers to special empowerment by the Holy Spirit, similar to the anointing that John described in 1 John 2:20, 27.

1:22 ***sealed us.*** Sealing indicates ownership and security. The *sealing* and the *giving* of the Holy Spirit are also linked. The Holy Spirit is a guarantee, the down payment that there is more spiritual blessing to come and that the believer will receive eternal life.

2:5 ***caused grief.*** This is probably a reference to the incestuous man of 1 Corinthians 5.

2:7 ***forgive and comfort him.*** The purpose of church discipline is repentance and restoration. Forgiveness should always follow the correction, just as Christ instructed (Matt. 18:15–35).

2:12 ***Troas.*** Troas was a city on the Aegean coast, where Paul had received his call to preach the gospel in Macedonia (Acts 16:8).

2:16 ***death leading to death.*** The gospel message gives life to those who choose to accept it, but it represents death and judgment to those who reject it.

1:12 *o* 2 Cor. 2:17 *p* [1 Cor. 2:4] **1:14** *q* 2 Cor. 5:12 *r* Phil. 2:16 **1:15** *s* 1 Cor. 4:19 *t* Rom. 1:11; 15:29 **1:16** *u* 1 Cor. 16:3–6 **1:17** *v* 2 Cor. 10:2; 11:18 **1:18** *w* 1 John 5:20 **1:19** *x* Mark 1:1 *y* 1 Pet. 5:12 *z* 2 Cor. 1:1 *a* [Heb. 13:8] **1:20** *b* [Rom. 15:8, 9] **1:21** *c* [1 John 2:20, 27] **1:22** *d* [Eph. 4:30] *e* [Eph. 1:14] **1:23** *f* Gal. 1:20 *g* 1 Cor. 4:21 **1:24** *h* [1 Pet. 5:3] *i* Rom. 11:20 **2:1** *a* 2 Cor. 1:23 **2:2** *b* 2 Cor. 7:8 **2:3** *c* 2 Cor. 12:21 *d* Gal. 5:10 **2:4** *e* [2 Cor. 2:9; 7:8, 12] **2:5** *f* [1 Cor. 5:1] *g* Gal. 4:12 **2:6** *h* 1 Cor. 5:4, 5 **2:7** *i* Gal. 6:1 **2:9** *j* 2 Cor. 7:15; 10:6 **2:12** *k* Acts 16:8 *l* 1 Cor. 16:9 **2:13** *m* 2 Cor. 7:6, 13; 8:6 **2:15** *n* [1 Cor. 1:18] *o* [2 Cor. 4:3] **2:16** *p* Luke 2:34

of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And [q]who *is* sufficient for these things? 17For we are not, as so many,* [r]peddling the word of God; but as [s]of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

Christ's Epistle

3 Do [a]we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, [b]epistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you? 2[c]You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 3clearly you are an epistle of Christ, [d]ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not [e]on tablets of stone but [f]on tablets of flesh, *that is,* of the heart.

The Spirit, Not the Letter

4And we have such trust through Christ toward God. 5[g]Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but [h]our sufficiency *is* from God, 6who also made us sufficient as [i]ministers of [j]the new covenant, not [k]of the letter but of the Spirit;* for [l]the letter kills, [m]but the Spirit gives life.

Glory of the New Covenant

7But if [n]the ministry of death, [o]written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, [p]so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, 8how will [q]the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry [r]of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. 10For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. 11For if what is passing away *was* glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious.

12Therefore, since we have such hope, [s]we use great boldness of speech— 13unlike Moses, [t]*who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at [u]the end of what was passing away. 14But [v]their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. 15But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. 16Nevertheless [w]when one turns to the Lord, [x]the veil is taken away. 17Now [y]the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is,* there *is* [z]liberty. 18But we all, with unveiled face, beholding [a]as in a mirror [b]the glory of the Lord, [c]are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Light of Christ's Gospel

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, [a]as we have received mercy, we [b]do not lose heart. 2But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth [c]commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3But even if our gospel is veiled, [d]it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4whose minds [e]the god of this age [f]has blinded, who do not believe, lest [g]the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, [h]who is the image of

* **2:17** M-Text reads *the rest.* * **3:6** Or *spirit*

3:2 *You are our epistle.* Paul sometimes did use letters of recommendation (8:22; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 16:10; Col. 4:10), but he did not need one for the Corinthians. They already knew him personally and had personally benefited from his ministry. Paul's love for the Corinthians was known to all who were acquainted with him. One of the qualifications for ministry is love for people, both God's people and the lost.

3:6 *not of the letter.* The "letter" is the old covenant of law. The "letter" kills because no one can be perfect enough to keep the whole law all the time, and the penalty for breaking it is death.

3:7 *ministry of death.* Though the law itself is holy (Rom. 7:12), the ministry of the law is the ministry of death because the law defines and convicts of sin but offers no salvation.

3:9 *ministry of righteousness.* God declares righteous those who believe in His Son, and then the Holy Spirit empowers the believer to live righteously. This first work of God is called justification, and the second is called sanctification.

3:11 *what remains.* The new covenant supersedes the old covenant established at Mount Sinai between God and the nation of Israel.

3:18 *from glory to glory.* As believers behold the glory of God in the Word of God, the Spirit of God changes their hearts and actions to make them more and more like Jesus Christ.

4:2 *handling the word of God deceitfully.* Apparently Paul had been accused of being crafty (12:16) and of being deceitful in the way that he preached. In fact, his ministry was based on the truthfulness of the word of God.

4:4 *the god of this age has blinded.* Because of Satan's deception, sometimes what the world thinks is obviously true is painfully wrong (Prov. 14:12). ***image of God.*** Jesus Christ is God's Son, and He perfectly reveals God the Father to us. Human beings have been created in the image of God, but through sin they have fallen from a perfect relationship with God. Jesus Christ is restoring believers to what they were originally created to be (3:18; Gen. 1:26).

2:16 [q] [1 Cor. 15:10] **2:17** [r] 2 Pet. 2:3 [s] 2 Cor. 1:12
3:1 [a] 2 Cor. 5:12; 10:12, 18; 12:11 [b] Acts 18:27 **3:2** [c] 1 Cor. 9:2 **3:3** [d] 1 Cor. 3:5 [e] Ex. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15 [f] Ps. 40:8
3:5 [g] [John 15:5] [h] 1 Cor. 15:10 **3:6** [i] 1 Cor. 3:5 [j] Jer. 31:31 [k] Rom. 2:27 [l] Gal. 3:10 [m] John 6:63 **3:7** [n] Rom. 7:10 [o] Ex. 34:1 [p] Ex. 34:29 **3:8** [q] [Gal. 3:5] **3:9** [r] [Rom. 1:17; 3:21] **3:12** [s] Eph. 6:19 **3:13** [t] Ex. 34:33–35 [u] [Gal. 3:23] **3:14** [v] Acts 28:26 **3:16** [w] Rom. 11:23 [x] Is. 25:7
3:17 [y] [1 Cor. 15:45] [z] Gal. 5:1, 13 **3:18** [a] 1 Cor. 13:12 [b] [2 Cor. 4:4, 6] [c] [Rom. 8:29, 30] **4:1** [a] 1 Cor. 7:25 [b] 2 Cor. 4:16 **4:2** [c] 2 Cor. 5:11 **4:3** [d] [1 Cor. 1:18] **4:4** [e] John 12:31 [f] John 12:40 [g] [2 Cor. 3:8, 9] [h] [John 1:18]

God, should shine on them. 5[i]For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and [j]ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 6For it is the God [k]who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has [l]shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Cast Down but Unconquered

7But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, [m]that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 *We are* [n]hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; 9persecuted, but not [o]forsaken; [p]struck down, but not destroyed— 10[q]always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, [r]that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11For we who live [s]are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12So then death is working in us, but life in you.

13And since we have [t]the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, [u]*"I believed and therefore I spoke,"** we also believe and therefore speak, 14knowing that [v]He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present *us* with you. 15For [w]all things *are* for your sakes, that [x]grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Seeing the Invisible

16Therefore we [y]do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is [z]being renewed day by day. 17For [a]our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, 18[b]while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

Assurance of the Resurrection

5 For we know that if [a]our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house [b]not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2For in this [c]we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3if indeed, [d]having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, [e]but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also [f]has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7For [g]we walk by faith, not by sight. 8We are confident, yes, [h]well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

9Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10[i]For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, [j]that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11Knowing, therefore, [k]the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

* **4:13** Psalm 116:10

4:8 *yet not crushed.* As believers we will face trials, but we must remember that God controls trials and uses them to strengthen His people. God's glory is manifested through broken vessels, through people who endure troubles by relying on His power.
4:9 *struck down.* This literally happened (Acts 14:19). In Lystra a crowd stoned Paul, leaving him for dead. But the Lord spared his life so that he could continue to preach the gospel and testify to God's deliverance.
4:12 *life in you.* Had Paul not been willing to risk death to bring the gospel to Corinth, the Corinthians would not have received eternal life.
4:17 *working for us.* Afflictions produce glory, but the glory is far greater than the affliction (Mark 10:30).
5:2 *we groan.* Along with the rest of creation, our spirits cry out for what we were meant to be (Rom. 8:22–23).
5:5 *a guarantee.* The Holy Spirit's work in believers' lives can be compared to a down payment, or earnest money (1:22). The presence of the Holy Spirit assures believers that God has purchased them. They are no longer slaves to sin, but are now His children.
5:8 *be present with the Lord.* This is one of the passages indicating where believers will go after death; they will be with Jesus in heaven (Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:23).
5:9 *we make it our aim.* Pleasing the Lord should always be our first concern in this life, since it is the only thing which will carry over into the next life.
5:10 *according to what he has done.* The believer will either be approved or ashamed (5:3; Luke 19:11–26; 1 Cor. 3:14–15; 9:27; 1 John 2:28; 2 John 7–8).
5:11 *terror of the Lord.* This is the fear of standing before the Lord and having one's life exposed and evaluated. The reality of giving an account to the Lord motivated Paul to persuade people, in this context meaning to convince the Corinthians of his sincerity and integrity.

4:5 [i] 1 Cor. 1:13 [j] 1 Cor. 9:19 **4:6** [k] Gen. 1:3 [l] 2 Pet. 1:19 **4:7** [m] 1 Cor. 2:5 **4:8** [n] 2 Cor. 1:8; 7:5 **4:9** [o] [Heb. 13:5] [p] Ps. 37:24 **4:10** [q] Phil. 3:10 [r] Rom. 8:17 **4:11** [s] Rom. 8:36 **4:13** [t] 2 Pet. 1:1 [u] Ps. 116:10 **4:14** [v] [Rom. 8:11] **4:15** [w] Col. 1:24 [x] 2 Cor. 1:11 **4:16** [y] 2 Cor. 4:1 [z] [Is. 40:29, 31] **4:17** [a] Rom. 8:18 **4:18** [b] [Heb. 11:1, 13] **5:1** [a] Job 4:19 [b] Mark 14:58 **5:2** [c] Rom. 8:23 **5:3** [d] Rev. 3:18 **5:4** [e] 1 Cor. 15:53 **5:5** [f] Rom. 8:23 **5:7** [g] Heb. 11:1 **5:8** [h] Phil. 1:23 **5:10** [i] Rom. 2:16; 14:10, 12 [j] Eph. 6:8 **5:11** [k] [Heb. 10:31; 12:29]

Be Reconciled to God

12 For [l]we do not commend ourselves
again to you, but give you opportunity [m]to
boast on our behalf, that you may have *an*
answer for those who boast in appearance
and not in heart. 13 For [n]if we are beside
ourselves, *it is* for God; or if we are of
sound mind, *it is* for you. 14 For the love
of Christ compels us, because we judge
thus: that [o]if One died for all, then all
died; 15 and He died for all, [p]that those who
live should live no longer for themselves,
but for Him who died for them and rose
again.

16 [q]Therefore, from now on, we re-
gard no one according to the flesh. Even
though we have known Christ according
to the flesh, [r]yet now we know *Him thus*
no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone [s]*is* in
Christ, *he is* [t]a new creation; [u]old things
have passed away; behold, all things have
become [v]new. 18 Now all things *are* of
God, [w]who has reconciled us to Himself
through Jesus Christ, and has given us the
ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that
[x]God was in Christ reconciling the world
to Himself, not imputing their trespasses
to them, and has committed to us the word
of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are [y]ambassadors for
Christ, as though God were pleading
through us: we implore *you* on Christ's be-
half, be reconciled to God. 21 For [z]He made
Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that
we might become [a]the righteousness of
God in Him.

Marks of the Ministry

6 We then, *as* [a]workers together *with Him*
also [b]plead with *you* not to receive the
grace of God in vain. 2 For He says:

> [c]*"In an acceptable time I have heard you,*
> *And in the day of salvation I have*
> *helped you."**

Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold,
now *is* the day of salvation.

3 [d]We give no offense in anything, that
our ministry may not be blamed. 4 But in
all *things* we commend ourselves [e]as min-
isters of God: in much patience, in tribula-
tions, in needs, in distresses, 5 [f]in stripes,
in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in
sleeplessness, in fastings; 6 by purity, by
knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness,
by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, 7 [g]by the
word of truth, by [h]the power of God, by [i]the
armor of righteousness on the right hand
and on the left, 8 by honor and dishonor, by
evil report and good report; as deceivers,
and *yet* true; 9 as unknown, and [j]*yet* well
known; [k]as dying, and behold we live; [l]as
chastened, and *yet* not killed; 10 as sorrow-
ful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet mak-
ing many [m]rich; as having nothing, and *yet*
possessing all things.

Be Holy

11 O Corinthians! We have spoken openly
to you, [n]our heart is wide open. 12 You are

* **6:2** Isaiah 49:8

5:14 *love of Christ.* This phrase can mean either Christ's love for us or our love for Christ.

5:15 *for Him.* Believers are united with Jesus both in His death and in His resurrection, and therefore they participate in the new creation. That is, they receive the benefits of being restored by Christ to what God had originally created them to be (Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 15:45–49).

5:17 Our New Nature—The term "new nature" refers to the spiritual transformation that occurs within people when they believe in Christ as Savior. New does not mean renewed, renovated, reformed, or rehabilitated. It means completely and distinctly new, with a new family, a new set of values, new motivations, and a whole new life. The old man is still present in the new life and expresses himself in sinful deeds such as lying (Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9). The new man, to be visible, must be *put on,* as one would put on a new suit of clothes (Col. 3:10). In other words, the new nature must be cultivated or nurtured by spiritual decisiveness to grow in Christ. We must not revert to putting on the old suit of the former life; rather, we must continue to grow in this new life (Eph. 5:8).

5:18 *ministry of reconciliation.* Reconciliation is the change of relation from enmity to peace. We who have been reconciled to God through Christ have the privilege of telling others that they can be reconciled to Him as well.

5:19 *reconciling the world to Himself.* God could change His relationship toward us because our sins have been imputed (charged) to Christ instead of to us. If we believe in Jesus, God counts Jesus' righteousness as our righteousness (v. 21).

5:20 *ambassadors.* Ambassadors are representatives of the sovereign who sends them, the "stand in" for their own ruler in a foreign country. Christians have been called by their King to serve as ambassadors in a world that is in rebellion against Him, with the responsibility to bring a message of peace and of reconciliation.

6:1 *in vain.* Believers who live for themselves may have received the grace of God, but they will miss out on a heavenly reward for their service to Him. Paul encourages those who have been saved to work out or develop their salvation (Phil. 2:12). The Corinthians were failing at this very point. They were saved and stuck, so to speak.

6:4 *in much patience.* Believers must not expect that it will be easy or comfortable to be a disciple, but it will be more deeply fulfilling than anything else could be.

5:12 [l] 2 Cor. 3:1 [m] 2 Cor. 1:14 **5:13** [n] 2 Cor. 11:1, 16; 12:11 **5:14** [o] [Rom. 5:15; 6:6] **5:15** [p] [Rom. 6:11] **5:16** [q] 2 Cor. 10:3 [r] [Matt. 12:50] **5:17** [s] [John 6:63] [t] [Rom. 8:9] [u] Is. 43:18; 65:17 [v] [Rom. 6:3–10] **5:18** [w] Rom. 5:10 **5:19** [x] [Rom. 3:24] **5:20** [y] Eph. 6:20 **5:21** [z] Is. 53:6, 9 [a] [Rom. 1:17; 3:21] **6:1** [a] 1 Cor. 3:9 [b] 2 Cor. 5:20 **6:2** [c] Is. 49:8 **6:3** [d] Rom. 14:13 **6:4** [e] 1 Cor. 4:1 **6:5** [f] 2 Cor. 11:23 **6:7** [g] 2 Cor. 7:14 [h] 1 Cor. 2:4 [i] 2 Cor. 10:4 **6:9** [j] 2 Cor. 4:2; 5:11 [k] 1 Cor. 4:9, 11 [l] Ps. 118:18 **6:10** [m] [2 Cor. 8:9] **6:11** [n] 2 Cor. 7:3

not restricted by us, but [o]you are restricted by your *own* affections. 13Now in return for the same [p](I speak as to children), you also be open.

14[q]Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For [r]what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For [s]you* are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

[t]*"I will dwell in them*
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
*And they shall be My people."**

17Therefore

[u]*"Come out from among them*
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
*And I will receive you."**
18 *"I* [v]*will be a Father to you,*
And you shall be My [w]*sons and*
daughters,
Says the LORD *Almighty."**

7 Therefore,[a] having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

The Corinthians' Repentance

2Open *your hearts* to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, [b]we have cheated no one. 3I do not say *this* to condemn; for [c]I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. 4[d]Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, [e]great *is* my boasting on your behalf. [f]I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

5For indeed, [g]when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but [h]we were troubled on every side. [i]Outside *were* conflicts, inside *were* fears. 6Nevertheless [j]God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by [k]the coming of Titus, 7and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

8For even if I made you [l]sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; [m]though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. 9Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. 10For [n]godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; [o]but the sorrow of the world produces death. 11For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, *what* [p]clearing *of yourselves, what* indignation, *what* fear, *what* vehement desire, *what* zeal, *what* vindication! In all *things* you proved yourselves to be [q]clear in this matter. 12Therefore, although I wrote to you, *I did* not *do it* for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, [r]but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.

The Joy of Titus

13Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit [s]has been refreshed by you all. 14For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true. 15And his affections are greater for you as he remembers [t]the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him. 16Therefore I rejoice that [u]I have confidence in you in everything.

* **6:16** NU-Text reads *we*. • Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 32:38; Ezekiel 37:27 * **6:17** Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 20:34, 41 * **6:18** 2 Samuel 7:14

6:14 ***unequally yoked together with unbelievers.*** This verse has most often been applied to the subject of marriage, warning believers not to bind themselves for life to one who does not love the Lord.
6:15 ***Belial.*** This term for Satan occurs only here in the New Testament. It refers to one who is vile and wicked and who causes destruction.
6:16 ***you are the temple.*** This reference to Leviticus 26:11–12 and Ezekiel 37:27 reminds believers of their relationship with God. Since the Holy Spirit is living in them, they are God's new dwelling place (1 Cor. 6:19).
6:17 ***be separate.*** Paul was not encouraging isolation from unbelievers (1 Cor. 9:5–13) but discouraging compromise with their sinful values and practices. He was urging them (and us) to maintain integrity in the world just as Christ did (John 15:14–16; Phil. 2:14–16).
7:1 ***perfecting holiness.*** This means dedicating ourselves to Christ and living righteously (Heb. 6:1).
7:3 ***you are in our hearts.*** Paul was not throwing his weight around or trying to be controlling. He loved the Corinthians and wanted the very best for them.
7:10 ***produces repentance.*** A person can be sorry that he or she was caught in sin, or sorry to have to bear the consequences, without repenting of sin. True sorrow leads to a change of heart and a turning to God. Repentance means changing direction, and results in spiritual deliverance.

6:12 [o] 2 Cor. 12:15 **6:13** [p] 1 Cor. 4:14 **6:14** [q] 1 Cor. 5:9 [r] Eph. 5:6, 7, 11 **6:16** [s] [1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19] [t] Ezek. 37:26, 27 **6:17** [u] Is. 52:11 **6:18** [v] 2 Sam. 7:14 [w] [Rom. 8:14] **7:1** [a] [1 John 3:3] **7:2** [b] Acts 20:33 **7:3** [c] 2 Cor. 6:11, 12 **7:4** [d] 2 Cor. 3:12 [e] 1 Cor. 1:4 [f] Phil. 2:17 **7:5** [g] 2 Cor. 2:13 [h] 2 Cor. 4:8 [i] Deut. 32:25 **7:6** [j] 2 Cor. 1:3, 4 [k] 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13 **7:8** [l] 2 Cor. 2:2 [m] 2 Cor. 2:4 **7:10** [n] Matt. 26:75 [o] Prov. 17:22 **7:11** [p] Eph. 5:11 [q] 2 Cor. 2:5–11 **7:12** [r] 2 Cor. 2:4 **7:13** [s] Rom. 15:32 **7:15** [t] 2 Cor. 2:9 **7:16** [u] 2 Thess. 3:4

Excel in Giving

8 Moreover, brethren, we make known to
you the grace of God bestowed on the
churches of Macedonia: 2that in a great tri-
al of affliction the abundance of their joy
and [q]their deep poverty abounded in the
riches of their liberality. 3For I bear witness
that according to *their* ability, yes, and be-
yond *their* ability, *they were* freely willing,
4imploring us with much urgency that we
would receive* the gift and [b]the fellowship
of the ministering to the saints. 5And not
only as we had hoped, but they first [c]gave
themselves to the Lord, and *then* to us by
the [d]will of God. 6So [e]we urged Titus, that
as he had begun, so he would also com-
plete this grace in you as well. 7But as [f]you
abound in everything—in faith, in speech,
in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your
love for us—*see* [g]that you abound in this
grace also.

Christ Our Pattern

8[h]I speak not by commandment, but I am
testing the sincerity of your love by the dil-
igence of others. 9For you know the grace
of our Lord Jesus Christ, [i]that though He
was rich, yet for your sakes He became
poor, that you through His poverty might
become [j]rich.

10And in this [k]I give advice: [l]It is to your
advantage not only to be doing what you
began and [m]were desiring to do a year ago;
11but now you also must complete the doing
of it; that as *there was* a readiness to desire
it, so *there* also *may be* a completion out
of what *you* have. 12For [n]if there is first a
willing mind, *it is* accepted according to
what one has, *and* not according to what
he does not have.

13For *I do* not *mean* that others should
be eased and you burdened; 14but by an
equality, *that* now at this time your abun-
dance *may supply* their lack, that their
abundance also may *supply* your lack—
that there may be equality. 15As it is writ-
ten, [o]*"He who gathered much had nothing
left over, and he who gathered little had no
lack."**

Collection for the Judean Saints

16But thanks *be* to God who puts* the
same earnest care for you into the heart
of Titus. 17For he not only accepted the ex-
hortation, but being more diligent, he went
to you of his own accord. 18And we have
sent with him [p]the brother whose praise
is in the gospel throughout all the church-
es, 19and not only *that,* but who was also
[q]chosen by the churches to travel with us
with this gift, which is administered by us
[r]to the glory of the Lord Himself and *to
show* your ready mind, 20avoiding this: that
anyone should blame us in this lavish gift
which is administered by us— 21[s]providing
honorable things, not only in the sight of
the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22And we have sent with them our broth-
er whom we have often proved diligent in
many things, but now much more diligent,
because of the great confidence which *we
have* in you. 23If *anyone inquires* about
[t]Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker
concerning you. Or if our brethren *are in-
quired about, they are* [u]messengers of the
churches, the glory of Christ. 24Therefore
show to them, and* before the churches,
the proof of your love and of our [v]boasting
on your behalf.

Administering the Gift

9 Now concerning [a]the ministering to
the saints, it is superfluous for me to
write to you; 2for I know your willingness,
about which I boast of you to the Macedo-
nians, that Achaia was ready a [b]year ago;
and your zeal has stirred up the majori-
ty. 3[c]Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our
boasting of you should be in vain in this
respect, that, as I said, you may be ready;
4lest if *some* Macedonians come with
me and find you unprepared, we (not to
mention you!) should be ashamed of this
confident boasting.* 5Therefore I thought
it necessary to exhort the brethren to go
to you ahead of time, and prepare your
generous gift beforehand, which *you had*
previously promised, that it may be ready
as *a matter of* generosity and not as a
grudging obligation.

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* **8:4** NU-Text and M-Text omit *that we would receive,* thus changing text to *urgency for the favor and fellowship* … . * **8:15** Exodus 16:18 * **8:16** NU-Text reads *has put.* * **8:24** NU-Text and M-Text omit *and.* * **9:4** NU-Text reads *this confidence.*

8:1 *Macedonia.* Macedonia corresponds to the northern part of present day Greece. Paul had established churches in the Macedonian cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

8:8 *testing the sincerity of your love.* Generosity is the natural result of sincere love.

8:9 *you . . . might become rich.* Jesus offers forgiveness, justification, regeneration, eternal life, and glorification. He purchased us from slavery to sin, giving us the position of children of God with free access to His presence.

8:10 *advantage.* Giving in this life is an investment for eternity (Matt. 6:19–21).

9:4 *Macedonians.* Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote this letter (2:13; 7:5). When he made his visit to Corinth he would no doubt bring traveling companions from Macedonia.

8:2 [a] Mark 12:44 **8:4** [b] Rom. 15:25, 26 **8:5** [c] [Rom. 12:1, 2] [d] [Eph. 6:6] **8:6** [e] 2 Cor. 8:17; 12:18 **8:7** [f] [1 Cor. 1:5; 12:13] [g] 2 Cor. 9:8 **8:8** [h] 1 Cor. 7:6 **8:9** [i] Phil. 2:6, 7 [j] Rom. 9:23 **8:10** [k] 1 Cor. 7:25, 40 [l] [Heb. 13:16] [m] 2 Cor. 9:2 **8:12** [n] Mark 12:43, 44 **8:15** [o] Ex. 16:18 **8:18** [p] 2 Cor. 12:18 **8:19** [q] 1 Cor. 16:3, 4 [r] 2 Cor. 4:15 **8:21** [s] Rom. 12:17 **8:23** [t] 2 Cor. 7:13, 14 [u] Phil. 2:25 **8:24** [v] 2 Cor. 7:4, 14; 9:2 **9:1** [a] Gal. 2:10 **9:2** [b] 2 Cor. 8:10 **9:3** [c] 2 Cor. 8:6, 17

The Cheerful Giver

6 [d]But this *I say:* He who sows sparingly
will also reap sparingly, and he who sows
bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So
let each one *give* as he purposes in his
heart, [e]not grudgingly or of necessity; for
[f]God loves a cheerful giver. 8 [g]And God *is*
able to make all grace abound toward you,
that you, always having all sufficiency in
all *things,* may have an abundance for ev-
ery good work. 9 As it is written:

[h]"*He has dispersed abroad,*
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever."*

10 Now may* He who [i]supplies seed to the
sower, and bread for food, supply and mul-
tiply the seed you have *sown* and increase
the fruits of your [j]righteousness, 11 while
you *are* enriched in everything for all liber-
ality, [k]which causes thanksgiving through
us to God. 12 For the administration of this
service not only [l]supplies the needs of the
saints, but also is abounding through many
thanksgivings to God, 13 while, through the
proof of this ministry, they [m]glorify God
for the obedience of your confession to the
gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal [n]shar-
ing with them and all *men,* 14 and by their
prayer for you, who long for you because
of the exceeding [o]grace of God in you.
15 Thanks *be* to God [p]for His indescribable
gift!

The Spiritual War

10 Now [a]I, Paul, myself am pleading
with you by the meekness and gen-
tleness of Christ—[b]who in presence *am*
lowly among you, but being absent am
bold toward you. 2 But I beg *you* [c]that when
I am present I may not be bold with that
confidence by which I intend to be bold
against some, who think of us as if we
walked according to the flesh. 3 For though
we walk in the flesh, we do not war accord-
ing to the flesh. 4 [d]For the weapons [e]of our
warfare *are* not carnal but [f]mighty in God
[g]for pulling down strongholds, 5 [h]casting
down arguments and every high thing that
exalts itself against the knowledge of God,
bringing every thought into captivity to the
obedience of Christ, 6 [i]and being ready to
punish all disobedience when [j]your obedi-
ence is fulfilled.

Reality of Paul's Authority

7 [k]Do you look at things according to the
outward appearance? [l]If anyone is con-
vinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him
again consider this in himself, that just as
he *is* Christ's, even so [m]we *are* Christ's.*
8 For even if I should boast somewhat more
[n]about our authority, which the Lord gave
us* for edification and not for your de-
struction, [o]I shall not be ashamed— 9 lest I
seem to terrify you by letters. 10 "For *his* let-
ters," they say, "*are* weighty and powerful,
but [p]*his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his*
[q]speech contemptible." 11 Let such a person
consider this, that what we are in word by
letters when we are absent, such *we will*
also *be* in deed when we are present.

Limits of Paul's Authority

12 [r]For we dare not class ourselves or
compare ourselves with those who com-
mend themselves. But they, measuring
themselves by themselves, and comparing
themselves among themselves, are not
wise. 13 [s]We, however, will not boast be-
yond measure, but within the limits of the
sphere which God appointed us—a sphere

* **9:9** Psalm 112:9 * **9:10** NU-Text reads *Now He who supplies … will supply….* * **10:7** NU-Text reads *even as we are.* * **10:8** NU-Text omits *us.*

9:6–8 Giving—There is no better indicator of growth in the new life than in the area of giving. This passage and others deal with several aspects of giving:

1. Giving should be done generously, even extravagantly (2 Cor. 9:6).
2. Giving should be done cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7).
3. Giving should be regular (1 Cor. 16:2).
4. Giving should be systematic (1 Cor. 16:2).
5. Giving should be proportionate (2 Cor. 8:3).

God is not primarily concerned about the amount of the gift, but with the motive that lies behind it. The person who fails to honor God with his money actually robs God (Mal. 3:8), not because it impoverishes God but because it denies the God-ordained means for the support of His work and His ministers. For the child of God who honors God with his money, God promises abundant blessing (Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38) and the provision of his every need (Phil. 4:19).

9:6 *reap sparingly.* The law of the harvest is referred to repeatedly in Scripture (Prov. 11:24–25; 19:17; Luke 6:38; Gal. 6:7). If you do not plant, you will have no harvest.

9:8 *God is able.* God sees to it that the generous giver will not suffer want. Instead, God generously provides for those who give so that they can continue to do so.

9:15 *indescribable gift.* Our gifts can never compare with God's sacrifice for us.

10:4 *our warfare.* The world is hostile to Christ and His followers because the world is following Satan. The life of a believer is not one of ease but a constant spiritual battle.

10:8 *edification.* Paul's exhortation was aimed at correcting abuses, not the tearing down of the church.

9:6 [d] Prov. 11:24; 22:9 **9:7** [e] Deut. 15:7 [f] Rom. 12:8 **9:8** [g] Prov. 11:24] **9:9** [h] Ps. 112:9 **9:10** [i] Is. 55:10 [j] Hos. 10:12 **9:11** [k] 2 Cor. 1:11 **9:12** [l] 2 Cor. 8:14 **9:13** [m] Matt. 5:16] [n] Heb. 13:16] **9:14** [o] 2 Cor. 8:1 **9:15** [p] James 1:17] **10:1** [a] Rom. 12:1 [b] 1 Thess. 2:7 **10:2** [c] 1 Cor. 4:21 **10:4** [d] Eph. 6:13 [e] 1 Tim. 1:18 [f] Acts 7:22 [g] Jer. 1:10 **10:5** [h] 1 Cor. 1:19 **10:6** [i] 2 Cor. 13:2, 10 [j] 2 Cor. 7:15 **10:7** [k] John 7:24] [l] 1 Cor. 1:12; 14:37 [m] 1 Cor. 3:23 **10:8** [n] 2 Cor. 13:10 [o] 2 Cor. 7:14 **10:10** [p] Gal. 4:13 [q] 2 Cor. 11:6 **10:12** [r] 2 Cor. 5:12 **10:13** [s] 2 Cor. 10:15

which especially includes you. 14For we are not overextending ourselves (as though *our authority* did not extend to you), [t]for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ; 15not boasting of things beyond measure, *that is,* [u]in other men's labors, but having hope, *that* as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, 16to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment.

17But [v]*"he who glories, let him glory in the LORD."** 18For [w]not he who commends himself is approved, but [x]whom the Lord commends.

Concern for Their Faithfulness

11 Oh, that you would bear with me in a little [a]folly—and indeed you do bear with me. 2For I am [b]jealous for you with godly jealousy. For [c]I have betrothed you to one husband, [d]that I may present *you* [e]*as* a chaste virgin to Christ. 3But I fear, lest somehow, as [f]the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds [g]may be corrupted from the simplicity* that is in Christ. 4For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a [h]different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!

Paul and False Apostles

5For I consider that [i]I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6Even though [j]*I am* untrained in speech, yet *I am* not [k]in knowledge. But [l]we have been thoroughly manifested* among you in all things.

7Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you [m]free of charge? 8I robbed other churches, taking wages *from them* to minister to you. 9And when I was present with you, and in need, [n]I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked [o]the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep *myself.* 10[p]As the truth of Christ is in me, [q]no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. 11Why? [r]Because I do not love you? God knows!

12But what I do, I will also continue to do, [s]that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. 13For such [t]*are* false apostles, [u]deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into [v]an angel of light. 15Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, [w]whose end will be according to their works.

Reluctant Boasting

16I say again, let no one think me a fool. If otherwise, at least receive me as a fool, that I also may boast a little. 17What I speak, [x]I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. 18Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast. 19For you put up with fools gladly, [y]since you *yourselves* are wise! 20For you put up with it [z]if one brings you into bondage, if one devours *you,* if one takes *from you,* if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. 21To *our* shame [a]I say that we were too weak for that! But [b]in whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also.

Suffering for Christ

22Are they [c]Hebrews? So *am* I. Are they Israelites? So *am* I. Are they the seed of

* **10:17** Jeremiah 9:24 * **11:3** NU-Text adds *and purity.* * **11:6** NU-Text omits *been.*

10:16 ***regions beyond you.*** Paul states in Romans that his ambition was to preach the gospel in Spain (Rom. 15:24).

11:2 ***jealous.*** Usually jealousy has a negative connotation to us—we confuse jealousy with envy or spite. The word has the same root as "zealous," and it can mean a sincere and energetic protection of the rights or purity of a person or place.

11:3 ***simplicity.*** In this sense, simplicity indicates sincerity or lack of double motives or cunning.

11:6 ***untrained in speech.*** Paul may have lacked gifts as a professional speaker, but he did not lack knowledge since he had received direct revelation from the Lord (Gal. 1:11–12).

11:7 ***free of charge.*** Professional philosophers and teachers in Greek society charged for teaching.

11:14 ***transforms himself into an angel of light.*** Don't make the mistake of believing that evil always appears grotesque, ugly, or repulsive. Satan's main tool is deception and he is quite capable of making evil appear beautiful.

11:17 ***I speak not according to the Lord.*** This kind of boasting was not characteristic of the Lord. Jesus Christ was an example of humility (Phil. 2:5–11).

11:18 ***according to the flesh.*** The false apostles measured themselves by their own standards rather than by God's.

11:21 ***too weak.*** Paul's critics had accused him of being weak (10:10). He sarcastically said that he was too weak to rule the Corinthians harshly as the false apostles had done.

10:14 [t] 1 Cor. 3:5, 6 **10:15** [u] Rom. 15:20 **10:17** [v] Jer. 9:24 **10:18** [w] Prov. 27:2 [x] Rom. 2:29 **11:1** [a] 2 Cor. 11:4, 16, 19 **11:2** [b] Gal. 4:17 [c] Hos. 2:19 [d] Col. 1:28 [e] Lev. 21:13 **11:3** [f] Gen. 3:4, 13 [g] Eph. 6:24 **11:4** [h] Gal. 1:6–8 **11:5** [i] 2 Cor. 12:11 **11:6** [j] [1 Cor. 1:17] [k] [Eph. 3:4] [l] [2 Cor. 12:12] **11:7** [m] 1 Cor. 9:18 **11:9** [n] Acts 20:33 [o] Phil. 4:10 **11:10** [p] Rom. 1:9; 9:1 [q] 1 Cor. 9:15 **11:11** [r] 2 Cor. 6:11; 12:15 **11:12** [s] 1 Cor. 9:12 **11:13** [t] Phil. 1:15 [u] Phil. 3:2 **11:14** [v] Gal. 1:8 **11:15** [w] [Phil. 3:19] **11:17** [x] 1 Cor. 7:6 **11:19** [y] 1 Cor. 4:10 **11:20** [z] [Gal. 2:4; 4:3, 9; 5:1] **11:21** [a] 2 Cor. 10:10 [b] Phil. 3:4 **11:22** [c] Phil. 3:4–6

Abraham? So *am* I. 23Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: [d]in labors more abundant, [e]in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, [f]in deaths often. 24From the Jews five times I received [g]forty [h]*stripes* minus one. 25Three times I was [i]beaten with rods; [j]once I was stoned; three times I [k]was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26*in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, [l]*in* perils of *my own* countrymen, [m]*in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; 27in weariness and toil, [n]in sleeplessness often, [o]in hunger and thirst, in [p]fastings often, in cold and nakedness— 28besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: [q]my deep concern for all the churches. 29[r]Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn *with indignation*?

30If I must boast, [s]I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. 31[t]The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [u]who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32[v]In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

The Vision of Paradise

12 It is doubtless* not profitable for me to boast. I will come to [a]visions and [b]revelations of the Lord: 2I know a man [c]in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one [d]was caught up to the third heaven. 3And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— 4how he was caught up into [e]Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. 5Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not [f]boast, except in my infirmities. 6For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me *to be* or hears from me.

The Thorn in the Flesh

7And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a [g]thorn in the flesh was given to me, [h]a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8[i]Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly [j]I will rather boast in my infirmities, [k]that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10Therefore [l]I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. [m]For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Signs of an Apostle

11I have become [n]a fool in boasting;* you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for [o]in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though [p]I am nothing. 12[q]Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and [r]wonders and mighty [s]deeds. 13For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!

* **12:1** NU-Text reads *necessary, though not profitable, to boast.* * **12:11** NU-Text omits *in boasting.*

11:23 ***as a fool.*** Paul acknowledged the silliness of such bragging. He knew that only God had made his preaching and service effective. Paul's credentials were superior to those of the false teachers on every point of experience and background, but even so his ministry had authority only because he received it from God.

12:1 ***visions and revelations.*** This boasting may have been to counter similar claims by the false teachers.

12:2 ***fourteen years.*** Paul wrote 2 Corinthians in A.D. 56; 14 years earlier would have been A.D. 42, probably when he was in Antioch (Acts 11:26). ***third heaven.*** It was common to speak of three "heavens": The first is the atmosphere where the birds fly; the second is the place of the sun, moon, and stars; the third is where God dwells.

12:7 ***thorn in the flesh.*** Most commentators interpret Paul's thorn as a physical ailment, and many suggest that it was eye trouble on the basis of Galatians 4:15. It is also possible that "flesh" is a reference to the fallen human nature, in which case the thorn could be a temptation, or it could refer to persecution or opposition. ***messenger of Satan.*** God permitted Satan to afflict Paul as he did Job (Job 1–2).

12:11 ***compelled me.*** Only the fact that the Corinthians had listened to the silly slander against Paul had made him waste time on boasting.

12:12 ***signs of an apostle.*** God has often used miracles as supernatural evidences of His authority in a new work (Acts 14:3).

11:23 [d] 1 Cor. 15:10 [e] Acts 9:16 [f] 1 Cor. 15:30
11:24 [g] Deut. 25:3 [h] 2 Cor. 6:5 **11:25** [i] Acts 16:22, 23; 21:32 [j] Acts 14:5, 19 [k] Acts 27:1–44 **11:26** [l] Acts 9:23, 24; 13:45, 50; 17:5, 13 [m] Acts 14:5, 19; 19:23; 27:42 **11:27** [n] Acts 20:31 [o] 1 Cor. 4:11 [p] Acts 9:9; 13:2, 3; 14:23 **11:28** [q] Acts 20:18 **11:29** [r] [1 Cor. 8:9, 13; 9:22] **11:30** [s] [2 Cor. 12:5, 9, 10] **11:31** [t] 1 Thess. 2:5 [u] Rom. 9:5 **11:32** [v] Acts 9:19–25 **12:1** [a] Acts 16:9; 18:9; 22:17, 18; 23:11; 26:13–15; 27:23 [b] [Gal. 1:12; 2:2] **12:2** [c] Rom. 16:7 [d] Acts 22:17 **12:4** [e] Luke 23:43 **12:5** [f] 2 Cor. 11:30 **12:7** [g] Ezek. 28:24 [h] Job 2:7 **12:8** [i] Matt. 26:44 **12:9** [j] 2 Cor. 11:30 [k] [1 Pet. 4:14] **12:10** [l] [Rom. 5:3; 8:35] [m] 2 Cor. 13:4 **12:11** [n] 2 Cor. 5:13; 11:1, 16; 12:6 [o] 2 Cor. 11:5 [p] 1 Cor. 3:7; 13:2; 15:9 **12:12** [q] Rom. 15:18 [r] Acts 15:12 [s] Acts 14:8–10; 16:16–18; 19:11, 12; 20:6–12; 28:1–10

Love for the Church

14 [t]Now *for* the third time I am ready to
come to you. And I will not be burdensome
to you; for [u]I do not seek yours, but you.
[v]For the children ought not to lay up for
the parents, but the parents for the chil-
dren. 15And I will very gladly spend and
be spent [w]for your souls; though [x]the more
abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.
16But be that *as it may*, [y]I did not burden
you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught
you by cunning! 17Did I take advantage of
you by any of those whom I sent to you?
18I urged Titus, and sent our [z]brother with
him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did
we not walk in the same spirit? Did *we* not
walk in the same steps?
19 [a]Again, do you think* that we excuse
ourselves to you? [b]We speak before God
in Christ. [c]But *we do* all things, beloved,
for your edification. 20For I fear lest, when
I come, I shall not find you such as I wish,
and *that* [d]I shall be found by you such as
you do not wish; lest *there be* contentions,
jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish am-
bitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits,
tumults; 21lest, when I come again, my God
[e]will humble me among you, and I shall
mourn for many [f]who have sinned before
and have not repented of the uncleanness,
[g]fornication, and lewdness which they
have practiced.

Coming with Authority

13 This *will be* [a]the third *time* I am coming to you. [b]"*By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.*"* 2[c]I have told you before, and fore-
tell as if I were present the second time, and
now being absent I write* to those [d]who
have sinned before, and to all the rest, that
if I come again [e]I will not spare— 3since
you seek a proof of Christ [f]speaking in me,
who is not weak toward you, but mighty
[g]in you. 4[h]For though He was crucified in
weakness, yet [i]He lives by the power of
God. For [j]we also are weak in Him, but we
shall live with Him by the power of God
toward you.
5Examine yourselves *as to* whether you
are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not
know yourselves, [k]that Jesus Christ is in
you?—unless indeed you are [l]disqualified.
6But I trust that you will know that we are
not disqualified.

Paul Prefers Gentleness

7Now I* pray to God that you do no
evil, not that we should appear approved,
but that you should do what is honorable,
though [m]we may seem disqualified. 8For
we can do nothing against the truth, but
for the truth. 9For we are glad [n]when we
are weak and you are strong. And this also
we pray, [o]that you may be made complete.
10[p]Therefore I write these things being ab-
sent, lest being present I should use sharp-
ness, according to the [q]authority which the
Lord has given me for edification and not
for destruction.

Greetings and Benediction

11Finally, brethren, farewell. Become
complete. [r]Be of good comfort, be of one
mind, live in peace; and the God of love
[s]and peace will be with you.
12 [t]Greet one another with a holy kiss.
13All the saints greet you.
14 [u]The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God, and [v]the communion
of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.

* **12:19** NU-Text reads *You have been thinking for a long time....* * **13:1** Deuteronomy 19:15 * **13:2** NU-Text omits *I write.* * **13:7** NU-Text reads *we.*

12:14 ***the third time.*** It is not clear whether Paul had already made two previous visits to Corinth, or whether this refers to the third attempt to visit. We know that he had tried to come and had been prevented at least once (1:15–16,23; 2:1–4).

13:4 ***in weakness.*** Christ appeared to be weak when He was crucified, but He was raised by the power of God; similarly, Paul was weak, but by the power of God he would live with Christ in strength toward them.

13:5 ***Examine yourselves.*** Paul did not doubt that they were true believers (1:1,24; 7:1; 8:1; 12:14). He wanted them to ask themselves whether they were walking according to the gospel that they professed. He wanted them to apply the same standard to themselves that they were applying to him.

13:9 ***complete.*** The Greek word for "complete" was used to describe the setting of bones and the reconciliation of alienated friends.

13:14 ***the communion of the Holy Spirit.*** At the end of his letter, Paul identifies the solution to many of the Corinthians' problems. The Holy Spirit, who dwelled in each of them, could empower them to live righteously. Furthermore, the Spirit could reconcile them to each other. They could love and encourage each other instead of fighting each other (12:20). They needed God's grace, not selfishness; God's love, not anger; and communion, not conflict.

12:14 [t] 2 Cor. 1:15; 13:1, 2 [u] [1 Cor. 10:24–33] [v] 1 Cor. 4:14 **12:15** [w] [2 Tim. 2:10] [x] 2 Cor. 6:12, 13 **12:16** [y] 2 Cor. 11:9 **12:18** [z] 2 Cor. 8:18 **12:19** [a] 2 Cor. 5:12 [b] [Rom. 9:1, 2] [c] 1 Cor. 10:33 **12:20** [d] 1 Cor. 4:21 **12:21** [e] 2 Cor. 2:1, 4 [f] 2 Cor. 13:2 [g] 1 Cor. 5:1 **13:1** [a] 2 Cor. 12:14 [b] Deut. 17:6; 19:15 **13:2** [c] 2 Cor. 10:2 [d] 2 Cor. 12:21 [e] 2 Cor. 1:23; 10:11 **13:3** [f] Matt. 10:20 [g] [1 Cor. 9:2] **13:4** [h] [1 Pet. 3:18] [i] [Rom. 1:4; 6:4] [j] [2 Cor. 10:3, 4] **13:5** [k] [Gal. 4:19] [l] 1 Cor. 9:27 **13:7** [m] 2 Cor. 6:9 **13:9** [n] 1 Cor. 4:10 [o] [1 Thess. 3:10] **13:10** [p] 1 Cor. 4:21 [q] 2 Cor. 10:8 **13:11** [r] Rom. 12:16, 18 [s] Rom. 15:33 **13:12** [t] Rom. 16:16 **13:14** [u] Rom. 16:24 [v] Phil. 2:1

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
GALATIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The Pauline authorship and the unity of this epistle are virtually unchallenged. The first verse clearly identifies the author as, "Paul, an apostle" as does 5:2, "I, Paul, say to you." In fact, Paul actually wrote, or at least finished, Galatians by his own hand (6:11) instead of dictating it to a secretary, as was his usual practice. There is some controversy as to whether Paul was writing to the northern Galatians or the southern Galatians. If the former theory is correct, this epistle was written sometime during Paul's third missionary journey in A.D. 53–56. If the latter theory is correct, this epistle was written before the Jerusalem council (Acts 15) in A.D. 49, right after the first missionary journey. Regardless of the timing of its writing, Galatians affords us a clear glimpse into the ministry and theology of Paul as a Jewish Christian.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 49–53 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Gal. 2:20–21

▶ **THEME:** The big question for the church in its first generation was, "Did a person have to become a Jew before they could be a Christian?" There were many Jews who thought this was the case. Three things happened to move the church away from this perspective: Peter's vision as recorded in Acts 10; the decision of the Jerusalem council in Acts 15 that Gentiles didn't need to adopt all the Jewish customs; and Paul's received revelation that he was to deliver to the Gentiles. Even with all this evidence, there were still some Jews who followed Paul around and attempted to teach Jewish regulations to his newly planted churches. Paul was furious at these events and used this letter to set the record straight. Christ brought freedom and died for people of all cultures, an idea that was a new paradigm for many of the Jews who were stuck in a "God loves us most" mode. Paul goes to great lengths to review with the Galatians what he had taught them and where this teaching had come from.

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but [a]through Jesus Christ and God the Father [b]who raised Him from the dead), **2**and all the brethren who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

3Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, **4**[c]who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us [d]from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, **5**to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Only One Gospel

6I marvel that you are turning away so soon [e]from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, **7**[f]which is not another; but there are some [g]who trouble you and want to [h]pervert the gospel of Christ. **8**But even if [i]we, or an angel from

1:1 ***an apostle.*** Paul calls himself this title to assert his divinely given authority to speak to the problem confronting the Galatian churches. ***through Jesus Christ and God the Father.*** Paul makes reference to his unique call to be an apostle (vv. 15–16) which came to him at the same time as his salvation on the road to Damascus (Acts 26:12–18).
1:2 ***To the churches of Galatia.*** Galatians is a circular letter, intended for several churches.
1:3 ***Grace to you and peace.*** These words are a variation from the standard greeting of ancient letters in Paul's time. Paul adds the Greek word for the traditional Hebrew greeting, "peace."
1:4 ***deliver us from this present evil age.*** This passage is similar to Colossians 1:13, which states, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." Both passages develop this truth based on Christ's redemptive work (Col. 1:14), implying that the word "deliver" refers to sanctification in the face of temptations of this present age.
1:6–7 ***marvel.*** Use of this word reveals Paul's ongoing shock at the Galatians' defection from the gospel of God's undeserved grace. The Galatians had unwittingly fallen for a different message.
1:8–9 ***If anyone.*** Paul's concern for the purity of the gospel message is revealed by his assertion that he

1:1 [a] Acts 9:6 [b] Acts 2:24 **1:4** [c] [Matt. 20:28] [d] Heb. 2:5 **1:6** [e] Gal. 1:15; 5:8 **1:7** [f] 2 Cor. 11:4 [g] Gal. 5:10, 12 [h] 2 Cor. 2:17 **1:8** [i] 1 Cor. 16:22

heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you [j]than what you have received, let him be accursed.

10For [k]do I now [l]persuade men, or God? Or [m]do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Call to Apostleship

11[n]But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12For [o]I neither received it from man, nor was I taught *it,* but *it came* [p]through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how [q]I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and [r]*tried to* destroy it. 14And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, [s]being more exceedingly zealous [t]for the traditions of my fathers.

15But when it pleased God, [u]who separated me from my mother's womb and called *me* through His grace, 16[v]to reveal His Son in me, that [w]I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with [x]flesh and blood, 17nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Contacts at Jerusalem

18Then after three years [y]I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,* and remained with him fifteen days. 19But [z]I saw none of the other apostles except [a]James, the Lord's brother. 20(Now *concerning* the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

21[b]Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which [c]*were* in Christ. 23But they were [d]hearing only, "He who formerly [e]persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once *tried to* destroy." 24And they [f]glorified God in me.

Defending the Gospel

2 Then after fourteen years [a]I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me.* 2And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but [b]privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means [c]I might run, or had run, in vain. 3Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4And *this occurred* because of [d]false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our [e]liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, [f]that they might bring us into bondage), 5to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that [g]the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6But from those [h]who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; [i]God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who

* **1:18** NU-Text reads *Cephas.*

would condemn to destruction anyone who taught a false gospel.

1:10 ***seek to please men.*** This was neither Paul's motivation nor the source of his authority (v. 1). Paul continually sought the approval of God. He did not base his decisions on the opinions of other people. Instead he single-mindedly aimed at pleasing God (Phil. 3:14).

1:13–14 ***Judaism.*** This refers to the Jewish way of life, which was based partly on the Old Testament and partly on additional traditions (Matt. 15:2).

1:15–17 ***separated me . . . called me through His grace.*** Paul related that God had chosen him to be an apostle (v. 1) before his birth, not unlike Jeremiah's call to be a prophet (Jer. 1:5). Paul, like the Judaizers in Galatia, had previously tried to earn his salvation by works (v. 14). He needed no human validation because of the way he had received his message.

1:19 ***James, the Lord's brother.*** This reference indicates that the "apostles" were not always restricted to the Twelve.

2:1 ***fourteen years.*** This timeframe may refer to twelve full years plus fractions of the first and last years (1:18). The span could date from Paul's previous visit to Jerusalem, but more likely from his conversion.

2:3 ***Titus.*** One of Paul's companions was a kind of "test-case" Gentile. ***circumcised.*** This term introduces a central topic of the Jewish false teachers, one which Paul addresses repeatedly in Galatians (5:2–3,6). Unlike Timothy, whom Paul had circumcised because Timothy's mother was Jewish, Titus was not circumcised. Circumcising him would have been a sign to all other Gentiles that following Jewish law was required for a person to become a Christian. As Paul explains in this letter, circumcising Titus would be a rejection of the good news that salvation is God's gift to those who believe in His Son.

2:4 ***false brethren.*** This phrase apparently indicates that, although these people passed themselves off convincingly as Christians, there was reason to view their profession as a sham. These pseudo-Christians did not announce their purpose, which was to curtail Christian liberty (5:1,13).

2:6 ***those who seemed to be something.*** While Paul recognized the leadership roles of James, Peter, and John, he pointed out that they were in no way superior to him in their understanding of the gospel.

1:9 [j] Deut. 4:2 **1:10** [k] 1 Thess. 2:4 [l] 1 Sam. 24:7 [m] 1 Thess. 2:4 **1:11** [n] 1 Cor. 15:1 **1:12** [o] 1 Cor. 15:1 [p] [Eph. 3:3–5] **1:13** [q] Acts 9:1 [r] Acts 8:3; 22:4, 5 **1:14** [s] Acts 26:9 [t] Jer. 9:14 **1:15** [u] Is. 49:1, 5 **1:16** [v] [2 Cor. 4:5–7] [w] Acts 9:15 [x] Matt. 16:17 **1:18** [y] Acts 9:26 **1:19** [z] 1 Cor. 9:5 [a] Matt. 13:55 **1:21** [b] Acts 9:30 **1:22** [c] Rom. 16:7 **1:23** [d] Acts 9:20, 21 [e] Acts 8:3 **1:24** [f] Acts 11:18 **2:1** [a] Acts 15:2 **2:2** [b] Acts 15:1–4 [c] Phil. 2:16 **2:4** [d] Acts 15:1, 24 [e] Gal. 3:25; 5:1, 13 [f] Gal. 4:3, 9 **2:5** [g] [Gal. 1:6; 2:14; 3:1] **2:6** [h] Gal. 2:9; 6:3 [i] Acts 10:34

seemed *to be something* [i]added nothing to me. 7But on the contrary, [k]when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised [l]had been committed to me, as *the gospel* for the circumcised *was* to Peter 8(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the [m]circumcised [n]also [o]worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be [p]pillars, perceived [q]the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, [r]that we *should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10*They desired* only that we should remember the poor, [s]the very thing which I also was eager to do.

No Return to the Law

11[t]Now when Peter* had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12for before certain men came from James, [u]he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14But when I saw that they were not straightforward about [v]the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter [w]before *them* all, [x]"If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you* compel Gentiles to live as Jews?* 15[y]We *who are* Jews by nature, and not [z]sinners of the Gentiles, 16[a]knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but [b]by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not [c]by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

17"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found [d]sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! 18For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19For I [e]through the law [f]died to the law that I might [g]live to God. 20I have been [h]crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh [i]I live by faith in the Son of God, [j]who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21I do not set aside the grace of God; for [k]if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain."

Justification by Faith

3 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth,* before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you* as crucified? 2This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, [a]or by the hearing of faith? 3Are you so foolish? [b]Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by [c]the flesh? 4[d]Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain?

5Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the

* **2:11** NU-Text reads *Cephas.* * **2:14** NU-Text reads *how can you.* • Some interpreters stop the quotation here. * **3:1** NU-Text omits *that you should not obey the truth.* • NU-Text omits *among you.*

2:7–10 *uncircumcised . . . circumcised.* There were not two different gospels. Rather, the primary scope of Paul's apostolic ministry was to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13), while Peter's apostleship was, first and foremost, targeted toward the Jews. ***remember the poor.*** Almost certainly, this is a reference to the poor among the church in Judea (Acts 11:29–30).

2:11–12 *Antioch.* This city was the largest of the Roman province of Syria. It became a center for missionary outreach to other Gentile cities in Asia Minor and Macedonia (Acts 13:1–3).

2:14 *they were not straightforward about the truth.* Peter's hypocritical example implied that Gentiles had to behave like Jews in order to receive God's grace. It had already been decided (vv. 1–5) that it was not proper to compel Gentiles to live as Jews, because salvation was through faith alone.

2:15–17 *We who are Jews by nature.* Paul is not denying that those who are Jews by birth are sinners, as are all Gentiles (Rom. 3:23). Rather he is implying that Jews enjoy spiritual privileges (Rom. 9:4–5) that should make them more knowledgeable about how to be justified before God (3:6; Gen. 15:6). The Jews should have been aware that no person can be declared righteous or justified by obedience to the law of Moses (3:10–21).

2:17–19 *is Christ therefore a minister of sin.* Paul strongly rejects the erroneous conclusion that being justified by faith in Christ actually made Jews sinners. Those who attempt to be justified through "the works of the law" are "cursed" (3:10). If anyone attempts to reassert the "works of the law" as having any part in the justification before God, the law itself convicts that person. The law itself is not sinful; its purpose is to convince individuals of their personal, spiritual deadness in sin outside of faith in Christ (Rom. 7:7–13).

3:1 *O foolish Galatians.* This phrase does not indicate lack of intelligence, but lack of wisdom. Paul wonders whether something like an evil spell had prevented the Galatians from recalling the gospel of the crucified Christ.

3:3 *Having begun in the Spirit . . . made perfect by the flesh.* The Galatians were mistakenly trying to achieve perfection through their own efforts, especially through circumcision.

2:6 [j] 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11 **2:7** [k] Acts 9:15; 13:46; 22:21 [l] 1 Thess. 2:4 **2:8** [m] 1 Pet. 1:1 [n] Acts 9:15 [o] [Gal. 3:5] **2:9** [p] Matt. 16:18 [q] Rom. 1:5 [r] Acts 13:3 **2:10** [s] Acts 11:30 **2:11** [t] Acts 15:35 **2:12** [u] [Acts 10:28; 11:2, 3] **2:14** [v] Gal. 1:6; 2:5 [w] 1 Tim. 5:20 [x] [Acts 10:28] **2:15** [y] [Acts 15:10] [z] Matt. 9:11 **2:16** [a] Acts 13:38, 39 [b] Rom. 1:17 [c] Ps. 143:2 **2:17** [d] [1 John 3:8] **2:19** [e] Rom. 8:2 [f] [Rom. 6:2, 14; 7:4] [g] [Rom. 6:11] **2:20** [h] [Rom. 6:6] [i] 2 Cor. 5:15 [j] Eph. 5:2 **2:21** [k] Heb. 7:11 **3:2** [a] Rom. 10:16, 17 **3:3** [b] [Gal. 4:9] [c] Heb. 7:16 **3:4** [d] Heb. 10:35

hearing of faith?— 6just as Abraham [e]*"believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."** 7Therefore know that *only* [f]those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8And [g]the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying*, [h]*"In you all the nations shall be blessed."** 9So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

The Law Brings a Curse

10For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, [i]*"Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."** 11But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for [j]*"the just shall live by faith."** 12Yet [k]the law is not of faith, but [l]*"the man who does them shall live by them."**

13[m]Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, [n]*"Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"**), 14[o]that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the [p]Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive [q]the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The Changeless Promise

15Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: [r]Though *it is* only a man's covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of [s]one, [t]*"And to your Seed,"** who is [u]Christ. 17And this I say, *that* the law, [v]which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ,* [w]that it should make the promise of no effect. 18For if [x]the inheritance *is* of the law, [y]*it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

Purpose of the Law

19What purpose then *does* the law *serve?* [z]It was added because of transgressions, till the [a]Seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* [b]appointed through angels by the hand [c]of a mediator. 20Now a mediator does not *mediate* for one *only*, [d]but God is one.

21*Is* the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22But the Scripture has confined [e]all under sin, [f]that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24Therefore [g]the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, [h]that we might be justified by

* **3:6** Genesis 15:6 * **3:8** Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14 * **3:10** Deuteronomy 27:26 * **3:11** Habakkuk 2:4 * **3:12** Leviticus 18:5 * **3:13** Deuteronomy 21:23 * **3:16** Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 24:7 * **3:17** NU-Text omits *in Christ*.

3:6 ***believed God.*** There are several reasons for Paul's reference to Abraham's faith as an example: (1) Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation (Gen. 12:1–3); (2) Abraham is the clearest example of justification in the Old Testament; and (3) the Judaizers almost certainly were pointing back to Abraham, probably in connection with circumcision (2:3; 5:2–3). The example of Abraham's faith is also developed in Romans 4 and Hebrews 11.

3:7 ***who are of faith.*** These are the spiritual sons of Abraham, even if they are not Jews. They are part of God's people.

3:8–9 ***Scripture.*** Here, Scripture is personified as a preacher who foretells that Abraham and his example of faith (Gen. 15:6) would become a life-changing blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:3; Matt. 28:19) as the gospel spread. All who have faith, as Abraham did, join in his "blessed" status.

3:10 ***Cursed is everyone.*** The quotation from Deuteronomy 27:26 says that those who do not keep the whole law are cursed, proving that all are cursed who follow the law, because all fall short of the law's standards (Rom. 1:17; 3:10,18,23).

3:13 ***the curse of the law.*** Paul knew that many of his readers would perceive that they were actually under the curse of the law. For them, as for us, it is incredibly comforting to know that Christ became that curse for us on the cross (Deut. 21:23).

3:16 ***to Abraham and his Seed.*** Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the covenant (v. 15) God made with Abraham. Although in one sense all Jews are the physical seed of Abraham, Christ is the final focus of God's promises, the ultimate Seed.

3:19–20 ***What purpose then does the law serve?*** The purpose of the law of Moses was not to justify man in God's eyes (2:16). Rather, the law was added after God's promise to Abraham to clarify the issue of sin until Christ, the Seed, came.

3:21–22 ***Is the law then against the promises of God?*** The relationship of the law and the promises is one of need and fulfillment. The law was not designed by God to give eternal life and righteousness. Rather, the law showed humanity's need for the promise of life through faith in Jesus Christ (v. 9; 2:16).

3:23–25 ***kept under guard . . . tutor.*** Paul gives two different illustrations concerning the function of the law until Christ came (4:4–5). The law acted as a jailor to hold humankind in custody until faith in Christ was revealed. But the law also served as a tutor. A tutor in ancient Greek culture would accompany the children

3:6 [e]Gen. 15:6 **3:7** [f]John 8:39 **3:8** [g]Rom. 9:17 [h]Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14 **3:10** [i]Deut. 27:26 **3:11** [j]Hab. 2:4 **3:12** [k]Rom. 4:4, 5 [l]Lev. 18:5 **3:13** [m][Rom. 8:3] [n]Deut. 21:23 **3:14** [o]Gen. 12:3; 22:18; [Rom. 4:1–5, 9, 16] [p]Is. 49:6; Rom. 3:29, 30 [q]Is. 32:15 **3:15** [r]Heb. 9:17 **3:16** [s]Gen. 22:18 [t]Gen. 12:3, 7; 13:15; 24:7 [u][1 Cor. 12:12] **3:17** [v]Ex. 12:40 [w][Rom. 4:13] **3:18** [x][Rom. 8:17] [y]Rom. 4:14 **3:19** [z]John 15:22 [a]Gal. 4:4 [b]Acts 7:53 [c]Ex. 20:19 **3:20** [d][Rom. 3:29] **3:22** [e]Rom. 11:32 [f]Rom. 4:11 **3:24** [g]Rom. 10:4 [h]Acts 13:39

faith. 25But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Sons and Heirs

26For you [i]are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27For [j]as many of you as were baptized into Christ [k]have put on Christ. 28[l]There is neither Jew nor Greek, [m]there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all [n]one in Christ Jesus. 29And [o]if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's [p]seed, and [q]heirs according to the promise.

4 Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. 3Even so we, when we were children, [a]were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4But [b]when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, [c]born* [d]of a woman, [e]born under the law, 5[f]to redeem those who were under the law, [g]that we might receive the adoption as sons.

6And because you are sons, God has sent forth [h]the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, [i]and if a son, then an heir of* God through Christ.

Fears for the Church

8But then, indeed, [j]when you did not know God, [k]you served those which by nature are not gods. 9But now [l]after you have known God, or rather are known by God, [m]how *is it that* you turn again to [n]the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10[o]You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11I am afraid for you, [p]lest I have labored for you in vain.

12Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I *became* like you. [q]You have not injured me at all. 13You know that [r]because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me [s]as an angel of God, [t]*even* as Christ Jesus. 15What* then was the blessing you *enjoyed?* For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. 16Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

17They [u]zealously court you, *but* for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. 18But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you. 19[v]My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, 20I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

* **4:4** Or *made* * **4:7** NU-Text reads *through God* and omits *through Christ.* * **4:15** NU-Text reads *Where.*

in his care, instructing and disciplining them when necessary. The law was like a tutor because it both corrected and instructed the Israelites in God's ways until Christ was revealed and such a schoolmaster was no longer needed (4:1–2).

3:28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek.* The context of this verse is justification by faith in Christ Jesus. Racial, social, and gender distinctions that so easily divide in no way hinder a person from coming to Christ in order to receive His mercy. All people equally can become God's heirs and recipients of His eternal promises (4:5–7).

4:1–2 *until the time appointed by the father.* In ancient society a child had to wait until the proper time before he could inherit what was his. Paul uses this idea to explain why God delayed Jesus Christ's coming, leaving people with His law as a guide (3:23–25).

4:4–5 *born under the law.* This means Christ was subject to the Jewish law (Matt. 5:17–19), further establishing His identification with all people who are subject to the law. ***redeem.*** This verb was used in the context of buying from a slave market. It describes Christ's supreme and final payment for the sins of humanity. His death on the cross frees those who believe in Him from the curse of the law and slavery to sin. This decisive payment and resulting freedom clear the way for Christians to become God's sons.

4:6 *God has sent forth the Spirit.* Just as "God sent forth His Son" in "fullness of the time" in world history (v. 4), so God has also sent the Spirit at just the right time for every person who believes in Christ.

4:9 *how is it that you turn again.* The Galatians had come to know God through faith in Jesus Christ (John 17:2–3). He had adopted them as His own sons, but they were turning back to the law that had once enslaved them.

4:12 *I urge you.* To get beyond the present dilemma, Paul appeals to the Galatians to follow his example (1 Cor. 11:1). He had abandoned the ceremonial rules and regulations connected with Judaism so that he could freely preach the gospel of Christ to Jew and Gentile alike in the cities of Galatia. They too should not hinder the gospel of Christ with laws and regulations.

4:17–18 *they want to exclude you.* Paul was strongly implying that the false teachers in Galatia were making the same mistake he had made prior to his conversion. Their zeal for the law was blinding them to the freedom and truth to be found in Jesus Christ.

4:19 *My little children.* Paul calls the Galatians children because of their lack of spiritual growth and depth. The apostle also portrays himself as the Galatians' "spiritual mother." He was feeling the labor

3:26 [i] John 1:12 **3:27** [j] [Rom. 6:3] [k] Rom. 10:12; 13:14 **3:28** [l] Col. 3:11 [m] [1 Cor. 12:13] [n] [Eph. 2:15, 16] **3:29** [o] Gen. 21:10 [p] Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:7 [q] Gen. 12:3; 18:18; Rom. 8:17 **4:3** [a] Col. 2:8, 20 **4:4** [b] [Gen. 49:10] [c] [John 1:14] [d] Gen. 3:15; [Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:25] [e] [Matt. 5:17]; Luke 2:21, 27 **4:5** [f] [Matt. 20:28] [g] [John 1:12] **4:6** [h] [Rom. 5:5; 8:9, 15, 16] **4:7** [i] [Rom. 8:16, 17] **4:8** [j] Eph. 2:12 [k] Rom. 1:25 **4:9** [l] [1 Cor. 8:3] [m] Col. 2:20 [n] Heb. 7:18 **4:10** [o] Rom. 14:5 **4:11** [p] 1 Thess. 3:5 **4:12** [q] 2 Cor. 2:5 **4:13** [r] 1 Cor. 2:3 **4:14** [s] Mal. 2:7 [t] [Luke 10:16] **4:17** [u] Rom. 10:2 **4:19** [v] 1 Cor. 4:15

Two Covenants

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under
the law, do you not hear the law? 22 For it
is written that Abraham had two sons:
w the one by a bondwoman, x the other by
a freewoman. 23 But he *who was* of the
bondwoman y was born according to the
flesh, z and he of the freewoman through
promise, 24 which things are symbolic. For
these are the* two covenants: the one from
Mount a Sinai which gives birth to bondage,
which is Hagar— 25 for this Hagar is Mount
Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jeru-
salem which now is, and is in bondage with
her children— 26 but the b Jerusalem above
is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For
it is written:

c *"Rejoice, O barren,*
You who do not bear!
Break forth and shout,
You who are not in labor!
For the desolate has many more
children
*Than she who has a husband."**

28 Now d we, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are
e children of promise. 29 But, as f he who was
born according to the flesh then persecuted
him *who was born* according to the Spir-
it, g even so *it is* now. 30 Nevertheless what
does h the Scripture say? i *"Cast out the*
bondwoman and her son, for i *the son of the*
bondwoman shall not be heir with the son
*of the freewoman."** 31 So then, brethren,
we are not children of the bondwoman but
of the free.

Christian Liberty

5 a Stand fast therefore in the liberty by
which Christ has made us free,* and
do not be entangled again with a b yoke of
bondage. 2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that
c if you become circumcised, Christ will
profit you nothing. 3 And I testify again to
every man who becomes circumcised d that
he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 e You
have become estranged from Christ, you
who *attempt to* be justified by law; f you
have fallen from grace. 5 For we through
the Spirit eagerly g wait for the hope of
righteousness by faith. 6 For h in Christ
Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircum-
cision avails anything, but i faith working
through love.

Love Fulfills the Law

7 You j ran well. Who hindered you from
obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does
not *come* from Him who calls you. 9 k A lit-
tle leaven leavens the whole lump. 10 I have
confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will
have no other mind; but he who troubles
you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

* **4:24** NU-Text and M-Text omit *the*. * **4:27** Isaiah 54:1 * **4:30** Genesis 21:10 * **5:1** NU-Text reads *For freedom Christ has made us free; stand fast therefore.*

pains of their birth all over again because they had fallen into serious error.

4:21–22 *bondwoman . . . freewoman.* To clinch his argument about the bondage of the law and freedom found in Christ, Paul uses as examples the two sons of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was born of a bondwoman, Hagar, and Isaac was born of Sarah, a freewoman (Gen. 16:15; 21:2). Paul counters the Jewish false teachers' zeal for the law with an argument based on the Law, the Pentateuch. He uses allegory to prove his point because it was a rhetorical technique the false teachers used. In other words, Paul was demonstrating that he could argue from the law just as well as they could, but to prove that the law of Moses pointed to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

4:26 *Jerusalem above.* This phrase represents the Jewish hope of heaven finally coming to earth (Rev. 21–22). Paul was strongly implying that the question at hand was not allegiance to Jerusalem, but allegiance to which Jerusalem—the new or the old? Would the Galatians follow the shortsighted present Jerusalem and its legalism or the liberty of the heavenly Jerusalem?

4:28–30 *Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.* This portion of Paul's allegory is based on Genesis 21:9–10. Isaac was continually persecuted by his older half brother Ishmael. Eventually, Ishmael and his mother Hagar were expelled because Ishmael had no standing in God's eyes as an heir of Abraham. In creating a parallel between the story from Genesis and the Galatians' situation, Paul points out that (1) the persecution by the Jewish legalists of his day was not unexpected, and (2) it would not go on indefinitely because the legalists would soon be cast out.

4:31—5:1 *So then.* This phrase represents the conclusion of the previous section, while "therefore" signals that Paul is going to apply this spiritual truth to the lives of the Galatian believers.

5:2–3 *if you become circumcised.* The legalistic Jewish teachers in Galatia were urging believers to be circumcised (6:12–13). Paul points out that circumcision would change the entire orientation of salvation away from God's grace to one's own actions. One who is circumcised in an attempt to gain God's acceptance is obligated to keep the whole law, which history has abundantly demonstrated no one can do (Rom. 3:10–18).

5:5 *hope of righteousness.* We can be assured that we will be declared righteous before the Lord on that last day because we have a foretaste of that righteousness from the Spirit who lives within us (2 Cor. 5:5).

5:9–10 *leaven.* This symbolizes the intruders, with their false doctrine and its sinister influence. They were taking the gospel of free forgiveness away from the Galatians. The one who causes such harm will experience God's judgment (2 Cor. 5:10).

4:22 w Gen. 16:15 x Gen. 21:2 **4:23** y Rom. 9:7, 8 z Heb. 11:11 **4:24** a Deut. 33:2 **4:26** b [Is. 2:2] **4:27** c Is. 54:1 **4:28** d Gal. 3:29 e Acts 3:25 **4:29** f Gen. 21:9 g Gal. 5:11 **4:30** h [Gal. 3:8, 22] i Gen. 21:10, 12 j [John 8:35] **5:1** a Phil. 4:1 b Acts 15:10 **5:2** c Acts 15:1 **5:3** d [Rom. 2:25] **5:4** e [Rom. 9:31] f Heb. 12:15 **5:5** g Rom. 8:24 **5:6** h [Gal. 6:15] i 1 Thess. 1:3 **5:7** j 1 Cor. 9:24 **5:9** k 1 Cor. 5:6

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, [l]why do I still suffer persecution? Then [m]the offense of the cross has ceased. 12 [n]I could wish that those [o]who trouble you would even cut themselves off!

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only [p]do not *use* liberty as an [q]opportunity for the flesh, but [r]through love serve one another. 14 For [s]all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: [t]*"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."** 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

Walking in the Spirit

16 I say then: [u]Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For [v]the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, [w]so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But [x]if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now [y]the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery,* fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders,* drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that [z]those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But [a]the fruit of the Spirit is [b]love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, [c]goodness, [d]faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. [e]Against such there is no law. 24 And those *who are* Christ's [f]have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 [g]If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 [h]Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Bear and Share Burdens

6 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of [a]gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 [b]Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill [c]the law of Christ. 3 For [d]if anyone thinks himself to be something, when [e]he

* **5:14** Leviticus 19:18 * **5:19** NU-Text omits *adultery.* * **5:21** NU-Text omits *murders.*

5:11 ***the offense of the cross.*** The cross is offensive to people because it proclaims God's unmerited grace and leaves no place for people's good works.

5:13 ***liberty.*** Christian liberty is the freedom to serve one another in love (vv. 5–6). As we grow in our knowledge of the Word of God, understand and apply its meaning, we should increasingly be involved in serving God and our fellow believers. The Spirit of God has given us spiritual gifts, but those gifts are worthless unless they are used in the service of God and His church. Paul often uses the figure of the human body to show the importance of each part serving the others (Rom. 12:4–5; 1 Cor. 12:12–31). While some parts of the body have more prominent places of service than others, all are equally important. To maintain strength, health, and vitality, every part of the body must function and serve all the other parts of the body. This is also true of the spiritual or new life. We will grow in the new life, become strong, and maintain good spiritual health as we use the talents and abilities that God has given us to meet the needs of the other parts of the body.

5:14 ***all the law.*** The Christian does not live under the law of Moses, but instead under "the law of Christ" (6:2). Living in Christ empowers us to love others, which is the fulfillment of the law (Matt. 22:36–40).

5:16 ***Walk in the Spirit.*** The only consistent way to overcome the sinful desires of our human nature (the flesh) is to live step-by-step in the power of the Holy Spirit as He works through our spirit.

5:17 ***the flesh lusts against the Spirit.*** The potential of the flesh energized by Satan in the life of the Christian should not be underestimated. Given free rein, the flesh will direct our choices, making us do what we know we should not do. This inner conflict between the flesh and the Spirit is very real. Although the precise meaning of "flesh" is unclear, Paul's intent is plain. The desires of our flesh are at odds with what the Holy Spirit desires for us: to be free from sin.

5:19–21 The Human Condition—The last part of Galatians 5 contrasts *works of the flesh* with *fruit of the Spirit*. The works of the flesh here are represented by those kinds of activities that are characteristic of our old natures. Without God, our lives are dominated by these more obvious sins and less obvious sinful attitudes. It is our sinful nature to be this way. Those who operate with these sins as a regular part of their lives, with no sense of guilt, demonstrate their need for salvation. It is the role of the Spirit to change these sinful behaviors. Paul points out that, if changes are not occurring, then there is a need for the Spirit that comes with the gift of salvation.

5:22–24 The New Nature—While the deeds of the flesh portray a disintegrating life, the fruit of the Spirit describes a life where things are working harmoniously. It points to qualities of personality and to behaviors that make us function as better people. It points to what God wants to see in us and should see in us as we mature in the faith.

5:22 ***fruit of the Spirit.*** This analogy is reminiscent of Jesus' teaching on the vine, branches, and fruitful harvest.

5:24 ***have crucified the flesh.*** Those who have mastered these sinful desires are those who have kept their focus on God (Jer. 9:23–24; Dan. 11:32; John 17:3; Heb. 12:1–3).

6:1 ***restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.*** A believer devastated by sin needs to be approached gently by fellow believers.

6:2 ***the law of Christ.*** This phrase is probably referring to the summation of the law: "Love your neighbor" (5:14; Matt. 22:39; John 13:34–35). Bearing the

5:11 [l] 1 Cor. 15:30 [m] [1 Cor. 1:23] **5:12** [n] Josh. 7:25 [o] Acts 15:1, 2 **5:13** [p] 1 Cor. 8:9 [q] 1 Pet. 2:16 [r] 1 Cor. 9:19 **5:14** [s] Matt. 7:12; 22:40 [t] Lev. 19:18 **5:16** [u] Rom. 6:12 **5:17** [v] Rom. 7:18, 22, 23; 8:5 [w] Rom. 7:15 **5:18** [x] [Rom. 6:14; 7:4; 8:14] **5:19** [y] Eph. 5:3, 11 **5:21** [z] 1 Cor. 6:9, 10 **5:22** [a] [John 15:2] [b] [Col. 3:12–15] [c] Rom. 15:14 [d] 1 Cor. 13:7 **5:23** [e] 1 Tim. 1:9 **5:24** [f] Rom. 6:6 **5:25** [g] [Rom. 8:4, 5] **5:26** [h] Phil. 2:3 **6:1** [a] Eph. 4:2 **6:2** [b] Rom. 15:1 [c] [James 2:8] **6:3** [d] Rom. 12:3 [e] [2 Cor. 3:5]

is nothing, he deceives himself. 4But [f]let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and [g]not in another. 5For [h]each one shall bear his own load.

Be Generous and Do Good

6[i]Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

7Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for [j]whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap [k]everlasting life. 9And [l]let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap [m]if we do not lose heart. 10[n]Therefore, as we have opportunity, [o]let us do good to all, [p]especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Glory Only in the Cross

11See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! 12As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, [q]only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. 13For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. 14But God forbid that I should boast except in the [r]cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom* the world has been crucified to me, and [s]I to the world. 15For [t]in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

Blessing and a Plea

16And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

17From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

* **6:14** Or *by which* (the cross)

burdens of one another is precisely what Christ expects of all believers. The Greek word for *burdens* refers to something beyond the normal capacity to carry, as opposed to a "load" (v. 5), which is what a person could be expected to carry.

6:7–8 *he who sows to his flesh.* The principle of sowing and reaping was known to everyone in a largely agricultural society. It would be foolish for Christians to think that they could escape the harvest of destruction and judgment if they persist in sin. ***corruption.*** This is a term used for a field in which the produce is too rotten to harvest (Heb. 6:8). ***he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*** This does not mean that everlasting life is earned by works. Rather, Paul is saying that everlasting life is the glorious end of those who follow the guidance of the Spirit (Rom. 6:22). Jesus said that He came so that we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). In this life, through the indwelling of the Spirit, Christians are developing a capacity to experience Christ to the fullest in the life to come.

6:9 *doing good.* The apostle has argued at length that such works cannot justify (2:16) or sanctify (3:3) anyone. However, good works are, in fact, an important fruit of the life of faith (5:5) that God has planned for each believer (Eph. 2:8–10).

6:12 *make a good showing.* The Judaizers were trying to appear spiritual by becoming circumcised and demanding that others become circumcised (5:2–12). By teaching that all Christians should become circumcised, the Judaizers were trying to make Christianity into a sect of Judaism. This would have two advantages. First, they could counter the persecution that they suffered from the zealous Jews. Second, they could include themselves with an officially sanctioned religion of the Roman Empire, Judaism.

6:13 *not even those . . . keep the law.* The Judaizers knew that they were unable to keep the entire law even though they were required to do so. They still attempted to persuade the Galatians to be circumcised so that they could boast about having them as their followers.

6:16 *the Israel of God.* This probably refers to the remnant of believing Jews (Rom. 11:1–2,7). They are Abraham's spiritual descendants (3:6–9) because they believe in God and rely on His grace.

6:17 *I bear in my body.* Paul's scars branded him as a slave for Christ (Rom. 1:1). Such marks far outweighed the "mark" of circumcision so valued by the false teachers in Galatia (vv. 12–15).

6:4 [f] 1 Cor. 11:28 [g] Luke 18:11 **6:5** [h] [Rom. 2:6]
6:6 [i] 1 Cor. 9:11, 14 **6:7** [j] [Rom. 2:6] **6:8** [k] [Rom. 6:8]
6:9 [l] 1 Cor. 15:58 [m] [James 5:7, 8] **6:10** [n] Prov. 3:27
[o] Titus 3:8 [p] Rom. 12:13 **6:12** [q] Gal. 5:11 **6:14** [r] [1 Cor. 1:18] [s] Col. 2:20 **6:15** [t] 1 Cor. 7:19

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
EPHESIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** All internal and external evidence strongly supports the Pauline authorship of Ephesians. In recent years, however, critics have turned to internal grounds to challenge this unanimous ancient tradition. It has been argued that the vocabulary and style are different from other Pauline epistles, but this overlooks Paul's flexibility under different circumstances (as in Romans and 2 Corinthians). The theology of Ephesians in some ways reflects a later development, but this must be attributed to Paul's own growth and meditation on the church as the body of Christ. Ephesians was written during his first Roman imprisonment in A.D. 60–62, perhaps around the same time as Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 60–61 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Eph. 4:1–3

▶ **THEME:** Ephesians is like a grand landscape whose subject is the whole world. Paul paints a richly textured picture of God's plan to bless the world through Christ. God is bringing light to darkness, healing to brokenness and reconciliation to the separated. Central to this teaching is the role of the church in the world and the gifts God has given it. God will bring about these things through the church. Once we understand and believe all that God has done and is doing, it is our responsibility to obey and live in light of His actions. Paul gives us much more than the theory in Ephesians. He makes critical connections between big-picture theology and the practical implications for living the day-to-day Christian life.

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

2Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Redemption in Christ

3[a]Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, **4**just as [b]He chose us in Him [c]before the foundation of the world, that we should [d]be holy and without blame before Him in love, **5**[e]having predestined us to [f]adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, [g]according to the good pleasure of His will, **6**to the praise of the glory of His grace, [h]by which He made us accepted in [i]the Beloved.

7[j]In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to [k]the riches of His grace **8**which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, **9**[l]having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His

1:1–2 *saints.* In the New Testament all believers are set apart by God in Christ. ***Grace to you and peace.*** The salutations in the New Testament epistles follow the form of the typical first-century letter. The writer is mentioned first and the recipient next, followed by a blessing or best wishes for good health. The difference here lies in the content of the blessing: pagan letters mentioned nonexistent gods and goddesses such as Diana or Apollo; the apostles call upon the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ to bless their readers.

1:3 *every spiritual blessing.* God does not guarantee health, wealth, and prosperity to the New Testament believer. The blessings of Christianity are largely spiritual.

1:4–5 *love.* In this instance the Greek *agape* is used. That love is a love that is by choice or one's will, not just a sentimental feeling. ***having predestined us.*** Predestination is not a cold-hearted determinism or set fate, but rather a loving choice on God's part.

1:6 *the Beloved.* This title is messianic, referring to God's Son, Jesus.

1:7 *redemption.* The word means "buy back" or "ransom." In ancient times, one could buy back a person who was sold into slavery. In the same way, Christ through His death bought us from our slavery to sin. ***His blood.*** The blood of Christ is the means by which our redemption comes. The Old Testament and the New both clearly teach that there is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood.

1:9 *the mystery.* This is not a puzzle to solve, or knowledge only for the few and the initiated, as in the mystery religions of Paul's day. In Paul's use, the

1:3 [a] 2 Cor. 1:3 **1:4** [b] Rom. 8:28 [c] 1 Pet. 1:2 [d] Luke 1:75 **1:5** [e] [Rom. 8:29] [f] John 1:12 [g] [1 Cor. 1:21] **1:6** [h] [Rom. 3:24] [i] Matt. 3:17 **1:7** [j] [Heb. 9:12] [k] [Rom. 3:24, 25] **1:9** [l] [Rom. 16:25]

good pleasure [m]which He purposed in Himself, [10]that in the dispensation of [n]the fullness of the times [o]He might gather together in one [p]all things in Christ, both* which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. [11q]In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to [r]the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, [12s]that we [t]who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

[13]In Him you also *trusted,* after you heard [u]the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, [v]you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, [14w]who* is the guarantee of our inheritance [x]until the redemption of [y]the purchased possession, [z]to the praise of His glory.

Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom

[15]Therefore I also, [a]after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, [16b]do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: [17]that [c]the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, [d]may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, [18e]the eyes of your understanding* being enlightened; that you may know what is [f]the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, [19]and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, [g]according to the working of His mighty power [20]which He worked in Christ when [h]He raised Him from the dead and [i]seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places,* [21j]far above all [k]principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

[22]And [l]He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him [m]*to be* head over all *things* to the church, [23n]which is His body, [o]the fullness of Him [p]who fills all in all.

By Grace Through Faith

2 And [a]you *He made alive,* [b]who were dead in trespasses and sins, [2c]in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to [d]the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in [e]the sons of disobedience, [3f]among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in [g]the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and [h]were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

[4]But God, [i]who is rich in mercy, because of His [j]great love with which He loved us, [5k]even when we were dead in trespasses, [l]made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), [6]and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together [m]in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, [7]that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in [n]*His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8o]For by grace you have been saved [p]through faith, and that not of yourselves; [q]*it is* the gift of God, [9]not of [r]works, lest anyone should [s]boast.

* **1:10** NU-Text and M-Text omit *both.* * **1:14** NU-Text reads *which.* * **1:18** NU-Text and M-Text read *hearts.*

word *mystery* refers to an aspect of God's will that was once hidden or obscure, but now was being revealed by God (Rom. 11:25).

1:14 ***the guarantee of our inheritance.*** The Greek word for *guarantee* can also be used to indicate an engagement ring. As Christ is the bridegroom and the church is the bride, so the Holy Spirit is the down payment, the earnest money in the long-awaited marriage of the two (Rev. 19:7). ***purchased possession.*** The Old Testament described the nation of Israel as God's special treasure, one He had purchased by His mighty acts of deliverance during the Exodus (Ex. 19:5). Here Paul describes Christians as a purchased possession, bought with the blood of Christ.

1:18–19 ***the eyes of your understanding.*** This phrase refers to spiritual understanding. To describe this, Paul uses words that picture eyes that have been brightened with divine illumination.

1:21 ***not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*** The Jews of Christ's time understood the end times to be divided into two time periods, the age in which they were living and the coming age. The Messiah, called "the Coming One," would rule in the age which is to come.

2:2 ***you once walked.*** Walking is a biblical expression that pictures a believer's steady normal progress with God (Ps. 1:1). Believers are saved so that they can have a lifestyle characterized by good works (v. 10).

prince of the power of the air. This is a reference to Satan.

2:4–7 ***we were dead in trespasses.*** Because of Adam's sin, the entire human race is spiritually dead. Only God can grant new life and save us from this predicament. Out of His mercy, God gave His Son for us while we were yet His enemies. He loved us long before we loved Him (1 John 4:9–10).

2:8–10 ***you have been saved through faith.*** The grace of God is the source of salvation; faith is the channel, not the cause. God alone saves. Salvation never originates in the efforts of people; it always arises out of the lovingkindness of God. ***the gift of God.*** We cannot do anything to earn our salvation.

1:9 [m] [2 Tim. 1:9] **1:10** [n] Gal. 4:4 [o] 1 Cor. 3:22 [p] [Col. 1:16, 20] **1:11** [q] Rom. 8:17 [r] Is. 46:10 **1:12** [s] 2 Thess. 2:13 [t] James 1:18 **1:13** [u] John 1:17 [v] [2 Cor. 1:22] **1:14** [w] 2 Cor. 5:5 [x] Rom. 8:23 [y] [Acts 20:28] [z] 1 Pet. 2:9 **1:15** [a] Col. 1:4 **1:16** [b] Rom. 1:9 **1:17** [c] John 20:17 [d] Col. 1:9 **1:18** [e] Acts 26:18 [f] Eph. 2:12 **1:19** [g] Col. 2:12 **1:20** [h] Acts 2:24 [i] Ps. 110:1 **1:21** [j] Phil. 2:9, 10 [k] [Rom. 8:38, 39] **1:22** [l] Ps. 8:6; 110:1; Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:27 [m] Heb. 2:7, 8 **1:23** [n] Rom. 12:5 [o] Col. 2:9 [p] [1 Cor. 12:6] **2:1** [a] Col. 2:13 [b] Eph. 4:18 **2:2** [c] Col. 1:21 [d] Eph. 6:12 [e] Col. 3:6 **2:3** [f] 1 Pet. 4:3 [g] Gal. 5:16 [h] [Ps. 51:5] **2:4** [i] Rom. 10:12 [j] John 3:16 **2:5** [k] Rom. 5:6, 8 [l] [Rom. 6:4, 5] **2:6** [m] Eph. 1:20 **2:7** [n] Titus 3:4 **2:8** [o] [2 Tim. 1:9] [p] Rom. 4:16 [q] [John 1:12, 13] **2:9** [r] Rom. 4:4, 5; 11:6 [s] Rom. 3:27

10 For we are [t]His workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good works, which God
prepared beforehand that we should walk
in them.

Brought Near by His Blood

11 Therefore remember that you, once
Gentiles in the flesh—who are called
Uncircumcision by what is called [u]the
Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—
12 that at that time you were without Christ,
being aliens from the commonwealth of Is-
rael and strangers from the covenants of
promise, having no hope and without God
in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you
who once were far off have been brought
near by the blood of Christ.

Christ Our Peace

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has
made both one, and has broken down
the middle wall of separation, 15 having
abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that
is,* the law of commandments *contained*
in ordinances, so as to create in Himself
one [v]new man *from* the two, *thus* mak-
ing peace, 16 and that He might [w]reconcile
them both to God in one body through
the cross, thereby [x]putting to death the
enmity. 17 And He came and preached
peace to you who were afar off and to
those who were near. 18 For [y]through Him
we both have access [z]by one Spirit to the
Father.

Christ Our Cornerstone

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer
strangers and foreigners, but fellow citi-
zens with the saints and members of the
household of God, 20 having been [a]built [b]on
the foundation of the [c]apostles and proph-
ets, Jesus Christ Himself being [d]the chief
corner*stone,* 21 in whom the whole building,
being fitted together, grows into [e]a holy
temple in the Lord, 22 [f]in whom you also are
being built together for a [g]dwelling place of
God in the Spirit.

The Mystery Revealed

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of
Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— 2 if in-
deed you have heard of the dispensation of
the grace of God [a]which was given to me
for you, 3 [b]how that by revelation [c]He made
known to me the mystery (as I have briefly
written already, 4 by which, when you read,
you may understand my knowledge in the
mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages
was not made known to the sons of men,
as it has now been revealed by the Spir-
it to His holy apostles and prophets: 6 that
the Gentiles [d]should be fellow heirs, of the
same body, and partakers of His promise
in Christ through the gospel, 7 [e]of which I
became a minister [f]according to the gift of
the grace of God given to me by [g]the effec-
tive working of His power.

Purpose of the Mystery

8 To me, [h]who am less than the least of
all the saints, this grace was given, that I
should preach among the Gentiles [i]the un-
searchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all
see what *is* the fellowship* of the mystery,
which from the beginning of the ages has
been hidden in God who [j]created all things
through Jesus Christ;* 10 [k]to the intent that
now [l]the manifold wisdom of God might be
made known by the church [m]to the princi-
palities and powers in the heavenly *places,*
11 [n]according to the eternal purpose which He
accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in
whom we have boldness and access [o]with
confidence through faith in Him. 13 [p]There-
fore I ask that you do not lose heart at my
tribulations for you, [q]which is your glory.

Appreciation of the Mystery

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the
[r]Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 15 from
whom the whole family in heaven and

* **3:9** NU-Text and M-Text read *stewardship* (dispensation). • NU-Text omits *through Jesus Christ.*
* **3:14** NU-Text omits *of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2:14 *the middle wall of separation.* This was vividly portrayed by an actual partition in the temple area, with a sign warning that any Gentile going beyond the Court of the Gentiles would receive swift and sudden death.
2:15 *one new man.* In the early days of Christianity, the church was largely made up of Jews. But, under the direction of God's Spirit, the believers witnessed to Gentiles (Acts 10), who then soon outnumbered the Jewish members. As the two groups learned to work together, they became something completely new.
2:20 *the apostles and prophets.* The early church was established on the teaching and preaching of the apostles. They were the foundation of the church.
2:21 *fitted together.* This idea pictures the process in Roman construction whereby laborers would turn huge rocks around until they fit each other perfectly.
3:5–6 *the Gentiles should be fellow heirs.* In Old Testament times people had only partial knowledge of God and His works. While Genesis pointed to the fact that God's grace would come to the Gentiles (Gen. 12:3), no one understood that they would also be fully equal with the Jews.
3:10 *manifold wisdom.* God's ways are not only "mysterious," but also varied. Angels are also learning about God's wisdom as they watch His grace working in us (1 Cor. 11:10).

2:10 [t] Is. 19:25 **2:11** [u] [Col. 2:11] **2:15** [v] Gal. 6:15 **2:16** [w] [Col. 1:20–22] [x] [Rom. 6:6] **2:18** [y] John 10:9 [z] 1 Cor. 12:13 **2:20** [a] 1 Pet. 2:4 [b] Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10, 11 [c] 1 Cor. 12:28 [d] Ps. 118:22; Luke 20:17 **2:21** [e] 1 Cor. 3:16, 17 **2:22** [f] 1 Pet. 2:5 [g] John 17:23 **3:2** [a] Acts 9:15 **3:3** [b] Acts 22:17, 21; 26:16 [c] [Rom. 11:25; 16:25] **3:6** [d] Gal. 3:28, 29 **3:7** [e] Rom. 15:16 [f] Rom. 1:5 [g] Rom. 15:18 **3:8** [h] [1 Cor. 15:9] [i] [Col. 1:27; 2:2, 3] **3:9** [j] Heb. 1:2 **3:10** [k] 1 Pet. 1:12 [l] [1 Tim. 3:16] [m] Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15 **3:11** [n] [Eph. 1:4, 11] **3:12** [o] Heb. 4:16; 10:19, 35 **3:13** [p] Phil. 1:14 [q] 2 Cor. 1:6 **3:14** [r] Eph. 1:3

earth is named, 16that He would grant you, [s]according to the riches of His glory, [t]to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in [u]the inner man, 17[v]that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, [w]being rooted and grounded in love, 18[x]may be able to comprehend with all the saints [y]what *is* the width and length and depth and height— 19to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled [z]with all the fullness of God.

20Now [a]to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly [b]above all that we ask or think, [c]according to the power that works in us, 21[d]to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Walk in Unity

4 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to [a]walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit [b]in the bond of peace. 4[c]*There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5[d]one Lord, [e]one faith, [f]one baptism; 6[g]one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and [h]through all, and in you* all.

Spiritual Gifts

7But [i]to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8Therefore He says:

[j]*"When He ascended on high,*
He led captivity captive,
*And gave gifts to men."**

* **4:6** NU-Text omits *you;* M-Text reads *us.*
* **4:8** Psalm 68:18

3:17 ***Christ may dwell in your hearts.*** Christ actually resides or makes His home in the believer's heart.

3:21 The Purpose of the Church—The ultimate purpose of the church is to bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ. It does this as it fulfills its three purposes related to God's plan for the world.

Worship—As the church worships, it continually declares to believers and the world God's view of reality. God is the world's Creator and Sustainer. Through Jesus Christ, God has redeemed the world and provided a way of salvation for people who rebel against Him.

Evangelism—The Great Commission in Matthew 28 clearly points to evangelism as a primary purpose for the church. "Teaching" implies that there is more to evangelism than simply declaring the good news. Evangelism should lead to discipleship, which involves the work of helping the new believer reach full maturity in Christ. This happens much as a parent raises children, nurturing them in every way possible so that they can grow. Christ makes baptism an important element in this process. In baptism, one indicates that he has been identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and that he wishes to be identified with the church.

Edification—Ephesians 4:12 points to the fact that the saints need to be built up (that is equipped) to fully do the work of the church, namely the ministry of Christ to the world. This involves making believers aware of everything they have in Christ and how the Spirit's gifts enable them to serve the body of Christ effectively.

4:1 ***therefore . . . walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.*** The second half of Ephesians, like that of a number of Paul's epistles, emphasizes the behavior that should result from the doctrines or beliefs taught in the first half.

4:2 ***lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering.*** These are the attitudes that Jesus demonstrated when He was on earth (Phil. 2:5–8). These attitudes do not come naturally, but must be cultivated by the determination to place others above ourselves. Only the Spirit can empower us to treat people this way consistently.

4:3 The Person of the Holy Spirit—Many people make the serious error of thinking of the Holy Spirit as only some kind of vague principle or influence. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit is as much a person (individual existence of a conscious being) as the Father and the Son.

1. *The personality of the Holy Spirit.* The Bible speaks of the mind (Rom. 8:27) and will (1 Cor. 2:11) of the Spirit. He is often described as speaking directly to men in the Book of Acts. During Paul's second missionary journey, the apostle was forbidden by the Spirit to visit a certain mission field (Acts 16:6–7) and then was instructed to proceed toward another field of service (Acts 16:10). It was God's Spirit who spoke directly to Christian leaders in the Antioch church, commanding them to send Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:2).
2. *The deity of the Holy Spirit.* He is not only a distinct being, but He is also God. As is God the Father, He too is everywhere at once (Ps. 139:7). As the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit has also existed forever (Heb. 9:14). He is often referred to as God in the Bible (Acts 5:3–4). Finally, the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and Son. This is seen during the baptism of Christ (Matt. 3:16–17) and is mentioned by Jesus Himself just prior to His ascension from the Mount of Olives (Matt. 28:19–20).

4:7 ***grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*** Like Peter (1 Pet. 4:10), Paul taught that all Christians have a spiritual gift or gifts. The gifts are given sovereignly by the ascended Christ in order to build up the church (1 Cor. 12:11). Thus the body of Christ is to function like a machine in which every part is essential for getting a job done. But, unlike a machine, the body of Christ should maintain itself and build every one of its members up so that they can do good works (1 Cor. 12:7).

4:8 ***When He ascended on high.*** Paul quotes Psalm 68:18 to picture the ascended Messiah triumphant over Satan and his hosts, distributing spiritual gifts to His people.

3:16 [s] [Phil. 4:19] [t] Col. 1:11 [u] Rom. 7:22 **3:17** [v] John 14:23 [w] Col. 1:23 **3:18** [x] Eph. 1:18 [y] Rom. 8:39 **3:19** [z] Eph. 1:23 **3:20** [a] Rom. 16:25 [b] 1 Cor. 2:9 [c] Col. 1:29 **3:21** [d] Rom. 11:36 **4:1** [a] 1 Thess. 2:12 **4:3** [b] Col. 3:14 **4:4** [c] Rom. 12:5 **4:5** [d] 1 Cor. 1:13 [e] Jude 3 [f] [Heb. 6:6] **4:6** [g] Mal. 2:10 [h] Rom. 11:36 **4:7** [i] [1 Cor. 12:7, 11] **4:8** [j] Ps. 68:18; Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9; [1 Cor. 12:4–11]

9 [k](Now this, *"He ascended"*—what does
it mean but that He also first* descended
into the lower parts of the earth? 10He who
descended is also the One [l]who ascended
far above all the heavens, [m]that He might
fill all things.)

11And He Himself gave some *to be*
apostles, some prophets, some evange-
lists, and some pastors and teachers, 12for
the equipping of the saints for the work of
ministry, [n]for the edifying of [o]the body of
Christ, 13till we all come to the unity of the
faith [p]and of the knowledge of the Son of
God, to [q]a perfect man, to the measure of
the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14that
we should no longer be [r]children, tossed
to and fro and carried about with every
wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men,
in the cunning craftiness of [s]deceitful plot-
ting, 15but, speaking the truth in love, may
grow up in all things into Him who is the
[t]head—Christ— 16[u]from whom the whole
body, joined and knit together by what ev-
ery joint supplies, according to the effec-
tive working by which every part does its
share, causes growth of the body for the
edifying of itself in love.

The New Man

17This I say, therefore, and testify in the
Lord, that you should [v]no longer walk as
the rest of* the Gentiles walk, in the futility
of their mind, 18having their understanding
darkened, being alienated from the life of
God, because of the ignorance that is in
them, because of the [w]blindness of their
heart; 19[x]who, being past feeling, [y]have giv-
en themselves over to lewdness, to work all
uncleanness with greediness.

20But you have not so learned Christ,
21if indeed you have heard Him and have
been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:
22that you [z]put off, concerning your former
conduct, the old man which grows corrupt
according to the deceitful lusts, 23and [a]be
renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24and
that you [b]put on the new man which was
created according to God, in true righ-
teousness and holiness.

Do Not Grieve the Spirit

25Therefore, putting away lying, [c]*"Let
each one of you speak truth with his
neighbor,"** for [d]we are members of one
another. 26[e]*"Be angry, and do not sin"*:*
do not let the sun go down on your wrath,
27[f]nor give place to the devil. 28Let him
who stole steal no longer, but rather [g]let
him labor, working with *his* hands what
is good, that he may have something [h]to
give him who has need. 29[i]Let no corrupt
word proceed out of your mouth, but [j]what
is good for necessary edification, [k]that it
may impart grace to the hearers. 30And
[l]do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by
whom you were sealed for the day of re-
demption. 31[m]Let all bitterness, wrath,
anger, clamor, and [n]evil speaking be put
away from you, [o]with all malice. 32And
[p]be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
[q]forgiving one another, even as God in
Christ forgave you.

Walk in Love

5 Therefore[a] be imitators of God as dear
[b]children. 2And [c]walk in love, [d]as Christ
also has loved us and given Himself for us,
an offering and a sacrifice to God [e]for a
sweet-smelling aroma.

3But fornication and all [f]uncleanness
or [g]covetousness, let it not even be named
among you, as is fitting for saints; 4[h]neither

* **4:9** NU-Text omits *first*. * **4:17** NU-Text omits *the rest of*. * **4:25** Zechariah 8:16 * **4:26** Psalm 4:4

4:11 *apostles . . . prophets . . . evangelists . . . pastors and teachers.* Apostles, meaning "envoys" or "ambassadors," in its strict sense refers to those who saw Christ in resurrected form and were specially chosen by Christ to tell others about Him from their eyewitness accounts. Prophets delivered direct revelations from God. They foretold God's actions in the future and they proclaimed what God had already said in the Scriptures. Evangelists play a major role in bringing people into the body of Christ. Pastors function as shepherds. They feed, nurture, care for, and protect the members of the body. The Greek ties in teacher with pastor.

4:12–13 *equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.* Three stages of growth are presented here. Leaders are responsible to equip. The well-equipped saints do the work of the ministry, and the result is that the body is built up. The final goal is maturity, truth, and love.

4:16 *every joint . . . every part.* There are no insignificant parts in the body (1 Cor. 12:14–27). Anything that builds up believers and the church can be said to be edifying.

4:22–24 *you put off . . . the old man.* Paul compares the Christian life to stripping off the dirty clothes of a sinful past and putting on the snowy white robes of Christ's righteousness.

4:30 *the Holy Spirit of God.* We should never push away, ignore, or reject the Holy Spirit. If we would remember that the One who lives in us is God's own Spirit, we would be much more selective about what we think, read, watch, say, and do.

5:1 *imitators of God.* Believers are to follow the example of God's actions. He loved us when we were still His enemies.

4:9 [k] John 3:13; 20:17 **4:10** [l] Ps. 68:18; Acts 1:9 [m] [Acts 2:33; Eph. 1:23] **4:12** [n] 1 Cor. 14:26 [o] Col. 1:24 **4:13** [p] Col. 2:2 [q] 1 Cor. 14:20 **4:14** [r] 1 Cor. 14:20 [s] Rom. 16:18 **4:15** [t] Eph. 1:22 **4:16** [u] Col. 2:19 **4:17** [v] Eph. 2:2; 4:22 **4:18** [w] Rom. 1:21 **4:19** [x] 1 Tim. 4:2 [y] 1 Pet. 4:3 **4:22** [z] Col. 3:8 **4:23** [a] [Rom. 12:2] **4:24** [b] [Rom. 6:4; 7:6; 12:2] **4:25** [c] Zech. 8:16 [d] Rom. 12:5 **4:26** [e] Ps. 4:4; 37:8 **4:27** [f] [Rom. 12:19] **4:28** [g] Acts 20:35 [h] Luke 3:11 **4:29** [i] Col. 3:8 [j] 1 Thess. 5:11 [k] Col. 3:16 **4:30** [l] Is. 7:13 **4:31** [m] Col. 3:8, 19 [n] James 4:11 [o] Titus 3:3 **4:32** [p] 2 Cor. 6:10 [q] [Mark 11:25] **5:1** [a] Luke 6:36 [b] 1 Pet. 1:14–16 **5:2** [c] 1 Thess. 4:9 [d] Gal. 1:4 [e] 2 Cor. 2:14, 15 **5:3** [f] Col. 3:5–7 [g] [Luke 12:15] **5:4** [h] Matt. 12:34, 35

filthiness, nor [i]foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, [j]which are not fitting, but rather [k]giving of thanks. 5For this you know,* that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any [l]inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7Therefore do not be [m]partakers with them.

Walk in Light

8For you were once darkness, but now *you are* [n]light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9(for [o]the fruit of the Spirit* *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10[p]finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11And have [q]no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them.* 12[r]For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13But [s]all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14Therefore He says:

[t]"Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light."

Walk in Wisdom

15[u]See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16[v]redeeming the time, [w]because the days are evil.

17[x]Therefore do not be unwise, but [y]understand [z]what the will of the Lord *is.* 18And [a]do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19speaking to one another [b]in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making [c]melody in your heart to the Lord, 20[d]giving thanks always for all things to God the Father [e]in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21[f]submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

Marriage—Christ and the Church

22Wives, [g]submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23For [h]the husband is head of the wife, as also [i]Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands [j]in everything.

25[k]Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and [l]gave

* **5:5** NU-Text reads *For know this.* * **5:9** NU-Text reads *light.* * **5:21** NU-Text reads *Christ.*

5:12 *in secret.* This verse effectively bans Christians from indulging in the modern preoccupation with examining the lurid details of evils such as the occult and other perverted practices.

5:16 *redeeming the time.* This means taking advantage of opportunities for service. Paul exhorts us to use as much time as is possible for advancing Christ's purposes in this world.

5:18 *drunk with wine.* Just as a person who is drunk is under the control of alcohol, so a Spirit-filled believer is controlled by the Spirit. ***filled.*** Filling is a step beyond the sealing of the Holy Spirit (1:13). Sealing is an action God took at the point of our new birth. The tense of the Greek word translated *filled* indicates that filling is a moment-by-moment repeatable action. To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by the Spirit and is therefore crucial to successfully living the Christian life. The imperative says that the believer is to be filled with the presence of the Spirit so that he comes to know God in all His fullness, living in relationship with Him. Out of this relationship, the believer is able to manifest Christlike character. The certainty of being filled with the Spirit may be confirmed by the believer's faith and life. The believer must, of course, believe God's Word that meeting the conditions will result in the filling. The Spirit-filled person will exhibit the Christlike character described in Galatians 5:22–23 as the fruit of the Spirit. Included in that list are all the vibrant, attractive qualities desired by all Christians. Any Christian may be transformed by the filling of the Spirit and possess these qualities.

5:19 *singing and making melody.* Most believe that these words refer to three larger categories: (1) the 150 psalms in the Psalter, (2) hymns or compositions addressed directly to God, and (3) spiritual songs, hymns about the Christian experience.

5:21–22 *submitting.* Verse 21 completes the thought of the previous verses (vv. 18–20), which address how being filled with the Spirit manifests itself in the believer's life. It also introduces the next section (5:22—6:4), about how members of a Christian family should relate to each other. The Greek word for *submit* does not refer to being under the absolute control of another but to voluntarily placing oneself under the authority of another.

5:22–24 *Wives, submit.* Just as Christ is not inferior to the Father, but is the second Person in the Trinity, so wives are equal to their own husbands. Yet, in a marriage relationship, a husband and wife have different roles. A wife's voluntary submission arises out of her own submission to Christ.

5:25 *Husbands, love.* Paul does not emphasize the husband's authority; instead, he calls on husbands to love self-sacrificially. Husbands are to emulate Christ's love, the kind of love that is willing to lay down one's life for another. ***Christ also loved the church.*** The relationship between Christ and the church was initiated by Christ, who loved the church and gave Himself for it. The details of that relationship are described with seven images:

1. *The Shepherd and the sheep* emphasizes both the warm leadership and protection of Christ and the helplessness and dependency of believers (John 10:1–18).
2. *The vine and the branches* points out the necessity for Christians to depend on Christ's sustaining strength for growth (John 15:1–8).

5:4 [i]Titus 3:9 [j]Rom. 1:28 [k]Phil. 4:6 **5:5** [l]1 Cor. 6:9, 10 **5:7** [m]1 Tim. 5:22 **5:8** [n]1 Thess. 5:5 **5:9** [o]Gal. 5:22 **5:10** [p][Rom. 12:1, 2] **5:11** [q]2 Cor. 6:14 **5:12** [r]Rom. 1:24 **5:13** [s][John 3:20, 21] **5:14** [t][Is. 26:19; 60:1] **5:15** [u]Col. 4:5 **5:16** [v]Col. 4:5 [w]Eccl. 11:2 **5:17** [x]Col. 4:5 [y][Rom. 12:2] [z]1 Thess. 4:3 **5:18** [a]Prov. 20:1; 23:31 **5:19** [b]Acts 16:25 [c]James 5:13 **5:20** [d]Ps. 34:1 [e][1 Pet. 2:5] **5:21** [f][Phil. 2:3] **5:22** [g]Col. 3:18—4:1 **5:23** [h][1 Cor. 11:3] [i]Col. 1:18 **5:24** [j]Titus 2:4, 5 **5:25** [k]Col. 3:19 [l]Acts 20:28

Himself for her, 26that He might sanctify and cleanse her [m]with the washing of water [n]by the word, 27[o]that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, [p]not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. 30For [q]we are members of His body,* of His flesh and of His bones. 31[r]*"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the [s]two shall become one flesh."* 32This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33Nevertheless [t]let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife *see* that she [u]respects *her* husband.

Children and Parents

6 Children, [a]obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2[b]*"Honor your father and mother,"* which is the first commandment with promise: 3*"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."**

4And [c]you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but [d]bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Bondservants and Masters

5[e]Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, [f]with fear and trembling, [g]in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6[h]not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8[i]knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

9And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own [j]Master also* is in heaven, and [k]there is no partiality with Him.

* **5:30** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.
* **5:31** Genesis 2:24 * **6:3** Deuteronomy 5:16
* **6:9** NU-Text reads *He who is both their Master and yours.*

3. *Christ as high priest* and *the church as a kingdom of priests* stress the joyful worship, fellowship, and service which the church can render to God through Christ (Heb. 5:1–10; 7:1; 8:6; 1 Pet. 2:5–9).
4. *The cornerstone and building stones* (Matt. 21:42) accents the foundational value of Christ to everything the church is and does, as well as Christ's value to the unity of believers. Love is to be the mortar which solidly holds the living stones together (1 Cor. 3:9; 13:1–13; Eph. 2:19–22; 1 Pet. 2:5).
5. *The head and many-membered body,* the church is a vibrant organism, not merely an organization; it draws its vitality and direction from Christ, the Head, and each believer has a unique and necessary place in its growth (1 Cor. 12:12–13,27; Eph. 4:4).
6. *The last Adam and new creation* presents Christ as the initiator of a new creation of believers as Adam was of the old creation (1 Cor. 15:22,45; 2 Cor. 5:17).
7. *The bridegroom and bride* beautifully emphasizes the intimate fellowship and co-ownership existing between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:25–33; Rev. 19:7–8; 21:9).

5:31 *the two shall become one flesh.* Paul quotes Genesis 2:24, which teaches that the special union between husband and wife supersedes the original family ties.

5:32 *This is a great mystery.* A sacred secret revealed is that Christian marriage parallels the union that exists spiritually between Christ and His bride, the church.

6:1–4 *Children, obey . . . fathers, do not provoke.* This paragraph has the beautiful balance we expect to find in God's Word: children are to obey their parents, and parents are to treat their children in such a way that the children will want to obey.

6:4 Parenting—The father is the parent responsible for setting the pattern for the child's obedience in the family. The father's responsibility is set forth in two ways: First, what the father is *not to do*—"do not provoke your children to wrath." He is not to overdiscipline them or rule the household in such a way that the child can only react in a rage. Second, what the father *is to do*—"but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." "Bring them up" involves three ideas:

a. It is a continuous job. As long as the child is a dependent, the father is to be responsible for providing for the child so that he becomes what God wants him to be.
b. It is a loving job. To "bring up" means literally to nourish tenderly; children should be objects of tender, loving care.
c. It is a job that involves nurture and admonition. The child needs to be nurtured physically and spiritually. He also needs corrective discipline that will be effective in bringing about obedience to the Word of God (Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 29:15–17).

6:5 *Bondservants, be obedient.* Bondservants made up a large percentage of the population of the Roman Empire. These people were considered mere property and could be abused and even killed by their masters with no resulting investigation by the state. In the church, wealthy slave owners and their slaves broke bread together at the Lord's Table as equals.

6:6 *not with eyeservice.* Servants and employees should serve faithfully even when no one is looking. After all, God sees all that we do.

5:26 [m] John 3:5 [n] [John 15:3; 17:17] **5:27** [o] Col. 1:22 [p] Song 4:7 **5:30** [q] Gen. 2:23 **5:31** [r] Gen. 2:24 [s] [1 Cor. 6:16] **5:33** [t] Col. 3:19 [u] 1 Pet. 3:1, 6 **6:1** [a] Col. 3:20 **6:2** [b] Deut. 5:16 **6:4** [c] Col. 3:21 [d] Gen. 18:19 **6:5** [e] [1 Tim. 6:1] [f] 2 Cor. 7:15 [g] 1 Chr. 29:17 **6:6** [h] Col. 3:22 **6:8** [i] Rom. 2:6 **6:9** [j] Col. 4:1 [k] Rom. 2:11

The Whole Armor of God

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the
Lord and in the power of His might. 11 [l]Put
on the whole armor of God, that you may be
able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and
blood, but against [m]principalities, against
powers, against [n]the rulers of the darkness
of this age,* against spiritual *hosts* of wick-
edness in the heavenly *places.* 13 [o]Therefore
take up the whole armor of God, that you
may be able to withstand [p]in the evil day,
and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, [q]having girded your
waist with truth, [r]having put on the breast-
plate of righteousness, 15 [s]and having shod
your feet with the preparation of the gos-
pel of peace; 16 above all, taking [t]the shield
of faith with which you will be able to
quench all the fiery darts of the wicked
one. 17 And [u]take the helmet of salvation,
and [v]the sword of the Spirit, which is the
word of God; 18 [w]praying always with all
prayer and supplication in the Spirit,
[x]being watchful to this end with all per-
severance and [y]supplication for all the
saints— 19 and for me, that [z]utterance may
be given to me, that I may open my mouth
boldly to make known the mystery of the
gospel, 20 for which [a]I am an ambassador
in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as
I ought to speak.

A Gracious Greeting

21 But that you also may know my af-
fairs *and* how I am doing, [b]Tychicus, a be-
loved brother and [c]faithful minister in the
Lord, will make all things known to you;
22 [d]whom I have sent to you for this very
purpose, that you may know our affairs,
and *that* he may [e]comfort your hearts.

23 Peace to the brethren, and love with
faith, from God the Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ. 24 Grace *be* with all those
who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincer-
ity. Amen.

* **6:12** NU-Text reads *rulers of this darkness.*

6:11 ***the whole armor of God.*** This equipment is the believer's protection against evil and the devil. Paul presented the extended metaphor of the battle dress roughly according to the order in which the various pieces were put on.

6:12 ***For we do not wrestle.*** The real battle is not with human cultists, false religionists, atheists, agnostics, and pseudo-Christians, but with the demonic beings working through them.

6:14 ***truth.*** This is a reference to integrity, a life of practical truthfulness and honesty. ***breastplate.*** In Roman times this went completely around the body and was made of hard leather or metal. ***righteousness.*** This is not the righteousness of Christ, which all believers possess, but the practical, righteous character and deeds of the believer.

6:15 ***the preparation of the gospel of peace.*** This may mean either that the gospel is the firm foundation on which Christians are to stand or that the Christian soldier should be ready to go out to defend and spread the gospel.

6:16 ***shield of faith.*** The Christian's shield offers protection against all forms of evil. Flaming arrows could not penetrate the fireproof shield of the ancient Roman soldier, nor can the assaults of Satan penetrate to the believer who places his or her faith in God.

6:17 ***the sword of the Spirit.*** This is the only offensive weapon in the believer's armor. This weapon is not necessarily the Bible as a whole, but the specific word that needs to be spoken in a specific situation.

6:21–24 ***that you also may know my affairs.*** The last verses of Ephesians reveal Paul's appreciation of the ministry of others, especially the ministry of Tychicus (Col. 4:7). The fact that this letter does not conclude with personal greetings, as Paul's other letters do, may indicate that this was a circular letter, one intended for a number of churches around Ephesus.

6:11 [l] [2 Cor. 6:7] **6:12** [m] Rom. 8:38 [n] Luke 22:53
6:13 [o] [2 Cor. 10:4] [p] Eph. 5:16 **6:14** [q] Is. 11:5 [r] Is. 59:17
6:15 [s] Is. 52:7 **6:16** [t] 1 John 5:4 **6:17** [u] 1 Thess. 5:8
[v] [Heb. 4:12] **6:18** [w] Luke 18:1 [x] [Matt. 26:41] [y] Phil. 1:4
6:19 [z] Col. 4:3 **6:20** [a] 2 Cor. 5:20 **6:21** [b] Acts 20:4
[c] 1 Cor. 4:1, 2 **6:22** [d] Col. 4:8 [e] 2 Cor. 1:6

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
PHILIPPIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The external and internal evidence for the Pauline authorship of Philippians is very strong, and there is scarcely any doubt that anyone but Paul wrote it. Paul's "Macedonian call" in Troas during his second missionary journey led to his ministry in Philippi with the conversion of Lydia and others. Internal evidence suggests that the epistle was written from Rome (1:3; 4:22), although some commentators argue for Caesarea or Ephesus. It seems that during the writing of this letter Paul's life was at stake, and he was evidently awaiting the verdict of the imperial court (2:20–26).

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 62 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Phil. 4:4–7

▶ **THEME:** Even though Paul probably wrote this letter while imprisoned in Rome, the letter is often called the Epistle of Joy. It gives us valuable insight into key areas of the Christian life by helping understand how we should identify with Christ in a variety of circumstances. We gain some insight into what Christian relationships should look like and what the content of our prayers for each other should be. Philippians also provides great insight in setting spiritual direction and determining practical priorities. Christians desiring to mature in the Lord will return to study it often.

Greeting

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops* and [a]deacons:

2Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thankfulness and Prayer

3[b]I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, **4**always in [c]every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, **5**[d]for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, **6**being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun [e]a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ; **7**just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. **8**For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

* **1:1** Literally *overseers*

1:1–11 ***To all the saints.*** This term means "holy ones" (those who are separated to God) and refers to all the believers in Philippi. ***bishops.*** This refers to those who watch over the spiritual welfare of the local church. ***deacons.*** This is a reference to those who serve the congregation in special service capacities. They were charged with handling the physical and material concerns of the church (Acts 6:1–7). In the first few verses, Paul reveals his great love for the Philippians. He thinks of them often (vv. 3–6), he is concerned about them (vv. 7–8), and he regularly prays for them (vv. 9–11).

1:3 ***I thank.*** The tense of the Greek verb indicates that Paul was continually thankful to God for the Philippian Christians. ***upon every remembrance of you.*** Every time God brought them to his mind, Paul gave thanks.

1:4 ***joy.*** This is the first of five uses of the Greek word for *joy* in the letter (v. 25; 2:2,29; 4:1). Paul also uses the Greek word for *rejoice* eight times in this letter (v. 18; 2:17–18,28; 3:1; 4:4).

1:5 ***fellowship.*** This term is a commercial term for a joint-partnership in a business venture in which all parties actively participate to ensure the success of the business. In the Christian community, the word expresses intimacy with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9).

1:6 ***until.*** This word can also be translated "as far as." It expresses progress toward a goal and indicates that a time is coming when God will completely finish His work among the Philippian Christians.

1:7 ***right.*** This word conveys a sense of moral uprightness and is often translated throughout the New Testament as "righteous." In this context, the word indicates that Paul's thoughts regarding the Philippians were in perfect accord with God's will. ***confirmation.*** Used only here and in Hebrews 6:16 in the New Testament, this word is a legal and commercial term meaning "a validating guarantee."

1:8 ***the affection of Jesus Christ.*** The word translated "affection" literally means the internal organs, regarded by the first century reader as the center of

1:1 [a] [1 Tim. 3:8–13] **1:3** [b] 1 Cor. 1:4 **1:4** [c] Eph. 1:16
1:5 [d] [Rom. 12:13] **1:6** [e] [John 6:29]

9And this I pray, that your love may
abound still more and more in knowledge
and all discernment, 10that you may ap-
prove the things that are excellent, that
you may be sincere and without offense
till the day of Christ, 11being filled with the
fruits of righteousness [f]which *are* by Jesus
Christ, [g]to the glory and praise of God.

Christ Is Preached

12But I want you to know, brethren, that
the things *which happened* to me have ac-
tually turned out for the furtherance of the
gospel, 13so that it has become evident [h]to
the whole palace guard, and to all the rest,
that my chains are in Christ; 14and most of
the brethren in the Lord, having become
confident by my chains, are much more
bold to speak the word without fear.

15Some indeed preach Christ even from
envy and strife, and some also from good-
will: 16The former* preach Christ from
selfish ambition, not sincerely, suppos-
ing to add affliction to my chains; 17but
the latter out of love, knowing that I am
appointed for the defense of the gospel.
18What then? Only *that* in every way,
whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is
preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and
will rejoice.

To Live Is Christ

19For I know that [i]this will turn out for
my deliverance through your prayer and
the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
20according to my earnest expectation and
hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed,
but [j]with all boldness, as always, so now
also Christ will be magnified in my body,
whether by life [k]or by death. 21For to me,
to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. 22But if
I live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit
from *my* labor; yet what I shall choose I
cannot tell. 23For* I am hard-pressed be-
tween the two, having a [l]desire to depart
and be with Christ, *which is* [m]far better.
24Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is*
more needful for you. 25And being confi-
dent of this, I know that I shall remain and
continue with you all for your progress and
joy of faith, 26that [n]your rejoicing for me
may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by
my coming to you again.

Striving and Suffering for Christ

27Only [o]let your conduct be worthy of the
gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and
see you or am absent, I may hear of your

* **1:16** NU-Text reverses the contents of verses 16 and 17. * **1:23** NU-Text and M-Text read *But*.

the deepest feelings. Whereas the heart is the seat of reflection, Paul now speaks of his deep feelings for the believers. His feelings for the Philippians were like those of Jesus Christ, who loved them and died for them.

1:9 *love.* The kind of love that Paul sought for the believers is the highest form of Christian love, based on a lasting, unconditional commitment, not on an unstable emotion. ***knowledge.*** The first of two terms on which a directed love is built, knowledge suggests an intimate understanding based on a relationship with a person. Here the focus of this knowledge is God. ***discernment.*** Found only here in the New Testament, the Greek word means moral or ethical understanding based on both the intellect and the senses.

1:10 *that you may approve.* This verb is used in ancient literature for the testing of gold to determine its purity and for trying oxen to assess their usefulness for the task at hand.

1:12 *furtherance.* This phrase could suggest a pioneer beating or cutting a path through a densely forested area. Paul's imprisonment was a strategic advance in the kingdom of God because it was clearing the way for the gospel to penetrate the ranks of the Roman military.

1:13 *palace guard.* This is a reference to the praetorian guard, a force consisting of several thousand highly trained, elite soldiers of the Roman Empire who were headquartered at Rome. For the one to two years that Paul had been under house arrest in Rome, different soldiers had taken turns guarding him. Although Paul could not go to the world to preach, in this way God brought the world to Paul. In an ironic twist, they were the captives and Paul was free to preach.

1:18 *in pretense or in truth.* Whether the preaching was done for false motives or pure, whether for appearance's sake or for the sake of what was right, Paul was pleased that the gospel was being spread.

1:19 *deliverance.* In the New Testament this word is used for physical healing, rescue from danger or death, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

1:20 *be magnified.* Paul was committed to ensuring that Christ would be made even more conspicuous in his own life than ever. He was not relying on himself to magnify Christ but looked to the Holy Spirit (v. 19) to magnify Christ in him (John 16:14).

1:21 *Christ . . . gain.* Paul would experience gain in his own death because he would be with Christ (v. 23). In fact, Paul may have been expressing his confidence that his imprisonment had furthered the gospel; God would also use his death to further His kingdom.

1:22 *what I shall choose I cannot tell.* Paul was in a dilemma because he clearly saw the advantages of both life and death, for the Christian life meant an opportunity to minister to people like the Philippians (v. 24), while death meant being with Christ his Savior.

1:25 *your progress.* Paul was not satisfied that the Philippian Christians should simply be saved, but that they should advance to maturity in Christ.

1:27 *let your conduct.* The word used could refer to discharging the obligations of a citizen. Because Philippi held the privileged status of a Roman colony, its citizens understood the responsibilities associated with citizenship. Paul here commanded them to shift their perspective from the earthly realm to the heavenly one. They should live in this world as citizens of another world, the heavenly kingdom. Their conduct should reveal their heavenly citizenship.

1:11 [f] Col. 1:6 [g] John 15:8 **1:13** [h] Phil. 4:22 **1:19** [i] Job 13:16, LXX **1:20** [j] Eph. 6:19, 20 [k] [Rom. 14:8] **1:23** [l] [2 Cor. 5:2, 8] [m] [Ps. 16:11] **1:26** [n] 2 Cor. 1:14 **1:27** [o] Eph. 4:1

affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, [p]with one mind [q]striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation,* and that from God. 29For to you [r]it has been granted on behalf of Christ, [s]not only to believe in Him, but also to [t]suffer for His sake, 30[u]having the same conflict [v]which you saw in me and now hear *is* in me.

Unity Through Humility

2 Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any [a]affection and mercy, 2[b]fulfill my joy [c]by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of [d]one accord, of one mind. 3[e]*Let* nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but [f]in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4[g]Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of [h]others.

The Humbled and Exalted Christ

5[i]Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6who, [j]being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7[k]but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form [l]of a bondservant, *and* [m]coming in the likeness of men. 8And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and [n]became [o]obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. 9[p]Therefore God also [q]has highly exalted Him and [r]given Him the name which is above every name, 10[s]that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11and [t]*that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Light Bearers

12Therefore, my beloved, [u]as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, [v]work out your own salvation with [w]fear and trembling; 13for [x]it is God who works in you both to will and to do [y]for *His* good pleasure.

14Do all things [z]without complaining

* **1:28** NU-Text reads *of your salvation.*

1:28 *terrified.* This word is a strong term that is used for the terror of a panicked horse. The Philippians are not to be terror-stricken in the face of their enemies.
1:29 *to suffer for His sake.* Suffering matures us as Christians in the present (James 1:2–4) and enables us to be glorified with Christ in the future (Rom. 8:17).
2:1 *if . . . if . . . if.* The conditional clauses in this verse indicate certainties, not "maybes." Each *if* here expresses the idea of "since," and each following clause may be considered to be true.
2:2 *being like-minded.* In this verse the apostle sets forth a fourfold appeal that expresses one major idea—namely, the unity of the church. Paul is strongly emphasizing the unity that should exist between believers and how they must single-mindedly strive together to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.
2:3 *esteem others better than himself.* This verb indicates a thorough analysis of the facts in order to reach a correct conclusion about the matter. In other words, each Philippian Christian was to properly assess himself or herself. Such an assessment would lead to valuing others.
2:5 *Let this mind.* All godly action begins with the renewing of the mind. Right thinking produces right actions. Our actions are the fruit of our deepest thoughts. ***in you.*** Thinking and being like Christ are requirements not only for an individual but also for the corporate body of believers. Together, we need to think and act like one being, like the Person of Jesus Christ.
2:6 *did not consider it robbery.* Because Christ was God, He did not look on sharing God's nature as "robbery," as though He did not already possess it, or as "a thing to be retained," as though He might lose it.
2:7 *made Himself of no reputation.* Christ did this by taking on the form of a servant. In doing this, He did not empty Himself of any part of His essence as God. Instead, He gave up His privileges as God and took upon Himself existence as a man. While remaining completely God, He became completely human. ***form.*** Jesus added to His divine essence (v. 6) a servant's essence, that is, the essential characteristics of a human being seeking to fulfill the will of another. Paul does not say that Christ exchanged the form of God for the form of a servant, involving a loss of deity or the attributes of deity. Rather, in the incarnation, Christ continued in the very nature of God but added to Himself the nature of a servant.
2:8 *He humbled Himself.* Jesus willingly took the role of a servant; no one forced Him to do it. ***obedient.*** Although He never sinned and did not deserve to die, He chose to die so that the sins of the world could be charged to His account. Subsequently, He could credit His righteousness to the account of all who believe in Him (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4). ***even the death of the cross.*** Paul describes the depths of Christ's humiliation by reminding his readers that Christ died by the cruelest form of capital punishment, crucifixion. The Jews viewed death on a cross as a curse from God (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13).
2:11 *confess.* The term Paul uses is a strong, intensive verb, which means "agree with" or "say the same thing." Essentially Paul is saying that everyone will unanimously affirm what God the Father has already stated (Is. 45:23): that Jesus Christ is Lord.
2:12 *work out.* The Greek term speaks of the present deliverance of the Philippians. The word translated *work out* is used by a first century author to speak of digging silver out of silver mines. Thus, salvation

1:27 [p] Eph. 4:3 [q] Jude 3 **1:29** [r] [Matt. 5:11, 12] [s] Eph. 2:8 [t] [2 Tim. 3:12] **1:30** [u] Col. 1:29; 2:1 [v] Acts 16:19–40 **2:1** [a] Col. 3:12 **2:2** [b] John 3:29 [c] Rom. 12:16 [d] Phil. 4:2 **2:3** [e] Gal. 5:26 [f] Rom. 12:10 **2:4** [g] 1 Cor. 13:5 [h] Rom. 15:1, 2 **2:5** [i] [Matt. 11:29] **2:6** [j] 2 Cor. 4:4 **2:7** [k] Ps. 22:6 [l] Is. 42:1 [m] [John 1:14] **2:8** [n] Matt. 26:39 [o] Heb. 5:8 **2:9** [p] Heb. 2:9 [q] Ps. 68:18; 110:1; Is. 52:13; Acts 2:33 [r] Eph. 1:21 **2:10** [s] Is. 45:23 **2:11** [t] John 13:13; [Rom. 10:9; 14:9] **2:12** [u] Phil. 1:5, 6; 4:15 [v] John 6:27, 29 [w] Eph. 6:5 **2:13** [x] Heb. 13:20, 21 [y] Eph. 1:5 **2:14** [z] 1 Pet. 4:9

and [a]disputing, 15that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as [b]lights in the world, 16holding fast the word of life, so that [c]I may rejoice in the day of Christ that [d]I have not run in vain or labored in [e]vain.

17Yes, and if [f]I am being poured out *as a drink offering* on the sacrifice [g]and service of your faith, [h]I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

Timothy Commended

19But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send [i]Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. 20For I have no one [j]like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. 21For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. 22But you know his proven character, [k]that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel. 23Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. 24But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.

Epaphroditus Praised

25Yet I considered it necessary to send to you [l]Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and [m]fellow soldier, [n]but your messenger and [o]the one who ministered to my need; 26[p]since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. 29Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; 30because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, [q]to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

All for Christ

3 Finally, my brethren, [a]rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you *is* not tedious, but for you *it is* safe.

2[b]Beware of dogs, beware of [c]evil workers, [d]beware of the mutilation! 3For we are [e]the circumcision, [f]who worship God in the Spirit,* rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4though [g]I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I [h]more so: 5circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, [i]*of* the tribe of Benjamin, [j]a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, [k]a Pharisee;

* **3:3** NU-Text and M-Text read *who worship in the Spirit of God.*

can be compared to a huge gift that needs to be unwrapped for one's thorough enjoyment. Note that Paul is encouraging the Philippians to develop and *work out* their salvation, but not to work *for* their salvation.

2:15 ***crooked and perverse generation.*** Paul describes the world as being the opposite of Christian. On the one hand, the world is turned away from the truth, while on the other hand, it exerts a corrupting influence that is opposed to the truth.

2:17 ***poured out.*** Paul was probably saying that he was presently being offered as a living sacrifice on behalf of the faith of the Philippians. ***sacrifice.*** This means primarily the act of offering something to God.

2:19 ***Timothy.*** He had accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey, during which time they had established the church at Philippi. Timothy was apparently well loved by the Philippians, and he in turn exhibited a great concern for them.

2:22 ***as a son with his father.*** In New Testament times a son who served his father did so to learn the family trade. Serving in this way meant learning all about the business and being willing to obey the teacher in order to become as skillful as possible in the work.

2:25 ***Epaphroditus.*** He was a Philippian Christian sent by the church in Philippi to take a gift to Paul and to assist Paul in his ministry.

2:27 ***sick almost unto death.*** Paul was making certain that the Philippians understood the effort that Epaphroditus had made for the cause of Christ. His condition had been far worse than perhaps they had imagined. Paul viewed Epaphroditus's healing as God's direct intervention.

3:2 ***Beware of dogs.*** In New Testament times, dogs were hated scavengers. The term came to be used for all who had morally impure minds. ***the mutilation.*** Paul here points sarcastically and specifically to those who desire to reinstate Jewish religious practices as necessary for salvation. He chooses a term that literally means "to cut." By doing so, he suggests that these people do not even understand the truth about the Old Testament practice of circumcision.

3:3 ***the circumcision.*** Paul defines this as a matter of the heart and not of the flesh. He reveals three aspects: (1) worshiping God in the Spirit; (2) rejoicing in Christ; and (3) placing no confidence in any human honor or accomplishment as a means to reach God.

3:5 ***eighth day.*** Paul's parents obeyed God's law and had Paul circumcised on the appropriate day after his birth (Lev. 12:2–3). ***tribe of Benjamin.*** This tribe was highly regarded because it had produced the first king of Israel and had remained loyal to David. ***Hebrew of the Hebrews.*** This description of Paul may indicate that (1) both his parents were Jews, (2) he was a model Jew, or (3) he was educated completely as a Jew. ***Pharisee.*** They rigorously followed and defended the letter of the Jewish law.

2:14 [a] Rom. 14:1 **2:15** [b] Matt. 5:15, 16 **2:16** [c] 2 Cor. 1:14 [d] Gal. 2:2 [e] 1 Thess. 3:5 **2:17** [f] 2 Tim. 4:6 [g] Rom. 15:16 [h] 2 Cor. 7:4 **2:19** [i] Rom. 16:21 **2:20** [j] 2 Tim. 3:10 **2:22** [k] 1 Cor. 4:17 **2:25** [l] Phil. 4:18 [m] Philem. 2 [n] 2 Cor. 8:23 [o] 2 Cor. 11:9 **2:26** [p] Phil. 1:8 **2:30** [q] 1 Cor. 16:17 **3:1** [a] 1 Thess. 5:16 **3:2** [b] Gal. 5:15 [c] Ps. 119:115 [d] Rom. 2:28 **3:3** [e] Deut. 30:6 [f] Rom. 7:6 **3:4** [g] 2 Cor. 5:16; 11:18 [h] 2 Cor. 11:22, 23 **3:5** [i] Rom. 11:1 [j] 2 Cor. 11:22 [k] Acts 23:6

6concerning zeal, [l]persecuting the church;
concerning the righteousness which is in
the law, blameless.
7But [m]what things were gain to me, these
I have counted loss for Christ. 8Yet indeed
I also count all things loss [n]for the excel-
lence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my
Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of
all things, and count them as rubbish, that
I may gain Christ 9and be found in Him,
not having [o]my own righteousness, which
is from the law, but [p]that which *is* through
faith in Christ, the righteousness which is
from God by faith; 10that I may know Him
and the [q]power of His resurrection, and
[r]the fellowship of His sufferings, being
conformed to His death, 11if, by any means,
I may [s]attain to the resurrection from the
dead.

Pressing Toward the Goal

12Not that I have already [t]attained, or
am already [u]perfected; but I press on, that
I may lay hold of that for which Christ
Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13Brethren,
I do not count myself to have apprehended;
but one thing *I do,* [v]forgetting those things
which are behind and [w]reaching forward
to those things which are ahead, 14[x]I press
toward the goal for the prize of [y]the up-
ward call of God in Christ Jesus.
15Therefore let us, as many as are [z]ma-
ture, [a]have this mind; and if in anything you
think otherwise, [b]God will reveal even this
to you. 16Nevertheless, to *the degree* that
we have already attained, [c]let us walk [d]by
the same rule,* let us be of the same mind.

Our Citizenship in Heaven

17Brethren, [e]join in following my exam-
ple, and note those who so walk, as [f]you
have us for a pattern. 18For many walk, of
whom I have told you often, and now tell
you even weeping, *that they are* [g]the en-
emies of the cross of Christ: 19[h]whose end
is destruction, [i]whose god *is their* belly,
and [j]*whose* glory *is* in their shame—[k]who
set their mind on earthly things. 20For [l]our
citizenship is in heaven, [m]from which we
also [n]eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord
Jesus Christ, 21[o]who will transform our
lowly body that it may be [p]conformed to
His glorious body, [q]according to the work-
ing by which He is able even to [r]subdue all
things to Himself.
4 Therefore, my beloved and [a]longed-for
brethren, [b]my joy and crown, so [c]stand
fast in the Lord, beloved.

Be United, Joyful, and in Prayer

2I implore Euodia and I implore Synty-
che [d]to be of the same mind in the Lord.
3And* I urge you also, true companion,

* **3:16** NU-Text omits *rule* and the rest of the verse.
* **4:3** NU-Text and M-Text read *Yes*.

3:7 ***loss.*** This word indicates that which is damaged or of no further use (v. 8). Those things that Paul thought to be important became unimportant after confronting the resurrected Messiah.
3:8 ***rubbish.*** This word means anything that is detestable or worthless. All things of this world are dung compared to Christ. Even our righteousness is like filthy rags (Is. 64:6).
3:10 ***power of His resurrection.*** Paul does not say the power "in" His resurrection, which would specify the power of the one-time event of His resurrection. Rather, Paul seeks the ongoing power that is the day-to-day experience of being in Christ. ***fellowship of His sufferings.*** Paul sees the value of participating in the persecutions or struggles that naturally accompany one who is in partnership with Christ and His sufferings. ***being conformed to His death.*** Paul desires to imitate Christ—even in His death. In other words, Paul wants to be completely obedient to God the Father, just as Jesus was obedient to His Father's will (Luke 22:42).
3:12 ***perfected.*** The Greek term means mature or complete, finished. It does not specifically mean a moral or sinless perfection. Paul is not speaking of moral perfection or righteousness but of reaching the state of completion as a Christian. ***lay hold.*** This phrase adds the idea of overtaking by surprise to the sense of seizing some object. Paul urgently wants to "grab hold of" God as God had laid hold of him.
3:13 ***forgetting.*** Paul was indicating that it is an ongoing process. He might even be implying that he wanted to forget everything so that he would not rest on his past successes in Christ, but continue to labor for the Lord.
3:16 ***let us walk.*** Paul commands the Philippians to conduct themselves as soldiers who "march in line" together, organized each in his proper position.
3:17 ***example.*** The word indicates an exact representation of the original. The example of Paul's life is so evident that one can readily see it and use it as a pattern for living.
3:19 ***glory is in their shame.*** The things in which they take pride actually are the things that will bring disgrace or humiliation to them, things of which they should have been ashamed.
3:20 ***citizenship is in heaven.*** Here Paul presents a direct contrast to the earthly focus of enemies of the cross in verse 19. The eager desire of Christians is not earthly things, but a heavenly Person, the Savior.
3:21 ***conformed to His glorious body.*** Our bodies now are weak and susceptible to sin, disease, and death. But God will change our bodies to resemble Christ's glorious resurrection body.
4:2 ***Euodia . . . Syntyche.*** What is written here is all that is known about the two women and their dispute. Paul does not take sides in the argument, but instead encourages them to be reconciled.

3:6 [l] Acts 8:3; 22:4, 5; 26:9–11 **3:7** [m] Matt. 13:44 **3:8** [n] Jer. 9:23 **3:9** [o] Rom. 10:3 [p] Rom. 1:17 **3:10** [q] Eph. 1:19, 20 [r] [Rom. 6:3–5] **3:11** [s] Acts 26:6–8 **3:12** [t] [1 Tim. 6:12, 19] [u] Heb. 12:23 **3:13** [v] Luke 9:62 [w] Heb. 6:1 **3:14** [x] 2 Tim. 4:7 [y] Heb. 3:1 **3:15** [z] 1 Cor. 2:6 [a] Gal. 5:10 [b] Hos. 6:3 **3:16** [c] Gal. 6:16 [d] Rom. 12:16; 15:5 **3:17** [e] [1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1] [f] Titus 2:7, 8 **3:18** [g] Gal. 1:7 **3:19** [h] 2 Cor. 11:15 [i] 1 Tim. 6:5 [j] Hos. 4:7 [k] Rom. 8:5 **3:20** [l] Eph. 2:6, 19 [m] Acts 1:11 [n] 1 Cor. 1:7 **3:21** [o] [1 Cor. 15:43–53] [p] 1 John 3:2 [q] Eph. 1:19 [r] [1 Cor. 15:28] **4:1** [a] Phil. 1:8 [b] 2 Cor. 1:14 [c] Phil. 1:27 **4:2** [d] Phil. 2:2; 3:16

help these women who [e]labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in [f]the Book of Life.

4 [g]Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. [h]The Lord *is* at hand.

6 [i]Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with [j]thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and [k]the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Meditate on These Things

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are [l]true, whatever things *are* [m]noble, whatever things *are* [n]just, [o]whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* [p]lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and [q]the God of peace will be with you.

Philippian Generosity

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last [r]your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, [s]to be content: 12 [t]I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things [u]through Christ* who strengthens me.

14 Nevertheless you have done well that [v]you shared in my distress. 15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, [w]no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek [x]the fruit that abounds to your account. 18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from [y]Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, [z]a sweet-smelling aroma, [a]an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. 19 And my God [b]shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. 20 [c]Now to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Greeting and Blessing

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren [d]who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* Amen.

* **4:13** NU-Text reads *Him who.* * **4:23** NU-Text reads *your spirit.*

4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord.* The joy of Christians is not based on agreeable circumstances; instead, it is based on their relationship to God. Christians will face trouble in this world, but they should rejoice in the trials they face because they know God is using those situations to improve their character.

4:6 *Be anxious for nothing.* Paul prohibits the Philippians from worrying about their own problems. Instead, they are to commit their problems to God in prayer, trusting that He will provide deliverance.

4:7 *will guard.* Paul's choice of a military term "guard" implies that the mind is in a battle zone and needs to be protected by a "military guard" since the purpose of such a guard in a wartime situation is either to prevent a hostile invasion or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from escaping.

4:9 *learned.* This verb conveys not only the concept of "increasing in intellectual knowledge," but also the idea of "learning by habitual practice." In some areas of their Christian development, the Philippians had been excellent disciples of Paul, practicing what he had taught.

4:11 *content.* The word literally means "self-sufficient." In Stoic philosophy this Greek word described a person who dispassionately accepted whatever circumstances brought. For the Greeks, this contentment came from personal sufficiency. But for Paul, true sufficiency is found in the strength of Christ.

4:17 *account.* Paul uses business terminology. The Philippians' gift was producing spiritual profit, just as money deposited in a bank account accrues interest. But Paul was not as concerned with their gift as with the development in the Philippians of the spiritual ability to give.

4:20 *Amen.* The Jewish practice of closing prayers with the word *amen* carried over to the Christian church as well. When found at the end of a sentence, as it is here, the word can be translated "so be it" or "may it be fulfilled." At the beginning of a sentence, it means "surely," "truly," or "most assuredly."

4:3 [e] Rom. 16:3 [f] Luke 10:20 **4:4** [g] Rom. 12:12
4:5 [h] [James 5:7–9] **4:6** [i] Matt. 6:25 [j] [1 Thess. 5:17, 18]
4:7 [k] [John 14:27] **4:8** [l] Eph. 4:25 [m] 2 Cor. 8:21 [n] Deut. 16:20 [o] 1 Thess. 5:22 [p] 1 Cor. 13:4–7 **4:9** [q] Rom. 15:33
4:10 [r] 2 Cor. 11:9 **4:11** [s] 1 Tim. 6:6, 8 **4:12** [t] 1 Cor. 4:11
4:13 [u] John 15:5 **4:14** [v] Phil. 1:7 **4:15** [w] 2 Cor. 11:8, 9
4:17 [x] Titus 3:14 **4:18** [y] Phil. 2:25 [z] Heb. 13:16 [a] 2 Cor. 9:12 **4:19** [b] Ps. 23:1 **4:20** [c] Rom. 16:27 **4:21** [d] Gal. 1:2

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
COLOSSIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The external testimony to the Pauline authorship of Colossians is ancient and consistent, and the internal evidence is also very good. It not only claims to be written by Paul (1:1,23; 4:18), but the personal details and close parallels with Ephesians and Philemon make the case even stronger. It is evident from 1:4–8 and 2:1 that Paul had never visited the church at Colosse, which was founded by Epaphras. On his third missionary journey, Paul devoted almost three years to an Asian ministry centered in Ephesus (Acts 19:10; 20:31), and Epaphras probably came to Christ during this time. He then carried the gospel to cities like Colosse in the Lycus Valley. Epaphras visited Paul in prison (4:12) and his report concerning the church in Colosse prompted this epistle.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 60–61 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Col. 2:9–10

▶ **THEME:** The problem of the Colossian church was similar to what we experience in many churches today. This is often called syncretism, the tendency to regard other philosophies and religions as equally valid as Christianity. The people in Colosse wanted to believe Christian truth, but they also wanted to hang on to their old beliefs by blending them with the gospel. Paul's purpose in this letter is to settle once and for all the issue of Christ's centrality and supremacy. He writes to restore Jesus, the Messiah, to the center of these believers' lives. Here we can see Paul's unwavering confidence in the incomparability of Christ, as it has completely shaped his views on all of life. He writes to introduce the Colossians to this same vision.

Greeting

1 Paul, [a]an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2 To the saints [b]and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse:

[c]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Their Faith in Christ

3 [d]We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, **4** [e]since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of [f]your love for all the saints; **5** because of the hope [g]which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, **6** which has come to you, [h]as *it has* also in all the world, and [i]is bringing forth fruit,* as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew [j]the grace of God in truth; **7** as you also learned from [k]Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is [l]a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, **8** who also declared to us your [m]love in the Spirit.

Preeminence of Christ

9 [n]For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you,

* **1:2** NU-Text omits *and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
* **1:6** NU-Text and M-Text add *and growing.*

1:1 ***an apostle.*** Paul calls himself an apostle, a word whose root means "to send." The Greek word was first used for a cargo ship or fleet, but later denoted a commander of a fleet. The New Testament employs the word to signify an approved spokesman sent as a personal representative.
1:2 ***saints.*** The Greek term means "holy people." The essence of "holiness" is being set apart to God. All believers are saints, not because they are perfect, but because they belong to God. ***in Christ.*** This is a favorite expression of the apostle Paul, used some 80 times in his letters.
1:4–8 ***faith . . . love . . . hope.*** Paul often uses these three terms together (Rom. 5:2–5; 1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Thess. 1:3; 5:8). Faith is in Christ. Love flows from faith and proves the genuineness of one's faith (James 2:14–26). Hope refers to the result of faith, the treasure laid up in heaven.
1:9 ***all wisdom and spiritual understanding.*** *Wisdom* is the practical outworking of knowledge (James 3:17), and that knowledge cannot be separated from the *spiritual understanding* that comes through the discernment given by the Holy Spirit.

1:1 [a] Eph. 1:1 **1:2** [b] 1 Cor. 4:17 [c] Gal. 1:3 **1:3** [d] Phil. 1:3 **1:4** [e] Eph. 1:15 [f] [Heb. 6:10] **1:5** [g] [1 Pet. 1:4] **1:6** [h] Matt. 24:14 [i] John 15:16 [j] Eph. 3:2 **1:7** [k] Philem. 23 [l] 2 Cor. 11:23 **1:8** [m] Rom. 15:30 **1:9** [n] Eph. 1:15–17

and to ask [o]that you may be filled with [p]the knowledge of His will [q]in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10[r]that you may walk worthy of the Lord, [s]fully pleasing *Him*, [t]being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the [u]knowledge of God; 11[v]strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, [w]for all patience and longsuffering [x]with joy; 12[y]giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of [z]the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13He has delivered us from [a]the power of darkness [b]and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14[c]in whom we have redemption through His blood,* the forgiveness of sins.

15He is [d]the image of the invisible God, [e]the firstborn over all creation. 16For [f]by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or [g]dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created [h]through Him and for Him. 17[i]And He is before all things, and in Him [j]all things consist. 18And [k]He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, [l]the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Reconciled in Christ

19For it pleased *the Father that* [m]in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20and [n]by Him to reconcile [o]all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, [p]having made peace through the blood of His cross.

21And you, [q]who once were alienated and enemies in your mind [r]by wicked works, yet now He has [s]reconciled 22[t]in the body of His flesh through death, [u]to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— 23if indeed you continue [v]in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are [w]not

* **1:14** NU-Text and M-Text omit *through His blood.*

1:10 ***walk worthy of the Lord.*** Paul wanted the Colossians to live in a manner that adequately reflected what God had done for them and was doing in them. Being "worthy of God" is a phrase that occurs in ancient pagan inscriptions throughout Asia. It pictures someone's life being weighed on scales to determine its worth.

1:12 ***qualified us.*** This means to be able or qualified for a task. Believers can never be qualified on their own; instead, God must make them sufficient through Jesus Christ. The tense of the verb points to "qualifying" as an act in the past rather than a process.

1:13 ***delivered . . . conveyed.*** God has liberated believers from the dominion of darkness. The apostle uses the common symbolism of light and darkness for good and evil, for God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom, that is found throughout the New Testament. The kingdom from which believers have been rescued is the kingdom of darkness.

1:14 ***redemption.*** The Greek word points naturally to the payment of a price or ransom for the release of a slave. They are freed from bondage to sin by forgiveness through the blood of Jesus (Eph. 1:7).

1:15 ***firstborn over all creation.*** Verses 15–20 are thought to be an early Christian hymn celebrating the supremacy of Christ. *Firstborn* could denote a priority in time or in rank. The word does not describe Christ as the first being created in time because the hymn proclaims that all things were "created by Him" and that "He is before all things." Being firstborn referred more to rank and privilege than to order of birth.

1:16 ***All things were created through Him and for Him.*** Not only did Jesus create all things, everything was created for His purposes (Heb. 1:2, where Christ is said to be the "heir of all things").

1:18 ***head of the body.*** No one should underestimate the significance of the church, for it is in fact Christ's body. The sovereign Creator of the universe, as Head of the church, provides leadership and oversight over it.

1:19 ***fullness.*** The opponents of Paul, and later the Greek Gnostics, seem to have used this word as a technical term for the sphere between heaven and earth where a hierarchy of angels lived. The Gnostics viewed Christ as one of many spirits existing in this hierarchy between God and all people. However, Paul used the term *fullness* to refer to the complete embodiment of God.

1:20–22 Jesus Pays the Price—Salvation is a free gift, but it is not a cheap one. It costs us nothing, but it cost God dearly—it cost Jesus His life. In physically dying on the cross, Jesus sacrificed Himself and satisfied the debt that we had incurred through sin, so that it is possible for God and man to be reconciled. As Jesus hung on the cross, He cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46). Jesus was separated from God the Father so that we do not have to be. This is the heart of the atonement (becoming *at one* with God). The marvel of it all is that He did this while we were His enemies: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

1:20–21 ***reconcile all things.*** This phrase shows the significance of Christ's work on the cross. It does not mean that all people will be saved, since many passages clearly say that unbelievers will suffer eternal separation from God (Matt. 25:46).

1:22 ***holy, and blameless, and above reproach.*** We who were once enemies of God and alienated by our own wicked works will one day be presented as above reproach on account of Christ's death for us.

1:23 ***if indeed you continue in the faith.*** The perseverance of the Colossians was proof of the reconciling work of Christ on their behalf. ***every creature under heaven.*** Paul uses this exaggeration to illustrate the rapid spread of the gospel. Compare Acts 17:6 where the apostles are said to have turned the world upside down, even though their ministry, up to that point,

1:9 [o] 1 Cor. 1:5 [p] [Rom. 12:2] [q] Eph. 1:8 **1:10** [r] Eph. 4:1 [s] 1 Thess. 4:1 [t] Heb. 13:21 [u] 2 Pet. 3:18 **1:11** [v] [Eph. 3:16; 6:10] [w] Eph. 4:2 [x] [Acts 5:41] **1:12** [y] [Eph. 5:20] [z] Eph. 1:11 **1:13** [a] Eph. 6:12 [b] 2 Pet. 1:11 **1:14** [c] Eph. 1:7 **1:15** [d] 2 Cor. 4:4 [e] Rev. 3:14 **1:16** [f] Heb. 1:2, 3 [g] [Eph. 1:20, 21] [h] Heb. 2:10 **1:17** [i] [John 17:5] [j] Heb. 1:3 **1:18** [k] Eph. 1:22 [l] Rev. 1:5 **1:19** [m] John 1:16 **1:20** [n] Eph. 2:14 [o] 2 Cor. 5:18 [p] Eph. 1:10 **1:21** [q] [Eph. 2:1] [r] Titus 1:15 [s] 2 Cor. 5:18, 19 **1:22** [t] 2 Cor. 5:18 [u] [Eph. 5:27] **1:23** [v] Eph. 3:17 [w] [John 15:6]

moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, [x]which was preached to every creature under heaven, [y]of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Sacrificial Service for Christ

24 [z]I now rejoice in my sufferings [a]for you, and fill up in my flesh [b]what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for [c]the sake of His body, which is the church, 25of which I became a minister according to [d]the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, 26[e]the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, [f]but now has been revealed to His saints. 27[g]To them God willed to make known what are [h]the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which* is [i]Christ in you, [j]the hope of glory. 28Him we preach, [k]warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, [l]that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me [m]mightily.

Not Philosophy but Christ

2 For I want you to know what a great [a]conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, 2that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and *attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and* of Christ, 3[b]in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4Now this I say [c]lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. 5For [d]though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see [e]your *good* order and the [f]steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

6[g]As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7[h]rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it* with thanksgiving.

8Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to [i]the tradition of men, according to the [j]basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9For [k]in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10and you are complete in Him, who is the [l]head of all principality and power.

Not Legalism but Christ

11In Him you were also [m]circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by [n]putting off the body of the sins* of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12[o]buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through [p]faith in the working of God, [q]who raised Him from the dead. 13And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14[r]having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken

* **1:27** M-Text reads *who.* * **2:2** NU-Text omits *both of the Father and.* * **2:7** NU-Text omits *in it.* * **2:11** NU-Text omits *of the sins.*

had been limited to a small portion of the eastern Mediterranean region.

1:24 *my sufferings for you.* Paul is making the point that a Christian will endure the sufferings that Christ would be enduring if He were still in the world (2 Cor. 1:5; 4:11).

1:26–27 *mystery.* In Greek pagan religions, a mystery was a secret teaching reserved for a few spiritual teachers who had been initiated into an inner circle. Paul uses the word to refer to knowledge that had been "hidden from ages and from generations" but was now being revealed by God. The mystery is that Christ now lives within Gentile believers.

2:1 *Laodicea.* It was a sister city of Colosse about 11 miles away. The two churches were to share their letters from Paul.

2:2–3 *the knowledge of the mystery of God.* Paul reminds the Colossians that true knowledge will be acknowledged by bringing people together in Christian love in the church. The Gnostics thought only certain "knowledgeable" people could join their elite group; Paul teaches that every believer has access to complete wisdom found in Christ.

2:8 *philosophy.* This verse has been used at times to teach that Christians should not study or read philosophy. This is not Paul's meaning. Paul himself was adept at philosophy, evidenced by his interaction with the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers in Athens (Acts 17:1–34). Paul was warning the believers not to be taken in by any philosophy that does not conform to a proper knowledge of Christ. The false teachers at Colosse had combined worldly philosophies with the gospel.

2:9 *dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.* In this verse Paul clearly proclaims the incarnation, the fact that God became a man bodily. This contradicts the Gnostic idea of the inherent evil of physical bodies and the claim that Jesus is merely a spirit.

2:10 *you are complete.* Paul emphasizes the sufficiency of Christ in order to refute the Gnostics and the Judaizers who respectively believed that special knowledge or works were necessary to make a Christian complete.

2:12–13 *buried with Him in baptism.* Baptism is the symbol of the believer's association with Christ's death on the cross. Water baptism itself does not bring forgiveness of sins, but Paul uses the rite to help explain the work of the Spirit. The early church would never have understood the idea of an unbaptized Christian.

1:23 [x] Col. 1:6 [y] Col. 1:25 **1:24** [z] 2 Cor. 7:4 [a] Eph. 3:1, 13 [b] [2 Cor. 1:5; 12:15] [c] Eph. 1:23 **1:25** [d] Gal. 2:7 **1:26** [e] [1 Cor. 2:7] [f] [2 Tim. 1:10] **1:27** [g] 2 Cor. 2:14 [h] Rom. 9:23 [i] [Rom. 8:10, 11] [j] 1 Tim. 1:1 **1:28** [k] Acts 20:20 [l] Eph. 5:27 **1:29** [m] Eph. 3:7 **2:1** [a] Phil. 1:30 **2:3** [b] 1 Cor. 1:24, 30 **2:4** [c] Rom. 16:18 **2:5** [d] 1 Thess. 2:17 [e] 1 Cor. 14:40 [f] 1 Pet. 5:9 **2:6** [g] 1 Thess. 4:1 **2:7** [h] Eph. 2:21 **2:8** [i] Gal. 1:14 [j] Gal. 4:3, 9, 10 **2:9** [k] [John 1:14] **2:10** [l] [Eph. 1:20, 21] **2:11** [m] Deut. 10:16 [n] Rom. 6:6; 7:24 **2:12** [o] Rom. 6:4 [p] Eph. 1:19, 20 [q] Acts 2:24 **2:14** [r] [Eph. 2:15, 16]

it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15[s]Having disarmed [t]principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16So let no one [u]judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17[v]which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. 18Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not* seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19and not holding fast to [w]the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, [x]grows with the increase *that is* from God.

20Therefore,* if you [y]died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, [z]why, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— 21[a]"Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," 22which all concern things which perish with the using—[b]according to the commandments and doctrines of men? 23[c]These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Not Carnality but Christ

3 If then you were [a]raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, [b]where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2Set your mind on things above, not on things on the [c]earth. 3[d]For you died, [e]and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4[f]When Christ *who is* [g]our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in [h]glory.

5[i]Therefore put to death [j]your members which are on the earth: [k]fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, [l]which is idolatry. 6[m]Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon [n]the sons of disobedience, 7[o]in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

8[p]But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10and have put on the new *man* who [q]is renewed in knowledge [r]according to the image of Him who [s]created him, 11where there is neither [t]Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, [u]but Christ *is* all and in all.

Character of the New Man

12Therefore, [v]as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, [w]put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13[x]bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. 14[y]But above all these things [z]put on love, which is the [a]bond of perfection. 15And let [b]the peace of God rule in your hearts, [c]to which also you were called [d]in one body; and [e]be thankful. 16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another [f]in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17And [g]whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

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* **2:18** NU-Text omits *not*. * **2:20** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Therefore*.

2:15 ***principalities and powers.*** These words allude to Satan and the fallen angels. Paul is describing Christ's victory on the cross over the powers that opposed Him and that were against God's faithful people. To describe this victory, Paul uses the spectacle of the military triumph, when prisoners of war were stripped and paraded before the populace behind the conquering general.

2:16–19 ***false humility.*** People who do not champion salvation in Christ alone often appear to be humble. But their search for a new spiritual experience or advocacy of some work as necessary for salvation is actually human pride. They do not want to submit to God's plan of salvation.

2:20–23 ***subject yourselves to regulations.*** Since believers have been released from ritualistic observances, why should they let others bind them down again (Rom. 6:3–14)? No human work can be added to the merit of Christ's death. His work on the cross is the only acceptable work in God's eyes.

3:1–4 ***Set your mind on things above.*** The false teachers were instructing the Colossians to concentrate on temporal observances; in contrast, Paul instructs them to concentrate on the eternal realities of heaven. The Greek verb for *set* emphasizes an ongoing decision. Christians must continually discipline themselves to focus on eternal realities instead of the temporal realities of this earth.

3:9–10 ***old man . . . new man.*** These two terms do not refer to the Christian's fleshly and spiritual natures. Instead, Paul describes our former unredeemed life as the old man and our life as God's child as the new man. The new man has the image of the new creation in Christ, just as the old man bears the image of our fallen nature. The old man is under an old master, Satan, while the new man has a new master, the Spirit of God living within.

3:11 ***barbarian.*** In the Roman Empire a person who did not speak Greek was despised. ***Scythian.*** An

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2:15 [s] [Is. 53:12] [t] Eph. 6:12 **2:16** [u] Rom. 14:3 **2:17** [v] Heb. 8:5; 10:1 **2:19** [w] Eph. 4:15 [x] Eph. 1:23; 4:16 **2:20** [y] Rom. 6:2–5 [z] Gal. 4:3, 9 **2:21** [a] 1 Tim. 4:3 **2:22** [b] Titus 1:14 **2:23** [c] 1 Tim. 4:8 **3:1** [a] Col. 2:12 [b] Ps. 68:18; 110:1; Eph. 1:20 **3:2** [c] [Matt. 6:19–21] **3:3** [d] [Rom. 6:2] [e] [2 Cor. 5:7] **3:4** [f] [1 John 3:2] [g] John 14:6 [h] 1 Cor. 15:43 **3:5** [i] [Rom. 8:13] [j] [Rom. 6:13] [k] Eph. 5:3 [l] Eph. 4:19; 5:3, 5 **3:6** [m] Rom. 1:18 [n] [Eph. 2:2] **3:7** [o] 1 Cor. 6:11 **3:8** [p] Eph. 4:22 **3:10** [q] Rom. 12:2 [r] [Rom. 8:29] [s] [Eph. 2:10] **3:11** [t] Gal. 3:27, 28 [u] Eph. 1:23 **3:12** [v] [1 Pet. 1:2] [w] 1 John 3:17 **3:13** [x] [Mark 11:25] **3:14** [y] 1 Pet. 4:8 [z] [1 Cor. 13] [a] Eph. 4:3 **3:15** [b] [John 14:27] [c] 1 Cor. 7:15 [d] Eph. 4:4 [e] [1 Thess. 5:18] **3:16** [f] Eph. 5:19 **3:17** [g] 1 Cor. 10:31

The Christian Home

18 [h]Wives, submit to your own husbands,
[i]as is fitting in the Lord.
19 [j]Husbands, love your wives and do not
be [k]bitter toward them.
20 [l]Children, obey your parents [m]in all
things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.
21 [n]Fathers, do not provoke your children,
lest they become discouraged.
22 [o]Bondservants, obey in all things your
masters according to the flesh, not with
eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincer-
ity of heart, fearing God. 23 [p]And whatever
you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not
to men, 24 [q]knowing that from the Lord you
will receive the reward of the inheritance;
[r]for* you serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he
who does wrong will be repaid for what he
has done, and [s]there is no partiality.
4 Masters,[a] give your bondservants what
is just and fair, knowing that you also
have a Master in heaven.

Christian Graces

2 [b]Continue earnestly in prayer, being
vigilant in it [c]with thanksgiving; 3 [d]mean-
while praying also for us, that God would
[e]open to us a door for the word, to speak
[f]the mystery of Christ, [g]for which I am also
in chains, 4 that I may make it manifest, as
I ought to speak.
5 [h]Walk in [i]wisdom toward those *who
are* outside, [j]redeeming the time. 6 *Let* your
speech always *be* [k]with grace, [l]seasoned
with salt, [m]that you may know how you
ought to answer each one.

Final Greetings

7 [n]Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful
minister, and fellow servant in the Lord,
will tell you all the news about me. 8 [o]I am
sending him to you for this very purpose,
that he* may know your circumstances
and comfort your hearts, 9 with [p]Onesimus,
a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one*
of you. They will make known to you all
things which *are happening* here.
10 [q]Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets
you, with [r]Mark the cousin of Barnabas
(about whom you received instructions: if
he comes to you, welcome him), 11 and Jesus
who is called Justus. These *are my* only fel-
low workers for the kingdom of God who
are of the circumcision; they have proved
to be a comfort to me.
12 [s]Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a bond-
servant of Christ, greets you, always [t]la-
boring fervently for you in prayers, that
you may stand [u]perfect and complete* in
all the will of God. 13 For I bear him witness
that he has a great zeal* for you, and those
who are in Laodicea, and those in Hier-
apolis. 14 [v]Luke the beloved physician and
[w]Demas greet you. 15 Greet the brethren
who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and
[x]the church that *is* in his* house.

Closing Exhortations and Blessing

16 Now when [y]this epistle is read among
you, see that it is read also in the church of
the Laodiceans, and that you likewise
read the *epistle* from Laodicea. 17 And say
to [z]Archippus, "Take heed to [a]the ministry
which you have received in the Lord, that
you may fulfill it."
18 [b]This salutation by my own hand—
Paul. [c]Remember my chains. Grace *be* with
you. Amen.

* **3:24** NU-Text omits *for.* * **4:8** NU-Text reads *you may know our circumstances and he may.* * **4:12** NU-Text reads *fully assured.* * **4:13** NU-Text reads *concern.* * **4:15** NU-Text reads *Nympha … her house.*

uncultured person who came from the area around the Black Sea.

3:18–23 *submit.* See notes at Ephesians 5:19–31.

3:22–25 *the reward of the inheritance.* The strong motivation to serve someone well is found in the future reward that Christ gives to those who are faithful in this service. We normally think we receive eternal rewards for spiritual practices like reading the Bible, prayer, or evangelism. Here, Paul asserts that all work done to the honor of Christ will bring an eternal reward (1:22–23; 2:18).

4:5 *Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside.* Early Christians were often viewed with suspicion, distrust, and disdain. They were considered atheists because they would not worship the gods of Rome and Greece. Many labeled them as unpatriotic because they would not burn incense before the image of the emperor. Some even accused the early Christians of participating in orgies because of their talk of "love feasts" (Jude 12). Others harbored suspicions that Christians were really cannibals who ate and drank the blood and body of the Lord. With such misrepresentations of Christian belief and practice running rampant, it was very important for misunderstandings to be dispelled by the virtuous and impeccable lives of Christian believers.

4:9 *Onesimus.* This slave of Philemon probably accompanied Tychicus to Colosse. Paul's letter to Philemon would have been carried along with the letter to the Colossians. It dealt with a personal situation between Onesimus and his master.

4:10–15 *Mark.* This is the author of the Gospel of Mark.

4:18 *This salutation by my own hand.* The apostle dictated his letters to a secretary, but it was his custom to give a greeting in his own handwriting at the end (2 Thess. 2:1; 3:17). This served to personalize and authenticate the letter.

3:18 [h] 1 Pet. 3:1 [i] [Eph. 5:22—6:9] **3:19** [j] [Eph. 5:25] [k] Eph. 4:31 **3:20** [l] Eph. 6:1 [m] Eph. 5:24 **3:21** [n] Eph. 6:4 **3:22** [o] Eph. 6:5 **3:23** [p] [Eccl. 9:10] **3:24** [q] Eph. 6:8 [r] 1 Cor. 7:22 **3:25** [s] Rom. 2:11 **4:1** [a] Eph. 6:9 **4:2** [b] Luke 18:1 [c] Col. 2:7 **4:3** [d] Eph. 6:19 [e] 1 Cor. 16:9 [f] Eph. 3:3, 4; 6:19 [g] Eph. 6:20 **4:5** [h] Eph. 5:15 [i] [Matt. 10:16] [j] Eph. 5:16 **4:6** [k] Eccl. 10:12 [l] Mark 9:50 [m] 1 Pet. 3:15 **4:7** [n] 2 Tim. 4:12 **4:8** [o] Eph. 6:22 **4:9** [p] Philem. 10 **4:10** [q] Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2 [r] 2 Tim. 4:11 **4:12** [s] Philem. 23 [t] Rom. 15:30 [u] Matt. 5:48 **4:14** [v] 2 Tim. 4:11 [w] 2 Tim. 4:10 **4:15** [x] Rom. 16:5 **4:16** [y] 1 Thess. 5:27 **4:17** [z] Philem. 2 [a] 2 Tim. 4:5 **4:18** [b] 1 Cor. 16:21 [c] Heb. 13:3

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
THESSALONIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** First Thessalonians went unchallenged as a Pauline epistle until the nineteenth century, when radical critics claimed that its lack of doctrinal content made its authenticity suspect. But this is a weak objection on two counts: (1) the proportion of doctrinal teaching in Paul's epistles varies widely, and (2) 4:13—5:11 is a foundational passage for New Testament eschatology (future events). Paul had quickly grounded the Thessalonians in Christian doctrine, and the only problematic issue when this epistle was written concerned the matter of Christ's return. Paul planted the Thessalonian church on his second missionary journey, and wrote this epistle as a response to a good report regarding the church from Timothy in A.D. 51.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 51 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 1 Thess. 3:12–13

▶ **THEME:** Since Paul's time in Thessalonica was cut short, Paul used these letters to clarify some of his teaching. After a review of the basics, the primary issues covered in 1 Thessalonians are what happens when people die and the timing of the second coming of Christ. In that there were so many people around at that time that had seen Jesus, the promise of His return was met with anxious expectation. We tend to be blasé about it because we have watched so many predictions concerning the end times come and go, but this book will help us to sharpen and renew our expectations.

Greeting

1 Paul, [a]Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the [b]Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Their Good Example

2 [c]We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, **3** remembering without ceasing [d]your work of faith, [e]labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, **4** knowing, beloved brethren, [f]your election by God. **5** For [g]our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, [h]and in the Holy Spirit [i]and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

* **1:1** NU-Text omits *from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1:1 ***Silvanus.*** Silvanus is the Roman form of the name Silas. After Paul had separated from Barnabas (Acts 15:36–40), Silas became Paul's traveling companion on the second missionary journey, and he may have served as Paul's secretary. He was a leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:22–23), and he accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to deliver the decree of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:22–23). He and Paul suffered a beating at Philippi (Acts 16:22–24), and he had helped found the church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–4). ***Timothy.*** Timothy was also with Paul on the second missionary journey. Paul considered him like a son and loved him dearly (Acts 16:3; 1 Tim. 1:2). This letter is a response to Timothy's report from the church in Thessalonica. ***To the church.*** The Greek word *ekklēsia* was a familiar term meaning any gathering or assembly. In its New Testament usage this word calls to mind the relationship of believers in Thessalonica as a body.

1:3 ***patience of hope.*** The believers at Thessalonica fixed their hope solidly on the return of Jesus Christ (v. 10). Notice that each of the virtues has Christ as its object. Jesus is constantly the focus. This is a good standard for evaluating any Christian service.

1:5 ***our gospel.*** Paul had preached the gospel to them clearly when he was with them. For three weeks he had "reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead" (Acts 17:2–3). This message was far different from the messianic expectations that Paul knew from his own training as a Pharisee. The Jews of that day were not looking for a suffering savior but a conquering champion.

1:5 Sharing Our Faith—In order to share our faith successfully, we must keep the following rules in mind:

1:1 [a] 1 Pet. 5:12 [b] Acts 17:1–9 **1:2** [c] Rom. 1:8 **1:3** [d] John 6:29 [e] Rom. 16:6 **1:4** [f] Col. 3:12 **1:5** [g] Mark 16:20 [h] 2 Cor. 6:6 [i] Heb. 2:3

6 And [j]you became followers of us and
of the Lord, having received the word in
much affliction, [k]with joy of the Holy Spir-
it, 7 so that you became examples to all in
Macedonia and Achaia who believe. 8 For
from you the word of the Lord [l]has sounded
forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia,
but also [m]in every place. Your faith toward
God has gone out, so that we do not need to
say anything. 9 For they themselves declare
concerning us [n]what manner of entry we
had to you, [o]and how you turned to God
from idols to serve the living and true God,
10 and [p]to wait for His Son from heaven,
whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus
who delivers us [q]from the wrath to come.

Paul's Conduct

2 For you yourselves know, brethren, that
our coming to you was not in vain. 2 But
even* after we had suffered before and
were spitefully treated at [a]Philippi, as you
know, we were [b]bold in our God to speak
to you the gospel of God in much conflict.
3 [c]For our exhortation *did* not *come* from
error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit.
4 But as [d]we have been approved by God
[e]to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we
speak, [f]not as pleasing men, but God [g]who
tests our hearts. 5 For [h]neither at any time
did we use flattering words, as you know,
nor a cloak for covetousness—[i]God *is* wit-
ness. 6 [j]Nor did we seek glory from men,
either from you or from others, when [k]we
might have [l]made demands [m]as apostles of
Christ. 7 But [n]we were gentle among you,
just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own
children. 8 So, affectionately longing for
you, we were well pleased [o]to impart to you
not only the gospel of God, but also [p]our
own lives, because you had become dear to
us. 9 For you remember, brethren, our [q]labor
and toil; for laboring night and day, [r]that
we might not be a burden to any of you, we
preached to you the gospel of God.

10 [s]You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, [t]how
devoutly and justly and blamelessly we be-
haved ourselves among you who believe;
11 as you know how we exhorted, and com-
forted, and charged* every one of you, as
a father *does* his own children, 12 [u]that you
would walk worthy of God [v]who calls you
into His own kingdom and glory.

Their Conversion

13 For this reason we also thank God
[w]without ceasing, because when you [x]re-
ceived the word of God which you heard
from us, you welcomed *it* [y]not *as* the word
of men, but as it is in truth, the word of
God, which also effectively [z]works in you
who believe. 14 For you, brethren, became
imitators [a]of the churches of God which
are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For [b]you also
suffered the same things from your own
countrymen, just as they *did* from the Ju-
deans, 15 [c]who killed both the Lord Jesus
and [d]their own prophets, and have perse-
cuted us; and they do not please God [e]and

*2:2 NU-Text and M-Text omit *even*. *2:11 NU-Text and M-Text read *implored*.

First, we must be clean vessels. God reminds Isaiah the prophet of this: "Be clean, you who bear the vessels of the LORD" (Is. 52:11). David prays for forgiveness and cleansing, and a willing spirit. He states, "Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You (Ps. 51:13).

We must be able to clearly give out the simple facts of the gospel without getting bogged down with profound theological concepts. Philip the evangelist demonstrated how to do this when he dealt with the Ethiopian eunuch in the desert. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:35).

We must avoid arguments and stick to the basic issues of man's sin and Christ's sacrifice.

We must use the Word of God. Paul's tremendous success as an evangelist can be linked directly to his constant use of God's Word (Acts 17:2; 18:28; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14–17).

We must depend upon the Spirit of God (John 3:15; Acts 6:10; 1 Cor. 2:4).

1:6 *followers of us.* As we focus on Jesus we will reflect His image to others (2 Cor. 3:18).

1:8 *sounded forth.* Since Thessalonica was a port city on the much-traveled Egnatian Way, those who saw the virtuous life and persistent faith of the Thessalonian Christians would spread the word throughout the entire region.

1:10 *delivers us from the wrath to come.* Because Christ endured God's wrath at Calvary, all who are in Christ will escape that wrath. They have nothing to fear.

2:2 *at Philippi.* Paul and Silas were beaten and put in the stocks in Philippi (Acts 16:22–24).

2:5 *flattering words.* Far from flattering, Paul preached boldly that everyone was a sinner who needed to be saved by the grace of God.

2:9 *labor.* This word indicates strenuous work that produces weariness. Paul made tents to provide for his financial needs (Acts 18:3), showing that his ministry was motivated by an unselfish desire to promote the well-being of others rather than to advance his own needs.

2:13 *effectively works.* Gentile Christians in Thessalonica could contrast the pure Word of God, with its transforming effect, with the immoral pagan religions, which only perverted people even more. Likewise, Jewish believers could contrast the love and grace of God in the gospel to the legalism and pride often produced by the Jewish religion.

1:6 [j] 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1 [k] Acts 5:41; 13:52 **1:8** [l] Rom. 10:18 [m] Rom. 1:8; 16:19 **1:9** [n] 1 Thess. 2:1 [o] 1 Cor. 12:2 **1:10** [p] [Rom. 2:7] [q] Rom. 5:9 **2:2** [a] Acts 14:5; 16:19–24 [b] Acts 17:1–9 **2:3** [c] 2 Cor. 7:2 **2:4** [d] 1 Cor. 7:25 [e] Titus 1:3 [f] Gal. 1:10 [g] Prov. 17:3 **2:5** [h] 2 Cor. 2:17 [i] Rom. 1:9 **2:6** [j] 1 Tim. 5:17 [k] 1 Cor. 9:4 [l] 2 Cor. 11:9 [m] 1 Cor. 9:1 **2:7** [n] 1 Cor. 2:3 **2:8** [o] Rom. 1:11 [p] 2 Cor. 12:15 **2:9** [q] Acts 18:3; 20:34, 35 [r] 2 Cor. 12:13 **2:10** [s] 1 Thess. 1:5 [t] 2 Cor. 7:2 **2:12** [u] Eph. 4:1 [v] 1 Cor. 1:9 **2:13** [w] 1 Thess. 1:2, 3 [x] Mark 4:20 [y] [Gal. 4:14] [z] [1 Pet. 1:23] **2:14** [a] Gal. 1:22 [b] Acts 17:5 **2:15** [c] Acts 2:23 [d] Matt. 5:12; 23:34, 35 [e] Esth. 3:8

are contrary to all men, 16[f]forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always [g]to fill up *the measure of* their sins; [h]but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Longing to See Them

17But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time [i]in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. 18Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but [j]Satan hindered us. 19For [k]what *is* our hope, or joy, or [l]crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the [m]presence of our Lord Jesus Christ [n]at His coming? 20For you are our glory and joy.

Concern for Their Faith

3 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, 2and sent [a]Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, 3[b]that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that [c]we are appointed to this. 4[d]For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. 5For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, [e]lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and [f]our labor might be in vain.

Encouraged by Timothy

6[g]But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, [h]as we also *to see* you—7therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress [i]we were comforted concerning you by your faith. 8For now we live, if you [j]stand fast in the Lord.

9For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God, 10night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face [k]and perfect what is lacking in your faith?

Prayer for the Church

11Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, [l]direct our way to you. 12And may the Lord make you increase and [m]abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, 13so that He may establish [n]your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Plea for Purity

4 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus [a]that you should abound more and more, [b]just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; 2for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

3For this is [c]the will of God, [d]your sanctification: [e]that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4[f]that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5[g]not in passion of lust, [h]like the Gentiles [i]who do not know

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2:16 ***always to fill up the measure of their sins.*** The implication is that God will allow a nation, group, or individual to go only so far in sin before He brings judgment upon them (Gen. 15:16).

2:18 ***Satan hindered us.*** Satan has a vested interest in hindering the spread of the gospel, and we may be sure that when we are engaged in the Lord's work, we will experience spiritual attacks and opposition of various kinds.

3:1 ***Athens.*** When forced to leave Thessalonica, Paul and Silas went to Berea, the next city west of Thessalonica. The Thessalonian Jews who had opposed Paul learned that he was at Berea, and went there also to stir up opposition. Paul's friends then escorted him south to Athens (Acts 17:13–15).

3:3 ***shaken by these afflictions.*** The Bible teaches that those who live godly lives should expect persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). In fact, Christ warned His disciples that they would experience the same type of rejection He had experienced (John 15:18–21). But such suffering should not make us depressed. Instead we should rejoice that we are allied with His name (Matt. 5:10–12).

3:12 ***increase and abound in love to one another.*** Christ had told His disciples that His followers would be identified by their love for one another (John 13:35).

3:13 ***all His saints.*** The word saints means "holy ones" or "those set apart." It can be used to apply to believers, or to holy angels. Angels will participate in the second coming (4:16; Jude 14; Rev. 19:14).

4:1 ***how you ought to walk.*** The Christian life not only begins with faith, but it continues as a daily walk of faith. Christians are not to live like unsaved Gentiles (Eph. 4:17); instead they are to walk worthy of their calling from God (Eph. 4:1). John exhorts Christians to walk in the light, that is, in the revealed will of God (1 John 1:7).

4:3 ***abstain from sexual immorality.*** A major problem for the early church was maintaining sexual purity (1 Cor. 5:1,9–11). Pagan religions often included sexual orgies as part of their rites of worship, and temple prostitutes were dedicated to various gods. In contrast, Christianity taught that the body is God's temple (1 Cor. 6:18–20). The body should be honored as created by God and should be sanctified in keeping with its holy purpose.

2:16 [f]Luke 11:52 [g]Gen. 15:16 [h]Matt. 24:6 **2:17** [i]1 Cor. 5:3 **2:18** [j]Rom. 1:13; 15:22 **2:19** [k]2 Cor. 1:14 [l]Prov. 16:31 [m]Jude 24 [n]1 Cor. 15:23 **3:2** [a]Rom. 16:21 **3:3** [b]Eph. 3:13 [c]Acts 9:16; 14:22 **3:4** [d]Acts 20:24 **3:5** [e]1 Cor. 7:5 [f]Gal. 2:2 **3:6** [g]Acts 18:5 [h]Phil. 1:8 **3:7** [i]2 Cor. 1:4 **3:8** [j]Phil. 4:1 **3:10** [k]2 Cor. 13:9 **3:11** [l]Mark 1:3 **3:12** [m]Phil. 1:9 **3:13** [n]2 Thess. 2:17 **4:1** [a]1 Cor. 15:58 [b]Phil. 1:27 **4:3** [c][Rom. 12:2] [d]Eph. 5:27 [e][1 Cor. 6:15–20] **4:4** [f]Rom. 6:19 **4:5** [g]Col. 3:5 [h]Eph. 4:17, 18 [i]1 Cor. 15:34

God; 6that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord *i*is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7For God did not call us to uncleanness, *k*but in holiness. 8*l*Therefore he who rejects *this* does not reject man, but God, *m*who has also given* us His Holy Spirit.

A Brotherly and Orderly Life

9But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for *n*you yourselves are taught by God *o*to love one another; 10and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, *p*that you increase more and more; 11that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, *q*to mind your own business, and *r*to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, 12*s*that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing.

The Comfort of Christ's Coming

13But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow *t*as others *u*who have no hope. 14For *v*if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him *w*those who sleep in Jesus.*

15For this we say to you *x*by the word of the Lord, that *y*we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16For *z*the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with *a*the trumpet of God. *b*And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17*c*Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them *d*in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus *e*we shall always be with the Lord. 18*f*Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The Day of the Lord

5 But concerning *a*the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2For you yourselves know perfectly that *b*the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then *c*sudden destruction comes upon them, *d*as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4*e*But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5You are all *f*sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6*g*Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but *h*let us watch and be sober. 7For *i*those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk *j*are drunk at night. 8But let us who are of the day be sober, *k*putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope

* **4:8** NU-Text reads *who also gives.* * **4:14** Or *those who through Jesus sleep*

4:10 ***increase more and more.*** These believers already had a good record of loving one another, but Paul desired that love to increase. This was the commandment of Jesus (John 13:34–35; 15:12,17) and is an important basis of evangelism. In a world that is filled with self-serving individuals, the genuine love of Christians should attract others to the faith.

4:11 ***aspire to lead a quiet life.*** This does not refer to a lack of activity but rather to an inner quietness and peace befitting the Christian faith (2 Thess. 3:12; 1 Tim. 2:11). ***work with your own hands.*** Usually people who are busy running other people's affairs do not run their own affairs well. A Christian's house should be in order as a testimony to others.

4:14 ***those who sleep in Jesus.*** Some believe this phrase indicates that departed Christians are unconscious until the second coming. But the Bible indicates that to be absent from our present body is to be present with the Lord Jesus (5:10; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23).

4:16 ***descend from heaven with a shout.*** Accompanying the descent of Christ from heaven will be the voice of an archangel, perhaps Michael, who is portrayed as the leader of the army of God (Dan. 10:13,21; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7–9). The only other angel named in Scripture is Gabriel, who is given a prominent role as a messenger of God (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19,26). ***the dead in Christ will rise.*** Clearly this will be a physical resurrection in which bodily existence will be restored, as confirmed in 1 Corinthians 15:51–53. The resurrected bodies of Christians will be like the body of Christ (1 John 3:2), incorruptible and immortal, and yet they will be bodies of flesh and bone (Luke 24:39–40; John 20:20,25,27).

4:17 ***caught up.*** The English word *rapture* comes from the Latin for "caught up."

5:2 ***the day of the Lord.*** This expression was familiar to those who knew the Hebrew Scriptures. The day of the Lord in the Old Testament was characterized by two phases: God's judgment against sinful people and God's eternal reign over His people. God's judgment will be a time of darkness and an expression of His wrath (Joel 2:1–2; Amos 5:18–20; Zeph. 1:14–15). His reign will also be a time of blessing (Is. 2:1–3; 11:1–9; 30:23–26; Zech. 14:1,7–11,20–21; Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:19–21).

5:4 ***not in darkness.*** Though the day of the Lord will overtake the unsaved world unexpectedly, it will not overtake Christians, because they will be looking forward to and expecting it. The fact that Christ could come at any moment should motivate unbelievers to accept His forgiveness, and believers to live daily for Him.

5:8 ***sober.*** A sober life is not only free from drunkenness, but awake to spiritual realities.

4:6 *j* 2 Thess. 1:8 **4:7** *k* Lev. 11:44 **4:8** *l* Luke 10:16 *m* 1 Cor. 2:10 **4:9** *n* [Jer. 31:33, 34] *o* Matt. 22:39 **4:10** *p* 1 Thess. 3:12 **4:11** *q* 2 Thess. 3:11 *r* Acts 20:35 **4:12** *s* Rom. 13:13 **4:13** *t* Lev. 19:28 *u* [Eph. 2:12] **4:14** *v* 1 Cor. 15:13 *w* 1 Cor. 15:20, 23 **4:15** *x* 1 Kin. 13:17; 20:35 *y* 1 Cor. 15:51, 52 **4:16** *z* [Matt. 24:30, 31] *a* [1 Cor. 15:52] *b* [1 Cor. 15:23] **4:17** *c* [1 Cor. 15:51–53] *d* Acts 1:9 *e* John 14:3; 17:24 **4:18** *f* 1 Thess. 5:11 **5:1** *a* Matt. 24:3 **5:2** *b* [2 Pet. 3:10] **5:3** *c* Is. 13:6–9 *d* Hos. 13:13 **5:4** *e* 1 John 2:8 **5:5** *f* Eph. 5:8 **5:6** *g* Matt. 25:5 *h* [1 Pet. 5:8] **5:7** *i* [Luke 21:34] *j* Acts 2:15 **5:8** *k* Eph. 6:14

of salvation. 9For [l]God did not appoint us to wrath, [m]but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10[n]who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

11Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Various Exhortations

12And we urge you, brethren, [o]to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. [p]Be at peace among yourselves.

14Now we exhort you, brethren, [q]warn those who are unruly, [r]comfort the faint-hearted, [s]uphold the weak, [t]be patient with all. 15[u]See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always [v]pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

16[w]Rejoice always, 17[x]pray without ceasing, 18in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

19[y]Do not quench the Spirit. 20[z]Do not despise prophecies. 21[a]Test all things; [b]hold fast what is good. 22Abstain from every form of evil.

Blessing and Admonition

23Now may [c]the God of peace Himself [d]sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body [e]be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24He who calls you *is* [f]faithful, who also will [g]do *it*.

25Brethren, pray for us.

26Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

27I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy* brethren.

28The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

* **5:27** NU-Text omits *holy*.

5:9 *did not appoint us to wrath.* There will be wrath at the day of the Lord, but it will be God's wrath on the unbelieving world that has spurned and mocked Christ (Rev. 6:12–17).

5:12 *And we urge you.* Significantly, Paul combines prophecy with practical teachings for the Christian life. God never intended prophecy to just be a field for academic debate, but to be a truth that would provide believers hope and direction in their lives.

5:16 *Rejoice always.* Regardless of difficult circumstances, a Christian always has grounds for rejoicing. The Lord is a sovereign Ruler and will accomplish His purpose. Christian joy is not based on circumstances, but on a growing awareness of God and the certain future of eternal life with Christ (Rev. 21:1–7).

5:17 *pray without ceasing.* To pray without ceasing seems impossible, but a person can develop an attitude and habit of constant prayer. No matter what else is going on, we should be aware of God's presence with us, and turn to Him with every thought and action.

5:23 *spirit, soul, and body.* Every part of the Christian life should bear evidence that we are set apart as holy to God.

5:26 *a holy kiss.* A kiss was a customary greeting among friends (as it still is in some cultures), something like our modern handshake.

5:9 [l] Rom. 9:22 [m] [2 Thess. 2:13] **5:10** [n] 2 Cor. 5:15 **5:12** [o] 1 Cor. 16:18 **5:13** [p] Mark 9:50 **5:14** [q] 2 Thess. 3:6, 7, 11 [r] Heb. 12:12 [s] Rom. 14:1; 15:1 [t] Gal. 5:22 **5:15** [u] Lev. 19:18 [v] Gal. 6:10 **5:16** [w] [2 Cor. 6:10] **5:17** [x] Eph. 6:18 **5:19** [y] Eph. 4:30 **5:20** [z] 1 Cor. 14:1, 31 **5:21** [a] 1 John 4:1 [b] Phil. 4:8 **5:23** [c] Phil. 4:9 [d] 1 Thess. 3:13 [e] 1 Cor. 1:8, 9 **5:24** [f] [1 Cor. 10:13] [g] Phil. 1:6

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
THESSALONIANS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The external attestation to the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians as a Pauline epistle is even stronger than that for 1 Thessalonians. Internally the vocabulary, style, and doctrinal content support the claims in 1:1 and 3:17 that it was written by Paul. This letter was probably written a few months after 1 Thessalonians, while Paul was still in Corinth with Silas and Timothy (1:1; Acts 18:5).

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 51 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 Thess. 2:2–3

▶ **THEME:** This letter to the Thessalonians appears to have been written fairly soon after the first one. He provides some further clarification on some of the same issues he addressed in the first letter. There appears to still be some confusion about the events of the end times, which he clarifies. He also wisely encourages the believers in the basics he has taught them in his role as a caring pastor.

Greeting

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in
God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 [a]Grace to you and peace from God our
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Final Judgment and Glory

3 We are bound to thank God always for
you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your
faith grows exceedingly, and the love of
every one of you all abounds toward each
other, **4** so that [b]we ourselves boast of you
among the churches of God [c]for your patience and faith [d]in all your persecutions
and tribulations that you endure, **5** *which is*
[e]manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, [f]for which you
also suffer; **6** [g]since *it is* a righteous thing
with God to repay with tribulation those
who trouble you, **7** and to *give* you who are
troubled [h]rest with us when [i]the Lord Jesus
is revealed from heaven with His mighty
angels, **8** in flaming fire taking vengeance
on those who do not know God, and on
those who do not obey the gospel of our
Lord Jesus Christ. **9** [j]These shall be punished
with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and [k]from the glory of His
power, **10** when He comes, in that Day, [l]to be
[m]glorified in His saints and to be admired
among all those who believe,* because
our testimony among you was believed.

11 Therefore we also pray always for you
that our God would [n]count you worthy of
this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and [o]the work of faith
with power, **12** [p]that the name of our Lord
Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and
you in Him, according to the grace of our
God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

* **1:10** NU-Text and M-Text read *have believed.*

1:1 *Silvanus, and Timothy.* Silvanus (Latin for Silas) had been Paul's traveling companion ever since the start of the second missionary journey. He had participated in the founding of the church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–4). Timothy also accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey. His report from the Thessalonian church had been the occasion for writing 1 Thessalonians (1 Thess. 3:6–8). ***To the church.*** The Greek word *ekklēsia* means "gathering" or "assembly."
1:5 *counted worthy of the kingdom of God.* If believers handle their persecutions properly, they will be counted worthy of great reward in the coming kingdom of God (Matt. 5:12; 1 Pet. 2:19–20). Christians are called to endure suffering in this world, for they will receive a far greater reward in the next (2 Tim. 2:12).
1:7–8 *when the Lord Jesus is revealed.* Presently the Lord Jesus is enthroned in glory at the right hand of the Father (John 17:5). Stephen saw this glory before he was martyred (Acts 7:55–56), but one day, and it may be soon, "every eye will see Him" (Rev. 1:7). ***in flaming fire.*** Some believe that this is the fulfillment of John the Baptist's prophecy of the One who would "baptize with fire" (Matt. 3:11–12; Luke 3:16–17).
1:8 *do not know . . . do not obey.* Those who do not know are the unbelieving Gentiles, those who do not obey are the unbelieving Jews who knew about God and rejected His Son (Rom. 10:1,16).
1:12 *glorified in you.* Christ will be glorified not only among, but also in the saints, for believers reflect His glory.

1:2 [a] 1 Cor. 1:3 **1:4** [b] 2 Cor. 7:4 [c] 1 Thess. 1:3 [d] 1 Thess. 2:14 **1:5** [e] Phil. 1:28 [f] 1 Thess. 2:14 **1:6** [g] Rev. 6:10 **1:7** [h] Rev. 14:13 [i] Jude 14 **1:9** [j] Phil. 3:19 [k] Deut. 33:2 **1:10** [l] Matt. 25:31 [m] John 17:10 **1:11** [n] Col. 1:12 [o] 1 Thess. 1:3 **1:12** [p] [Col. 3:17]

The Great Apostasy

2 Now, brethren, [a]concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ [b]and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, **2** [c]not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ* had come. **3**Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* [d]unless the falling away comes first, and [e]the man of sin* is revealed, [f]the son of perdition, **4**who opposes and [g]exalts himself [h]above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God* in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? **6**And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. **7**For [i]the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He* who now restrains *will do so* until He* is taken out of the way. **8**And then the lawless one will be revealed, [j]whom the Lord will consume [k]with the breath of His mouth and destroy [l]with the brightness of His coming. **9**The coming of the *lawless one* is [m]according to the working of Satan, with all power, [n]signs, and lying wonders, **10**and with all unrighteous deception among [o]those who perish, because they did not receive [p]the love of the truth, that they might be saved. **11**And [q]for this reason God will send them strong delusion, [r]that they should believe the lie, **12**that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but [s]had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Stand Fast

13But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God [t]from the beginning [u]chose you for salvation [v]through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, **14**to which He called you by our gospel, for [w]the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. **15**Therefore, brethren, [x]stand fast and hold [y]the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

16Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, [z]who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and [a]good hope by grace, **17**comfort your hearts [b]and establish you in every good word and work.

Pray for Us

3 Finally, brethren, [a]pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be

* **2:2** NU-Text reads *the Lord.* * **2:3** NU-Text reads *lawlessness.* * **2:4** NU-Text omits *as God.* * **2:7** Or *he* • Or *he*

2:1 ***concerning the coming.*** After writing 1 Thessalonians, Paul had received word that the believers in Thessalonica were being misled by false teachers who were confusing the believers with erroneous ideas about the second coming. ***gathering together to Him.*** This will be the first time that the whole church, including every believer, will be gathered before the Lord to worship Him. The phrase seems to refer to the event described in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, where Paul speaks of meeting the Lord in the air.

2:2 ***the day of Christ had come.*** The false teaching was that the day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:2–4) had already come, bringing with it the tribulations they were experiencing. Thus, some Thessalonian believers thought that they had missed the second coming.

2:3 ***the falling away.*** The Greek word translated "falling away" is the word commonly used to describe a military rebellion. In the Scriptures, the word is used of rebellion against God. Some have therefore interpreted this verse to refer to a general defection from the truth, perhaps even by those professing to be the church. This rebellious apostasy would prepare the way for the antichrist. ***the man of sin.*** Paul does not use the title "antichrist" for this man, but his description parallels John's description of the antichrist (1 John 2:18; Rev. 13). The man of sin will lead the world into rebellion against God (v. 10), perform wonders through Satan's power (v. 9), and finally will present himself as a god to be worshiped (v. 4).

2:4 ***he sits as God in the temple.*** This is the ultimate fulfillment of the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel (Dan. 7:23; 9:26; 11:31,36–37; 12:11) and Jesus (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14).

2:7 ***is already at work.*** The evil and deception that the man of sin embodies already exist in this world (1 John 2:18). Anyone who opposes Christ and His church and seeks to deceive others into worshiping false gods is against Christ (antichrist). ***taken out of the way.*** Many believe that this verse refers to the rapture of the church (1 Thess. 4:16–17), and the cessation of the Holy Spirit working through believers to restrain the power of sin in this world. There are a variety of other interpretations for the identity of the restrainer, including the Roman state, or the principle of law and government embodied in the state.

2:8 ***whom the Lord will consume . . . and destroy.*** Although the man of lawlessness will be revealed as extremely powerful (Rev. 13:7), he will be destroyed by Christ and cast into the lake of fire when the Lord comes (Rev. 19:19–20).

2:14 ***obtaining of the glory.*** The Thessalonians have already been saved (v. 13), and called, but they must respond to God's work in them. Through the power of the Holy Spirit (v. 13), believers on this earth prepare for a future with Christ by living in a holy manner (1:10; 1 Thess. 4:1–2).

2:17 ***comfort your hearts and establish.*** It is interesting to note that Paul uses the singular form of these verbs, with the plural subject of "Jesus Christ and God our Father," supporting the trinity and equality of God (1 Thess. 3:11).

2:1 [a] [1 Thess. 4:15–17] [b] Matt. 24:31 **2:2** [c] Matt. 24:4 **2:3** [d] 1 Tim. 4:1 [e] Dan. 7:25; 8:25; 11:36 [f] John 17:12 **2:4** [g] Is. 14:13, 14 [h] 1 Cor. 8:5 **2:7** [i] 1 John 2:18 **2:8** [j] Dan. 7:10 [k] Is. 11:4 [l] Heb. 10:27 **2:9** [m] John 8:41 [n] Deut. 13:1 **2:10** [o] 2 Cor. 2:15 [p] 1 Cor. 16:22 **2:11** [q] Rom. 1:28 [r] 1 Tim. 4:1 **2:12** [s] Rom. 1:32 **2:13** [t] Eph. 1:4 [u] 1 Thess. 1:4 [v] [1 Pet. 1:2] **2:14** [w] 1 Pet. 5:10 **2:15** [x] 1 Cor. 16:13 [y] 1 Cor. 11:2 **2:16** [z] [Rev. 1:5] [a] 1 Pet. 1:3 **2:17** [b] 1 Cor. 1:8 **3:1** [a] Eph. 6:19

glorified, just as *it is* with you, 2and [b]that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; [c]for not all have faith.

3But [d]the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and [e]guard *you* from the evil one. 4And [f]we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you.

5Now may [g]the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

Warning Against Idleness

6But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [h]that you withdraw [i]from every brother who walks [j]disorderly and not according to the tradition which he* received from us. 7For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; 8nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with [k]labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, 9not because we do not have [l]authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.

10For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. 11For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are [m]busybodies. 12Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ [n]that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

13But *as for* you, brethren, [o]do not grow weary *in* doing good. 14And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and [p]do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15[q]Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, [r]but admonish *him* as a brother.

Benediction

16Now may [s]the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all.

17[t]The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write.

18[u]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

* **3:6** NU-Text and M-Text read *they*.

3:2 ***unreasonable and wicked men.*** These may have been the unbelieving Jews in Corinth who were persecuting Paul at the time he wrote this letter (Acts 18:12–13). Justice in this world may never come for Christians, but they can certainly pray for deliverance from the wicked.

3:5 ***direct your hearts.*** The heart, the seat of a person's will and emotions, is the place where spiritual renewal begins. There God plants love and patience, traits that will produce a harvest of good works.

3:6 ***command.*** This is not just a friendly suggestion, but a binding order with the authority of Jesus Christ.

withdraw. Among other things, this would include not allowing the person to participate in love feasts and the Lord's Supper (Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 5:9–12).

3:9 ***not because we do not have authority.*** It is right for the church to financially support those who do the Lord's work (Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:6–14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17–18).

3:11 ***not working at all.*** Some Thessalonians, apparently using the impending return of the Lord as an excuse, had refused to work and were expecting others in the church to feed them. In his previous letter, Paul had already exhorted them to work (1 Thess. 4:11–12). Since they had not heeded, the time had come to take further steps. While believers must always act with gentleness and love toward one another, it is wrong to enable another person to continue in sin.

3:12 ***they work in quietness.*** The cure for gossips and busybodies is hard work. There is much truth in the saying "Satan finds work for idle hands."

3:15 ***as a brother.*** The disobedient one is not an enemy, but one who needs compassionate correction.

3:18 ***our Lord Jesus Christ.*** Not only is Jesus our ultimate hope, it is He who lovingly strengthens us to endure trials.

3:2 [b] Rom. 15:31 [c] Acts 28:24 **3:3** [d] 1 Cor. 1:9 [e] John 17:15 **3:4** [f] 2 Cor. 7:16 **3:5** [g] 1 Chr. 29:18 **3:6** [h] Rom. 16:17 [i] 1 Cor. 5:1 [j] 1 Thess. 4:11 **3:8** [k] 1 Thess. 2:9 **3:9** [l] 1 Cor. 9:4, 6–14 **3:11** [m] 1 Pet. 4:15 **3:12** [n] Eph. 4:28 **3:13** [o] Gal. 6:9 **3:14** [p] Matt. 18:17 **3:15** [q] Lev. 19:17 [r] Titus 3:10 **3:16** [s] Rom. 15:33 **3:17** [t] 1 Cor. 16:21 **3:18** [u] Rom. 16:20, 24

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO
TIMOTHY

▶ **AUTHOR:** The external evidence solidly supports the position that Paul wrote the letters to Timothy and Titus. Only Romans and 1 Corinthians have better attestation among the Pauline Epistles. Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles requires Paul's release from his Roman imprisonment (Acts 28), the continuation of his missionary endeavors, and his imprisonment for a second time in Rome. Unfortunately, the order of events can only be reconstructed from hints, because there is no concurrent history paralleling Acts to chronicle the last years of the apostle. It is most probable that Paul wrote 1 Timothy from Macedonia in A.D. 62 or 63 while Timothy was serving as his representative in Ephesus.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 62–63 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 1 Tim. 3:15–16

▶ **THEME:** The letters to Timothy and Titus are generally called "the Pastoral Epistles." They are pastoral in tone and in the subject matter they address. While covering much of the apostolic instruction on the life and doctrine of the church, they also provide some guidelines on how Christians in the church should relate to society. One of the overriding concerns of the books is that truth be valued and guarded. Too often today, truth is subjective and culturally conditioned to the point where people don't even have problems believing mutually contradictory ideas. Paul speaks of the value of truth in his own apostolic role, and he stands against false teachers who would distort the truth for their own ends.

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

2 To Timothy, a [a]true son in the faith:

[b]Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

No Other Doctrine

3 As I urged you [c]when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some [d]that they teach no other doctrine, **4** [e]nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. **5** Now [f]the purpose of the commandment is love [g]from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith, **6** from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to [h]idle talk, **7** desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

8 But we know that the law *is* [i]good if one uses it lawfully, **9** knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for *the* lawless and insubordinate, for *the* ungodly and for sinners, for *the* unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, **10** for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, **11** according to the glorious gospel of the [j]blessed God which was [k]committed to my trust.

1:1 ***apostle of Jesus Christ.*** The Greek word for "apostle" means "sent one." Paul was an ambassador sent by Christ (Acts 9).
1:2 ***Timothy.*** Timothy was a young believer from Lystra who traveled with Paul during his second and third missionary journeys.
1:3 ***that you may charge.*** Paul's request that Timothy stay in Ephesus to minister to the believers there demonstrates Paul's confidence in the young man.
1:4 ***fables and endless genealogies.*** The errors that Paul left Timothy to correct in Ephesus appear to have been primarily Jewish in nature. The Jews tended to place a lot of importance on the genealogies and also on allegorical interpretations of the law.
1:6 ***idle talk.*** Gossip, speculation, and criticism should not come from the lips of believers.
1:8 ***law.*** The proper function of the law is to make sinners aware of their sinfulness (Rom. 3:20).
1:10 ***perjurers.*** The term "perjure" is more significant than simply "lie," as it deals with false promises. To swear an oath and then not carry through is a serious thing indeed.

1:2 [a] Titus 1:4 [b] Gal. 1:3 **1:3** [c] Acts 20:1, 3 [d] Gal. 1:6, 7 **1:4** [e] Titus 1:14 **1:5** [f] Rom. 13:8–10 [g] Eph. 6:24 **1:6** [h] 1 Tim. 6:4, 20 **1:8** [i] Rom. 7:12, 16 **1:11** [j] 1 Tim. 6:15 [k] 1 Cor. 9:17

Glory to God for His Grace

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who
has [l]enabled me, [m]because He counted me
faithful, [n]putting *me* into the ministry,
13 although [o]I was formerly a blasphemer, a
persecutor, and an insolent man; but I ob-
tained mercy because [p]I did *it* ignorantly
in unbelief. 14 [q]And the grace of our Lord
was exceedingly abundant, [r]with faith
and love which are in Christ Jesus. 15 [s]This
is a faithful saying and worthy of all ac-
ceptance, that [t]Christ Jesus came into the
world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.
16 However, for this reason I obtained mer-
cy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show
all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who
are going to believe on Him for everlasting
life. 17 Now to [u]the King eternal, [v]immortal,
[w]invisible, to God [x]who alone is wise,* [y]*be*
honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Fight the Good Fight

18 This charge I commit to you, son Tim-
othy, according to the prophecies previ-
ously made concerning you, that by them
you may wage the good warfare, 19 having
faith and a good conscience, which some
having rejected, concerning the faith have
suffered shipwreck, 20 of whom are [z]Hyme-
naeus and [a]Alexander, whom I delivered
to Satan that they may learn not to [b]blas-
pheme.

Pray for All Men

2 Therefore I exhort first of all that sup-
plications, prayers, intercessions, *and*
giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 [a]for
kings and [b]all who are in authority, that we
may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all
godliness and reverence. 3 For this *is* [c]good
and acceptable in the sight [d]of God our
Savior, 4 [e]who desires all men to be saved
[f]and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
5 [g]For *there is* one God and [h]one Mediator
between God and men, *the* Man Christ
Jesus, 6 [i]who gave Himself a ransom for all,
to be testified in due time, 7 [j]for which I was
appointed a preacher and an apostle—I
am speaking the truth in Christ* *and* not
lying—[k]a teacher of the Gentiles in faith
and truth.

* **1:17** NU-Text reads *to the only God.* * **2:7** NU-Text omits *in Christ.*

1:13 ***but I obtained mercy.*** Paul found mercy and forgiveness even after his intense persecution of the church. God surely offers salvation to all people (2:4).
1:14 ***grace.*** Grace is God's undeserved, unearned, freely given favor.
1:15–16 Believing Jesus—Jesus came to earth to save sinners. Paul knew this firsthand. When he became a Christian, Paul realized the extent of his sin in terms of both his past sins and his current tendencies. But he also knew exactly where he stood in Christ as a believer. The mercy of God can only be acquired through belief. Paul reminds Timothy here of God's perfect patience and mercy and urges others to come to faith and receive the benefit of new and everlasting life, as he has. Eternal life can only begin with belief. It is an active choice of the individual. We must believe that Jesus is the saving Christ or reject Him. Paul says, "I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life." If you have never believed in Jesus, take this opportunity to tell God how you feel. Believe in Jesus as Savior and begin on the path of a new life.
1:16 ***believe on Him.*** As stated over 185 times in the New Testament, the sole condition for salvation is belief, having faith or trust in Jesus Christ. The gospel (or "good news") is that Jesus Christ, God's Son, gave up His heavenly kingdom for a time to become a human. As a man, He died for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day. All who place their trust in Jesus will be saved from the coming judgment and from the present power of sin. To add any other condition to faith for salvation is to make it dependent on our own works (Rom. 11:6; Gal. 2:16).
1:20 ***delivered to Satan.*** Paul did not have some sort of authority over these men to have them "delivered" in the sense that they would now belong to Satan. Rather, Paul had stopped trying to exhort them, or show them the way they should go. They would not listen, so Paul had to say, "So be it, go your own way."
2:4 ***desires all men to be saved.*** God desires that all men would be saved, although this does not mean that He will force this to happen. Only those who believe in Christ will receive salvation (Rom. 1:16–17; 3:21–26; 5:17). Christ died for the sins of the entire world, but only those who believe will receive the benefits of His sacrifice. ***to come to the knowledge of the truth.*** God not only wants our salvation (justification), He also wants us to grow in truth (sanctification) so that we will not be led astray by false teachers.
2:5 ***one God.*** This is the central truth of the Hebrew Scriptures. The only living God desires that all should be saved. He is the only one to whom our prayers should be addressed. ***Mediator.*** This is a concept that came from the ceremonial worship in the Old Testament. In the tabernacle and later in the temple, the priests mediated between God and Israel by offering sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people. In their position of mediator, the priests were the only ones eligible to enter into the holy place, the place where God had made His presence known. When Jesus came, He came as the Mediator between man and God. Through Him we can be eligible to enter into God's holy presence.
2:6 ***ransom.*** The Greek word translated "ransom" is found only here in the New Testament. It specifically refers to a ransom paid for a slave.
2:7 ***in faith and truth.*** Paul was called not only to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, but also to guide their growth in truth.

1:12 [l] 1 Cor. 15:10 [m] 1 Cor. 7:25 [n] Col. 1:25 **1:13** [o] Acts 8:3 [p] John 4:21 **1:14** [q] Rom. 5:20 [r] 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:22 **1:15** [s] 2 Tim. 2:11 [t] Matt. 1:21; 9:13 **1:17** [u] Ps. 10:16 [v] Rom. 1:23 [w] Heb. 11:27 [x] Rom. 16:27 [y] 1 Chr. 29:11 **1:20** [z] 2 Tim. 2:17, 18 [a] 2 Tim. 4:14 [b] Acts 13:45 **2:2** [a] Ezra 6:10 [b] [Rom. 13:1] **2:3** [c] Rom. 12:2 [d] 2 Tim. 1:9 **2:4** [e] Ezek. 18:23, 32 [f] [John 17:3] **2:5** [g] Gal. 3:20 [h] [Heb. 9:15] **2:6** [i] Mark 10:45 **2:7** [j] Eph. 3:7, 8 [k] [Gal. 1:15, 16]

Men and Women in the Church

8 I desire therefore that the men pray [l]everywhere, [m]lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; 9 in like manner also, that the [n]women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 [o]but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. 11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. 12 And [p]I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 15 Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

Qualifications of Overseers

3 This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop,* he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,* but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among

* **3:1** Literally *overseer* * **3:3** NU-Text omits *not greedy for money.*

2:8 ***men.*** The Greek word translated "men" in this verse refers specifically to males as distinguished from females. Some believe that this verse means specifically public worship, while others believe it refers to life in general. ***lifting up holy hands.*** This is a Hebrew way of praying (1 Kin. 8:22; Ps. 141:2). "Holy" means morally and spiritually clean.

2:9 ***in modest apparel.*** Modesty means more than just covering up enough. It means not flaunting one's wealth, or one's jewels, or one's name brands, as well as not flaunting one's body. ***propriety.*** This word means reverence and respect, shrinking away from what is inappropriate.

2:10 ***good works.*** A Christian woman's beauty should be found in her godly character and her love for the Lord as demonstrated in all types of good works.

2:11 ***in silence with all submission.*** These verses are not easy to understand, and there are many differences of opinion as to their meaning. The Scripture here does actually say just what it looks like: that women must be silent and submissive. It is universally accepted that this is referring to times of public worship, although the Bible makes it clear that a woman must submit to her husband (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18), but the concept of submission also applies to all believers. Philippians 4:5 says, "Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand." Being submissive means not being unruly or argumentative. There are times when it is proper for a woman to teach, pray, or prophesy (1 Cor. 11), but apparently this is not supposed to happen in public worship.

2:12 ***to teach or to have authority.*** It seems best to understand this passage as saying that women may exercise their spiritual gifts in a variety of ministries in the local assembly, as long as those gifts are exercised under the appropriate leadership of men. We have problems understanding the roles of men and women in the church. Often we want to ignore the subject altogether and say that men and women are entirely equal, the alternative being that men become despotic and tyrannical, while women become spiritually weak with no teaching and no opportunity to use their God-given gifts. Men and women are equal in God's eyes in terms of their value as people and eligibility for spiritual growth and relationship with God, but He created this difference in roles. Many tend to feel that this role difference is because of the fall, but God did create men and women to be different. The mess and confusion we have with our God-given positions is the result of the fall.

2:14 ***Adam was not deceived.*** This seems to point to the fact that Adam sinned with his eyes open; he knew what he was doing. Eve sinned because she was deceived. Paul's arguments from creation and the fall seem to indicate that the prohibitions in verses 9–12 are permanent, not cultural.

2:15 ***will be saved in childbearing.*** This is a very difficult verse to understand and no one agrees about what it means. We know that it does not mean "saved" in terms of receiving eternal life, because the Bible elsewhere makes it very clear we are saved by faith alone (John 3:15–18; Rom. 1:16–17; 3:23–26). Some think that it has to do with daily sanctification and the woman's special task of bearing children. Others say it is referring to being delivered from the desire to dominate by recognizing one's appropriate place in God's creation order. Still others believe that it refers specifically to the birth of Jesus Christ, the seed born of woman prophesied in Genesis 3:15.

3:1 ***bishop.*** This means a person who oversees a congregation. The words "bishop" and "elder" are used interchangeably for the same office (Titus 1:5–7).

3:2 ***blameless.*** The idea is not that an overseer is sinless, but that he displays mature consistent Christian conduct that gives no reason for anyone to accuse him of anything. ***husband of one wife.*** This phrase is also subject to much disagreement. Many feel that it means "a one-woman kind of man," indicating a lifestyle of fidelity. Others feel that it is more specific, and prohibits a divorced and remarried man from the elder position. Certainly it is an exclusion of anyone who is sexually immoral or a polygamist.

3:3 ***violent.*** An overseer is not to be a quarrelsome man.

3:7 ***good testimony.*** An overseer must have a good reputation in the community. A non-Christian should not be able to reproach or insult an elder because of his behavior. The elder's good testimony avoids the traps of Satan.

2:8 *l* Luke 23:34 *m* Ps. 134:2 **2:9** *n* 1 Pet. 3:3
2:10 *o* 1 Pet. 3:4 **2:12** *p* 1 Cor. 14:34

those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the [a]snare of the devil.

Qualifications of Deacons

8 Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not
double-tongued, [b]not given to much wine,
not greedy for money, 9 holding the mystery
of the faith with a pure conscience. 10 But
let these also first be tested; then let them
serve as deacons, being *found* blameless.
11 Likewise, *their* wives *must be* reverent,
not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all
things. 12 Let deacons be the husbands of
one wife, ruling *their* children and their
own houses well. 13 For those who have
served well as deacons [c]obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness
in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The Great Mystery

14 These things I write to you, though I
hope to come to you shortly; 15 but if I am
delayed, *I write* so that you may know how
you ought to conduct yourself in the house
of God, which is the church of the living
God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
16 And without controversy great is the
mystery of godliness:

[d]God* was manifested in the flesh,
[e]Justified in the Spirit,
[f]Seen by angels,
[g]Preached among the Gentiles,
[h]Believed on in the world,
[i]Received up in glory.

The Great Apostasy

4 Now the Spirit expressly says that in
latter times some will depart from the
faith, giving heed [a]to deceiving spirits and
doctrines of demons, 2 [b]speaking lies in
hypocrisy, having their own conscience
[c]seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to
marry, *and commanding* to abstain from
foods which God created to be received
with thanksgiving by those who believe
and know the truth. 4 For every creature of
God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused
if it is received with thanksgiving; 5 for it is
sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

A Good Servant of Jesus Christ

6 If you instruct the brethren in these
things, you will be a good minister of Jesus
Christ, [d]nourished in the words of faith
and of the good doctrine which you have
carefully followed. 7 But [e]reject profane and
old wives' fables, and [f]exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For [g]bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all
things, [h]having promise of the life that now
is and of that which is to come. 9 This *is* a
faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. 10 For to this *end* we both labor and
suffer reproach,* because we trust in the
living God, [i]who is *the* Savior of all men,
especially of those who believe. 11 These
things command and teach.

* **3:16** NU-Text reads *Who.* * **4:10** NU-Text reads *we labor and strive.*

3:8 *deacons.* Deacons fill a second leadership position in the local assembly. The Greek word for deacon means "servant." ***not double-tongued.*** This speaks specifically of the dangers of gossip, especially changing sides or changing a story to fit the audience.
3:9 *mystery of the faith.* The mystery of the faith is the coming of God in the flesh (v. 16). The Son of God becoming a human in order to serve humanity (Mark 10:43–45) is the embodiment of service.
3:11 *their wives.* Some believe here that Paul is speaking of another office in the local body, that of "deaconess," godly women who serve under the leadership of the elders. Others, however, believe that this verse refers to the wives of the deacons, and not to an office. It could be assumed that both are true, and that the deacon and his wife are supposed to work together as a team, serving the church. The original language leaves the verse open to interpretation, since the Greek uses one word to mean both woman and wife.
3:15 *pillar and ground of the truth.* Misconduct and disorder in the local church weaken the support of God's truth in the world. We as believers have a tremendous responsibility to keep the name of our Lord without spot or criticism from the nonbelieving world.
3:16 *manifested in the flesh.* This refers to Christ's incarnation, the fact that Jesus became man (John 1:14). ***Justified in the Spirit.*** This is the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry and resurrection (Matt. 3:15–17; John 16:7–10; Rom. 1:4). ***Seen by angels.*** This refers to the angelic witness of Christ's ministry and resurrection. ***Preached among the Gentiles.*** This refers to the preaching of Christ to the Gentiles (Col. 1:23). ***Believed on in the world.*** This is the response of individuals to God's plan of salvation (Col. 1:18–25). ***Received up in glory.*** Christ ascended to heaven and is seated at God's right hand there (Acts 1:9; Heb. 1:3–4).
4:1 *the Spirit expressly says.* When Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit's words here, he may be referring to various prophecies inspired by the Holy Spirit concerning defection from God's truth (Dan. 7:25; 8:23; Matt. 24:4–12), or also he may have been referring to a revelation the Spirit had given him.
4:5 *sanctified.* Sanctified means "set apart," or "made holy." Paul is saying that God has sanctified all the good things He created, from marriage to the food we eat. Nothing is less in accord with God than to begin forbidding the good things He made for us.
4:7 *old wives' fables.* This is not to say that such fables are appropriate for old women either. Paul is merely using the term "old wives' fables" to describe the superstitions and thoughtless beliefs that were prevalent.
4:8 *profits a little.* This contrasts the short-term value of physical exercise with the long-term benefits of godliness for all things.
4:10 *Savior of all men.* This describes God as the One who gives life, breath, and existence to all.

3:7 [a] 2 Tim. 2:26 **3:8** [b] Ezek. 44:21 **3:13** [c] Matt. 25:21 **3:16** [d] John 1:14] [e] Matt. 3:16] [f] Matt. 28:2 [g] Rom. 10:18 [h] Col. 1:6, 23 [i] Luke 24:51 **4:1** [a] Rev. 16:14 **4:2** [b] Matt. 7:15 [c] Eph. 4:19 **4:6** [d] 2 Tim. 3:14 **4:7** [e] 2 Tim. 2:16 [f] Heb. 5:14 **4:8** [g] 1 Cor. 8:8 [h] Ps. 37:9 **4:10** [i] Ps. 36:6

Take Heed to Your Ministry

12 Let no one despise your youth, but be
an [j]example to the believers in word, in
conduct, in love, in spirit,* in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attention to reading,
to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 [k]Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy [l]with the laying on
of the hands of the eldership. 15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them,
that your progress may be evident to all.
16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine.
Continue in them, for in doing this you will
save both yourself and those who hear you.

Treatment of Church Members

5 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort
him as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger
women as sisters, with all purity.

Honor True Widows

3 Honor widows who are really widows.
4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety
at home and [a]to repay their parents; for
this is good and* acceptable before God.
5 Now she who is really a widow, and left
alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers [b]night and day. 6 But
she who lives in pleasure is dead while she
lives. 7 And these things command, that
they may be blameless. 8 But if anyone does
not provide for his own, [c]and especially for
those of his household, [d]he has denied the
faith [e]and is worse than an unbeliever.

9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old
be taken into the number, *and not unless*
she has been the wife of one man, 10 well
reported for good works: if she has brought
up children, if she has lodged strangers, if
she has washed the saints' feet, if she has
relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently
followed every good work.

11 But refuse *the* younger widows; for
when they have begun to grow wanton
against Christ, they desire to marry, 12 having condemnation because they have cast
off their first faith. 13 And besides they learn
to be idle, wandering about from house to
house, and not only idle but also gossips
and busybodies, saying things which they
ought not. 14 Therefore I desire that *the*
younger *widows* marry, bear children,
manage the house, give no opportunity
to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
15 For some have already turned aside after
Satan. 16 If any believing man or* woman
has widows, let them relieve them, and do
not let the church be burdened, that it may
relieve those who are really widows.

Honor the Elders

17 Let the elders who rule well be counted
worthy of double honor, especially those
who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For
the Scripture says, [f]"*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain*,"* and,
[g]"The laborer *is* worthy of his wages."*
19 Do not receive an accusation against an
elder except [h]from two or three witnesses. 20 Those who are sinning rebuke in the
presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

* **4:12** NU-Text omits *in spirit*. * **5:4** NU-Text and M-Text omit *good and*. * **5:16** NU-Text omits *man or*. * **5:18** Deuteronomy 25:4 • Luke 10:7

4:12 ***be an example.*** Timothy, in spite of youth, was to set an example in five areas: "in word," meaning his speech; "in conduct," or behavior; "in love, in spirit" which is the love of God; "in faith," meaning trust in God; "in purity," both in thought and action. These are qualities every believer should strive after, practice, and desire.

4:16 ***save both yourself.*** This is not a reference to justification by works, but to sanctification, which is the Christian's daily walk of faith (Mark 8:34–38; John 12:25–26). Timothy's example and hard work in teaching would serve to help others with their walk also.

5:2 ***all purity.*** Believing men must respect the purity of a young woman as the purity of a sister.

5:3 ***really widows.*** This refers to a woman who when widowed is left with no family at all, as opposed to those widows who still have living children or other relations.

5:4 ***show piety at home.*** Piety is respect, reverence, or obligation. Honoring our parents includes caring for them physically and financially as they grow older.

5:8 ***does not provide for his own.*** A believer is to provide for his family and this seems to include any of his relatives that need help. Failure to do this denies the faith he has said to believe in and smirches the name of Christianity.

5:9 ***taken into the number.*** Many believe the list referred to here was a list of widows whom the church was to assist. Some have maintained that this was an official order of widows. These women were to pray for the church and practice works of charity (vv. 5,10).

5:13–14 ***idle . . . gossips and busybodies.*** An old saying tells us, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." Do not allow yourself to become so idle that you begin to gossip. As odd as it may sound, it will happen. Employ yourself with the tasks God has set before you. Look around. There are lots of things we as believers should be doing.

5:18 ***Scripture says.*** Paul quotes two passages: Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7. The quotation from Luke is especially interesting as it shows that Paul considered the Gospels to be Scripture as well as the Old Testament.

5:19 ***an accusation against an elder.*** Charges against elders are to be factual, not based on a single opinion or rumor.

5:20 ***Those who are sinning.*** This seems to refer to elders who fail in their leadership, whether in the church, in their social relationships, or in their home life. Public rebuke is to serve as a warning to other

4:12 [j] 1 Pet. 5:3 **4:14** [k] 2 Tim. 1:6 [l] Acts 6:6 **5:4** [a] Gen. 45:10 **5:5** [b] Acts 26:7 **5:8** [c] Is. 58:7 [d] 2 Tim. 3:5 [e] Matt. 18:17 **5:18** [f] Deut. 25:4 [g] Luke 10:7 **5:19** [h] Deut. 17:6; 19:15

21I charge *you* before God and the
Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels
that you observe these things without
[i]prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.
22Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor
[j]share in other people's sins; keep yourself
pure.

23No longer drink only water, but use
a little wine for your stomach's sake and
your frequent infirmities.

24Some men's sins are [k]clearly evident,
preceding *them* to judgment, but those
of some *men* follow later. 25Likewise, the
good works *of some* are clearly evident,
and those that are otherwise cannot be
hidden.

Honor Masters

6 Let as many [a]bondservants as are un-
der the yoke count their own masters
worthy of all honor, so that the name of
God and *His* doctrine may not be blas-
phemed. 2And those who have believing
masters, let them not despise *them* be-
cause they are brethren, but rather serve
them because those who are benefited are
believers and beloved. Teach and exhort
these things.

Error and Greed

3If anyone teaches otherwise and does
not consent to [b]wholesome words, *even*
the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, [c]and
to the doctrine which accords with godli-
ness, 4he is proud, knowing nothing, but
is obsessed with disputes and arguments
over words, from which come envy, strife,
reviling, evil suspicions, 5useless wran-
glings* of men of corrupt minds and
destitute of the truth, who suppose that
godliness is a *means of* gain. From [d]such
withdraw yourself.*

6Now godliness with [e]contentment
is great gain. 7For we brought nothing
into *this* world, *and it is* [f]certain* we can
carry nothing out. 8And having food and
clothing, with these we shall be [g]con-
tent. 9But those who desire to be rich fall
into temptation and a snare, and *into*
many foolish and harmful lusts which
drown men in destruction and perdition.
10For the love of money is a root of all
kinds of evil, for which some have strayed
from the faith in their greediness, and
pierced themselves through with many
sorrows.

The Good Confession

11But you, O man of God, flee these
things and pursue righteousness, god-
liness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.
12Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold
on eternal life, to which you were also
called and have confessed the good
confession in the presence of many wit-
nesses. 13I urge you in the sight of God
who gives life to all things, and *before*
Christ Jesus [h]who witnessed the good
confession before Pontius Pilate, 14that
you keep *this* commandment without
spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus
Christ's appearing, 15which He will
manifest in His own time, *He who is* the
blessed and only Potentate, the King of
kings and Lord of lords, 16who alone has
immortality, dwelling in [i]unapproachable
light, [j]whom no man has seen or can see,

* **6:5** NU-Text and M-Text read *constant friction.* • NU-Text omits this sentence. * **6:7** NU-Text omits *and it is certain.*

believers. Sin is a serious matter, especially for those who are in leadership, setting an example for others (1 Pet. 4:14).

5:22 *hastily.* This verse is believed to be warning against too quickly restoring a leader who has fallen. Correction in love and restoration to fellowship should occur as soon as possible, but restoration to leadership should not be made without time and biblical evaluation. Not only does this apply to former leaders, it is a caution not to share responsibility for someone else's sins by restoring or appointing someone who is not qualified.

5:25 *evident . . . cannot be hidden.* Unnoticed good works always come to light, if not in this life, at the judgment seat, but even sins hidden from men cannot be concealed from God.

6:1 *bondservants.* This serves as an example of how believers should act in the workplace. We are Christians, who are to represent our faith, and Christ Himself. If we do this badly, we minimize not only our faith, but the power and testimony of Christ.

6:2 *these things.* "These things" probably are best understood as the contents of the entire letter to Timothy.

6:9 *those who desire to be rich.* Inside of every man there is a "God-shaped void." Many unbelievers try to fill this inner longing with wealth and possessions. Greed drives people to temptation and foolish and harmful desires. This is not an ailment of unbelievers only. Many believers also try to gain material things rather than the imperishable things of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness (v. 11). These are the things we should pursue with all of our being.

6:10 *love of money.* Money in and of itself is not a problem, but the love of money is. Christians can be so blinded by greed that they no longer see the need for holy living. A life focused on material things brings only pain.

6:12 *lay hold on eternal life.* Use the hope of everlasting life with the Savior as your lifeline, your comfort, and your guide.

6:14 *our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing.* The imminent return of Christ should be a motive for godly living (1 John 2:28).

6:16 *immortality.* This may also be translated "without death." The glorified Christ can never die.

5:21 [i] Deut. 1:17 **5:22** [j] Eph. 5:6, 7 **5:24** [k] Gal. 5:19–21
6:1 [a] Eph. 6:5 **6:3** [b] 2 Tim. 1:13 [c] Titus 1:1 **6:5** [d] 2 Tim. 3:5 **6:6** [e] Heb. 13:5 **6:7** [f] Job 1:21 **6:8** [g] Prov. 30:8, 9
6:13 [h] John 18:36, 37 **6:16** [i] Dan. 2:22 [j] John 6:46

to whom *be* honor and everlasting power. Amen.

Instructions to the Rich

17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain [k]riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things [l]to enjoy. 18 *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 [m]storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Guard the Faith

20 O Timothy! [n]Guard what was committed to your trust, [o]avoiding the profane *and* idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— 21 by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.

Grace *be* with you. Amen.

6:20 *falsely called knowledge.* Gnosticism (from the Greek word for knowledge) is a heresy that teaches that salvation comes through secret knowledge of spiritual mysteries.

6:21 *Grace be with you.* The Greek word for "you" here is plural, including the whole church. God's grace to us as sinners is indeed amazing.

6:17 [k] Jer. 9:23; 48:7 [l] Eccl. 5:18, 19 **6:19** [m] [Matt. 6:20, 21; 19:21] **6:20** [n] [2 Tim. 1:12, 14] [o] Titus 1:14

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO
TIMOTHY

▶ **AUTHOR:** Fearing for their own lives, the Asian believers failed to support Paul after this second Roman imprisonment and his first defense before the imperial court (1:15; 4:16). Now he was in a cold Roman cell (4:13) without hope of acquittal in spite of the success of his initial defense. Under these conditions, Paul wrote this epistle in the fall of A.D. 67, hoping that Timothy would be able to visit him before the approaching winter (4:21).

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 66–67 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 Tim. 3:14–17

▶ **THEME:** This is likely the last of Paul's writings that we have. He writes this letter from a prison cell where he is being kept like a common criminal. He knows that his work on earth is nearing its conclusion, and these are then his last words of counsel to his trusted companion in ministry. One can sense his weariness, but also his strongly held conviction about what is necessary for the continued growth of the church. One can also clearly see the hope that sustains him as he looks forward to going home to Christ.

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ* by the will of God, according to the [a]promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, a [b]beloved son:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Timothy's Faith and Heritage

3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* [c]forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, **4** greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, **5** when I call to remembrance [d]the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and [e]your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. **6** Therefore I remind you [f]to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. **7** For [g]God has not given us a spirit of fear, [h]but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

8 [i]Therefore do not be ashamed of [j]the testimony of our Lord, nor of me [k]His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, **9** who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, [l]not according to our works, but [m]according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus [n]before time began, **10** but [o]has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, **11** [p]to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a

* **1:1** NU-Text and M-Text read *Christ Jesus.*

1:1 ***the promise of life.*** This message of life stands in ironic contrast to the fact that Paul was writing from a Roman prison, facing his execution.
1:3 ***my forefathers.*** Paul's forefathers were the patriarchs of the faith: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Paul had great love for Israel (Rom. 9:1–5). The reason that he connects himself to Israel's forefathers may be to demonstrate that he is not advocating a new religion but one of which the godly of the past are also a part.
1:5 ***Lois . . . Eunice.*** The prayers, witness, and faith of his godly mother and grandmother were central factors in the spiritual development of Timothy (1 Tim. 2:15).
1:8 ***do not be ashamed of the testimony.*** *Testimony* is the witness of the Lord; the Greek term is the source of the English word *martyr.* Church tradition says that most of the apostles died as martyrs.
1:9 ***not according to our works.*** It is impossible for people to earn their way into heaven. Salvation is by grace, the unearned and undeserved favor of God.
1:10 ***abolished death.*** Knowing that leaving our earthly bodies simply means that we will live forever with the Lord effectively robs death of its dread. The same gospel that offers us the forgiveness of sins and draws us to holy living also announces life and immortality. Believing the gospel, we begin to live in the power of an endless life (1 John 5:11–13,20).

1:1 [a] Titus 1:2 **1:2** [b] 1 Tim. 1:2 **1:3** [c] Acts 24:14
1:5 [d] 1 Tim. 1:5; 4:6 [e] Acts 16:1 **1:6** [f] 1 Tim. 4:14
1:7 [g] Rom. 8:15 [h] [Acts 1:8] **1:8** [i] [Rom. 1:16] [j] 1 Tim. 2:6
[k] Eph. 3:1 **1:9** [l] [Rom. 3:20] [m] Rom. 8:28 [n] Rom. 16:25
1:10 [o] Eph. 1:9 **1:11** [p] Acts 9:15

teacher of the Gentiles.* 12For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, [q]for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

Be Loyal to the Faith

13[r]Hold fast [s]the pattern of [t]sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

15This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 16The Lord grant mercy to the [u]household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 17but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found *me*. 18The Lord [v]grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord [w]in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he [x]ministered *to me** at Ephesus.

Be Strong in Grace

2 You therefore, [a]my son, [b]be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 3You therefore must [c]endure* hardship [d]as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4[e]No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. 5And also [f]if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 6The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. 7Consider what I say, and may* the Lord [g]give you understanding in all things.

8Remember that Jesus Christ, [h]of the seed of David, [i]was raised from the dead [j]according to my gospel, 9[k]for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, [l]*even* to the point of chains; [m]but the word of God is not chained. 10Therefore [n]I endure all things for the sake of the elect, [o]that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11*This is* a faithful saying:

For [p]if we died with *Him*,
We shall also live with *Him*.
12 [q]If we endure,
We shall also reign with *Him*.
[r]If we deny *Him*,
He also will deny us.
13 If we are faithless,
He remains faithful;
He [s]cannot deny Himself.

Approved and Disapproved Workers

14Remind *them* of these things, [t]charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. 15[u]Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16But shun profane *and* idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. 17And their message will spread like cancer. [v]Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 18who have strayed concerning the truth, [w]saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. 19Nevertheless [x]the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord [y]knows those

* **1:11** NU-Text omits *of the Gentiles.* * **1:18** *To me* is from the Vulgate and a few Greek manuscripts. * **2:3** NU-Text reads *You must share.* * **2:7** NU-Text reads *the Lord will give you.*

1:12 *what I have committed.* It is certain that God will keep our "deposit" safe. Paul was preparing for imminent death, but in spite of this he was hopeful. He had spent his time, resources, and even his life proclaiming the gospel, and this investment in Christ's kingdom would bring him an abundant reward in eternity (Luke 19:15; 1 Cor. 3:10–15; Rev. 11:15,18).

1:14 *That good thing.* This is the truth of the kingdom of God (Matt. 13:44–45; 1 Tim. 6:20).

2:1 *strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* The emphasis is on the strength of Christ, not on Timothy's own power. If we trust in ourselves, we are doomed to fail.

2:2 *commit these to faithful men.* Since the time of Christ, there has been an endless chain of Christian discipleship (Matt. 28:18–20).

2:8 *seed of David.* Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises that God gave to David (2 Sam. 7:11–16).

2:11 *if we died . . . shall also live.* Believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3–11).

2:12 *If we endure.* Persevering in our faith, even in the face of hardship or persecution, will result in a reward when Christ returns (Luke 19:11–27; Rom. 8:17; Rev. 3:21).

2:13 *faithless.* This word describes an immature believer who lives for self and not for the Savior (1 Cor. 3:1–3,15). ***He remains faithful.*** For Christ to abandon us would be contrary to His faithful nature (John 10:27–30; Heb. 10:23; 13:5).

2:15 *Be diligent.* The position of teaching God's word is a position of great responsibility, not to be taken lightly (James 3:1).

2:18 *already past.* This was probably an early form of Gnosticism, a body of teaching which emphasized the "spiritual," and considered the physical world and the human body unreal and unimportant.

1:12 [q] 1 Pet. 4:19 **1:13** [r] Titus 1:9 [s] Rom. 2:20; 6:17 [t] 1 Tim. 6:3 **1:16** [u] 2 Tim. 4:19 **1:18** [v] Mark 9:41 [w] 2 Thess. 1:10 [x] Heb. 6:10 **2:1** [a] 1 Tim. 1:2 [b] Eph. 6:10 **2:3** [c] 2 Tim. 4:5 [d] 1 Tim. 1:18 **2:4** [e] [2 Pet. 2:20] **2:5** [f] [1 Cor. 9:25] **2:7** [g] Prov. 2:6 **2:8** [h] Rom. 1:3, 4 [i] 1 Cor. 15:4 [j] Rom. 2:16 **2:9** [k] Acts 9:16 [l] Eph. 3:1 [m] Acts 28:31 **2:10** [n] Eph. 3:13 [o] 2 Cor. 1:6 **2:11** [p] Rom. 6:5, 8 **2:12** [q] [Rom. 5:17; 8:17] [r] Matt. 10:33 **2:13** [s] Num. 23:19 **2:14** [t] Titus 3:9 **2:15** [u] 2 Pet. 1:10 **2:17** [v] 1 Tim. 1:20 **2:18** [w] 1 Cor. 15:12 **2:19** [x] [1 Cor. 3:11] [y] [Nah. 1:7]

who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ* depart from iniquity."

20But in a great house there are not only [z]vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. 21Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, [a]prepared for every good work. 22[b]Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. 24And [c]a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, [d]able to teach, [e]patient, 25[f]in humility correcting those who are in opposition, [g]if God perhaps will grant them repentance, [h]so that they may know the truth, 26and *that* they may come to their senses *and* [i]*escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

Perilous Times and Perilous Men

3 But know this, that [a]in the last days perilous times will come: 2For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4[b]traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5[c]having a form of godliness but [d]denying its power. And [e]from such people turn away! 6For [f]of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, 7always learning and never able [g]to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8[h]Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: [i]men of corrupt minds, [j]disapproved concerning the faith; 9but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, [k]as theirs also was.

The Man of God and the Word of God

10[l]But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me [m]at Antioch, [n]at Iconium, [o]at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And [p]out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. 12Yes, and [q]all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 13[r]But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14But you must [s]continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, 15and that from childhood you have known [t]the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16[u]All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, [v]and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17[w]that the man of God may be complete, [x]thoroughly equipped for every good work.

* **2:19** NU-Text and M-Text read *the Lord*.

2:21 *Master.* This is a strong term for God's authority over the lives of believers, regardless of their level of spiritual maturity.

2:22 *Flee . . . pursue.* When we run toward righteousness, we are running away from sin. The two are completely opposite, and a person cannot follow both at once.

2:25 *in humility correcting.* The aim of instruction is repentance or a change of thinking, not self-justification or the pleasure of argument.

2:26 *come to their senses.* False teaching has an intoxicating effect that dulls the mind to God's truth.

3:5 *a form of godliness.* This is an outward appearance of reverence for God. Denying its power describes religious activity that is not connected to a living relationship with Jesus Christ. This kind of religion provokes God's anger (Is. 1:10–18; Matt. 23:25–28).

3:8 *Jannes and Jambres.* They are not named in the Old Testament, but according to Jewish tradition, Jannes and Jambres were two of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses (Ex. 7:11).

3:12 *will suffer persecution.* God does not promise deliverance *from* persecution, but deliverance *through* it. Persecution is one of the means that God uses to bring about our growth and sanctification (2:12; Matt. 5:10–12; Rev. 2:10).

3:16 *inspiration of God.* This is literally "God-breathed." Scripture was freely produced by human writers, but the original Author is God Himself. God "breathed out" the Scriptures so that they are not only human words, but simultaneously and ultimately the very utterances of God. Thus, Scripture is true in all that it affirms and is completely authoritative (1 Pet. 1:20–21). The Bible not only "contains God's words," it *is* God's Word. Therefore the Scriptures are fully consistent and inerrant, authoritative and trustworthy.

3:17 *every good work.* Paul emphasizes the essential link between knowing God's Word and applying it to one's daily life. Right doctrine should produce right practice.

2:20 [z] Rom. 9:21 **2:21** [a] 2 Tim. 3:17 **2:22** [b] 1 Tim. 6:11 **2:24** [c] Titus 3:2 [d] Titus 1:9 [e] 1 Tim. 3:3 **2:25** [f] Gal. 6:1 [g] Acts 8:22 [h] 1 Tim. 2:4 **2:26** [i] 1 Tim. 3:7 **3:1** [a] 1 Tim. 4:1 **3:4** [b] 2 Pet. 2:10 **3:5** [c] Titus 1:16 [d] 1 Tim. 5:8 [e] 2 Thess. 3:6 **3:6** [f] Matt. 23:14 **3:7** [g] 1 Tim. 2:4 **3:8** [h] Ex. 7:11, 12, 22; 8:7; 9:11 [i] 1 Tim. 6:5 [j] Rom. 1:28 **3:9** [k] Ex. 7:11, 12; 8:18; 9:11 **3:10** [l] 1 Tim. 4:6 **3:11** [m] Acts 13:44–52 [n] Acts 14:1–6, 19 [o] Acts 14:8–20 [p] Ps. 34:19 **3:12** [q] [Ps. 34:19] **3:13** [r] 2 Thess. 2:11 **3:14** [s] 2 Tim. 1:13 **3:15** [t] John 5:39 **3:16** [u] [2 Pet. 1:20] [v] Rom. 4:23; 15:4 **3:17** [w] 1 Tim. 6:11 [x] 2 Tim. 2:21

Preach the Word

4 I [a]charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, [b]who will judge the living and the dead at* His appearing and His kingdom: **2**Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. [c]Convince, [d]rebuke, [e]exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. **3**[f]For the time will come when they will not endure [g]sound doctrine, [h]but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; **4**and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and [i]be turned aside to fables. **5**But you be watchful in all things, [j]endure afflictions, do the work of [k]an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Paul's Valedictory

6For [l]I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of [m]my departure is at hand. **7**[n]I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8**Finally, there is laid up for me [o]the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous [p]Judge, will give to me [q]on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

The Abandoned Apostle

9Be diligent to come to me quickly; **10**for [r]Demas has forsaken me, [s]having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. **11**Only Luke is with me. Get [t]Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. **12**And [u]Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. **13**Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.

14[v]Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. **15**You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words.

16At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. [w]May it not be charged against them.

The Lord Is Faithful

17[x]But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, [y]so that the message might be preached fully through me, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered [z]out of the mouth of the lion. **18**[a]And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom. [b]To Him *be* glory forever and ever. Amen!

Come Before Winter

19Greet [c]Prisca and Aquila, and the household of [d]Onesiphorus. **20**[e]Erastus stayed in Corinth, but [f]Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick.

21Do your utmost to come before winter.

Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

Farewell

22The Lord Jesus Christ* be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

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* **4:1** NU-Text omits *therefore* and reads *and by* for *at*. * **4:22** NU-Text omits *Jesus Christ*.

4:2 *longsuffering.* Longsuffering and doctrine are two necessary components of an effective ministry. True spiritual growth occurs over a period of time, through consistent teaching and application of God's Word.

4:6 *drink offering.* An offering performed by pouring wine out on the ground or altar (Num. 28:11–31). Paul's life was already being poured out in service to Christ.

4:7 *fought the good fight.* Paul did not make these comments until the end of his race, when he was about to die. He did not presume or rely on his past service. Instead, he persevered, struggled, and served God until the end (1 Cor. 9:24–27).

4:8 *loved His appearing.* These are the believers who have lived faithfully in the hope of His return (Titus 2:11–15; 1 John 2:28).

4:11 *Mark.* Mark's desertion of Paul in Pamphylia on his first missionary journey had led to the separation of Paul and Barnabas at the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36–40). Later Paul and Mark were reconciled, and Mark served Paul in the ministry (Col. 4:10). It is believed that Mark later wrote the Gospel of Mark.

4:12 *Tychicus.* Tychicus was Paul's faithful co-worker (Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7).

4:14 *Alexander.* This may be the person named in 1 Timothy 1:20 or Acts 19:33, who caused harm to Paul's ministry in Ephesus.

4:19 *Prisca and Aquila.* Prisca is a form of the name Priscilla. Paul had met Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–3), and they had assisted in God's work in Ephesus (Acts 18:18–19).

4:20 *Trophimus.* Trophimus, a member of the church of Ephesus (Acts 21:29), had traveled with Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4).

4:1 [a] 1 Tim. 5:21 [b] Acts 10:42 **4:2** [c] Titus 2:15 [d] 1 Tim. 5:20 [e] 1 Tim. 4:13 **4:3** [f] 2 Tim. 3:1 [g] 1 Tim. 1:10 [h] 2 Tim. 3:6 **4:4** [i] 1 Tim. 1:4 **4:5** [j] 2 Tim. 1:8 [k] Acts 21:8 **4:6** [l] Phil. 2:17 [m] [Phil. 1:23] **4:7** [n] 1 Cor. 9:24–27 **4:8** [o] James 1:12 [p] John 5:22 [q] 2 Tim. 1:12 **4:10** [r] Col. 4:14 [s] 1 John 2:15 **4:11** [t] Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37–39 **4:12** [u] Acts 20:4 **4:14** [v] 1 Tim. 1:20 **4:16** [w] Acts 7:60 **4:17** [x] Acts 23:11 [y] Acts 9:15 [z] 1 Sam. 17:37 **4:18** [a] Ps. 121:7 [b] Rom. 11:36 **4:19** [c] Acts 18:2 [d] 2 Tim. 1:16 **4:20** [e] Rom. 16:23 [f] Acts 20:4; 21:29

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO
TITUS

▶ **AUTHOR:** Titus was one of Paul's Gentile converts. He probably worked with Paul during his time at Ephesus on his third missionary journey. Later he also worked in Corinth and this letter indicates that Paul is commissioning him to work on the island of Crete. Paul wrote this letter about A.D. 63, perhaps from Corinth, taking advantage of the journey of Zenas and Apollos (3:13), whose destination would take them by way of Crete.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 63 ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Titus 3:8

▶ **THEME:** Paul's instructions to Titus are similar to those he gives to Timothy. He gives him instructions about the leadership and organization of the church and guidance in dealing with the opposition of those who would contradict his teaching. His tone is that of a seasoned leader passing on the essential instructions to a valued disciple.

Greeting

1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and [a]the acknowledgment of the truth [b]which accords with godliness, **2**in hope of eternal life which God, who [c]cannot lie, promised before time began, **3**but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

4To [d]Titus, a true son in *our* common faith:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ* our Savior.

Qualified Elders

5For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should [e]set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you— **6**if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, [f]having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. **7**For a bishop* must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, [g]not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, **8**but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

* **1:4** NU-Text reads *and Christ Jesus.* * **1:7** Literally *overseer*

1:2 We Can Trust God—Often Christians will doubt our position with God simply because we do not *feel* saved. We don't understand that the basis for our standing is the promise of God and not emotional feelings. One helpful way to see these promises is in relation to the Trinity:

1. *The promise and work of the Father.* He has promised to graciously accept in Christ all repenting sinners (Eph. 1:6 and Col. 3:3). This means a Christian has the right to be in heaven someday, for he is in Christ. God guarantees us that He will work out all things for our ultimate good (Rom. 8:28).

2. *The promise and work of the Son.* He has promised us eternal life (John 5:24) and abundant life (John 10:10). This promise covers not only our final destiny in heaven, but also our present Christian service here on earth. He is, in fact, right now praying for us and ministering to us at His Father's right hand (Heb. 8:1; 9:24).

3. *The promise and work of the Holy Spirit.* The Holy Spirit is said to indwell the believer (John 14:16). In addition, He places all believing sinners into the body of Christ, thus assuring us of union with God's family (1 Cor. 12:13).

1:3 *preaching.* Paul places the emphasis on the message, not on the messenger. Christ is the center of our faith, not any one preacher (1 Cor. 9:16; 2 Cor. 4:5).

1:5 *appoint elders.* The Greek words for "elder" and "bishop" (literally, overseer) seem to have been used interchangeably by Paul (v. 7). "Elder" perhaps speaks more of the office and its authority, while "bishop" may speak more of the person's function and the ministry of oversight (Acts 20:17).

1:6 *husband of one wife.* The exact application of this phrase is debated; some believe that it merely forbids polygamy, while others believe that it also prohibits a man who is divorced and remarried. It is clearly emphasizing the importance of marital faithfulness (Matt. 19:5). ***faithful children.*** The man must have a good relationship with his wife, and he should also have children who demonstrate faithfulness to God. If a man has children who reject the ways of God, or who are out of control, this reflects on the father's ability to lead others outside his home.

1:1 [a] 2 Tim. 2:25 [b] [1 Tim. 3:16] **1:2** [c] Num. 23:19 **1:4** [d] 2 Cor. 2:13; 8:23 **1:5** [e] 1 Cor. 11:34 **1:6** [f] 1 Tim. 3:2–4 **1:7** [g] Lev. 10:9

9holding fast the faithful word as he has
been taught, that he may be able, by sound
doctrine, both to exhort and convict those
who contradict.

The Elders' Task

10For there are many insubordinate,
both idle [h]talkers and deceivers, espe-
cially those of the circumcision, 11whose
mouths must be stopped, who subvert
whole households, teaching things which
they ought not, [i]for the sake of dishonest
gain. 12[j]One of them, a prophet of their
own, said, "Cretans *are* always liars, evil
beasts, lazy gluttons." 13This testimony is
true. [k]Therefore rebuke them sharply, that
they may be sound in the faith, 14not giving
heed to Jewish fables and [l]commandments
of men who turn from the truth. 15[m]To the
pure all things are pure, but to those who
are defiled and unbelieving nothing is
pure; but even their mind and conscience
are defiled. 16They profess to [n]know God,
but [o]in works they deny *Him*, being abom-
inable, disobedient, [p]and disqualified for
every good work.

Qualities of a Sound Church

2 But as for you, speak the things which
are proper for sound doctrine: 2that the
older men be sober, reverent, temperate,
sound in faith, in love, in patience; 3the old-
er women likewise, that they be reverent in
behavior, not slanderers, not given to much
wine, teachers of good things— 4that they
admonish the young women to love their
husbands, to love their children, 5*to be* dis-
creet, chaste, [q]homemakers, good, [b]obedi-
ent to their own husbands, [c]that the word
of God may not be blasphemed.

6Likewise, exhort the young men to
be sober-minded, 7in all things showing
yourself *to be* [d]a pattern of good works; in
doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, [e]in-
corruptibility,* 8sound speech that cannot
be condemned, that one who is an oppo-
nent may be ashamed, having nothing evil
to say of you.*

9*Exhort* [f]bondservants to be obedient to
their own masters, to be well pleasing in all
things, not answering back, 10not pilfering,
but showing all good fidelity, that they may
adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all
things.

Trained by Saving Grace

11For [g]the grace of God that brings sal-
vation has appeared to all men, 12teaching
us that, denying ungodliness and worldly
lusts, we should live soberly, righteously,
and godly in the present age, 13[h]looking for
the blessed [i]hope and glorious appearing
of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

*2:7 NU-Text omits *incorruptibility*. *2:8 NU-Text and M-Text read *us*.

1:9 *convict.* The word *convict* here means to rebuke in such a way as to produce repentance and confession of sin (John 16:8). A rebuke can have the positive results of producing change in a person's life.

1:10 *those of the circumcision.* Apparently there were Jewish Christians in the churches of Crete who were limiting the Christian freedom of Gentile Christians by requiring an adherence to Jewish laws (Gal. 3).

1:12 *Cretans are always liars.* Paul is quoting the Cretan poet Epimenides, who wrote these words around 600 B.C. The Cretans were so much regarded as liars in the Mediterranean world that the expression "to Cretanize" meant "to lie."

1:14 *Jewish fables.* These were probably legends about Old Testament figures, like some that survive to this day in non-biblical writings.

1:15 *To the pure . . . to those who are defiled.* Paul highlights the mistaken asceticism of the Cretan false teachers. They had identified certain foods and practices as defiled when in reality it was their minds that were defiled and unbelieving. On the other hand, to the pure, all things are pure. The Cretan believers had placed their trust in Christ, focusing their minds on Him, and therefore they would be empowered by God's Spirit to lead pure lives. Jesus taught the same principle in Matthew 15:11. Physical objects or external practices do not defile a person, but a mind focused on evil thoroughly corrupts.

2:1 *sound doctrine.* "Sound" means "healthy." Right thinking is the raw material for right actions (Ps. 119:11; Prov. 23:7; Rom. 12:2; James 1:13–15). Our actions will naturally reveal the direction of our thoughts.

2:2 *older men.* Maturity is not determined simply by age or even by how much a person knows; it is determined by how skilled a person is in applying the truth to life and in distinguishing good from evil (Heb. 5:13–14).

2:4 *love their husbands . . . their children.* This is not just romantic or emotional love, but the commitment of a woman to the welfare of her husband and children.

2:5 *obedient to their own husbands.* Women are not under the authority of men in general, but rather the authority of their own husbands (Eph. 5:21). ***not be blasphemed.*** The older women are to teach the younger women so that their actions will glorify God, build His kingdom, and strengthen the family. Failure to follow Paul's instructions will result in the word of God being maligned in the pagan community.

2:6 *young men.* Young men are to pursue the character qualities that older men should possess already.

2:7 *pattern of good works.* More people will learn from our daily actions than from what we say.

2:11 *appeared.* Christ came the first time in grace to save men from their sins; the second time He will come in glory to reign (v. 13).

2:13 *looking for the blessed hope.* Paul reminded Timothy that there is a special crown awaiting all who "have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8). ***great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*** This is one of the strongest statements of the deity of Christ in the New Testament.

1:10 *h* James 1:26 **1:11** *i* 1 Tim. 6:5 **1:12** *j* Acts 17:28
1:13 *k* 2 Cor. 13:10 **1:14** *l* Is. 29:13 **1:15** *m* 1 Cor. 6:12
1:16 *n* Matt. 7:20–23; 25:12 *o* [2 Tim. 3:5, 7] *p* Rom. 1:28
2:5 *a* 1 Tim. 5:14 *b* 1 Cor. 14:34 *c* Rom. 2:24 **2:7** *d* 1 Tim. 4:12 *e* Eph. 6:24 **2:9** *f* 1 Tim. 6:1 **2:11** *g* [Rom. 5:15]
2:13 *h* 1 Cor. 1:7 *i* [Col. 3:4]

14 [j]who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed [k]and purify for Himself [l]*His* own special people, zealous for good works.

15 Speak these things, [m]exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Graces of the Heirs of Grace

3 Remind them [a]to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, [b]to be ready for 2 every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. 3 For [c]we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 But when [d]the kindness and the love of [e]God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 [f]not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through [g]the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 [h]whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace [i]we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 [j]This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Avoid Dissension

9 But [k]avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. 10 [l]Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

Final Messages

12 When I send Artemas to you, or [m]Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. 13 Send Zenas the lawyer and [n]Apollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack nothing. 14 And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

Farewell

15 All who *are* with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith.

Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

2:14 *redeem.* "Redeem" means "to purchase." With His death on the cross, Christ paid the price to release us from the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:6–7,17,20; Eph. 1:7). God's purpose in redeeming us is not only to save us from hell; He also wants to free us from sin so that we can produce good works that glorify Him (Eph. 2:8–10).

3:1 *Remind them.* The Cretans notoriously lacked the virtue of good citizenship (1:12). Disobedience permeated the Cretan's lifestyle, both in the church (v. 10) and in government. Believers who got along with civil authorities and who lived peacefully with their neighbors would reflect positively on their faith and would glorify God.

3:5 *not by works of righteousness.* Paul has been exhorting Titus to emphasize good works in his ministry with the Cretans, and he wants to make it clear that such good works have no value in saving a person. It is solely on the basis of God's mercy that we are delivered from the penalty of our sin. ***washing of regeneration.*** This phrase refers to the work of the Holy Spirit, in whom we are "born again" (John 3:3,6), given a new nature and cleansed from old sin. ***renewing of the Holy Spirit.*** There are three works performed by the Holy Spirit in preparing nonbelievers to become Christians. (1) *The Holy Spirit restrains.* Satan would enjoy nothing more than to destroy people before they make their decision to accept Christ as Savior. But the Holy Spirit prevents this from occurring (Is. 59:19). (2) *The Holy Spirit convicts.* Mankind's sin and righteousness are exposed by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). Two examples of such conviction are Felix, a Roman governor who "trembled" under conviction (Acts 24:25), and King Agrippa, who was almost persuaded in Acts 26:28. (3) *The Holy Spirit regenerates.* When a repenting sinner accepts Christ as Savior, he is given a new nature by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus carefully explained this ministry of the Holy Spirit to Nicodemus (John 3:3–7).

3:7 *we should become heirs.* God justifies believers so that they might become co-heirs with Jesus Christ in His coming reign (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

3:10 *Reject a divisive man.* A sinner must always be given ample opportunity to repent, but if he insists on continuing in sin, the church is required to let him go (Matt. 18:15–17; 2 Thess. 3:14–15).

3:12 *Tychicus.* Tychicus, one of Paul's assistants, is also mentioned in Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7; 2 Timothy 4:12.

3:13 *Apollos.* Apollos was a fellow worker of Paul's (1 Cor. 16:12), an Alexandrian who had been taught by Priscilla and Aquila and who had eloquently preached the gospel at Ephesus and Corinth (Acts 18:24—19:1).

3:14 *not be unfruitful.* Justification is a free gift from God, but we will be rewarded according to what we do on this earth (Rev. 22:12). It would be tragedy to stand ashamed at Christ's return (1 John 2:28).

2:14 *j* Gal. 1:4 *k* [Heb. 1:3; 9:14] *l* Ex. 15:16 **2:15** *m* 2 Tim. 4:2 **3:1** *a* 1 Pet. 2:13 *b* Col. 1:10 **3:3** *c* 1 Cor. 6:11 **3:4** *d* Titus 2:11 *e* 1 Tim. 2:3 **3:5** *f* [Rom. 3:20] *g* John 3:3 **3:6** *h* Ezek. 36:26 **3:7** *i* [Rom. 8:17, 23, 24] **3:8** *j* 1 Tim. 1:15 **3:9** *k* 2 Tim. 2:23 **3:10** *l* Matt. 18:17 **3:12** *m* Acts 20:4 **3:13** *n* Acts 18:24

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO
PHILEMON

▶ **AUTHOR:** Though some critics deny its authenticity, the general consensus of scholarship recognizes Philemon as Paul's work. There could have been no doctrinal motive for its forgery, and it is supported externally by consistent tradition and internally by no less than three references to Paul (Philem. 1,9,19).

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 60–61 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Philem. 16–17

▶ **THEME:** Paul wrote this letter to a slave owner in the church at Colosse. Apparently, Onesimus, the slave of Philemon had stolen from him and had run away, an act punishable by death under Roman law. Onesimus had since met Paul and become a Christian. Paul's letter is a personal appeal in an effort to help them reconcile and renew their relationship.

Greeting

Paul, a [a]prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy *our* brother,

To Philemon our beloved *friend* and fellow laborer, [2]to the beloved* Apphia, [b]Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

[3]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon's Love and Faith

[4][c]I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, [5][d]hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, [6]that the sharing of your faith may become effective [e]by the acknowledgment of [f]every good thing which is in you* in Christ Jesus. [7]For we have* great joy* and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

The Plea for Onesimus

[8]Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, [9]*yet* for love's sake I rather appeal *to you*—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ— [10]I appeal to you for my son [g]Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, [11]who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.

[12]I am sending him back.* You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, [13]whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. [14]But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, [h]that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

[15]For perhaps he departed for a while for this *purpose*, that you might receive him forever, [16]no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the [i]flesh and in the Lord.

* **2** NU-Text reads *to our sister Apphia.* * **6** NU-Text and M-Text read *us.* * **7** NU-Text reads *had.* • M-Text reads *thanksgiving.* * **12** NU-Text reads *back to you in person, that is, my own heart.*

1–2 ***To Philemon . . . and to the church.*** Paul addresses the letter to Philemon and the Colossian church, but this intensely personal epistle uses the singular "I" and "you," demonstrating that the letter is Paul's personal plea to Philemon. It was written at the same time as the letter to the Colossians, and doubtless carried by the same messenger.

2 ***Apphia . . . Archippus.*** Apphia may have been the wife of Philemon; Archippus may have been Philemon's son, or perhaps an elder in the Colossian church (Col. 4:17).

6 ***faith may become effective.*** Working faith is a sharing faith; it is the acknowledgment of what Christ has done in the believer's life (Eph. 3:17–19).

9 ***Paul, the aged.*** The apostle is either speaking of his old age, or of the office of an elder.

11 ***unprofitable . . . profitable.*** Paul uses an interesting play on words here. Having mentioned Onesimus, whose name means "useful," the apostle describes him as someone who was formerly useless, but who has become useful through the work of Christ in his life.

14 ***not . . . by compulsion.*** Service for Christ is never forced. Paul has given Philemon several good reasons to forgive Onesimus, but here he returns to the foundation of his argument: Philemon's actions must proceed from his own love (v. 9).

1 [a] Eph. 3:1 **2** [b] Col. 4:17 **4** [c] 2 Thess. 1:3 **5** [d] Col. 1:4 **6** [e] Phil. 1:9 [f] [1 Thess. 5:18] **10** [g] Col. 4:9 **14** [h] 2 Cor. 9:7 **16** [i] Col. 3:22

Philemon's Obedience Encouraged

17 If then you count me as a partner, receive him as *you would* me. 18 But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. 19 I, Paul, am writing with my own [j]hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. 20 Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.

21 [k]Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. 22 But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for [l]I trust that [m]through your prayers I shall be granted to you.

Farewell

23 [n]Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, 24 *as do* [o]Mark, [p]Aristarchus, [q]Demas, [r]Luke, my fellow laborers.

25 [s]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

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18 ***wronged you.*** Onesimus had probably stolen something from Philemon when he left. ***put that on my account.*** This accounting imagery reminds us of the theological truth that our sins were charged over to Christ even though He had not earned them. Forgiveness is costly (Is. 53:6).

19 ***my own hand.*** Paul wrote this personal letter himself, and therefore it could be considered a legal document obligating him to pay the damages that Onesimus had caused.

22 ***prepare a guest room.*** It is believed that Paul wrote this letter during his imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28), and that he was released shortly afterwards. He was probably not at liberty for very long, but it is possible that he was able to visit Colosse before his second imprisonment and execution.

23–24 ***Epaphras . . . Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke.*** These five co-workers are also mentioned in Colossians 4:10–14.

19 *j* 1 Cor. 16:21 **21** *k* 2 Cor. 7:16 **22** *l* Phil. 1:25; 2:24 *m* 2 Cor. 1:11 **23** *n* Col. 1:7; 4:12 **24** *o* Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37–39 *p* Acts 19:29; 27:2 *q* Col. 4:14 *r* 2 Tim. 4:11
25 *s* 2 Tim. 4:22

THE EPISTLE TO THE
HEBREWS

▶ **AUTHOR:** The origin of Hebrews is unknown. Uncertainty plagues not only its authorship, but also its date and its readership. Hebrews 13:18–24 tells us that this book was not anonymous to the original readers; they evidently knew the author. For some reason however, early church tradition is divided over the identity of the author. Part of the church attributed it to Paul, others preferred Barnabas, Luke, or Clement, and some chose anonymity. Some aspects of the language style and theology of Hebrews are very similar to Paul's epistles. However, significant stylistic differences have led the majority of biblical scholars to reject Pauline authorship of this book.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 64–68 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Heb. 4:14–16

▶ **THEME:** Hebrews was written for a group of Jewish Christians who were thinking about returning to their original faith. The author goes to great lengths to convince them to stay with their new faith. Point by point he goes through a whole series of arguments showing how Judaism was a foreshadowing of Christ. Everything promising about Old Testament Judaism is fulfilled in Christ. The new way is the superior way, as Christ and the faith that He established supersedes what has gone before. Understanding Jewish faith and practice, and the role of Moses and Aaron in biblical history is a prerequisite to understanding Hebrews.

God's Supreme Revelation

1 God, who at various times and [a]in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **2**has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; **3**[b]who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express [c]image of His person, and [d]upholding all things by the word of His power, [e]when He had by Himself* purged our* sins, [f]sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, **4**having become so much better than the angels, as [g]He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

The Son Exalted Above Angels

5For to which of the angels did He ever say:

[h]*"You are My Son,*
Today I have begotten You"?*

And again:

[i]*"I will be to Him a Father,*
And He shall be to Me a Son"?*

6But when He again brings [j]the firstborn into the world, He says:

* **1:3** NU-Text omits *by Himself.* • NU-Text omits *our.* * **1:5** Psalm 2:7 • 2 Samuel 7:14

1:2 *by His Son.* This could be rephrased as "in such a person as a Son." The emphasis rests on the character of the revelation. It is a revelation of the Son, a revelation not so much in what He has said as in who He is and what He has done.
1:3 *brightness of His glory.* The author of Hebrews is emphasizing that this is not a reflected brightness like the light of the moon. Instead, this is an inherent brightness like a ray from the sun. Jesus' glorious brightness comes from being essentially divine. ***express image.*** In Greek literature the word was used for stamping a coin from the die. ***upholding.*** This means to "bear" or "carry," referring to movement and progress toward a final end. The Son not only created the universe by His powerful word, but also maintains and directs its course. He is the Governor of the universe. ***sat down.*** This suggests the formal act of assuming the office of High Priest and implies a contrast to the Levitical priest, who never finished his work and sat down (10:11–13).
1:5 *Today I have begotten You.* This probably refers to the day Christ sat down at the Father's right hand after He accomplished His work as the Messiah.
1:6 *when He again brings the firstborn.* This is a reference to the second coming. "Firstborn" refers to rank, meaning one who ranks above all others (Ps. 89:27).

1:1 [a] Num. 12:6, 8 **1:3** [b] John 1:14 [c] 2 Cor. 4:4 [d] Col. 1:17 [e] [Heb. 7:27] [f] Ps. 110:1 **1:4** [g] [Phil. 2:9, 10] **1:5** [h] Ps. 2:7 [i] 2 Sam. 7:14 **1:6** [j] [Rom. 8:29]

[k] *"Let all the angels of God worship Him."**

7 And of the angels He says:

[l] *"Who makes His angels spirits*
*And His ministers a flame of fire."**

8 But to the Son *He says:*

[m] *"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;*
A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.
9 *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;*
Therefore God, Your God, [n] has anointed You
*With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."**

10 And:

[o] *"You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,*
And the heavens are the work of Your hands.
11 [p] *They will perish, but You remain;*
And [q] they will all grow old like a garment;
12 *Like a cloak You will fold them up,*
And they will be changed.
But You are the [r] same,
*And Your years will not fail."**

13 But to which of the angels has He ever said:

[s] *"Sit at My right hand,*
*Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"?**

14 [t] Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will [u] inherit salvation?

Do Not Neglect Salvation

2 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word [a] spoken through angels proved steadfast, and [b] every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 [c] how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, [d] which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was [e] confirmed to us by those who heard *Him,* 4 [f] God also bearing witness [g] both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and [h] gifts of the Holy Spirit, [i] according to His own will?

The Son Made Lower than Angels

5 For He has not put [j] the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 But one testified in a certain place, saying:

[k] *"What is man that You are mindful of him,*
Or the son of man that You take care of him?
7 *You have made him a little lower than the angels;*
*You have crowned him with glory and honor,**
And set him over the works of Your hands.
8 [l] *You have put all things in subjection under his feet."**

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now [m] we do not yet see all things

* **1:6** Deuteronomy 32:43 (Septuagint, Dead Sea Scrolls); Psalm 97:7 * **1:7** Psalm 104:4 * **1:9** Psalm 45:6, 7 * **1:12** Psalm 102:25–27 * **1:13** Psalm 110:1 * **2:7** NU-Text and M-Text omit the rest of verse 7. * **2:8** Psalm 8:4–6

1:7 *ministers.* The Son is superior to angels because He is the Sovereign who is worshiped, while the angels are *ministers,* that is, servants of God. The author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 104 because that psalm places angels in a long list of created objects which God sovereignly controls.

1:9 *companions.* This term comes from a word that means "close associates" or "partners." The concept of believers being partners with Christ is key in Hebrews (3:1,14; 6:4; 12:8). The term refers to those who will be participants with Christ in His reign.

1:10–12 *You, LORD.* The context of Psalm 102 here indicates that the Lord is the One who would appear in the future to Israel and the nations (Ps. 102:12–16).

1:14 *those who will inherit salvation.* Salvation here is not justification because it is in the future, not in the past. The reference is to believers who inherit the kingdom or rule in God's kingdom as a reward for their service to the Son (9:28; Col. 3:24).

2:1 *drift away.* The author's audience was marked by immaturity and spiritual sluggishness (5:11–12). The author warned them not to be carried away by the popular opinions that surrounded them. Instead, they were to hold fast to Christ's words because they were the words of God.

2:3 *how shall we escape.* If the people who heard the message delivered through angels were justly punished when they disobeyed the law, how can believers expect to escape punishment when they neglect the even greater message delivered through the greater Messenger, the Son?

2:4 *signs and wonders.* This phrase refers to the miracles performed by the Holy Spirit through the Lord and His apostles in fulfillment of the ancient promises regarding the coming of the Messiah (Acts 2:22,43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 14:3; 15:12; 1 Cor. 12:12).

2:6–8 *set him over the works of Your hands.* Since the Son's humanity might appear to be an obstacle to the claim of His superiority, the author of Hebrews cites Psalm 8, a lyrical reflection on Genesis 1, to prove that God has placed humanity over all created things, which includes the angelic world.

1:6 [k] Deut. 32:43, LXX, DSS; Ps. 97:7 **1:7** [l] Ps. 104:4 **1:8** [m] Ps. 45:6, 7 **1:9** [n] Is. 61:1, 3 **1:10** [o] Ps. 102:25–27 **1:11** [p] [Is. 34:4] [q] Is. 50:9; 51:6 **1:12** [r] Heb. 13:8 **1:13** [s] Ps. 110:1 **1:14** [t] Ps. 103:20 [u] Rom. 8:17 **2:2** [a] Acts 7:53 [b] Num. 15:30 **2:3** [c] Heb. 10:28 [d] Matt. 4:17 [e] Luke 1:2 **2:4** [f] Mark 16:20 [g] Acts 2:22, 43 [h] 1 Cor. 12:4, 7, 11 [i] Eph. 1:5, 9 **2:5** [j] [2 Pet. 3:13] **2:6** [k] Ps. 8:4–6 **2:8** [l] Matt. 28:18 [m] 1 Cor. 15:25, 27

put under him. 9But we see Jesus, [n]who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death [o]crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death [p]for everyone.

Bringing Many Sons to Glory

10For it was fitting for Him, [q]for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation [r]perfect through sufferings. 11For [s]both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified [t]*are* all of one, for which reason [u]He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12saying:

[v]*"I will declare Your name to My brethren;*
*In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."**

13And again:

[w]*"I will put My trust in Him."**

And again:

[x]*"Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."**

14Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He [y]Himself likewise shared in the same, [z]that through death He might destroy him who had the power of [a]death, that is, the devil, 15and release those who [b]through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17Therefore, in all things He had [c]to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be [d]a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18[e]For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

The Son Was Faithful

3 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, 2who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as [a]Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. 3For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as [b]He who built the house has more honor than the house. 4For every house is built by someone, but [c]He who built all things *is* God. 5[d]And Moses indeed *was* faithful in all His house as [e]a servant, [f]for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, 6but Christ as [g]a Son over His own house, [h]whose house

* **2:12** Psalm 22:22 * **2:13** 2 Samuel 22:3; Isaiah 8:17 • Isaiah 8:18

2:10 ***captain of their salvation.*** The Greek word here means "leader" or "originator." The word describes a pioneer or pathfinder. Jesus' endurance of sufferings on this earth makes Him our leader. He not only endured them but also triumphed over sin, death, and Satan through them.
2:12 ***to My brethren.*** Psalm 22 is quoted here. In it, the Messiah refers to "My brethren," identifying Himself with all those who place their faith in God.
2:14–16 ***He might destroy . . . release.*** Having established the unity between the Son and believer, the author concludes that there are two purposes of this close identification. The Son became human so that He could destroy the devil and release those who were in bondage to sin.
2:16 ***seed of Abraham.*** The author may have used the expression because the recipients of this letter were primarily Jewish believers. The author is pointing out that Christ came to the aid of Abraham's sons, not the angelic hosts.
2:17 ***in things pertaining to God.*** Jesus participated in our nature and in our sufferings on earth so that He could be a sympathetic Mediator between God and humanity. He understands our weaknesses and intercedes for us in the presence of God the Father. ***make propitiation.*** This term refers to the satisfaction of the claims of a holy and righteous God against sinners who have broken His law. Christ appeased God's righteous wrath by dying on the cross in our place (Rom. 3:21–26). Although completely sinless, Christ voluntarily submitted to the penalty of sin, His agonizing death on the cross. This voluntary sacrifice of Himself for our welfare satisfied the justice and holiness of God. The benefits of His sacrifice are applied to all who place their faith in Him.
2:18 ***He Himself has suffered, being tempted.*** Christ's suffering included temptation. He experienced the lure of sin, but He never surrendered Himself to it. He knows what it is like to be tempted, so He knows how to assist those who are being tempted.
3:2 ***in all His house.*** This phrase is taken from Numbers 12:7. "House" refers to the tabernacle, the center of Israelite worship. Moses had faithfully obeyed God's instructions concerning the tabernacle. In the same way, Jesus had been obedient to the mission the Father had given Him. Through obedience, God established a new house of God, the church.
3:3–4 ***worthy of more glory than Moses.*** The implication is that the covenant established through Jesus' death is more glorious than the covenant established at Mount Sinai.
3:5 ***as a servant.*** The author of Hebrews continues the comparison between Moses and Jesus. While Moses was faithful as a servant, Christ's faithfulness was greater because it was performed by a Son. ***things which would be spoken afterward.*** Moses' work pointed forward to Christ (9:10; 10:3). The regulations of the law of Moses pointed out both the sin of humanity and the need for a perfect sacrifice to reconcile people to their holy Creator.

2:9 [n] Phil. 2:7–9 [o] Acts 2:33; 3:13 [p] [John 3:16]
2:10 [q] Col. 1:16 [r] Heb. 5:8, 9; 7:28 **2:11** [s] Heb. 10:10 [t] Acts 17:26 [u] Matt. 28:10 **2:12** [v] Ps. 22:22
2:13 [w] 2 Sam. 22:3; Is. 8:17 [x] Is. 8:18 **2:14** [y] John 1:14 [z] Col. 2:15 [a] 2 Tim. 1:10 **2:15** [b] [Luke 1:74] **2:17** [c] Phil. 2:7 [d] [Heb. 4:15; 5:1–10] **2:18** [e] [Heb. 4:15, 16]
3:2 [a] Num. 12:7 **3:3** [b] Zech. 6:12, 13 **3:4** [c] [Eph. 2:10]
3:5 [d] Heb. 3:2 [e] Ex. 14:31 [f] Deut. 18:15, 18, 19 **3:6** [g] Heb. 1:2 [h] [1 Cor. 3:16]

we are [i]if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.*

Be Faithful

7 Therefore, as [j]the Holy Spirit says:

[k]*"Today, if you will hear His voice,*
8 *Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,*
In the day of trial in the wilderness,
9 *Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,*
And saw My works forty years.
10 *Therefore I was angry with that generation,*
And said, 'They always go astray in their heart,
And they have not known My ways.'
11 *So I swore in My wrath,*
*'They shall not enter My rest.'"**

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called *"Today,"* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said:

[l]*"Today, if you will hear His voice,*
*Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."**

Failure of the Wilderness Wanderers

16 [m]For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, [n]whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And [o]to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of [p]unbelief.

The Promise of Rest

4 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, [q]let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them,* not being mixed with faith in those who heard *it*. 3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

[b]*"So I swore in My wrath,*
*'They shall not enter My rest,'"**

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: [c]*"And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"*;* 5 and again in this *place:* [d]*"They shall not enter My rest."**

6 Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, 7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, *"Today,"* after such a long time, as it has been said:

[e]*"Today, if you will hear His voice,*
*Do not harden your hearts."**

8 For if Joshua had [f]given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. 10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

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* **3:6** NU-Text omits *firm to the end.* * **3:11** Psalm 95:7–11 * **3:15** Psalm 95:7, 8 * **4:2** NU-Text and M-Text read *profit them, since they were not united by faith with those who heeded it.* * **4:3** Psalm 95:11 * **4:4** Genesis 2:2 * **4:5** Psalm 95:11 * **4:7** Psalm 95:7, 8

3:7–11 *Do not harden your hearts.* The author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 95:7–11 to warn the Jewish Christians about hardening their hearts to God and the salvation He offers. Moses' generation had refused to trust in God to provide for their needs in the wilderness (Ex. 17:1–7), and the readers of this letter were also in danger. ***My rest.*** This is a key concept in Hebrews. In the Old Testament, the conquest of the Promised Land and the cessation of fighting in the land was viewed as a form of rest (Deut. 3:20; 12:9; 25:19; Josh. 11:23; 21:44; 22:4). In the New Testament, "rest" speaks of the believer's eternal home and the joy that he or she will experience in Jesus' presence (4:1).

3:12–13 *heart of unbelief.* In essence, unbelief is a stubborn refusal to trust in the truthfulness of His word. It is a grave sin because it leads us away from God.

3:14 *partakers of Christ.* This is the same word translated *companions* in 1:9. Believers will be partners with Christ in His future kingdom (Rev. 2:26–27).

3:15–19 *with whom was He angry.* The Jewish Christians to whom this letter was addressed were in danger of following in their ancestors' footsteps. They were tempted to doubt the words of Jesus. With the rhetorical questions in these verses, the author of Hebrews was encouraging them to place their faith firmly in Christ.

4:2 *the gospel was preached.* This is the translation of a single Greek word meaning "the good news was announced."

4:4 *God rested.* The theme of rest has its beginning in God's own rest after creation. The fact that Genesis makes no mention of the evening of the seventh day of creation provides a basis for some Jewish commentators to conclude that the rest of God lasts throughout all history.

4:9 *rest.* The word used here is different from the word used in verses 1, 3, 5, 10–11; 3:11, 18. Jews commonly taught that the Sabbath foreshadowed the world to come, and they spoke of "a day which shall be all Sabbath."

3:6 [i] [Matt. 10:22] **3:7** [j] Acts 1:16 [k] Ps. 95:7–11 **3:15** [l] Ps. 95:7, 8 **3:16** [m] Num. 14:2, 11, 30 **3:17** [n] Num. 14:22, 23 **3:18** [o] Num. 14:30 **3:19** [p] 1 Cor. 10:11, 12 **4:1** [q] Heb. 12:15 **4:3** [b] Ps. 95:11 **4:4** [c] Gen. 2:2 **4:5** [d] Ps. 95:11 **4:7** [e] Ps. 95:7, 8 **4:8** [f] Josh. 22:4

The Word Discovers Our Condition

11 [g]Let us therefore be diligent to enter
that rest, lest anyone fall according to the
same example of disobedience. 12For the
word of God *is* [h]living and powerful, and
[i]sharper than any [j]two-edged sword, pierc-
ing even to the division of soul and spirit,
and of joints and marrow, and is [k]a discern-
er of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
13 [l]And there is no creature hidden from His
sight, but all things *are* [m]naked and open
to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give*
account.

Our Compassionate High Priest

14Seeing then that we have a great
[n]High Priest who has passed through
the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, [o]let
us hold fast *our* confession. 15For [p]we do
not have a High Priest who cannot sym-
pathize with our weaknesses, but [q]was in
all *points* tempted as *we are,* [r]*yet* with-
out sin. 16 [s]Let us therefore come bold-
ly to the throne of grace, that we may
obtain mercy and find grace to help in
time of need.

Qualifications for High Priesthood

5 For every high priest taken from
among men [a]is appointed for men in
things *pertaining* to God, that he may of-
fer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2He
can have compassion on those who are
ignorant and going astray, since he him-
self is also subject to [b]weakness. 3Because
of this he is required as for the people, so
also for [c]himself, to offer *sacrifices* for
sins. 4And no man takes this honor to him-
self, but he who is called by God, just as
[d]Aaron *was.*

A Priest Forever

5 [e]So also Christ did not glorify Himself
to become High Priest, but *it was* He who
said to Him:

[f]*"You are My Son,*
*Today I have begotten You."**

6As *He* also says in another *place:*

[g]*"You are a priest forever*
According to the order of
*Melchizedek";**

7who, in the days of His flesh, when He
had [h]offered up prayers and supplications,
[i]with vehement cries and tears to Him [j]who
was able to save Him from death, and was
heard [k]because of His godly fear, 8though
He was a Son, *yet* He learned [l]obedience by
the things which He suffered. 9And [m]hav-
ing been perfected, He became the author
of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,
10called by God as High Priest [n]*"according*
to the order of Melchizedek," 11of whom
[o]we have much to say, and hard to explain,
since you have become [p]dull of hearing.

Spiritual Immaturity

12For though by this time you ought to
be teachers, you need *someone* to teach
you again the first principles of the oracles
of God; and you have come to need [q]milk
and not solid food. 13For everyone who
partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the
word of righteousness, for he is [r]a babe.
14But solid food belongs to those who are
of full age, *that is,* those who by reason of
use have their senses exercised [s]to discern
both good and evil.

* **5:5** Psalm 2:7 * **5:6** Psalm 110:4

4:11 ***be diligent to enter that rest.*** The rest is not automatic. Determined diligence is required. The danger is that believers today, like the Israelites of the past, will not stand, but will fall in disobedience.
4:13 ***naked and open.*** This phrase suggests complete exposure and defenselessness before God.
4:15 ***sympathize.*** This word means "to suffer with" and expresses the feeling of one who has entered into suffering.
4:16 ***come.*** This command strongly contrasts with God's command at Mount Sinai: "Do not go up to the mountain or touch its base" (Ex. 19:12). Because of Christ's priestly work, believers can approach God's presence. ***boldly.*** This word carries with it the idea of "fearlessness" or "courageousness." Believers should boldly approach God in prayer because His Son is our gracious High Priest who sits at God's right hand interceding for us.
5:1–4 ***high priest.*** He represents the people and thus must identify with their human nature. But he also represents God to the people and thus must be called by God to his office.
5:2 ***ignorant, and going astray.*** This phrase describes those who unintentionally sin (Num. 15:30–36).
5:8 ***He learned obedience.*** Jesus experienced all of what a person goes through on this earth. He knows how difficult it is to obey God completely, just as He understands the attraction of temptation (2:18).
5:9 ***having been perfected.*** This phrase does not suggest that Jesus had not been perfect before. It means that He successfully carried out God's plan for Him. He endured suffering and temptation so that He could truly function as our High Priest, understanding our weaknesses and interceding before God for us.
5:12 ***first principles.*** The phrase refers to the letters of the alphabet in writing or to addition and subtraction tables in arithmetic. They are principles out of which everything else develops.
5:13 ***unskilled in the word of righteousness.*** The readers of this letter did not necessarily lack information concerning righteousness; they lacked experience in practicing the information they had.

4:11 *g* 2 Pet. 1:10 **4:12** *h* Ps. 147:15 *i* Is. 49:2 *j* Eph. 6:17 *k* 1 Cor. 14:24, 25 **4:13** *l* Ps. 33:13–15; 90:8 *m* Job 26:6 **4:14** *n* Heb. 2:17; 7:26 *o* Heb. 10:23 **4:15** *p* Is. 53:3–5 *q* Luke 22:28 *r* 2 Cor. 5:21 **4:16** *s* [Eph. 2:18] **5:1** *a* Heb. 2:17; 8:3 **5:2** *b* Heb. 7:28 **5:3** *c* Lev. 9:7; 16:6 **5:4** *d* Ex. 28:1 **5:5** *e* John 8:54 *f* Ps. 2:7 **5:6** *g* Ps. 110:4 **5:7** *h* Matt. 26:39, 42, 44 *i* Ps. 22:1 *j* Matt. 26:53 *k* Matt. 26:39 **5:8** *l* Phil. 2:8 **5:9** *m* Heb. 2:10 **5:10** *n* Ps. 110:4 **5:11** *o* [John 16:12] *p* [Matt. 13:15] **5:12** *q* 1 Cor. 3:1–3 **5:13** *r* Eph. 4:14 **5:14** *s* Is. 7:15

The Peril of Not Progressing

6 Therefore, [a]leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from [b]dead works and of faith toward God, **2**[c]of the doctrine of baptisms, [d]of laying on of hands, [e]of resurrection of the dead, [f]and of eternal judgment. **3**And this we will* do if God permits.

4For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted [g]the heavenly gift, and [h]have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, **5**and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **6**if they fall away,* to renew them again to repentance, [i]since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

7For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, [j]receives blessing from God; **8**[k]but if it bears thorns and briers, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned.

A Better Estimate

9But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. **10**For [l]God *is* not unjust to forget [m]your work and labor of* love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have [n]ministered to the saints, and do minister. **11**And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence [o]to the full assurance of hope until the end, **12**that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience [p]inherit the promises.

God's Infallible Purpose in Christ

13For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, [q]He swore by Himself, **14**saying, [r]*"Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."** **15**And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the [s]promise. **16**For men indeed swear by the greater, and [t]an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. **17**Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to [u]the heirs of promise [v]the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, **18**that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to [w]lie, we might* have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope [x]set before *us*.

19This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, [y]and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, **20**[z]where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, [a]having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

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* **6:3** M-Text reads *let us do.* * **6:6** Or *and have fallen away* * **6:10** NU-Text omits *labor of.*
* **6:14** Genesis 22:17 * **6:18** M-Text omits *might.*

6:1 ***repentance from dead works.*** This phrase refers to a change of mind about the demands of the law of Moses (9:14). Even though the law was good (1 Tim. 1:8), it was weak because of the weakness of our sinful nature (Rom. 8:3). What is needed for salvation is not lifeless works that cannot save, but faith directed toward God.

6:2 ***laying on of hands.*** This action was used to impart the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17–18; 19:6). It was also used for ordination of the ministry (Acts 6:6; 13:3). This practice is also found in the Old Testament in commissioning someone to a public office (Num. 27:18,23; Deut. 34:9) or in the context of presenting a sacrificial offering to the Lord (Lev. 1:4; 3:2; 4:4; 8:14; 16:21). ***eternal judgment.*** This refers to the belief that everyone will be judged by the great Judge.

6:4–6 ***if they fall away.*** This difficult passage has been interpreted in various ways. Some insist that the author is speaking of nominal Christians who heard the truth and appeared to believe in Christ but were not sincere in their faith. Others view these verses as a hypothetical argument. In other words, the author is using this hypothetical case to warn the spiritually immature. These two positions are supported by passages that speak of God's consistency in His work, that nothing can separate us from His love (John 6:39–40; 10:27–29; Rom. 8:28–30). But another group of commentators insists that the author is speaking of genuine Christians who renounce Christ. They point out that those who "tasted the heavenly gift" fall away. Passages such as 2 Corinthians 11:1–4; 2 Timothy 2:17–18; 1 John 2:21–25 are in support of this position. Whatever way one interprets this passage, it is clear that the author of Hebrews has given us a clear warning not to renounce Christ or spurn His offer of salvation.

6:6 ***renew.*** This word means "restore." In other words, it is impossible for continuous effort on the part of anyone in the Christian community to restore an apostate back to fellowship with God. Continuing Christian immaturity is dangerous.

6:13–15 ***Abraham.*** Here is an example of faith and patience in God's promise (v. 12). He waited 25 years from the time the promise was first made until Isaac, the promised son, was born (Gen. 12:3–4; 15:4; 18:10; 21:5).

6:18 ***two immutable things.*** These things are God's Word and God's oath. Since God does not lie and since He is all-powerful, He will fulfill all His promises.

6:20 ***forerunner.*** This word was used in the second century A.D. for the smaller boats sent into the harbor by larger ships unable to enter due to the buffeting of the weather. These smaller boats carried the anchor through the breakers inside the harbor and dropped it there, securing the larger ship. *Forerunner* also

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6:1 [a] Heb. 5:12 [b] [Heb. 9:14] **6:2** [c] Acts 19:3–5 [d] [Acts 8:17] [e] Acts 17:31 [f] Acts 24:25 **6:4** [g] [John 4:10] [h] [Gal. 3:2, 5] **6:6** [i] Heb. 10:29 **6:7** [j] Ps. 65:10 **6:8** [k] Is. 5:6 **6:10** [l] Rom. 3:4 [m] 1 Thess. 1:3 [n] Rom. 15:25 **6:11** [o] Col. 2:2 **6:12** [p] Heb. 10:36 **6:13** [q] Gen. 22:16, 17 **6:14** [r] Gen. 22:16, 17 **6:15** [s] Gen. 12:4; 21:5 **6:16** [t] Ex. 22:11 **6:17** [u] Heb. 11:9 [v] Rom. 11:29 **6:18** [w] Num. 23:19 [x] [Col. 1:5] **6:19** [y] Lev. 16:2, 15 **6:20** [z] [Heb. 4:14] [a] Heb. 3:1; 5:10, 11

The King of Righteousness

7 For this [a]Melchizedek, king of Salem,
priest of the Most High God, who met
Abraham returning from the slaughter of
the kings and blessed him, **2**to whom also
Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first be-
ing translated "king of righteousness," and
then also king of Salem, meaning "king of
peace," **3**without father, without mother,
without genealogy, having neither begin-
ning of days nor end of life, but made like
the Son of God, remains a priest continu-
ally.

4Now consider how great this man *was*,
to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave
a tenth of the spoils. **5**And indeed [b]those
who are of the sons of Levi, who receive
the priesthood, have a commandment to
receive tithes from the people according
to the law, that is, from their brethren,
though they have come from the loins of
Abraham; **6**but he whose genealogy is not
derived from them received tithes from
Abraham [c]and blessed [d]him who had the
promises. **7**Now beyond all contradiction
the lesser is blessed by the better. **8**Here
mortal men receive tithes, but there he *re-
ceives them*, [e]of whom it is witnessed that
he lives. **9**Even Levi, who receives tithes,
paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak,
10for he was still in the loins of his father
when Melchizedek met him.

Need for a New Priesthood

11[f]Therefore, if perfection were through
the Levitical priesthood (for under it the
people received the law), what further need
was there that another priest should rise
according to the order of Melchizedek, and
not be called according to the order of Aar-
on? **12**For the priesthood being changed, of
necessity there is also a change of the law.
13For He of whom these things are spoken
belongs to another tribe, from which no
man has officiated at the altar.

14For *it is* evident that [g]our Lord arose
from [h]Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke
nothing concerning priesthood.* **15**And it
is yet far more evident if, in the likeness
of Melchizedek, there arises another priest
16who has come, not according to the law
of a fleshly commandment, but according
to the power of an endless life. **17**For He
testifies:*

> [i]*"You are a priest forever
> According to the order of
> Melchizedek."**

18For on the one hand there is an annul-
ling of the former commandment because
of [j]its weakness and unprofitableness, **19**for
[k]the law made nothing perfect; on the other
hand, *there is the* bringing in of [l]a better
hope, through which [m]we draw near to
God.

Greatness of the New Priest

20And inasmuch as *He was* not *made
priest* without an oath **21**(for they have be-
come priests without an oath, but He with
an oath by Him who said to Him:

> [n]*"The LORD has sworn
> And will not relent,
> 'You are a priest forever*
> *According to the order of
> Melchizedek'"*),*

22by so much more Jesus has become a
surety of a [o]better covenant.

23Also there were many priests, because
they were prevented by death from con-
tinuing. **24**But He, because He continues
forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

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* **7:14** NU-Text reads *priests.* * **7:17** NU-Text reads *it is testified.* • Psalm 110:4 * **7:21** NU-Text ends the quotation here. • Psalm 110:4

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presupposes that others will follow. Thus, Jesus is like a runner boat that has taken our anchor into port and secured it there.

7:1 *Melchizedek.* The name means "king of righteousness." ***Salem*** means "peace." The ideal king rules in righteousness, which assures peace (Is. 32:17).

7:3 *without father, without mother, without genealogy.* Genesis, a book with many genealogies, has none for Melchizedek. The author is not saying that Melchizedek was born without a father and mother, only that there is no record of his birth in the genealogies of Genesis. This description of Melchizedek prefigures the eternal priesthood of Jesus. Like Melchizedek, Jesus is both a Priest and a King belonging to a righteous priesthood that is independent of Aaron's.

7:4 *patriarch.* In the Greek text this word is emphatic. The greatness of Abraham, the one who possessed the promises of God (v. 6), underscores the even greater rank of Melchizedek, the priest of righteousness.

7:8–10 *mortal men receive tithes.* Melchizedek was not only superior to Abraham, but he was also superior to the Levitical priesthood in two ways: first, the Levitical priests were mortal. In contrast, Melchizedek seems to be immortal. At least, the Old Testament does not record his death. Second, in a sense, Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham's gift. Because he was descended from Abraham, he is counted as having paid tithes to Melchizedek.

7:12 *changed.* This word means removal (12:27). If the Melchizedek priesthood removed the Levitical priesthood, then the Mosaic law is also removed. In short, the believer is not under the law but instead relies on the righteousness of Christ (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 3:24–25).

7:15–18 *according to the power of an endless life.* This point is proved by Psalm 110:4, quoted in verse 17. Jesus is a different kind of priest, another indication that the law has been changed. There has been an *annulling*, a putting away, of the law.

7:1 [a] Gen. 14:18–20 **7:5** [b] Num. 18:21–26 **7:6** [c] Gen. 14:19, 20 [d] [Rom. 4:13] **7:8** [e] Heb. 5:6; 6:20 **7:11** [f] Heb. 7:18; 8:7 **7:14** [g] Is. 1:1 [h] Matt. 1:2 **7:17** [i] Ps. 110:4 **7:18** [j] [Rom. 8:3] **7:19** [k] [Acts 13:39] [l] Heb. 6:18, 19 [m] Rom. 5:2 **7:21** [n] Ps. 110:4 **7:22** [o] Heb. 8:6

25 Therefore He is also [p]able to save to the
uttermost those who come to God through
Him, since He always lives [q]to make inter-
cession for them.

26 For such a High Priest was fitting
for us, [r]*who is* holy, harmless, undefiled,
separate from sinners, [s]and has become
higher than the heavens; 27 who does not
need daily, as those high priests, to offer
up sacrifices, first for His [t]own sins and
then for the people's, for this He did once
for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For
the law appoints as high priests men who
have weakness, but the word of the oath,
which came after the law, *appoints* the Son
who has been perfected forever.

The New Priestly Service

8 Now *this is* the main point of the things
we are saying: We have such a High
Priest, [a]who is seated at the right hand of
the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,
2 [a]a Minister of [b]the sanctuary and of [c]the
true tabernacle which the Lord erected,
and not man.

3 For [d]every high priest is appointed to
offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore [e]*it
is* necessary that this One also have some-
thing to offer. 4 For if He were on earth,
He would not be a priest, since there are
priests who offer the gifts according to the
law; 5 who serve [f]the copy and [g]shadow of
the heavenly things, as Moses was divine-
ly instructed when he was about to make
the tabernacle. For He said, [h]*"See that you
make all things according to the pattern
shown you on the mountain."** 6 But now
[i]He has obtained a more excellent ministry,
inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a [j]better
covenant, which was established on better
promises.

A New Covenant

7 For if that [k]first *covenant* had been
faultless, then no place would have been
sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault
with them, He says: [l]*"Behold, the days are
coming, says the* LORD, *when I will make a
new covenant with the house of Israel and
with the house of Judah—* 9 *not according to
the covenant that I made with their fathers
in the day when I took them by the hand to
lead them out of the land of Egypt; because
they did not continue in My covenant, and
I disregarded them, says the* LORD. 10 *For
this is the covenant that I will make with
the house of Israel after those days, says
the* [m]LORD: *I will put My laws in their mind
and write them on their hearts; and* [n]*I will
be their God, and they shall be My people.*
11 [o]*None of them shall teach his neighbor,
and none his brother, saying, 'Know the*
[p]LORD,' *for all shall know Me, from the
least of them to the greatest of them.* 12 *For
I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,*
[q]*and their sins and their lawless deeds** *I
will remember no more."**

13 [r]In that He says, *"A new covenant,"*
He has made the first obsolete. Now what
is becoming obsolete and growing old is
ready to vanish away.

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* **8:5** Exodus 25:40 * **8:12** NU-Text omits *and their lawless deeds.* • Jeremiah 31:31–34

7:25 ***He is also able to save.*** Christ is able to save because He is fully God and fully human (2:18; 4:15). Since this verse speaks to Jesus' present intercession for us, the word *save* in this verse speaks of our sanctification, the continuing process by which we are freed from the power of sin. This continuing process of salvation will eventually be completed in our glorification, when we are saved from the presence of sin.

7:26–28 ***daily, as those high priests.*** The high priest offered an annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement for the atonement of the people's sins (9:7; 10:1), but the priests also offered sacrifices every day before the Lord (Ex. 29:36). In contrast, Jesus offered Himself once, a perfect, sinless sacrifice for the sins of all. Since Jesus is perfect, He did not have to offer sacrifices for His own sins.

8:2 ***sanctuary.*** This word refers to the heavenly reality represented by the Most Holy Place (9:2,8,24; 10:19; 13:11). The reality is the presence of God. Our High Priest serves there and desires to bring us there (10:19).

8:8 ***a new covenant.*** This covenant is the "better covenant" of verse 6. This covenant was made with Israel and Judah, yet the church enjoys the spiritual blessings of this covenant now. The Abrahamic covenant was made with Abraham and his physical descendants (Gen. 17:7). Yet the Abrahamic covenant also contained a spiritual promise (Gen. 12:3) in which the church participates (Rom. 11:11–27; Gal. 3:13–14). The new covenant in fact is a fulfillment of the spiritual redemption promise in the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants (Matt. 26:26–29; Luke 22:20).

8:10–12 ***after those days, says the LORD.*** There are four provisions of the new covenant: (1) God's law will be written on believers' minds and hearts. (2) Believers will have a relationship with God fulfilling the promise of Leviticus 26:12 (2 Cor. 6:16). (3) All will know God. No longer will Pharisees and scribes have to teach the intricacies of the law to the people. (4) God will forgive the sins of believers and remember them no more. The continual sacrifice of animals for the atonement of sin will cease.

8:13 ***obsolete and growing old.*** At the time the author of Hebrews wrote these words, the ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant were still being conducted in the temple in Jerusalem. In A.D. 70 the Roman general Titus destroyed the temple, fulfilling these words.

7:25 [p] Jude 24 [q] Rom. 8:34 **7:26** [r] Heb. 4:15 [s] Eph. 1:20 **7:27** [t] Lev. 9:7; 16:6 **8:1** [a] Col. 3:1 **8:2** [b] Heb. 9:8, 12 [c] Heb. 9:11, 24 **8:3** [d] Heb. 5:1; 8:4 [e] [Eph. 5:2] **8:5** [f] Heb. 9:23, 24 [g] Col. 2:17 [h] Ex. 25:40 **8:6** [i] [2 Cor. 3:6–8] [j] Heb. 7:22 **8:7** [k] Ex. 3:8; 19:5 **8:8** [l] Jer. 31:31–34 **8:10** [m] Jer. 31:33 [n] Zech. 8:8 **8:11** [o] Is. 54:13 [p] Jer. 31:34 **8:12** [q] Rom. 11:27 **8:13** [r] [2 Cor. 5:17]

The Earthly Sanctuary

9 Then indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and [a]the earthly sanctuary. 2For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part,* in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; 3[b]and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, 4which had the [c]golden censer and [d]the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* [e]the golden pot that had the manna, [f]Aaron's rod that budded, and [g]the tablets of the covenant; 5and [h]above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Limitations of the Earthly Service

6Now when these things had been thus prepared, [i]the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. 7But into the second part the high priest *went* alone [j]once a year, not without blood, which he offered for [k]himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance; 8the Holy Spirit indicating this, that [l]the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. 9It *was* symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered [m]which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience— 10*concerned* only with [n]foods and drinks, [o]various washings, [p]and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

The Heavenly Sanctuary

11But Christ came *as* High Priest of [q]the good things to come,* with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12Not [r]with the blood of goats and calves, but [s]with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place [t]once for all, [u]having obtained eternal redemption. 13For if [v]the blood of bulls and goats and [w]the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, [x]cleanse your conscience from [y]dead works [z]to serve the living God? 15And for this reason [a]He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that [b]those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

The Mediator's Death Necessary

16For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17For [c]a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. 18[d]Therefore not even the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood. 19For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, [e]he took the blood of calves and goats, [f]with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20saying, [g]*"This is the [h]blood of the covenant which God has commanded you."** 21Then likewise [i]he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. 22And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and [j]without shedding of blood there is no remission.

* **9:11** NU-Text reads *that have come.* * **9:20** Exodus 24:8

9:2–5 *a tabernacle was prepared.* These verses simply describe the furniture of the tabernacle. The tabernacle courtyard contained an altar for animal sacrifice and a laver for ceremonial washings. The tabernacle was divided into two rooms by a veil. The first part was the sanctuary or holy place, housing the lampstand, the table for the showbread, and the altar of incense. The second room was the Most Holy Place, containing the ark of the covenant, in which were stored the symbols of the Mosaic covenant.

9:7–8 *once a year.* In the provisions of the Mosaic covenant, access to God was limited. The fact that the high priest had such little access himself indicates the striking failure of the Mosaic covenant to bring believers into the presence of God.

9:9 *cannot make him who performed the service perfect.* The Mosaic covenant covered sins of ignorance (v. 7), but not premeditated sins or the sinful nature of all people (Ps. 51). In other words, the old system was lacking. It did not completely reconcile the people to God.

9:12 *with His own blood.* Christ obtained eternal redemption. His sacrifice never has to be repeated because it is perfect.

9:13 *ashes of a heifer.* These were mixed with water and were used to cleanse a person who had become ceremonially defiled by touching a corpse (Num. 19:11–13). The author of Hebrews points out that these ceremonies could purify only a person's exterior, not a person's heart.

9:14 *the eternal Spirit.* All three persons of the Trinity are involved in cleansing. The defilement is internal, not external (v. 13). Christ's death has the power to purify a person's mind and soul.

9:15 *redemption.* Christ paid the price to free us from our own sin. His death substitutes for our death, the penalty of our sins. Like the Israelites, believers receive an inheritance, but our inheritance is eternal (v. 14).

9:1 [a] Ex. 25:8 **9:3** [b] Ex. 26:31–35; 40:3 **9:4** [c] Lev. 16:12 [d] Ex. 25:10 [e] Ex. 16:33 [f] Num. 17:1–10 [g] Ex. 25:16; 34:29 **9:5** [h] Lev. 16:2 **9:6** [i] Num. 18:2–6; 28:3 **9:7** [j] Ex. 30:10 [k] Heb. 5:3 **9:8** [l] [John 14:6] **9:9** [m] Heb. 7:19 **9:10** [n] Col. 2:16 [o] Num. 19:7 [p] Eph. 2:15 **9:11** [q] Heb. 10:1 **9:12** [r] Heb. 10:4 [s] Eph. 1:7 [t] Zech. 3:9 [u] [Dan. 9:24] **9:13** [v] Lev. 16:14, 15 [w] Num. 19:2 **9:14** [x] 1 John 1:7 [y] Heb. 6:1 [z] Luke 1:74 **9:15** [a] Rom. 3:25 [b] Heb. 3:1 **9:17** [c] Gal. 3:15 **9:18** [d] Ex. 24:6 **9:19** [e] Ex. 24:5, 6 [f] Lev. 14:4, 7 **9:20** [g] [Matt. 26:28] [h] Ex. 24:3–8 **9:21** [i] Ex. 29:12, 36 **9:22** [j] Lev. 17:11

Greatness of Christ's Sacrifice

23 Therefore *it was* necessary that [k]the
copies of the things in the heavens should
be purified with these, but the heavenly
things themselves with better sacrifices
than these. 24 For [l]Christ has not entered
the holy places made with hands, *which*
are copies of [m]the true, but into heaven it-
self, now [n]to appear in the presence of God
for us; 25 not that He should offer Himself
often, as [o]the high priest enters the Most
Holy Place every year with blood of an-
other— 26 He then would have had to suffer
often since the foundation of the world; but
now, once at the end of the ages, He has
appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice
of Himself. 27 [p]And as it is appointed for
men to die once, [q]but after this the judg-
ment, 28 so [r]Christ was [s]offered once to bear
the sins [t]of many. To those who [u]eagerly
wait for Him He will appear a second time,
apart from sin, for salvation.

Animal Sacrifices Insufficient

10 For the law, having a [a]shadow of the
good things to come, *and* not the
very image of the things, [b]can never with
these same sacrifices, which they offer
continually year by year, make those who
approach perfect. 2 For then would they
not have ceased to be offered? For the wor-
shipers, once purified, would have had no
more consciousness of sins. 3 But in those
sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every
year. 4 For [c]*it is* not possible that the blood
of bulls and goats could take away sins.

Christ's Death Fulfills God's Will

5 Therefore, when He came into the
world, He said:

[d]*"Sacrifice and offering You did not*
desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.
6 *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for*
sin
You had no pleasure.
7 *Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—*
In the volume of the book it is written
of Me—
*To do Your will, O God.'"**

8 Previously saying, *"Sacrifice and offer-*
ing, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin
You did not desire, nor had pleasure in
them" (which are offered according to the
law), 9 then He said, *"Behold, I have come*
*to do Your will, O God."** He takes away
the first that He may establish the second.
10 [e]By that will we have been sanctified
[f]through the offering of the body of Jesus
Christ once *for all.*

Christ's Death Perfects the Sanctified

11 And every priest stands [g]ministering
daily and offering repeatedly the same
sacrifices, which can never take away sins.
12 [h]But this Man, after He had offered one
sacrifice for sins forever, sat down [i]at the
right hand of God, 13 from that time wait-
ing [j]till His enemies are made His footstool.
14 For by one offering He has perfected for-
ever those who are being sanctified.

15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to
us; for after He had said before,

16 [k]*"This is the covenant that I will make*
with them after those days, says the LORD:
I will put My laws into their hearts, and in
*their minds I will write them,"** 17 *then He*
adds, [l]*"Their sins and their lawless deeds*
*I will remember no more."** 18 Now where
there is remission of these, *there is* no lon-
ger an offering for sin.

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* **10:7** Psalm 40:6–8 * **10:9** NU-Text and M-Text omit *O God.* * **10:16** Jeremiah 31:33
* **10:17** Jeremiah 31:34

9:24 *Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands.* Christ's sacrifice was better than sacrifices made under the Mosaic covenant because Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary, which was a copy; instead, He entered the true sanctuary, which is in heaven—the very presence of God.

9:26 *but now, once.* Christ's sacrifice was better than the sacrifices made under the Mosaic covenant because He did not offer an annual sacrifice of animals but offered Himself once for all time.

10:1–4 *not the very image of the things.* The sacrifices of the Mosaic covenant prefigured Christ's ultimate sacrifice of Himself. Therefore, these imperfect sacrifices of mere animals could not completely purify the person who offered them. If they had been able to, these sacrifices would have ceased. Instead of thoroughly atoning for the sins of the people, the annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was a visible reminder of the people's sins.

10:5–7 *To do Your will.* The Old Testament prophets had warned the Israelites that sacrifices alone would not please God. He desired obedience as well (Ps. 51:16–17; Is. 1:13–17; Mark 12:33). This messianic psalm indicates that Jesus' obedience to God the Father was one of the reasons His sacrifice was better than the Old Testament sacrifices.

10:8–9 *He takes away the first that He may establish the second.* The author is explaining Psalm 40. The verb translated "takes away" means "abolishes." The imperfect sacrifices were abolished so that the perfect Sacrifice could impart true life.

10:11–12 *sat down.* Sitting indicates that His work of atonement is finished. His final words on the cross, "It is finished," declare this spiritual reality (John 19:30).

10:16–18 *I will remember no more.* This phrase does not mean to forget, but not to hold sin against us any longer.

9:23 [k] Heb. 8:5 **9:24** [l] Heb. 6:20 [m] Heb. 8:2 [n] Rom. 8:34 **9:25** [o] Heb. 9:7 **9:27** [p] Gen. 3:19 [q] [2 Cor. 5:10] **9:28** [r] Rom. 6:10 [s] 1 Pet. 2:24 [t] Matt. 26:28 [u] Titus 2:13 **10:1** [a] Heb. 8:5 [b] Heb. 7:19; 9:9 **10:4** [c] Mic. 6:6, 7 **10:5** [d] Ps. 40:6–8 **10:10** [e] John 17:19 [f] [Heb. 9:12] **10:11** [g] Num. 28:3 **10:12** [h] Col. 3:1 [i] Ps. 110:1 **10:13** [j] Ps. 110:1 **10:16** [k] Jer. 31:33, 34 **10:17** [l] Jer. 31:34

Hold Fast Your Confession

19 Therefore, brethren, having [m]boldness
to enter [n]the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,
20 by a new and [o]living way which He con-
secrated for us, through the veil, that is, His
flesh, 21 and *having* a High Priest over the
house of God, 22 let us [p]draw near with a true
heart [q]in full assurance of faith, having our
hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed with pure water.
23 Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope
without wavering, for [r]He who promised *is*
faithful. 24 And let us consider one anoth-
er in order to stir up love and good works,
25 [s]not forsaking the assembling of our-
selves together, as *is* the manner of some,
but exhorting *one another,* and [t]so much
the more as you see [u]the Day approaching.

The Just Live by Faith

26 For [v]if we sin willfully [w]after we have
received the knowledge of the truth, there
[x]no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but
a certain fearful expectation of judgment,
and [y]fiery indignation which will devour
the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected
Moses' law dies without mercy on *the testi-
mony of* two or three [z]witnesses. 29 [a]Of how
much worse punishment, do you suppose,
will he be thought worthy who has tram-
pled the Son of God underfoot, [b]counted
the blood of the covenant by which he was
sanctified a common thing, [c]and insulted
the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who
said, [d]*"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,"** says the Lord.* And again, [e]*"The LORD will judge His people."** 31 [f]It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But [g]recall the former days in which,
after you were illuminated, you endured
a great struggle with sufferings: 33 part-
ly while you were made [h]a spectacle
both by reproaches and tribulations, and
partly while [i]you became companions of
those who were so treated; 34 for you had
compassion on me* [j]in my chains, and
[k]joyfully accepted the plundering of your
goods, knowing that [l]you have a better
and an enduring possession for yourselves
in heaven.* 35 Therefore do not cast away
your confidence, [m]which has great reward.
36 [n]For you have need of endurance, so that
after you have done the will of God, [o]you
may receive the promise:

37 *"For [p]yet a little while,*
And [q]He who is coming will come*
and will not tarry.
38 *Now [r]the* just shall live by faith;*
But if anyone draws back,
*My soul has no pleasure in him."**

39 But we are not of those [s]who draw back to
perdition, but of those who [t]believe to the
saving of the soul.

By Faith We Understand

11 Now faith is the substance of things
hoped for, the evidence [a]of things not
seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a *good*
testimony.

* **10:30** Deuteronomy 32:35 • NU-Text omits *says the Lord.* • Deuteronomy 32:36 * **10:34** NU-Text reads *the prisoners* instead of *me in my chains.* • NU-Text omits *in heaven.* * **10:37** Or *that which* * **10:38** NU-Text reads *My just one.* • Habakkuk 2:3, 4

10:19 *Therefore.* The author has spent five chapters explaining the superiority of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood and the superiority of the new covenant to the Mosaic covenant. Unlike the Israelites, who approached God at Mount Sinai with fear and trembling (Ex. 20:18–21), believers can approach God with boldness (3:6; 4:16; 10:35) because we possess Christ's righteousness and not our own.

10:20 *His flesh.* The Old Testament high priest passed through a veil to get to the Most Holy Place. Now, believers enter God's presence through Christ's flesh, meaning His sacrificial death.

10:22 *our hearts sprinkled . . . our bodies washed.* Our consciences can be cleansed through the blood of Christ (9:14). Just as the high priest washed before entering the Most Holy Place (Lev. 16:3–4), so believers are cleansed before they come before the Holy One.

10:24–25 *stir up love and good works.* The Greek word translated "stir up" means "convulse." In this context the word speaks forcefully of the tremendous impact believers can have on each other. That is why the author exhorts the Hebrews to gather together. Evidently, some believers had stopped attending the worship services of the church, perhaps because they feared persecution.

10:26 *sin willfully.* The reference here is not to an occasional act of sin (which can be confessed and forgiven) but to a conscious rejection of God. The Old Testament speaks in Numbers 15:30–31 of committing willful sin. A person who sinned presumptuously was to be cut off from the people. To sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth is apostasy. If a Christian rejects God's provision for his or her salvation, there is no other remedy for sins, since forgiveness for sins can only be found in Christ's perfect sacrifice.

10:29 *Spirit of grace.* This is a reference to the Holy Spirit, the agent of God's gracious gift of salvation. A believer who commits these offenses will be judged with a punishment worse than physical death.

10:35 *do not cast away your confidence.* For the recipients of Hebrews to return to the safety of Judaism would mean a loss of eternal reward at the judgment seat of Christ.

11:1 *Now faith is.* This verse is not a definition of faith, but a description of what faith does. ***substance.*** This means "essence" or "reality." Faith treats things hoped

10:19 [m] [Eph. 2:18] [n] Heb. 9:8, 12 **10:20** [o] John 14:6 **10:22** [p] Heb. 7:19; 10:1 [q] Eph. 3:12 **10:23** [r] 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13 **10:25** [s] Acts 2:42 [t] Rom. 13:11 [u] Phil. 4:5 **10:26** [v] Num. 15:30 [w] 2 Pet. 2:20 [x] Heb. 6:6 **10:27** [y] Zeph. 1:18 **10:28** [z] Deut. 17:2–6; 19:15 **10:29** [a] [Heb. 2:3] [b] 1 Cor. 11:29 [c] [Matt. 12:31] **10:30** [d] Deut. 32:35 [e] Deut. 32:36 **10:31** [f] [Luke 12:5] **10:32** [g] Gal. 3:4 **10:33** [h] 1 Cor. 4:9 [i] Phil. 1:7 **10:34** [j] 2 Tim. 1:16 [k] Matt. 5:12 [l] Matt. 6:20 **10:35** [m] Matt. 5:12 **10:36** [n] Luke 21:19 [o] [Col. 3:24] **10:37** [p] Luke 18:8 [q] Hab. 2:3, 4 **10:38** [r] Rom. 1:17 **10:39** [s] 2 Pet. 2:20 [t] Acts 16:31 **11:1** [a] Rom. 8:24

3By faith we understand that [b]the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Faith at the Dawn of History

4By faith [c]Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still [d]speaks.

5By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, [e]*"and was not found, because God had taken him";** for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

7By faith [f]Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, [g]prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of [h]the righteousness which is according to faith.

Faithful Abraham

8By faith [i]Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, [j]dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, [k]the heirs with him of the same promise; 10for he waited for [l]the city which has foundations, [m]whose builder and maker *is* God.

11By faith [n]Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and [o]she bore a child* when she was past the age, because she judged Him [p]faithful who had promised. 12Therefore from one man, and him as good as [q]dead, were born *as many* as the [r]stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

The Heavenly Hope

13These all died in faith, [s]not having received the [t]promises, but [u]having seen them afar off were assured of them,* embraced *them* and [v]confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14For those who say such things [w]declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15And truly if they had called to mind [x]that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed [y]to be called their God, for He has [z]prepared a city for them.

The Faith of the Patriarchs

17By faith Abraham, [a]when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, 18of whom it was said, [b]*"In Isaac your seed shall be called,"** 19concluding that God [c]*was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

20By faith [d]Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21By faith Jacob, when he was dying, [e]blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

22By faith [f]Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

The Faith of Moses

23By faith [g]Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's [h]command.

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* **11:5** Genesis 5:24 * **11:11** NU-Text omits *she bore a child.* * **11:13** NU-Text and M-Text omit *were assured of them.* * **11:18** Genesis 21:12

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for as reality. ***evidence.*** This means "proof." Faith itself proves that what is unseen is real, such as the believer's rewards at the return of Christ (2 Cor. 4:18).

11:4 ***a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.*** Evidently, Cain offered his sacrifice without faith (Gen. 4). ***still speaks.*** Abel still speaks to us because his righteous deeds have been recorded in Scripture.

11:6 ***comes.*** This word is used repeatedly in Hebrews to refer to the privilege of drawing near to God (4:16; 7:25; 10:1,22). Here, the author of Hebrews explains that faith is mandatory for those who approach Him. ***rewarder.*** God rewards not only those who seek Him, but also those who do good works in the Holy Spirit's power (Rev. 22:12).

11:8 ***not knowing where he was going.*** Abraham placed his trust in God. Faith means obediently stepping into the unknown (v. 1). Abraham did this, and God considered him righteous because of it (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:1–12).

11:15 ***opportunity to return.*** The patriarchs and Sarah did not return to Ur, even though they could have if they had wanted to. The recipients of Hebrews were to follow the patriarchs' example and refuse to return to the religion of their ancestors, a religious system that no longer provided atonement for sin (8:7–13).

11:17–19 ***Abraham . . . tested.*** Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac from the dead (Gen. 22:5), if necessary. The incident is figurative of what God has done for us. Isaac was as good as dead, but God provided a ram to sacrifice in his place (Gen. 22:9–14).

11:3 [b] Ps. 33:6 **11:4** [c] Gen. 4:3–5 [d] Heb. 12:24
11:5 [e] Gen. 5:21–24 **11:7** [f] Gen. 6:13–22 [g] 1 Pet. 3:20
[h] Rom. 3:22 **11:8** [i] Gen. 12:1–4 **11:9** [j] Gen. 12:8; 13:3, 18; 18:1, 9 [k] Heb. 6:17 **11:10** [l] [Heb. 12:22; 13:14] [m] [Rev. 21:10] **11:11** [n] Gen. 17:19; 18:11–14; 21:1, 2 [o] Luke 1:36
[p] Heb. 10:23 **11:12** [q] Rom. 4:19 [r] Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 32:12
11:13 [s] Heb. 11:39 [t] Gen. 12:7 [u] John 8:56 [v] Ps. 39:12
11:14 [w] Heb. 13:14 **11:15** [x] Gen. 11:31 **11:16** [y] Ex. 3:6, 15; 4:5 [z] [Rev. 21:2] **11:17** [a] James 2:21 **11:18** [b] Gen. 21:12 **11:19** [c] Rom. 4:17 **11:20** [d] Gen. 27:26–40
11:21 [e] Gen. 48:1, 5, 16, 20 **11:22** [f] Gen. 50:24, 25
11:23 [g] Ex. 2:1–3 [h] Ex. 1:16, 22

24By faith [i]Moses, when he became of
age, refused to be called the son of Pha-
raoh's daughter, 25choosing rather to suf-
fer affliction with the people of God than
to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26es-
teeming [j]the reproach of Christ greater
riches than the treasures in* Egypt; for he
looked to the [k]reward.
27By faith [l]he forsook Egypt, not fearing
the wrath of the king; for he endured as
seeing Him who is invisible. 28By faith [m]he
kept the Passover and the sprinkling of
blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn
should touch them.
29By faith [n]they passed through the Red
Sea as by dry *land, whereas* the Egyptians,
attempting to do so, were drowned.

By Faith They Overcame

30By faith [o]the walls of Jericho fell down
after they were encircled for seven days.
31By faith [p]the harlot Rahab did not perish
with those who did not believe, when [q]she
had received the spies with peace.
32And what more shall I say? For the
time would fail me to tell of [r]Gideon and
[s]Barak and [t]Samson and [u]Jephthah, also
of [v]David and [w]Samuel and the prophets:
33who through faith subdued kingdoms,
worked righteousness, obtained promises,
[x]stopped the mouths of lions, 34[y]quenched
the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the
sword, out of weakness were made strong,
became valiant in battle, turned to flight
the armies of the aliens. 35[z]Women re-
ceived their dead raised to life again.
Others were [a]tortured, not accepting
deliverance, that they might obtain a
better resurrection. 36Still others had tri-
al of mockings and scourgings, yes, and
[b]of chains and imprisonment. 37[c]They
were stoned, they were sawn in two, were
tempted,* were slain with the sword.
[d]They wandered about [e]in sheepskins
and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted,
tormented— 38of whom the world was not
worthy. They wandered in deserts and
mountains, [f]*in* dens and caves of the earth.
39And all these, [g]having obtained a good
testimony through faith, did not receive
the promise, 40God having provided some-
thing better for us, that they should not be
[h]made perfect apart from us.

The Race of Faith

12 Therefore we also, since we are sur-
rounded by so great a cloud of wit-
nesses, [a]let us lay aside every weight, and
the sin which so easily ensnares *us,* and [b]let
us run [c]with endurance the race that is set
before us, 2looking unto Jesus, the author
and finisher of *our* faith, [d]who for the joy
that was set before Him [e]endured the cross,
despising the shame, and [f]has sat down at
the right hand of the throne of God.

The Discipline of God

3[g]For consider Him who endured such
hostility from sinners against Himself,
[h]lest you become weary and discouraged
in your souls. 4[i]You have not yet resisted
to bloodshed, striving against sin. 5And
you have forgotten the exhortation which
speaks to you as to sons:

[j]*"My son, do not despise the chastening*
of the LORD,
Nor be discouraged when you are
rebuked by Him;
6 *For* [k]*whom the* LORD *loves He*
chastens,
And scourges every son whom He
*receives."**

* **11:26** NU-Text and M-Text read *of.* * **11:37** NU-Text omits *were tempted.* * **12:6** Proverbs 3:11, 12

11:26 *the reproach of Christ.* This phrase refers to the earthly disgrace Christ received. Like Christ, Moses chose to suffer the indignities associated with God's people, instead of embracing the worldly pleasures of Pharaoh's court.
11:28 *sprinkling of blood.* God told Moses to sprinkle blood on the doorposts. Moses believed God's word and heeded His warning, and, as a result, the firstborn of every Israelite family was saved (Ex. 12:1–13).
11:35 *Women received their dead.* This is probably a reference to the raising of the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kin. 17:17–24) and of the Shunammite woman (2 Kin. 4:32–37). But the author of Hebrews also points out that not all who had faith won victories, at least not in the same hour. ***tortured.*** This is usually understood to be an allusion to the heroic martyrs of Maccabean times, who were well known.
11:40 *made perfect.* This phrase means "made complete." This completion, the realization of all of God's promises in Christ's coming kingdom, awaits all believers.
12:1 *cloud of witnesses.* This refers to the people of faith mentioned in chapter 11. They are not actually spectators watching us; they are witnesses testifying to the truth of the faith (11:2,4–6).
12:2 *finisher.* Christ has done everything necessary for us to endure in our faith. He is our example and model. ***the joy that was set before Him.*** His attention was not on the agonies of the cross, but on the crown, not on the suffering, but on the reward.
12:3 *consider.* This thought involves the idea of comparison, as an accountant would compare the various columns of a balance sheet. Believers should compare their sufferings to the torture Christ endured on their behalf (v. 4).

11:24 [i] Ex. 2:11–15 **11:26** [j] Heb. 13:13 [k] Rom. 8:18
11:27 [l] Ex. 10:28 **11:28** [m] Ex. 12:21 **11:29** [n] Ex. 14:22–29 **11:30** [o] Josh. 6:20 **11:31** [p] Josh. 2:9; 6:23 [q] Josh. 2:1 **11:32** [r] Judg. 6:11; 7:1–25 [s] Judg. 4:6–24 [t] Judg. 13:24—16:31 [u] Judg. 11:1–29; 12:1–7 [v] 1 Sam. 16; 17 [w] 1 Sam. 7:9–14 **11:33** [x] Dan. 6:22 **11:34** [y] Dan. 3:23–28
11:35 [z] 1 Kin. 17:22 [a] Acts 22:25 **11:36** [b] Gen. 39:20
11:37 [c] 1 Kin. 21:13 [d] 2 Kin. 1:8 [e] Zech. 13:4 **11:38** [f] 1 Kin. 18:4, 13; 19:9 **11:39** [g] Heb. 11:2, 13 **11:40** [h] Heb. 5:9
12:1 [a] Col. 3:8 [b] 1 Cor. 9:24 [c] Rom. 12:12 **12:2** [d] Luke 24:26 [e] Phil. 2:8 [f] Ps. 110:1 **12:3** [g] Matt. 10:24 [h] Gal. 6:9
12:4 [i] [1 Cor. 10:13] **12:5** [j] Prov. 3:11, 12 **12:6** [k] Rev. 3:19

7 [l]If* you endure chastening, God deals
with you as with sons; for what [m]son is
there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But
if you are without chastening, [n]of which
all have become partakers, then you are
illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore,
we have had human fathers who cor-
rected *us,* and we paid *them* respect. Shall we
not much more readily be in subjection to
[o]the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they in-
deed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed
best to them, but He for *our* profit, [p]that *we*
may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no
chastening seems to be joyful for the pres-
ent, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it
yields [q]the peaceable fruit of righteousness
to those who have been trained by it.

Renew Your Spiritual Vitality

12 Therefore [r]strengthen the hands
which hang down, and the feeble knees,
13 and make straight paths for your feet, so
that what is lame may not be dislocated,
but rather be healed.

14 [s]Pursue peace with all *people,* and ho-
liness, [t]without which no one will see the
Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone [u]fall
short of the grace of God; lest any [v]root of
bitterness springing up cause trouble, and
by this many become defiled; 16 lest there
be any [w]fornicator or profane person like
Esau, [x]who for one morsel of food sold his
birthright. 17 For you know that afterward,
when he wanted to inherit the blessing,
he was [y]rejected, for he found no place for
repentance, though he sought it diligently
with tears.

The Glorious Company

18 For you have not come to [z]the moun-
tain that* may be touched and that burned
with fire, and to blackness and darkness*
and tempest, 19 and the sound of a trumpet
and the voice of words, so that those who
heard *it* [a]begged that the word should not
be spoken to them anymore. 20 (For they
could not endure what was commanded:
[b]*"And if so much as a beast touches the
mountain, it shall be stoned* or shot with
an arrow."* 21 And so terrifying was the
sight *that* Moses said, [c]*"I am exceedingly
afraid* and trembling."*)

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and
to the city of the living God, the heavenly
Jerusalem, to an innumerable company
of angels, 23 to the general assembly and
church of [d]the firstborn [e]*who are* regis-
tered in heaven, to God [f]the Judge of all, to
the spirits of just men [g]made perfect, 24 to
Jesus [h]the Mediator of the new covenant,
and to [i]the blood of sprinkling that speaks
better things [j]than *that of* Abel.

Hear the Heavenly Voice

25 See that you do not refuse Him who
speaks. For [k]if they did not escape who re-
fused Him who spoke on earth, much more
shall we not escape if we turn away from
Him who *speaks* from heaven, 26 whose
voice then shook the earth; but now He
has promised, saying, [l]*"Yet once more I
shake* not only the earth, but also heav-
en."* 27 Now this, *"Yet once more,"* indi-
cates the [m]removal of those things that are
being shaken, as of things that are made,
that the things which cannot be shaken
may remain.

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a
kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us
have grace, by which we may* [n]serve God
acceptably with reverence and godly fear.
29 For [o]our God *is* a consuming fire.

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* **12:7** NU-Text and M-Text read *It is for discipline that you endure; God . . .* * **12:18** NU-Text reads *to that which.* • NU-Text reads *gloom.* * **12:20** NU-Text and M-Text omit the rest of this verse. • Exodus 19:12, 13 * **12:21** Deuteronomy 9:19 * **12:26** NU-Text reads *will shake.* • Haggai 2:6 * **12:28** M-Text omits *may.*

12:8 ***then you are illegitimate and not sons.*** In Roman society an illegitimate son was one who had no inheritance rights.

12:11 ***the peaceable fruit of righteousness.*** This phrase suggests that the result of God's discipline is peace and righteousness.

12:18–24 ***For you have not come to the mountain.*** In these verses, the author of Hebrews contrasts the Mosaic covenant with the new covenant by contrasting two mountains: Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. At Mount Sinai, the Israelites received the law from God with fear and trembling, for God displayed at that time His awesome power (Ex. 19:10—20:26). In contrast, Christian believers have come to a heavenly Jerusalem on Mount Zion through Jesus' blood. This mountain is a celebration of the Holy One, attended by angels, believers, and righteous people. The author makes the contrast between the two covenants vivid and then once again exhorts his readers not to reject Christ's offer of salvation (vv. 25–29).

12:23 ***just men made perfect.*** This phrase refers to all believers who have died. They are just because they have been justified or made righteous and perfect because they are now "complete" in heaven.

12:25 ***Him who speaks from heaven.*** This is a reference to Christ, who spoke on earth and is now in heaven.

12:29 ***our God is a consuming fire.*** The author concludes his lengthy warning to those who are tempted to abandon the faith (2:1—12:29) with a vivid description of God's judgment (Deut. 4:24). The Lord will judge His people (10:27,30).

12:7 [l] Deut. 8:5 [m] Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 23:13 **12:8** [n] 1 Pet. 5:9 **12:9** [o] [Job 12:10] **12:10** [p] Lev. 11:44 **12:11** [q] James 3:17, 18 **12:12** [r] Is. 35:3 **12:14** [s] Ps. 34:14 [t] Matt. 5:8 **12:15** [u] Heb. 4:1 [v] Deut. 29:18 **12:16** [w] [1 Cor. 6:13–18] [x] Gen. 25:33 **12:17** [y] Gen. 27:30–40 **12:18** [z] Deut. 4:11; 5:22 **12:19** [a] Ex. 20:18–26 **12:20** [b] Ex. 19:12, 13 **12:21** [c] Deut. 9:19 **12:23** [d] [James 1:18] [e] Luke 10:20 [f] Ps. 50:6; 94:2 [g] [Phil. 3:12] **12:24** [h] Heb. 8:6; 9:15 [i] Ex. 24:8 [j] Gen. 4:10 **12:25** [k] Heb. 2:2, 3 **12:26** [l] Hag. 2:6 **12:27** [m] [Is. 34:4; 54:10; 65:17] **12:28** [n] Heb. 13:15, 21 **12:29** [o] Ex. 24:17

Concluding Moral Directions

13 Let [a]brotherly love continue. [2b]Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* [c]some have unwittingly entertained angels. [3d]Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.

[4e]Marriage *is* honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; [f]but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

[5]*Let your* conduct *be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, [g]*"I will never leave you nor forsake you."** [6]So we may boldly say:

[h]*"The LORD is my helper;*
I will not fear.
*What can man do to me?"**

Concluding Religious Directions

[7]Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct. [8]Jesus Christ *is* [i]the same yesterday, today, and forever. [9]Do not be carried about* with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

[10]We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. [11]For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. [12]Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. [13]Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing [j]His reproach. [14]For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. [15k]Therefore by Him let us continually offer [l]the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, [m]the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. [16n]But do not forget to do good and to share, for [o]with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

[17p]Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for [q]they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Prayer Requested

[18r]Pray for us; for we are confident that we have [s]a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. [19]But I especially urge *you* to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

* **13:5** Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5
* **13:6** Psalm 118:6 * **13:9** NU-Text and M-Text read *away.*

13:2 ***entertained angels.*** This is a reference to men in the Old Testament who encounter heavenly beings. These men included Abraham (Gen. 18), Lot (Gen. 19), and Gideon (Judg. 6). The idea is that, when you practice hospitality, you may be helping a messenger of God without realizing it.

13:5 ***I will never leave you nor forsake you.*** This quotation is one of the emphatic statements in the New Testament. In Greek it contains two double negatives, similar to saying in English, "I will never, ever, ever forsake you." Jesus uses the same technique to express the certainty of eternal life for believers (John 10:28).

13:9 ***strange doctrines.*** This implies ideas foreign to the gospel message. Many of the ideas which the author was confronting were Jewish in origin—pertaining to ritual observances, sacrificial feasts, and various laws identifying what was clean and unclean.

13:11 ***burned outside the camp.*** The believer has a sacrifice, Jesus Christ. He atoned for the sins of humanity with His death on the cross. But, unlike the high priests from the Old Testament, believers receive their sustenance from Christ in a symbolic way, by believing in Him (John 6:41–58).

13:15–16 ***sacrifice of praise.*** Although the Old Testament sacrifices are now obsolete (8:13), believers are to offer spiritual sacrifices which include their praise, their possessions, and even their lives (Rom. 12:1–2).

13:15 **Worship—**Since worship encompasses thought, feeling, and deed, there are many expressions of it. Worship especially includes praise and thanksgiving which may be expressed privately or publicly, whether by grateful declarations (Heb. 13:15) or by joyful singing (Ps. 100:2; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Portions of early Christian hymns of worship have been preserved in the New Testament (Phil. 2:5–11; 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:11–13). One very important expression of worship for the church is remembering the death of Christ through the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:26). The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ Himself (Matt. 26:26–28) and judged by Paul to be taken very seriously (1 Cor. 11:28–32). Since worship means giving something to God, the cheerful giving of money to God's work is certainly an act of worship (2 Cor. 9:7). The exercise of one of the spiritual gifts in ministry to the body of Christ constitutes worship as service (1 Cor. 12) as does faithfully occupying a church office (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9). In fact, presenting ourselves (mind and body) to God to serve in any context is described as an act of worship in Romans 12:1. In this manner our whole lives become acts of worship.

13:1 [a] Rom. 12:10 **13:2** [b] Matt. 25:35 [c] Gen. 18:1–22; 19:1 **13:3** [d] Matt. 25:36 **13:4** [e] Prov. 5:18, 19 [f] 1 Cor. 6:9 **13:5** [g] Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5 **13:6** [h] Ps. 27:1; 118:6 **13:8** [i] Heb. 1:12 **13:13** [j] 1 Pet. 4:14 **13:15** [k] Eph. 5:20 [l] Lev. 7:12 [m] Hos. 14:2 **13:16** [n] Rom. 12:13 [o] Phil. 4:18 **13:17** [p] Phil. 2:29 [q] Ezek. 3:17 **13:18** [r] Eph. 6:19 [s] Acts 23:1

Benediction, Final Exhortation, Farewell

20 Now may [t]the God of peace [u]who
brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead,
[v]that great Shepherd of the sheep, [w]through
the blood of the everlasting covenant,
21 make you complete in every good work to
do His will, [x]working in you* what is well
pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ,
to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

22 And I appeal to you, brethren, bear
with the word of exhortation, for I have
written to you in few words. 23 Know that
our brother Timothy has been set free, with
whom I shall see you if he comes shortly.
24 Greet all those who rule over you, and
all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.
25 Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

* **13:21** NU-Text and M-Text read *us*.

13:20 ***great Shepherd of the sheep.*** Having laid down His life for them (John 10:15) and now continuing to make intercession for them (7:25), this is another description of Jesus' ministry.

13:22 ***word of exhortation.*** This phrase refers to the whole epistle to the Hebrews. It is an exhortation not to depart from the living God (3:12), but to go on to maturity (6:1) and endure in the faith to the end (3:6,14).

13:24 ***Those from Italy.*** This phrase may refer to people living in Italy, or else to people from there who were now living elsewhere. Because of its ambiguity, this phrase does not reveal the location of the author or of the recipients.

13:20 [t] Rom. 5:1, 2, 10; 15:33 [u] Rom. 4:24 [v] 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4 [w] Zech. 9:11 **13:21** [x] Phil. 2:13

THE EPISTLE OF
JAMES

▶ **AUTHOR:** Four men are named James in the New Testament, one of which is the Lord's brother (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19). Tradition points to this prominent figure as the author of the epistle, and this best fits the evidence of Scripture. The brevity and limited doctrinal emphasis of James kept it from wide circulation, and by the time it became known in the church as a whole, there was uncertainty about the identity of the James in 1:1. Growing recognition that it was written by the Lord's brother led to its acceptance as a canonical book.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 46–49 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** James 1:19–22

▶ **THEME:** James is for the practical person. While most of Paul's epistles have a theological and practical section, there isn't much theoretical or systematic theology in this book. The subject matters covered in James are the issues we face daily if not hourly. How do we respond to trials and temptation? What are we doing with our money? Do we keep our tongues under control? Are we acting on our faith? What are we doing with our prayer lives? The main point of all these questions James raises is that saving faith needs to result in changed behavior.

Greeting to the Twelve Tribes

1 James, [a]a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:

Greetings.

Profiting from Trials

[2]My brethren, [b]count it all joy [c]when you fall into various trials, [3][d]knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. [4]But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. [5][e]If any of you lacks wisdom, [f]let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and [g]it will be given to him. [6][h]But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. [7]For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; [8]*he is* [i]a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

The Perspective of Rich and Poor

[9]Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, [10]but the rich in his humiliation, because [j]as a flower of the field he will pass away. [11]For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

Loving God Under Trials

[12][k]Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive [l]the crown of life [m]which the

1:1 ***To the twelve tribes.*** This salutation probably means the letter is for Jewish Christians living outside of Palestine. The letter was not intended for one specific church but was to be passed around among various local assemblies.

1:2 ***trials.*** These are outward circumstances—conflicts, sufferings, and troubles—encountered by all believers. Trials are not pleasant and may be extremely grievous, but believers are to consider them as opportunities for rejoicing. Troubles and difficulties are a tool which refines and purifies our faith, producing patience and endurance.

1:3 ***testing of your faith.*** The word that is translated into this phrase occurs only here and in 1 Peter 1:7. The term was used for coins that were genuine and not debased. The aim of testing is not to destroy or afflict, but to purge and refine. "Patience" here transcends the idea of bearing affliction; it includes the idea of standing fast under pressure, with a staying power that turns adversities into opportunities.

1:5 ***wisdom.*** The starting point for wisdom is a genuine reverence for the Almighty (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10) and a steadfast confidence that God controls all circumstances, guiding them to His good purposes (Rom. 8:28).

1:8 ***double-minded.*** This person is literally one with "two souls." If one part of a person is set on God and the other is set on this world (Matt. 6:24), there will be constant conflict within.

1:12 ***will receive the crown of life.*** The Bible describes the believer's reward (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12)

1:1 [a] Acts 12:17 **1:2** [b] Acts 5:41 [c] 1 Pet. 1:6 **1:3** [d] Rom. 5:3–5 **1:5** [e] 1 Kin. 3:9 [f] Matt. 7:7 [g] Jer. 29:12 **1:6** [h] [Mark 11:23, 24] **1:8** [i] James 4:8 **1:10** [j] Job 14:2 **1:12** [k] James 5:11 [l] [1 Cor. 9:25] [m] Matt. 10:22

Lord has promised to those who love Him.
13Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am
tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15Then, [n]when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, [o]brings forth death.

16Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17[p]Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, [q]with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18[r]Of His own will He brought us forth by the [s]word of truth, [t]that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.

Qualities Needed in Trials

19So then,* my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, [u]slow to speak, [v]slow to wrath; 20for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Doers—Not Hearers Only

21Therefore [w]lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, [x]which is able to save your souls.

22But [y]be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23For [z]if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25But [a]he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, [b]this one will be blessed in what he does.

26If anyone among you* thinks he is religious, and [c]does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. 27[d]Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: [e]to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, [f]*and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Beware of Personal Favoritism

2 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [a]*the Lord* of glory, with [b]partiality. 2For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, 3and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," 4have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

5Listen, my beloved brethren: [c]Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* [d]rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom [e]which He promised to those who love Him? 6But [f]you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you [g]and drag you into the courts? 7Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are [h]called?

8If you really fulfill *the* royal law according to the Scripture, [i]*"You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"** you do well; 9but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as [j]transgressors. 10For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet [k]stumble in one *point*, [l]he is guilty

* **1:19** NU-Text reads *Know this* or *This you know.*
* **1:26** NU-Text omits *among you.* * **2:8** Leviticus 19:18

under various vivid images, such as precious metals (1 Cor. 3:8–14), garments (Rev. 3:5,18; 19:7–8), and crowns (1 Cor. 9:25; Rev. 2:10; 3:11).

1:13 ***nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*** Enticement to sin does not come from God. God will never deliberately lead a person to commit sin because that would not only go against His nature, but it would also be opposed to His purpose of molding His creation into His holy image. Yet, God does sometimes place His people in adverse circumstances for the purpose of building godly character (Gen. 22:1,12).

1:19 ***swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*** These three exhortations reveal the outline of this letter (1:21—2:26 for "swift to hear"; 3:1–18 for "slow to speak"; 4:1—5:18 for "slow to wrath").

1:21 ***receive with meekness the implanted word.*** The believer should have a teachable spirit—without resisting, disputing, or questioning. Receiving God's Word this way will save the believer's soul.

1:22 ***be doers of the word, and not hearers only.*** Believers who hear the Word of God (v. 19) must receive it with a teachable spirit (v. 21), applying it to their daily lives. To hear and not obey is to be deceived.

1:25 ***the perfect law of liberty.*** Loving God and loving one's neighbor sum up the law (Rom. 13:8–10). But it is Christ's love (Eph. 3:17–19) which frees us from our sins to truly love others (John 8:36–38; Gal. 5:13).

1:27 ***orphans and widows.*** These people were among the most unprotected and needy classes in ancient societies (Ezek. 22:7). Pure religion does not merely give material goods for the relief of the distressed; it also oversees their care (Acts 6:1–7).

2:5 ***heirs of the kingdom.*** This inheritance means more than entering the kingdom; it also involves ruling with Christ (1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:12).

2:9 ***if you show partiality, you commit sin.*** James alludes to Leviticus 19:15, which prohibits favoritism to either the poor or the rich.

2:10 ***he is guilty of all.*** God does not allow selective

1:15 [n] Job 15:35 [o] [Rom. 5:12; 6:23] **1:17** [p] John 3:27 [q] Num. 23:19 **1:18** [r] John 1:13 [s] [1 Pet. 1:3, 23] [t] [Eph. 1:12, 13] **1:19** [u] Prov. 10:19; 17:27 [v] Prov. 14:17; 16:32 **1:21** [w] Col. 3:8 [x] Acts 13:26 **1:22** [y] Matt. 7:21–28 **1:23** [z] Luke 6:47 **1:25** [a] James 2:12 [b] John 13:17 **1:26** [c] Ps. 34:13 **1:27** [d] Matt. 25:34–36 [e] Is. 1:17 [f] [Rom. 12:2] **2:1** [a] 1 Cor. 2:8 [b] Lev. 19:15 **2:5** [c] 1 Cor. 1:27 [d] Luke 12:21 [e] Ex. 20:6 **2:6** [f] 1 Cor. 11:22 [g] Acts 13:50 **2:7** [h] 1 Pet. 4:16 **2:8** [i] Lev. 19:18 **2:9** [j] Deut. 1:17 **2:10** [k] Gal. 3:10 [l] Deut. 27:26

of all. 11For He who said, [m]*"Do not commit adultery,"** also said, [n]*"Do not murder."** Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12So speak and so do as those who will be judged by [o]the law of liberty. 13For [p]judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown [q]no [r]mercy. [s]Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith Without Works Is Dead

14[t]What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15[u]If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16and [v]one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? 17Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

18But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." [w]Show me your faith without your* works, [x]and I will show you my faith by my* works. 19You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! 20But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?* 21Was not Abraham our father justified by works [y]when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22Do you see [z]that faith was working together with his works, and by [a]works faith was made perfect? 23And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, [b]*"Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."** And he was called [c]the friend of God. 24You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25Likewise, [d]was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way?

26For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

The Untamable Tongue

3 My brethren, [a]let not many of you become teachers, [b]knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. 2For [c]we all stumble in many things. [d]If anyone does not stumble in word, [e]he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 3Indeed,* [f]we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. 4Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. 5Even so [g]the tongue is a little member and [h]boasts great things.

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6And [i]the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it [j]defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, [k]full of deadly poison. 9With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made [l]in the similitude of God. 10Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

* **2:11** Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18 • Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17 * **2:18** NU-Text omits *your.* • NU-Text omits *my.* * **2:20** NU-Text reads *useless.* * **2:23** Genesis 15:6 * **3:3** NU-Text reads *Now if.*

obedience. We cannot choose to obey the parts of the law that are to our own liking and disregard the rest. Some of the Pharisees were guilty of this. They carefully observed some of the requirements of the law, such as keeping the Sabbath, and ignored others, such as honoring their parents (Matt. 15:1–7). Sin is a violation of the perfect righteousness of God, who is the Lawgiver. James is saying that the whole divine law has to be accepted as an expression of God's will for His people. The violation of even one commandment separates an individual from God and His purposes.

2:14 *What does it profit.* James is implying in this verse that faith in Christ will demonstrate itself in love for others (John 13:34–35).

2:19 *Even the demons believe—and tremble.* While they believe, the demons do not love Him (Matt. 8:29). Their kind of belief does not lead to love, submission, and obedience; instead, it leads to hatred, rebellion, and disobedience.

2:21 *justified.* James is using the word *justified* to mean "proved." We prove to others our genuine faith in Christ through our works. But the justification that comes through faith is before God, and we do not "prove" ourselves to Him; instead, God declares us righteous through our association with Christ, the One who died for our sins (Rom. 3:28).

2:22 *faith . . . works.* These two should be together; there is a close relationship between the two. Faith produces works; and works make faith perfect, meaning "mature" or "complete."

3:1 *we shall receive a stricter judgment.* James does not give the warning of condemnation to others without applying it to himself.

3:7–8 *no man can tame the tongue.* The instincts of animals can be subdued through conditioning and punishment, but the sinful nature that inspires evil words is beyond our control. Only the work of the Holy Spirit within us can bring this destructive force under control.

3:9 *we bless our God and Father.* James is pointing out the inconsistency of blessing God while cursing people who are created in His image.

2:11 [m] Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18 [n] Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17 **2:12** [o] James 1:25 **2:13** [p] Job 22:6 [q] Prov. 21:13 [r] Mic. 7:18 [s] Rom. 12:8 **2:14** [t] Matt. 7:21–23, 26; 21:28–32 **2:15** [u] Luke 3:11 **2:16** [v] [1 John 3:17, 18] **2:18** [w] Heb. 6:10 [x] James 3:13 **2:21** [y] Gen. 22:9, 10, 12, 16–18 **2:22** [z] Heb. 11:17 [a] John 8:39 **2:23** [b] Gen. 15:6 [c] 2 Chr. 20:7 **2:25** [d] Heb. 11:31 **3:1** [a] [Matt. 23:8] [b] Luke 6:37 **3:2** [c] 1 Kin. 8:46 [d] Ps. 34:13 [e] [Matt. 12:34–37] **3:3** [f] Ps. 32:9 **3:5** [g] Prov. 12:18; 15:2 [h] Ps. 12:3; 73:8 **3:6** [i] Prov. 16:27 [j] [Matt. 12:36; 15:11, 18] **3:8** [k] Ps. 140:3 **3:9** [l] Gen. 1:26; 5:1; 9:6

11 Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and
bitter from the same opening? 12 Can a [m]fig
tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grape-
vine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both
salt water and fresh.*

Heavenly Versus Demonic Wisdom

13 [n]Who *is* wise and understanding
among you? Let him show by good con-
duct *that* his works *are done* in the meek-
ness of wisdom. 14 But if you have [o]bitter
envy and self-seeking in your hearts, [p]do
not boast and lie against the truth. 15 [q]This
wisdom does not descend from above, but
is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For [r]where
envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and
every evil thing *are* there. 17 But [s]the wis-
dom that is from above is first pure, then
peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of
mercy and good fruits, [t]without partiality
[u]and without hypocrisy. 18 [v]Now the fruit
of righteousness is sown in peace by those
who make peace.

Pride Promotes Strife

4 Where do wars and fights *come* from
among you? Do *they* not *come* from
your *desires for* pleasure [a]that war in your
members? 2 You lust and do not have. You
murder and covet and cannot obtain. You
fight and war. Yet* you do not have be-
cause you do not ask. 3 [b]You ask and do not
receive, [c]because you ask amiss, that you
may spend *it* on your pleasures. 4 Adulter-
ers and* adulteresses! Do you not know
that [d]friendship with the world is enmity
with God? [e]Whoever therefore wants to
be a friend of the world makes himself an
enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the
Scripture says in vain, [f]"The Spirit who
dwells in us yearns jealously"?
6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He
says:

[g]*"God resists the proud,*
*But gives grace to the humble."**

Humility Cures Worldliness

7 Therefore submit to God. [h]Resist the
devil and he will flee from you. 8 [i]Draw
near to God and He will draw near to you.
[j]Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and
[k]purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.
9 [l]Lament and mourn and weep! Let your
laughter be turned to mourning and *your*
joy to gloom. 10 [m]Humble yourselves in the
sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Do Not Judge a Brother

11 [n]Do not speak evil of one another,
brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother
[o]and judges his brother, speaks evil of the
law and judges the law. But if you judge
the law, you are not a doer of the law but
a judge. 12 There is one Lawgiver,* [p]who is
able to save and to destroy. [q]Who* are you
to judge another?*

Do Not Boast About Tomorrow

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or to-
morrow we will* go to such and such a city,

* **3:12** NU-Text reads *Neither can a salty spring produce fresh water.* * **4:2** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Yet.* * **4:4** NU-Text omits *Adulterers and.* * **4:6** Proverbs 3:34 * **4:12** NU-Text adds *and Judge.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *But* who. • NU-Text reads *a neighbor.* * **4:13** M-Text reads *let us.*

3:16 *confusion.* On the other hand, God brings harmony and wisdom (1 Cor. 14:33). Anyone who is involved in envy and strife is confused. This confusion corrupts human relationships. It is likely that the Jewish Christians to whom James was writing were going through turmoil because of sinful acts like the ones mentioned here. James wanted his readers to set aside their petty attitudes and seek reconciliation.

4:1 *wars and fights.* The source of problems is the conflict between desires for pleasure and the desire for God's will, an attitude that the Holy Spirit has placed within us.

4:3 *you ask amiss.* Some might have protested James's admonition (vv. 1–2) by claiming that they had not received an answer to their prayers (Matt. 7:7). James responds by suggesting that they were praying for the wrong things. Instead of praying for their sinful desires, they should have been praying for God's good will for them.

4:4 *Whoever therefore wants.* This verse does not speak of God's attitude toward the believer, but of the believer's attitude toward God. The difference between the world and God is so vast that, as we move toward the world, we alienate ourselves from God. In the world, sin is considered acceptable and pleasurable. Ultimately the world has lost its awareness of sin, and thus sin has become habitual.

4:6 *God resists the proud.* James quotes from Proverbs 3:34 to prove his point. Those who submit to divine wisdom will receive the necessary grace from God to put into practice the kind of life James describes (3:13–18). On the other hand, those who elevate themselves will face a formidable foe (v. 4). God Himself will fight against their plans, because they are not on His side.

4:9 *Lament and mourn and weep.* When a believer who has fallen into sin responds to God's call for repentance, he or she should place laughter and joy aside to reflect on the sin with genuine sorrow (2 Cor. 7:9–10). In this verse, laughter seems to refer to the loud revelry of pleasure-loving people. They immerse themselves in a celebration of their sins in an effort to forget God's judgment. A Christian should never laugh at sin. However, Christian sorrow leads to repentance; repentance leads to forgiveness; and forgiveness leads to true joy over one's reconciliation with God (Ps. 32:1; 126:2; Prov. 15:13).

4:13 *we will go . . . and make a profit.* The problem here is not the plan or the concept of planning; it is leaving God out of the plan (v. 15).

3:12 [m] Matt. 7:16–20 **3:13** [n] Gal. 6:4 **3:14** [o] Rom. 13:13 [p] Rom. 2:17 **3:15** [q] Phil. 3:19 **3:16** [r] 1 Cor. 3:3 **3:17** [s] 1 Cor. 2:6, 7 [t] James 2:1 [u] Rom. 12:9 **3:18** [v] Prov. 11:18 **4:1** [a] Rom. 7:23 **4:3** [b] Job 27:8, 9 [c] [Ps. 66:18] **4:4** [d] 1 John 2:15 [e] Gal. 1:4 **4:5** [f] Gen. 6:5 **4:6** [g] Prov. 3:34 **4:7** [h] [Eph. 4:27; 6:11] **4:8** [i] 2 Chr. 15:2 [j] Is. 1:16 [k] 1 Pet. 1:22 **4:9** [l] Matt. 5:4 **4:10** [m] Job 22:29 **4:11** [n] 1 Pet. 2:1–3 [o] [Matt. 7:1–5] **4:12** [p] [Matt. 10:28] [q] Rom. 14:4

spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? [r]It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15Instead you *ought* to say, [s]"If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." 16But now you boast in your arrogance. [t]All such boasting is evil.

17Therefore, [u]to him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.

Rich Oppressors Will Be Judged

5 Come now, *you* [a]rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you!* 2Your [b]riches are corrupted, and [c]your garments are moth-eaten. 3Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. [d]You have heaped up treasure in the last days. 4Indeed [e]the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and [f]the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.* 5You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as* in a day of slaughter. 6You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

Be Patient and Persevering

7Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

9Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned.* Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! 10[g]My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and [h]patience. 11Indeed [i]we count them blessed who [j]endure. You have heard of [k]the perseverance of Job and seen [l]the end *intended by* the Lord—that [m]the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

12But above all, my brethren, [n]do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and *your* "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.*

Meeting Specific Needs

13Is anyone among you suffering? Let him [o]pray. Is anyone cheerful? [p]Let him sing psalms. 14Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, [q]anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. [r]And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16Confess *your* trespasses* to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. [s]The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. 17Elijah was a man [t]with a nature like ours, and [u]he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18And he prayed [v]again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Bring Back the Erring One

19Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone [w]turns him back, 20let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way [x]will save a soul* from death and [y]cover a multitude of sins.

* **5:4** Literally, in Hebrew, *Hosts* * **5:5** NU-Text omits *as.* * **5:9** NU-Text and M-Text read *judged.* * **5:12** M-Text reads *hypocrisy.* * **5:16** NU-Text reads *Therefore confess your sins.* * **5:20** NU-Text reads *his soul.*

5:2–3 *your garments.* In the ancient world, food, costly clothing, and precious metals were conspicuous signs of wealth. James pronounces judgment and destruction on all three.

5:12–13 *do not swear.* James is not forbidding a believer from taking an oath in court or invoking God as witness to some significant statement (1 Thess. 2:5). Instead, he is prohibiting the ancient practice of appealing to a variety of different objects to confirm the veracity of one's statement. This practice was extremely close to idolatry, for it implied that such objects contained spirits. The warning in these verses can serve as a reminder to us to watch what we say. We should not use God's name in a reckless manner, and we should be careful to speak the truth.

5:14 *anointing him with oil.* This may refer to medicinal treatment (Luke 10:34). Yet, in this passage, it most likely refers to the healing power of the Holy Spirit, for verse 15 speaks of prayer saving the person. In either case, there is no indication that calling the elders excludes the use of a physician or medicine.

5:15 *the prayer of faith.* Whether a believer is healed through medicine or through miraculous means, all healing is ultimately from the Lord. That is why prayers should be consistently offered for the sick.

5:16 *The effective, fervent prayer.* This can mean that (1) prayer is effective when it is used, or (2) fervent prayer accomplishes great results.

4:14 [r] Job 7:7 **4:15** [s] Acts 18:21 **4:16** [t] 1 Cor. 5:6 **4:17** [u] [Luke 12:47] **5:1** [a] [Luke 6:24] **5:2** [b] Matt. 6:19 [c] Job 13:28 **5:3** [d] Rom. 2:5 **5:4** [e] Lev. 19:13 [f] Deut. 24:15 **5:10** [g] Matt. 5:12 [h] Heb. 10:36 **5:11** [i] [Ps. 94:12] [j] [James 1:12] [k] Job 1:21, 22; 2:10 [l] Job 42:10 [m] Num. 14:18 **5:12** [n] Matt. 5:34–37 **5:13** [o] Ps. 50:14, 15 [p] Eph. 5:19 **5:14** [q] Mark 6:13; 16:18 **5:15** [r] Is. 33:24 **5:16** [s] Num. 11:2 **5:17** [t] Acts 14:15 [u] 1 Kin. 17:1; 18:1 **5:18** [v] 1 Kin. 18:1, 42 **5:19** [w] Gal. 6:1 **5:20** [x] Rom. 11:14 [y] [1 Pet. 4:8]

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF
PETER

▶ **AUTHOR:** The early church universally acknowledged the authenticity and authority of 1 Peter. It is likely that Peter used Silvanus as his scribe (5:12). This epistle was addressed to Christians throughout Asia Minor, indicating the spread of the gospel in regions not evangelized when Acts was written. It was written from Babylon (5:13), but scholars are divided as to whether this refers literally to Babylon in Mesopotamia or symbolically to Rome. It is probably the latter as tradition consistently indicates that Peter spent the last few years of his life in Rome.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 63–64 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 1 Pet. 4:12–13

▶ **THEME:** First Peter was probably written to the Roman provinces of Turkey at the beginning of Nero's persecutions of Christians. Its primary message is one of comfort, hope, and encouragement. He asks the readers to hold fast to the faith in the midst of the coming persecution. In these letters we get a picture of a mature Peter who has incorporated Christ's crucifixion and death and resurrection into his thinking about suffering. He fully understands, and even looks forward to, the glory that is to come after the sufferings of this life.

Greeting to the Elect Pilgrims

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the pilgrims [a]of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, **2** [b]elect [c]according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, [d]in sanctification of the Spirit, for [e]obedience and [f]sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:

[g]Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

A Heavenly Inheritance

3 [h]Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who [i]according to His abundant mercy [j]has begotten us again to a living hope [k]through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, [l]reserved in heaven for you, **5** [m]who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 [n]In this you greatly rejoice, though now [o]for a little while, if need be, [p]you have been grieved by various trials, **7** that [q]the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though [r]it is tested by fire, [s]may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, **8** [t]whom having not seen* you love. [u]Though now you do not see *Him*, yet

* **1:8** M-Text reads *known*.

1:1 ***pilgrims.*** This term conveys the idea of being dispersed, much like the Jewish exiles of the Old Testament who were not living in their homeland but in Babylon.

1:2 ***sanctification of the Spirit.*** Sanctification is the ongoing process whereby the Holy Spirit works in believers, making their lives holy, separated from their old ways and to God in order to be more like Him. ***sprinkling of the blood.*** This concept, the second reason why God chooses us, draws our attention to three situations in the Old Testament when the Israelites were sprinkled with the blood of animals: (1) Moses' sprinkling of blood on the Israelites at Mount Sinai to symbolize their initiation into the covenant (Ex. 24:5–8); (2) the sprinkling of Aaron and his sons to be the priests of Israel (Ex. 29:19–21); and (3) the sprinkling of the blood performed by priests over healed lepers to symbolize their cleansing (Lev. 14:1–9). Any of these three cases could be the one that Peter has in mind here.

1:3 ***according to His abundant mercy.*** Our salvation is grounded in God's mercy, His act of compassion toward us despite our condition of sinfulness. ***has begotten us again.*** God has given believers a new, spiritual life that enables us to live in an entirely different dimension than the one our physical birth allowed.

1:4 ***inheritance.*** The Greek word here suggests both a present and a future reality. God has already determined what we will one day experience in its totality. ***reserved.*** God has set aside in heaven a wonderful inheritance that is waiting for us even now.

1:7 ***that the genuineness of your faith.*** As the purity of gold is brought forth by intense heat, so the reality

1:1 [a] James 1:1 **1:2** [b] Eph. 1:4 [c] [Rom. 8:29] [d] 2 Thess. 2:13 [e] Rom. 1:5 [f] Heb. 10:22; 12:24 [g] Rom. 1:7 **1:3** [h] Eph. 1:3 [i] Gal. 6:16 [j] [John 3:3, 5] [k] 1 Cor. 15:20 **1:4** [l] Col. 1:5 **1:5** [m] John 10:28 **1:6** [n] Matt. 5:12 [o] 2 Cor. 4:17 [p] James 1:2 **1:7** [q] James 1:3 [r] Job 23:10 [s] [Rom. 2:7] **1:8** [t] 1 John 4:20 [u] John 20:29

believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

10Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, 11searching what, or what manner of time, [v]the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us* they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which [w]angels desire to look into.

Living Before God Our Father

13Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14as obedient children, not [x]conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; 15[y]but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, 16because it is written, [z]*"Be holy, for I am holy."**

17And if you call on the Father, who [a]without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; 18knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, 19but [b]with the precious blood of Christ, [c]as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20[d]He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest [e]in these last times for you 21who through Him believe in God, [f]who raised Him from the dead and [g]gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

The Enduring Word

22Since you [h]have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit* in sincere [i]love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23[j]having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, [k]through the word of God which lives and abides forever,* 24because

[l]*"All flesh is as grass,*
And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.*
The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,
25 [m]*But the word of the LORD endures forever."**

[n]Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

2 Therefore, [a]laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2[b]as newborn babes, desire the pure [c]milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,* 3if indeed you have [d]tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

* **1:12** NU-Text and M-Text read *you.* * **1:16** Leviticus 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7 * **1:22** NU-Text omits *through the Spirit.* * **1:23** NU-Text omits *forever.* * **1:24** NU-Text reads *all its glory.* * **1:25** Isaiah 40:6–8 * **2:2** NU-Text adds *up to salvation.*

and purity of our faith are revealed as a result of the fiery trials we face. Ultimately the testing of our faith not only demonstrates our final salvation but also develops our capacity to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes into His kingdom and we reign with Him (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:9–12).

1:10 *the prophets.* Peter indicates that the Old Testament prophets knew of the gracious salvation we would one day receive and, as a result, studied it carefully and intensively.

1:12 *by the Holy Spirit.* Although humans may preach God's message of salvation, ultimately the Holy Spirit is the One who proclaims these great truths. Even the angels are amazed at what a wonderful salvation God has enacted on our behalf (Eph. 3:10).

1:13 *gird up the loins of your mind.* Just as people in biblical times would gather up their long robes and tie them around their waists so that they could move quickly and freely, we need to do whatever it takes to focus our thoughts on those things that allow us to serve God successfully, all the while eliminating any thoughts that would trip us up (Heb. 12:1). ***be sober.*** Peter's concern here is primarily using mentally or spiritually sound judgment. ***hope fully.*** We need to exhibit confidence that God will accomplish all that He promised He would do (v. 3; Rom. 8:24–25).

1:17 *in fear.* For Christians, this phrase should be understood as something between terror and reverential awe. We need to remember that God is both our merciful Savior (vv. 3,18–21) and our holy Judge (vv. 15–17).

1:19 *a lamb.* Peter describes Christ as the ultimate sacrificial Lamb, who is offered in our place to pay the price for our sins. The analogy here may be a reference either to the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:3–6) or to the many lambs without blemish that were offered as part of the Old Testament sacrificial system (Lev. 23:12; Num. 6:14; 28:3).

1:20 *foreordained.* God has known (v. 2) the One who would bring salvation, even as He has known those to whom that salvation is offered and secured (Rom. 11:2). ***but was manifest.*** This phrase contrasts with the first half of the verse. What was known only to God before the creation of the world is now made known to us.

1:22 *purified your souls.* We accomplish the purification of our souls by obedience to God's truth.

2:2 *that you may grow thereby.* The purpose of studying God's truth is not only to learn more, but to become mature in the faith.

1:11 [v] 2 Pet. 1:21 **1:12** [w] Eph. 3:10 **1:14** [x] [Rom. 12:2] **1:15** [y] [2 Cor. 7:1] **1:16** [z] Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7 **1:17** [a] Acts 10:34 **1:19** [b] Acts 20:28 [c] Ex. 12:5 **1:20** [d] Rom. 3:25 [e] Gal. 4:4 **1:21** [f] Acts 2:24 [g] Acts 2:33 **1:22** [h] Acts 15:9 [i] Heb. 13:1 **1:23** [j] John 1:13 [k] James 1:18 **1:24** [l] Is. 40:6–8 **1:25** [m] Is. 40:8 [n] [John 1:1] **2:1** [a] Heb. 12:1 **2:2** [b] [Matt. 18:3; 19:14] [c] 1 Cor. 3:2 **2:3** [d] Heb. 6:5

The Chosen Stone and His Chosen People

4 Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, [e]rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God
and precious, 5 you also, as living stones,
are being built up a spiritual house, a holy
priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

[f] *"Behold, I lay in Zion*
A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,
And he who believes on Him will by
*no means be put to shame."**

7 Therefore, to you who believe, *He is*
precious; but to those who are disobedient,*

[g] *"The stone which the builders rejected*
*Has become the chief cornerstone,"**

8 and

[h] *"A stone of stumbling*
*And a rock of offense."**

[i] They stumble, being disobedient to the
word, [j] to which they also were appointed.
9 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal
priesthood, a holy nation, His own special
people, that you may proclaim the praises
of Him who called you out of [k] darkness
into His marvelous light; 10 [l] who once *were*
not a people but *are* now the people of God,
who had not obtained mercy but now have
obtained mercy.

Living Before the World

11 Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and
pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts [m] which
war against the soul, 12 [n] having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that
when they speak against you as evildoers,
[o] they may, by *your* good works which they
observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Submission to Government

13 [p] Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake,
whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to
governors, as to those who are sent by him
for the punishment of evildoers and *for the*
praise of those who do good. 15 For this is
the will of God, that by doing good you
may put to silence the ignorance of foolish
men— 16 [q] as free, yet not [r] using liberty as a
cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.
17 Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood.
Fear [s] God. Honor the king.

Submission to Masters

18 [t] Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and

* **2:6** Isaiah 28:16 * **2:7** NU-Text reads *to those who disbelieve.* • Psalm 118:22 * **2:8** Isaiah 8:14

2:4 ***living stone.*** This phrase anticipates the Old Testament quotations in verses 6–8. Jesus, as a living stone, is superior to the Old Testament temple.

2:5 ***stones.*** Christians are part of God's great spiritual building project. Referenced here are stones that are shaped and ready for use in construction, as opposed to natural rock. ***a holy priesthood.*** Unlike the Old Testament priesthood, in which only those who were born into a certain tribe could be priests, all who are reborn into God's family, that is, all believers, are priests who have the privilege and responsibility of offering spiritual sacrifices to God (Rom. 12:1–2; Heb. 13:15–16).

2:6 ***A chief cornerstone . . . precious.*** Jesus is the foundation stone from which the placement of all other living stones in the spiritual house (v. 5) is determined (Is. 28:16). In ancient buildings, the cornerstone was first situated on the foundation and then all of the other stones were aligned to it. Thus as part of the house of God, we need to keep our focus on our Cornerstone (Heb. 12:2).

2:9 ***a chosen generation.*** God has not left to chance who will be part of a unique body of people, a group who will serve Him. ***a royal priesthood.*** Believers are transformed not only internally (v. 5), which describes us as being made into a "holy priesthood" but also externally. We are a priesthood that functions in a ruling capacity, as kings. ***a holy nation.*** Believers are a unified group of people who are set apart for God's use. ***special people.*** God protects those whom He has adopted into His family.

2:11 ***sojourners and pilgrims.*** With these words, Peter reminds believers (1:1) that this earth is not our home. We are foreigners here, traveling to our eternal home, heaven.

2:12 ***day of visitation.*** This term probably refers to the final day of judgment when all people, believers and unbelievers alike, will fall on their knees and acknowledge who Jesus Christ is and what He has done through His people.

2:13 ***every ordinance of man.*** This phrase suggests that the submission of Christians is not to be exercised solely in relation to civil authorities (v. 14), but to all kinds of rules that Christians encounter (2:18; 3:1).

2:13 Our Responsibility to Human Government—As children of God, our responsibility to human government is threefold:

1. We are to recognize and accept that the powers that be are ordained by God (Rom. 13:1). This truth even applies to governments that are anti-Christian. If a given law is clearly anti-scriptural, the believer is required to obey God rather than man (Dan. 3; 6; Acts 4:18–20).
2. We are to pay our taxes to human governments (Matt. 17:24; 22:21; Rom. 13:7).
3. We are to pray for the leaders in human government (1 Tim. 2:1–3).

2:16 ***as a cloak for vice.*** This may be understood either as an excuse made up before the fact, or after the fact.

2:18 ***be submissive . . . with all fear.*** Workers are to take their responsibilities seriously, even when serving the worst of bosses.

2:4 [e] Ps. 118:22 **2:6** [f] Is. 28:16 **2:7** [g] Ps. 118:22 **2:8** [h] Is. 8:14 [i] 1 Cor. 1:23 [j] Rom. 9:22 **2:9** [k] [Acts 26:18] **2:10** [l] Hos. 1:9, 10; 2:23 **2:11** [m] James 4:1 **2:12** [n] Phil. 2:15 [o] Matt. 5:16; 9:8 **2:13** [p] Matt. 22:21 **2:16** [q] Rom. 6:14, 20, 22 [r] Gal. 5:13 **2:17** [s] Prov. 24:21 **2:18** [t] Eph. 6:5–8

gentle, but also to the harsh. 19For this *is* [u]commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. 20For [v]what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. 21For [w]to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us,* [x]leaving us* an example, that you should follow His steps:

22 *"Who [y]committed no sin,*
*Nor was deceit found in His mouth";**

23[z]who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but [a]committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; 24[b]who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, [c]that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—[d]by whose stripes you were healed. 25For [e]you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned [f]to the Shepherd and Overseer* of your souls.

Submission to Husbands

3 Wives, likewise, *be* [a]submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, [b]they, without a word, may [c]be won by the conduct of their wives, 2[d]when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear. 3[e]Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel— 4rather *let it be* [f]the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, 6as Sarah obeyed Abraham, [g]calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

A Word to Husbands

7[h]Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, [i]as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, [j]that your prayers may not be hindered.

Called to Blessing

8Finally, all *of you be* of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be* tenderhearted, *be* courteous;* 9[k]not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary [l]blessing, knowing that you were called to this, [m]that you may inherit a blessing. 10For

[n]*"He who would love life*
And see good days,
[o]*Let him refrain his tongue from evil,*
And his lips from speaking deceit.
11 *Let him [p]turn away from evil and do good;*
[q]*Let him seek peace and pursue it.*
12 *For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,*
[r]*And His ears are open to their prayers;*
*But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."**

* **2:21** NU-Text reads *you.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *you.* * **2:22** Isaiah 53:9 * **2:25** Greek *Episkopos* * **3:8** NU-Text reads *humble.*
* **3:12** Psalm 34:12–16

2:20 *For what credit.* There is no advantage to believers for successfully enduring a deserved punishment for wrongdoing, yet there is great value when we honor God with our actions when we are unfairly condemned by others (3:17). ***take it patiently.*** Patience and perseverance in the face of suffering please God.
2:24 *who Himself bore our sins.* The Greek wording emphasizes Jesus' personal involvement in the act of paying the price for our sins. ***having died to sins, might live for righteousness.*** The purpose of Christ's bearing our sins is that we might live to please Him.
2:25 *Overseer.* No one else is qualified to be the one Shepherd and Overseer of our souls—only Christ is. For this reason the New Testament regularly describes the church and its congregations as having more than one leader (Titus 1:5).
3:1 *without a word.* A godly wife does not preach to her non-Christian husband with words but with the Christlike beauty of her daily life. The goal is to see that husband become a Christian.
3:3 *merely outward.* Christians are to spend more time developing their inner character than attempting to make themselves look beautiful on the outside (1 Sam. 16). Peter is not condemning women who wear jewelry. He is emphasizing the importance of a woman's character.
3:4 *gentle and quiet spirit.* Peter encourages Christian wives to exhibit attitudes that do not demand personal rights, attitudes that are not harsh and grating but are soothing and tranquil.
3:6 *calling him lord.* Sarah was not worshiping Abraham; she was showing him respect.
3:7 *dwell with them with understanding.* A Christian husband should be intimately aware of his wife's needs, her strengths and weaknesses, and her goals and desires. He should know as much about her as possible in order to respond in the best way to her.
3:9 *evil for evil.* Peter encourages Christians to act like the Lord Jesus. He endured suffering and ridicule in silence, entrusting His just cause to the ultimate Judge.
3:12 *eyes . . . ears.* Peter uses this imagery to remind his readers that God knows everything about believers, especially their suffering, and that He listens and responds to their cries for help (Heb. 4:12–16).

2:19 [u] Matt. 5:10 **2:20** [v] Luke 6:32–34 **2:21** [w] Matt. 16:24 [x] [1 John 2:6] **2:22** [y] Is. 53:9 **2:23** [z] Is. 53:7 [a] Luke 23:46 **2:24** [b] [Heb. 9:28] [c] Rom. 7:6 [d] Is. 53:5 **2:25** [e] Is. 53:5, 6 [f] [Ezek. 34:23] **3:1** [a] Eph. 5:22 [b] 1 Cor. 7:16 [c] Matt. 18:15 **3:2** [d] 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:6 **3:3** [e] 1 Tim. 2:9 **3:4** [f] Rom. 2:29 **3:6** [g] Gen. 18:12 **3:7** [h] [Eph. 5:25] [i] 1 Cor. 12:23 [j] Job 42:8 **3:9** [k] [Prov. 17:13] [l] Matt. 5:44 [m] Matt. 25:34 **3:10** [n] Ps. 34:12–16 [o] James 1:26 **3:11** [p] Ps. 37:27 [q] Rom. 12:18 **3:12** [r] John 9:31

Suffering for Right and Wrong

13 [s]And who *is* he who will harm you
if you become followers of what is good?
14 [t]But even if you should suffer for righ-
teousness' sake, *you are* blessed. [u]*"And
do not be afraid of their threats, nor be
troubled."** 15But sanctify the Lord God* in
your hearts, and always [v]*be* ready to *give* a
defense to everyone who asks you a reason
for the [w]hope that is in you, with meekness
and fear; 16 [x]having a good conscience, that
when they defame you as evildoers, those
who revile your good conduct in Christ
may be ashamed. 17For *it is* better, if it is the
will of God, to suffer for doing good than
for doing evil.

Christ's Suffering and Ours

18For Christ also suffered once for sins,
the just for the unjust, that He might bring
us* to God, being put to death in the flesh
but made alive by the Spirit, 19by whom
also He went and preached to the spirits
in prison, 20who formerly were disobedi-
ent, when once the Divine longsuffering
waited* in the days of Noah, while *the* ark
was being prepared, in which a few, that
is, eight souls, were saved through water.
21 [y]There is also an antitype which now
saves us—baptism [z](not the removal of the
filth of the flesh, [a]but the answer of a good
conscience toward God), through the res-
urrection of Jesus Christ, 22who has gone
into heaven and [b]is at the right hand of
God, [c]angels and authorities and powers
having been made subject to Him.

4 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us*
in the flesh, arm yourselves also with
the same mind, for he who has suffered in
the flesh has ceased from sin, 2that he no
longer should live the rest of *his* time in
the flesh for the lusts of men, [a]but for the
will of God. 3For we *have spent* enough
of our past lifetime* in doing the will of the
Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness,
lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking
parties, and abominable idolatries. 4In
regard to these, they think it strange that
you do not run with *them* in the same flood
of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*. 5They
will give an account to Him who is ready
[b]to judge the living and the dead. 6For this
reason [c]the gospel was preached also to
those who are dead, that they might be
judged according to men in the flesh, but
[d]live according to God in the spirit.

Serving for God's Glory

7But [e]the end of all things is at hand;
therefore be serious and watchful in your
prayers. 8And above all things have fervent

* **3:14** Isaiah 8:12 * **3:15** NU-Text reads *Christ as Lord.* * **3:18** NU-Text and M-Text read *you.* * **3:20** NU-Text and M-Text read *when the long-suffering of God waited patiently.* * **4:1** NU-Text omits *for us.* * **4:3** NU-Text reads *time.*

3:15 *sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.* Believers should acknowledge the eternal holiness of Christ by revering Him as the Lord of the universe who is in control of all things. ***to give a defense.*** Peter assumes that the Christian faith will be falsely accused. He therefore encourages Christians to have rational answers to respond to those false accusations.

3:17 *For it is better.* Peter is not encouraging believers to seek out situations in which they will experience suffering. Instead, he is saying that believers should make certain that when they suffer, it is the result of having been faithful to God rather than because they have done evil (2:19).

3:19–20 *spirits in prison.* The Greek term translated *spirits* can refer to human spirits, angels, or demons. There are three main interpretations: (1) Some interpret these verses as describing Jesus as going to the place where fallen angels are incarcerated and declaring His final victory over evil in His work on the cross; (2) others hold that *spirits* refers to human spirits; thus Christ preached to human beings who had died in Noah's day and were in the realm of the dead (hell or hades); and (3) another major interpretation understands this passage as describing Christ preaching through Noah to the unbelievers of his day.

4:1 *has ceased from sin.* Those who serve God faithfully in the midst of suffering take on a different attitude toward sin than what they previously held. Sin no longer holds the same grip on them.

4:3 *abominable idolatries.* The idea here is that some forms of idolatry may have been detestable even to the civil authorities. Of course, all types of idolatry are hateful to God.

4:5 *will give an account.* Although unbelievers think they are free to do as they please, they are greatly mistaken. There are consequences to what they do. One day they will stand defenseless before God and give an account of all of their wickedness (Rev. 20:11–15).

4:6 *to those who are dead.* There are four main interpretations of Peter's meaning here: (1) Some see a connection between the gospel preached in this verse and the proclamation of Christ in 3:19–20; accordingly, they understand this verse to be about Christ offering salvation to those who lived in pre-Christian times; (2) another group of commentators also connects this preaching to 3:19–20, but holds that this verse is speaking of Christ preaching the gospel only to the righteous people of Old Testament times; (3) Peter was speaking of the gospel which was preached to believers who are now dead; and (4) Peter is referring to the spiritually dead; the gospel was being preached to them so that they could come alive spiritually.

4:8 *love will cover a multitude of sins.* Peter is not suggesting that one Christian's love atones for another Christian's sins. Rather, by introducing this proverb from the Old Testament (Prov. 10:12), he is reminding us that love does not stir up sins. We can demonstrate our love for our fellow believers by truly forgiving them and not talking openly about their past sins.

3:13 [s] Prov. 16:7 **3:14** [t] James 1:12 [u] Is. 8:12 **3:15** [v] Ps. 119:46 [w] [Titus 3:7] **3:16** [x] Heb. 13:18 **3:21** [y] Eph. 5:26 [z] [Titus 3:5] [a] [Rom. 10:10] **3:22** [b] Ps. 110:1 [c] Rom. 8:38 **4:2** [a] John 1:13 **4:5** [b] Acts 10:42 **4:6** [c] 1 Pet. 1:12; 3:19 [d] [Rom. 8:9, 13] **4:7** [e] Rom. 13:11

love for one another, for [f]*"love will cover a multitude of sins."** [9][g]*Be* hospitable to one another [h]without grumbling. [10][i]As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, [j]as good stewards of [k]the manifold grace of God. [11]If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that [m]in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Suffering for God's Glory

[12]Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; [13]but rejoice [n]to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that [o]when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. [14]If you are reproached for the name of Christ, [p]blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.* On their part He is blasphemed, [q]but on your part He is glorified. [15]But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. [16]Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.*

[17]For the time *has come* [r]for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, [s]what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? [18]Now

[t]*"If the righteous one is scarcely saved,*
Where will the ungodly and the sinner
*appear?"**

[19]Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God [u]commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

Shepherd the Flock

5 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a [a]witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the [b]glory that will be revealed: [2][c]Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, [d]not by compulsion but willingly,* [e]not for dishonest gain but eagerly; [3]nor as [f]being lords over [g]those entrusted to you, but [h]being examples to the flock; [4]and when [i]the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive [j]the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Submit to God, Resist the Devil

[5]Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, [k]all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

[l]*"God resists the proud,*
*But [m]gives grace to the humble."**

[6]Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, [7]casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

[8]Be sober, be vigilant; because* your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. [9]Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced

* **4:8** Proverbs 10:12 * **4:14** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse. * **4:16** NU-Text reads *name*. * **4:18** Proverbs 11:31 * **5:2** NU-Text adds *according to God*. * **5:5** Proverbs 3:34 * **5:8** NU-Text and M-Text omit *because*.

4:9 *Be hospitable.* In New Testament times, hospitality typically meant housing and feeding travelers for two to three days with no expectation of payment in return.

4:10 *As each one has received a gift.* Every believer is gifted to serve. ***stewards.*** These are managers or trustees who will be held accountable for using their gift in the best interest of the One who gave it to them.

4:12 *do not think it strange.* Apparently Peter's readers were astonished that they had to suffer as Christians, especially to the extent that they were suffering. ***fiery trial.*** The Greek word translated here was also used to speak of the intense fire that burned away impurities in metals.

4:17 *for judgment to begin.* Judgment does not always imply condemnation in Scripture. When used in relation to Christians, it consistently refers to the evaluation of a believer's works for the purpose of reward (1 Cor. 3:10–15).

5:1 *partaker.* This terms speaks of sharing in Christ's reign in the coming kingdom (Rom. 8:17; Rev. 2:26–28; 5:9–10). Peter considers himself to be already participating partly in the glory that one day he will experience fully.

5:2 *Shepherd the flock of God.* An ancient Israelite shepherd would go before his sheep to lead them; he would not drive the sheep in front of him. Church leaders should lead the people of God in the same way; feeding, protecting, and guiding them (John 21:15–17). Christian leaders should also remember that they have been given responsibility for tending a flock that belongs to God, not to themselves. ***not for dishonest gain.*** Christian leaders need to make certain that their work is not motivated by money, but by a passion for the good of those believers put in their charge (1 Tim. 3:3,8; Titus 1:11).

5:3 *nor as being lords over.* Echoing a command that Peter heard directly from Jesus during His earthly ministry, Peter reminds all Christian leaders that they need to perform the role of servants, not masters, to those whom God has assigned to their care (Matt. 20:25–28; Mark 10:42–45).

5:8 *your adversary.* Satan is our avowed enemy. He never ceases from being hostile toward us; he is

4:8 [f] [Prov. 10:12] **4:9** [g] Heb. 13:2 [h] 2 Cor. 9:7
4:10 [i] Rom. 12:6–8 [j] 1 Cor. 4:1, 2 [k] [1 Cor. 12:4] **4:11** [l] Eph. 4:29 [m] [1 Cor. 10:31] **4:13** [n] James 1:2 [o] 2 Tim. 2:12
4:14 [p] Matt. 5:11 [q] Matt. 5:16 **4:17** [r] Is. 10:12 [s] Luke 10:12
4:18 [t] Prov. 11:31 **4:19** [u] 2 Tim. 1:12 **5:1** [a] Matt. 26:37
[b] Rom. 8:17, 18 **5:2** [c] Acts 20:28 [d] 1 Cor. 9:17 [e] 1 Tim. 3:3
5:3 [f] Ezek. 34:4 [g] Ps. 33:12 [h] Phil. 3:17 **5:4** [i] Heb. 13:20
[j] 2 Tim. 4:8 **5:5** [k] Eph. 5:21 [l] Prov. 3:34 [m] Is. 57:15

by your brotherhood in the world. 10But may* the God of all grace, [n]who called us* to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you.* 11[o]To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Farewell and Peace

12By [p]Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying [q]that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

13She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you,* greets you; and *so does* [r]Mark my son. 14Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

* **5:10** NU-Text reads *But the God of all grace … will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *you.*

constantly accusing us before God (Job 1:9—2:7; Zech. 3:1; Luke 22:31; Rev. 12:10). ***like a roaring lion.*** Satan is both cunning and cruel. He attacks when least expected and desires to destroy completely those whom he attacks.

5:10 ***establish . . . you.*** As a consequence of our facing the attacks of our enemy, God will build in us a firm foundation that makes us steadfast and immovable.

5:11 ***dominion forever and ever.*** God is in control of all things both in this world and throughout eternity.

5:10 [n] 1 Cor. 1:9 **5:11** [o] Rev. 1:6 **5:12** [p] 2 Cor. 1:19 [q] Acts 20:24 **5:13** [r] Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37, 39

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF
PETER

▶ **AUTHOR:** No other book in the New Testament poses as many problems of authenticity as does 2 Peter. But in spite of the external and internal problems, the traditional position of Petrine authorship overcomes more difficulties than any other option. This epistle was written just before the apostle's death (1:14), probably from Rome.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 64–66 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 Pet. 1:20–21

▶ **THEME:** While 1 Peter deals with suffering and persecution caused by people outside the church, 2 Peter deals more with the need for the true spiritual knowledge and maturity in the face of false teachers who would distort the faith from inside the church. He gives his readers insight into the thinking of the false teachers and encourages opposition to them. He also urges watchfulness for Christ's return through all the events at the end of the age.

Greeting the Faithful

1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and [a]apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained [b]like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

2 [c]Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, **3** as His [d]divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him [e]who called us by glory and virtue, **4** [f]by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be [g]partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

Fruitful Growth in the Faith

5 But also for this very reason, [h]giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue [i]knowledge, **6** to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, **7** to godliness brotherly kindness, and [j]to brotherly kindness love. **8** For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren [k]nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he who lacks these things is [l]shortsighted,

1:1 ***apostle.*** With this term Peter identifies himself as an authorized spokesman for the truth that Christ proclaimed. In verses 1–4 Peter describes the resources his readers have that will make growth in grace and knowledge possible. His apostleship is the first of these resources. ***like precious faith.*** Anyone who has faith in Jesus has the same access to God as any other believer. This access is the second great resource that Peter's readers possess.
1:2 ***the knowledge of God.*** The Greek word translated *knowledge* is a key word in this letter. It describes a special kind of knowledge, a kind that is complete. Since our knowledge of Jesus grows as we mature in the faith, we will experience His grace and peace on many different occasions in our Christian walk.
1:3 ***divine power.*** This power is identified as the "power of resurrection" (Phil. 3:10; 4:13). This power is the third resource for godly living that Peter lists in this letter. ***by glory and virtue.*** These words suggest the qualities of Jesus that attract believers to Him. The glory that John saw in Jesus (John 1:14) was His authority and power.
1:4 ***exceedingly great and precious promises.*** This phrase refers to the numerous offers of divine provision found in Scripture. These promises offer us the glory and virtue of Christ as the basis for our growing participation in the divine nature. We have Christ within us, as He promised (John 14:23), to enable us to become increasingly Christlike (2 Cor. 3:18).
1:5 ***virtue.*** This term is the same word used in verse 3 in reference to Christ's character. We cannot produce virtue ourselves; but we can choose to obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.
1:6 ***perseverance.*** A person who exercises self-control will not easily succumb to discouragement or the temptation to quit. Viewing all circumstances as coming from the hand of a loving Father who is in control of all things is the secret of perseverance.
1:9 ***blindness.*** This kind of person is one who looks only at earthly and material values—what is close at hand—and does not see the eternal spiritual realities. Concerned only with this present life, such a person becomes blind to the things of God, forgetting

1:1 [a] Gal. 2:8 [b] Eph. 4:5 **1:2** [c] Dan. 4:1 **1:3** [d] 1 Pet. 1:5 [e] 1 Thess. 2:12 **1:4** [f] 2 Cor. 1:20; 7:1 [g] [2 Cor. 3:18] **1:5** [h] 2 Pet. 3:18 [i] 2 Pet. 1:2 **1:7** [j] Gal. 6:10 **1:8** [k] [John 15:2] **1:9** [l] 1 John 2:9–11

even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent [m]to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Peter's Approaching Death

12 For this reason [n]I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, [o]though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, [p]as long as I am in this tent, [q]to stir you up by reminding *you*, 14 [r]knowing that shortly I *must* put off my tent, just as [s]our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.

The Trustworthy Prophetic Word

16 For we did not follow [t]cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the [u]power and [v]coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were [w]eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: [x]"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on [y]the holy mountain.

19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed,* which you do well to heed as a [z]light that shines in a dark place, [a]until [b]the day dawns and the morning star rises in your [c]hearts; 20 knowing this first, that [d]no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,* 21 for [e]prophecy never came by the will of man, [f]but holy men of God* spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

Destructive Doctrines

2 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be [a]false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does* not slumber.

Doom of False Teachers

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be

* **1:19** Or *We also have the more sure prophetic word.* * **1:20** Or *origin* * **1:21** NU-Text reads *but men spoke from God.* * **2:3** M-Text reads *will not.*

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the wonderful sense of cleansing that comes from turning oneself over to Christ.

1:11 *entrance . . . abundantly.* Peter distinguishes between a just-barely-made-it entrance into the eternal kingdom and a richly abundant one. The Scripture indicates that fruitful and faithful living here will be rewarded by greater privileges and rewards in glory (Rev. 22:12).

1:15 *a reminder . . . after my decease.* Several early church fathers took these words to be Peter's promise to leave behind a testimony of the truth for his readers, which they considered to be the Gospel of Mark.

1:16 *cunningly devised fables.* Peter countered the false teacher's faith claims with an eyewitness account. Peter himself had actually seen the power and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are the twin themes of this letter; the power of Jesus available for holy living and the coming of Jesus as the glorious hope of each believer.

1:19 *the prophetic word confirmed.* As strong as an eyewitness account (vv. 16–18) may be, there is an even stronger confirmation that Jesus is who He said He was. The written Scriptures are even more trustworthy than the personal experience of the apostle Peter.

1:20 *of any private interpretation.* Although some have taken this phrase to mean that no individual Christian has the right to interpret prophecy for himself or herself, the context and the Greek word for *interpretation* indicates another meaning for the verse. The Greek word for *interpretation* can also mean "origin." In the context of verse 21, it is clear that Peter is speaking of Scripture's "origin" from God Himself and not the credentials of the one who interprets it. There is no private source for the Bible; the prophets did not supply their own solutions or explanations to the mysteries of life. Rather, God spoke through them; He alone is responsible for what is written in Scripture.

2:1 *destructive heresies.* Peter is addressing here the ethical implication of false teaching. The Greek word translated *destructive* means "shameful" or "deliberately immoral." The false teachers gloried in the privileges of Christianity but treated its moral demands with indifference.

2:3 *judgment . . . destruction.* Peter turns from the description of the false teachers to a description of their fate. Verses 4–8 provide examples of judgment of false teachers of the past.

2:4 *angels who sinned.* There are two main interpretations of this passage, depending on one's understanding of Genesis 6:1–6. Some think that Peter is referring to "sons of God" in Genesis 6:2. According to this interpretation, the "sons of God" were angels who rebelled against God and their role in creation. They began to engage in forbidden practices with the daughters of men. Their conduct was met with immediate judgment. A second group of commentators

1:10 [m] 1 John 3:19 **1:12** [n] Phil. 3:1 [o] 1 Pet. 5:12 **1:13** [p] [2 Cor. 5:1, 4] [q] 2 Pet. 3:1 **1:14** [r] [2 Tim. 4:6] [s] John 13:36; 21:18, 19 **1:16** [t] 1 Cor. 1:17 [u] [Eph. 1:19–22] [v] [1 Pet. 5:4] [w] Matt. 17:1–5 **1:17** [x] Matt. 17:5 **1:18** [y] Matt. 17:1 **1:19** [z] [John 1:4, 5, 9] [a] Prov. 4:18 [b] Rev. 2:28; 22:16 [c] [2 Cor. 4:5–7] **1:20** [d] [Rom. 12:6] **1:21** [e] [2 Tim. 3:16] [f] 2 Sam. 23:2 **2:1** [a] 1 Tim. 4:1, 2

reserved for judgment; 5and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of* eight *people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; 6and turning the cities of [b]Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; 7and [c]delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked 8(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, [d]tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)— 9*then* [e]the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, 10and especially [f]those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. [g]*They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, 11whereas [h]angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

Depravity of False Teachers

12But these, [i]like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, 13[j]*and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, *as* those who count it pleasure [k]to carouse in the daytime. [l]*They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while [m]they feast with you, 14having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. [n]They have a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children. 15They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of [o]Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

17[p]These are wells without water, clouds* carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*

Deceptions of False Teachers

18For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped* from those who live in error. 19While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; [q]for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 20For if, after they [r]have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are [s]again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21For [t]it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness,

* **2:17** NU-Text reads *and mists.* • NU-Text omits *forever.* * **2:18** NU-Text reads *are barely escaping.*

balk at the suggestion of sexual relations between angels and women. They consider this verse to simply be a reference to those angels who fell with Satan.

2:5 *did not spare the ancient world.* Peter's second example of God's judgment is the flood (3:6).

preacher of righteousness. This is a reference to Noah because his righteous life put to shame the immoral lives of his neighbors. Noah's building of the ark would certainly have given him the opportunity to explain the coming judgment and to invite people to repent and believe in God. But the entreaties fell on deaf ears, just as the truth of Christ's atonement fell on the deaf ears of the false teachers of Peter's day. Such indifference and unbelief brought the ungodly of Noah's world to certain destruction.

2:6 *Sodom and Gomorrah.* These cities are Peter's third example of God's judgment. Genesis 19 makes it clear that sexual perversion was the primary cause of their destruction.

2:9–10 *presumptuous, self-willed.* These words describe the character and methods of false teachers. Their actions are characterized by boldness; they recklessly defy both God and man. Behind their presumption is a commitment to their own desires.

2:12 *like natural brute beasts.* False teachers are compared to animals in their behavior because they act in ignorance of the realities of death and judgment. Like animals they also react only to present circumstances, without giving thought to the consequences of their actions.

2:13 *carouse in the daytime.* Even pagan societies thought it strange and unnatural to hold drunken riots in the daylight. However, the false teachers had no qualms about practicing their erroneous concept of Christian liberty in clear daylight.

2:14 *eyes full of adultery.* They could not cease from sin because their fantasizing had become habitual. As a consequence, they convinced unstable souls in the church that adultery was acceptable Christian behavior and lured them into sexual immorality.

2:15–16 *following the way of Balaam.* The account of Balaam in Numbers 22–24 is used here, as well as in Jude 11 and Revelation 2:14, to depict the danger of forsaking the right way and going astray.

2:17 *wells . . . clouds.* Peter accuses the heretical teachers of awakening false expectations, like wells that contain no water or storm clouds that darken but produce no rain.

2:20 *they have escaped.* The subject of this phrase is the heretical teachers who are called "servants of corruption" in verse 19. This verse seems to indicate that the teachers had formerly turned from the pollution of the world through a full and experiential knowledge of Christ. Now, however, they have fallen again into immorality, even becoming teachers of sinful

2:6 [b] Gen. 19:1–26 **2:7** [c] Gen. 19:16, 29 **2:8** [d] Ps. 119:139 **2:9** [e] Ps. 34:15–19 **2:10** [f] Jude 4, 7, 8 [g] Jude 8 **2:11** [h] Jude 9 **2:12** [i] Jude 10 **2:13** [j] Phil. 3:19 [k] Rom. 13:13 [l] Jude 12 [m] 1 Cor. 11:20, 21 **2:14** [n] Jude 11 **2:15** [o] Num. 22:5, 7 **2:17** [p] Jude 12, 13 **2:19** [q] John 8:34 **2:20** [r] Matt. 12:45 [s] [Heb. 6:4–6] **2:21** [t] Luke 12:47

than having known *it,* to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: [u]*"A dog returns to his own vomit,"** and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

God's Promise Is Not Slack

3 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which [a]I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2that you may be mindful of the words [b]which were spoken before by the holy prophets, [c]and of the commandment of us,* the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, [d]walking according to their own lusts, 4and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of [e]creation." 5For this they willfully forget: that [f]by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth [g]standing out of water and in the water, 6[h]by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7But [i]the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for [j]fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and [k]a thousand years as one day. 9[l]The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but [m]is longsuffering toward us,* [n]not willing that any should perish but [o]that all should come to repentance.

The Day of the Lord

10But [p]the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which [q]the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.* 11Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be [r]in holy conduct and godliness, 12[s]looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will [t]be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will [u]melt with fervent heat? 13Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for [v]new heavens and a [w]new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Be Steadfast

14Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent [x]to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; 15and consider *that* [y]the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16as also in all his [z]epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the [a]rest of the Scriptures.

17You therefore, beloved, [b]since you know *this* beforehand, [c]beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18[d]but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[e]To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.

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* **2:22** Proverbs 26:11 * **3:2** NU-Text and M-Text read *commandment of the apostles of your Lord and Savior* or *commandment of your apostles of the Lord and Savior.* * **3:9** NU-Text reads *you.* * **3:10** NU-Text reads *laid bare* (literally *found*).

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lifestyles. ***the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.*** This phrase is almost certainly taken from Jesus' words in Matthew 12:45 and probably reflects Peter's memory of that occasion.

2:22 ***according to the true proverb.*** Jews considered dogs and pigs among the lowest of animals, so Peter chooses these animals to describe people who have known the truth but have turned away from it.

3:2 ***words which were spoken before.*** The only way Peter's readers could recognize the errors of the heretical teachers was to compare their teaching with the teaching of the holy prophets and apostles. As Peter had already reminded his readers in 1:21, "holy men" spoke words given to them by the Holy Spirit, which were therefore utterly reliable.

3:4 ***fathers fell asleep.*** This refers to the Old Testament patriarchs. ***all things continue.*** The basis for denying the supernatural reappearance of Jesus is that nothing of that nature has occurred in the past.

3:8 ***a thousand years.*** God will surely accomplish His purposes and promises, even though it may appear that He is slow in doing so. His timing is always perfect.

3:10 ***day of the Lord.*** This phrase describes the end-time events, the second coming (Dan. 9:24–27; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:1–12). Peter's description requires the unlimited power of God in dissolving the very elements of the universe, from which He will create a new heaven and a new earth (v. 13; Rev. 21:22).

3:11 ***what manner of persons.*** The primary purpose of prophetic teaching is not to satisfy our curiosity but to motivate us to change our lives. Rather than work for things that will ultimately be destroyed, we should work for things that are eternal.

3:16 ***untaught and unstable people twist.*** *Untaught* refers to one whose mind is untrained and undisciplined in habits of thought. *Unstable* refers to one whose conduct is not properly established.

2:22 [u] Prov. 26:11 **3:1** [a] 2 Pet. 1:13 **3:2** [b] 2 Pet. 1:21 [c] Jude 17 **3:3** [d] 2 Pet. 2:10 **3:4** [e] Gen. 6:1–7 **3:5** [f] Gen. 1:6, 9 [g] Ps. 24:2; 136:6 **3:6** [h] Gen. 7:11, 12, 21–23 **3:7** [i] 2 Pet. 3:10, 12 [j] [2 Thess. 1:8] **3:8** [k] Ps. 90:4 **3:9** [l] Hab. 2:3 [m] Is. 30:18 [n] Ezek. 33:11 [o] [Rom. 2:4] **3:10** [p] Rev. 3:3; 16:15 [q] Ps. 102:25, 26 **3:11** [r] 1 Pet. 1:15 **3:12** [s] 1 Cor. 1:7, 8 [t] Ps. 50:3 [u] Mic. 1:4 **3:13** [v] Is. 65:17; 66:22 [w] Rev. 21:1 **3:14** [x] 1 Cor. 1:8; 15:58 **3:15** [y] Rom. 2:4 **3:16** [z] 1 Cor. 15:24 [a] 2 Tim. 3:16 **3:17** [b] Mark 13:23 [c] Eph. 4:14 **3:18** [d] Eph. 4:15 [e] 2 Tim. 4:18

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF
JOHN

▶ **AUTHOR:** First John was universally accepted without dispute as authoritative by the early church. The internal evidence supports this tradition because the "we" (apostles), "you" (readers), and "they" (false teachers) phraseology places the writer in the sphere of apostolic eyewitness (1:1–3; 4:14). John's name was well known to the readers, and it was unnecessary for him to mention it. The style and vocabulary of 1 John are so similar to those of the fourth Gospel that most scholars acknowledge these books to be by the same hand. First John was probably written in Ephesus after the Gospel of John, but the date cannot be fixed with certainty.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 89–95 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 1 John 1:3–4

▶ **THEME:** Shortly after the church began, people like the Gnostics continually tried to recast the gospel in their own terms. Gnosticism made a distinction between the material or carnal, which was evil to them, and the spiritual, which was pure. John writes as one who was acquainted with Jesus personally, physically, and spiritually. He wants the reader to take the Christ he knew at face value. John wants his readers to believe the truth of his experience of Jesus and not the philosophical speculation of the Gnostics. In these letters we see the same themes as in John's Gospel—light and darkness, truth and falsehood, life and death, love and hate. John weaves these themes together with a straightforward skill and fatherly care.

What Was Heard, Seen, and Touched

1 That [a]which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have [b]seen with our eyes, [c]which we have looked upon, and [d]our hands have handled, concerning the [e]Word of life— **2**[f]the life [g]was manifested, and we have seen, [h]and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was [i]with the Father and was manifested to us— **3**that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* [j]with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. **4**And these things we write to you [k]that your* joy may be full.

Fellowship with Him and One Another

5[l]This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that [m]God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. **6**[n]If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do

* **1:4** NU-Text and M-Text read *our.*

1:1–4 ***the Word of life.*** These verses emphasize the personal experience of the apostles with the incarnate Word. The memory of Jesus Christ burned in the mind of John as he reflected on the three and one-half years that he and the other disciples were with the Lord. Now he wanted to be sure that the churches under his care enjoyed fellowship with the resurrected Lord and other disciples.

1:2 ***life was manifested.*** The life was not hidden or obscured so that few, if any, could find it. Rather, this life was made known openly and had its origin in God the Father. God had provided truth about Himself in nature and through the prophets of old, but the revelation in His Son (Heb. 1:1–2) is God's finest and clearest presentation of Himself.

1:3 ***have fellowship.*** The idea of this word carries both the thought of a positive relationship that people share and participation in a common interest or goal.

1:5 ***God is light.*** This is God's nature, in His essential being, just as He is Spirit (John 4:24) and love (4:8). Light refers to God's moral character. ***no darkness at all.*** God is holy, untouched by any evil or sin. Because God is light, those who desire fellowship with Him must also be pure.

1:6 ***fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness.*** To walk in darkness means to live contrary to the moral character of God, to live a sinful life. To claim fellowship with God without living a moral life or practicing the truth is to live a lie, since God cannot compromise His holiness to accommodate sin.

1:1 [a] [John 1:1] [b] John 1:14 [c] 2 Pet. 1:16 [d] Luke 24:39 [e] [John 1:1, 4, 14] **1:2** [f] John 1:4 [g] Rom. 16:26 [h] John 21:24 [i] [John 1:1, 18; 16:28] **1:3** [j] 1 Cor. 1:9 **1:4** [k] John 15:11; 16:24 **1:5** [l] 1 John 3:11 [m] [1 Tim. 6:16] **1:6** [n] [1 John 2:9–11]

not practice the truth. 7But if we [o]walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and [p]the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

8If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9If we [q]confess our sins, He is [r]faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to [s]cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10If we say that we have not sinned, we [t]make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, [a]we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2And [b]He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but [c]also for the whole world.

The Test of Knowing Him

3Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a [d]liar, and the truth is not in him. 5But [e]whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected [f]in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6[g]He who says he abides in Him [h]ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

7Brethren,* I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had [i]from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.* 8Again, [j]a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, [k]because the darkness is passing away, and [l]the true light is already shining.

9[m]He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10[n]He who loves his brother abides in the light, and [o]there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11But he who [p]hates his brother is in darkness and [q]walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Their Spiritual State

12 I write to you, little children,
Because [r]your sins are forgiven you
for His name's sake.
13 I write to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him *who is*
[s]from the beginning.
I write to you, young men,
Because you have overcome the
wicked one.
I write to you, little children,
Because you have [t]known the Father.

* **2:7** NU-Text reads *Beloved.* • NU-Text omits *from the beginning.*

1:8–9 *If we confess.* To confess is to agree with God, to admit that we are sinners in need of His mercy. If a believer confesses his or her specific sins to God, He will cleanse all unrighteousness from that person. Forgiveness and cleansing are guaranteed because God is faithful to His promises. Those promises are legitimated because God is just. God can maintain His perfect character and yet forgive us because of the perfect and righteous sacrifice of Jesus, His own Son (2:2).

1:10 *His word is not in us.* A person who denies committing sinful acts does not have the Word of God changing his or her life.

2:1 *My little children . . . that you may not sin.* John's statements about sin (1:8–10) were designed to make believers aware of sin's ever-present danger and to put them on guard against it. According to Greek grammar, the *if* before *anyone sins* carries the added sense of "and it is assumed that we all do." This statement is not an encouragement to sin but a warning to all Christians to be on guard against sinful tendencies.

2:2 *propitiation.* This act brings about the merciful removal of guilt through divine forgiveness. In the Greek Old Testament, the Greek term for propitiation was used for the sacrificial mercy seat on which the high priest placed the blood of the Israelites' sacrifices (Ex. 25:17–22). This practice indicates that God's righteous wrath had to be appeased somehow. God sent His Son and satisfied His own wrath with Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Our sins made it necessary for Jesus to suffer the agonies of the crucifixion; but God demonstrated His love and justice by providing His own Son.

2:3 *we know Him.* The New Testament speaks of knowing God in two senses. One who has trusted Christ knows Him (John 17:3), that is to say, has met Him. One who has previously met the Lord can also come to know Him intimately (Phil. 3:10). In this verse John is talking about knowing the Lord intimately.

2:6 *abides in Him.* Abiding is habitual obedience. It has the idea of settling down in Christ or resting in Him. It is evidenced by a life modeled after Christ. ***ought himself also to walk.*** The admonition to live by the teaching of Jesus reveals that this conformity comes from us. The Christian, as a child of God, ought to obey God because of a sincere desire to do so. It should be a joy to follow in the footsteps of the One who died for us.

2:8 *new commandment.* This refers to love (v. 10). It may be that John is simply repeating the statement of Christ in John 13:34. The command to love reached its truest and fullest expression in the life of Christ. He demonstrated what true love is by coming into our world and giving His life for us.

2:11 *he who hates his brother.* Hating one's brother opposes the teaching of Christ to love one another. The idea that one could hate a brother and yet claim fellowship with God shows the utter darkness that has blinded the Christian to the truth.

1:7 [o] Is. 2:5 [p] [1 Cor. 6:11] **1:9** [q] Prov. 28:13 [r] [Rom. 3:24–26] [s] Ps. 51:2 **1:10** [t] 1 John 5:10 **2:1** [a] Heb. 7:25; 9:24 **2:2** [b] [Rom. 3:25] [c] John 1:29 **2:4** [d] Rom. 3:4 **2:5** [e] John 14:21, 23 [f] [1 John 4:12] **2:6** [g] John 15:4 [h] 1 Pet. 2:21 **2:7** [i] 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:21 **2:8** [j] John 13:34; 15:12 [k] Rom. 13:12 [l] [John 1:9; 8:12; 12:35] **2:9** [m] [1 Cor. 13:2] **2:10** [n] [1 John 3:14] [o] 2 Pet. 1:10 **2:11** [p] [1 John 2:9; 3:15; 4:20] [q] John 12:35 **2:12** [r] [1 Cor. 6:11] **2:13** [s] John 1:1 [t] [Rom. 8:15–17]

14 I have written to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him *who is*
from the beginning.
I have written to you, young men,
Because [u]you are strong, and the
word of God abides in you,
And you have overcome the wicked
one.

Do Not Love the World

15 [v]Do not love the world or the things in
the world. [w]If anyone loves the world, the
love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all
that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh,
[x]the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—
is not of the Father but is of the world.
17 And [y]the world is passing away, and the
lust of it; but he who does the will of God
abides forever.

Deceptions of the Last Hour

18 [z]Little children, [a]it is the last hour; and
as you have heard that [b]the* Antichrist is
coming, [c]even now many antichrists have
come, by which we know [d]that it is the last
hour. 19 [e]They went out from us, but they
were not of us; for [f]if they had been of us,
they would have continued with us; but
they went out [g]that they might be made
manifest, that none of them were of us.
20 But [h]you have an anointing [i]from the
Holy One, and [j]you know all things.* 21 I
have not written to you because you do not
know the truth, but because you know it,
and that no lie is of the truth.
22 [k]Who is a liar but he who denies that
[l]Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who
denies the Father and the Son. 23 [m]Whoever
denies the Son does not have the [n]Father
either; [o]he who acknowledges the Son has
the Father also.

Let Truth Abide in You

24 Therefore let that abide in you [p]which
you heard from the beginning. If what you
heard from the beginning abides in you,
[q]you also will abide in the Son and in the
Father. 25 [r]And this is the promise that He
has promised us—eternal life.
26 These things I have written to you
concerning those who *try to* deceive you.
27 But the [s]anointing which you have re-
ceived from Him abides in you, and [t]you do
not need that anyone teach you; but as the
same anointing [u]teaches you concerning all
things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just
as it has taught you, you will* abide in Him.

The Children of God

28 And now, little children, abide in Him,
that when* He appears, we may have [v]con-
fidence and not be ashamed before Him
at His coming. 29 [w]If you know that He is
righteous, you know that [x]everyone who
practices righteousness is born of Him.
3 Behold [a]what manner of love the Father
has bestowed on us, that [b]we should
be called children of God!* Therefore the
world does not know us,* [c]because it did

*2:18 NU-Text omits *the*. *2:20 NU-Text reads *you all know*. *2:27 NU-Text reads *you abide*. *2:28 NU-Text reads *if*. *3:1 NU-Text adds *And we are*. • M-Text reads *you*.

2:15 *Do not love the world.* These words may be rephrased as "stop loving the world." John's readers were acting in a way that was inconsistent with the relationship with Christ. "World" here is the morally evil system opposed to all that God is and holds dear. In this sense, the "world" is the satanic system opposing Christ's kingdom on this earth (v. 16; 3:1; 4:4; 5:19; John 12:31; Eph. 6:11–12; James 4:4).

2:16 *lust of the flesh . . . lust of the eyes . . . pride of life.* The world is characterized by these three lusts, which have been interpreted as corresponding to the three different ways Eve was tempted in the garden (Gen. 3:6), or the three different temptations Jesus experienced (Luke 4:1–12). However, the correspondences are not close enough to make it certain that John was alluding to either of these. Instead, John was probably making a short list of the different ways believers could be lured away from a loving God. *Lust of the flesh* refers to desires of sinful sensual pleasure. *The lust of the eyes* refers to covetousness or materialism. *The pride of life* refers to being proud about one's position in this world.

2:17 *passing away.* John highlights the brevity of life. To be consumed with this life is to be unprepared for the next.

2:18 *antichrists.* This word is a combination of two Greek words: *anti*, meaning "instead of" or "against"; and *christos*, meaning "anointed one." *Antichrists* most likely means those who seek to take the place of Christ.

2:20 *anointing.* This is a reference to either the Holy Spirit or to Scripture. This unction, or anointing, is the protection that believers have against the false teachers. The true Anointed One, Jesus, also has representatives who are anointed. One of the main heresies the first century church faced was Gnosticism, whose followers claimed to have secret knowledge of the truth that led to salvation. Here John was opposing this teaching by asserting that all believers knew the truth.

2:22–23 *that Jesus is the Christ.* In John's epistles, denying that Jesus came in the flesh is to deny His status as the Anointed One. A person cannot worship God while denying Jesus' full deity and full humanity.

2:28 *ashamed before Him at His coming.* The shame is the result of not having had a lifestyle of obedience when Christ returns.

3:1 *what manner of love.* John stands in amazement of God's love. But the greater amazement and appreciation is for the fact that God's love is expressed to

2:14 [u] Eph. 6:10 **2:15** [v] [Rom. 12:2] [w] James 4:4 **2:16** [x] [Eccl. 5:10, 11] **2:17** [y] 1 Cor. 7:31 **2:18** [z] John 21:5 [a] 1 Pet. 4:7 [b] 2 Thess. 2:3 [c] 2 John 7 [d] 1 Tim. 4:1 **2:19** [e] Deut. 13:13 [f] Matt. 24:24 [g] 1 Cor. 11:19 **2:20** [h] 2 Cor. 1:21 [i] Acts 3:14 [j] [John 16:13] **2:22** [k] 2 John 7 [l] 1 John 4:3 **2:23** [m] John 15:23 [n] John 5:23 [o] 1 John 4:15; 5:1 **2:24** [p] 2 John 5, 6 [q] John 14:23 **2:25** [r] John 3:14–16; 6:40; 17:2, 3 **2:27** [s] [John 14:16; 16:13] [t] [Jer. 31:33] [u] [John 14:16] **2:28** [v] 1 John 3:21; 4:17; 5:14 **2:29** [w] Acts 22:14 [x] 1 John 3:7, 10
3:1 [a] [1 John 4:10] [b] [John 1:12] [c] John 15:18, 21; 16:3

not know Him. 2Beloved, [d]now we are children of God; and [e]it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, [f]we shall be like Him, for [g]we shall see Him as He is. 3[h]And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Sin and the Child of God

4Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and [i]sin is lawlessness. 5And you know [j]that He was manifested [k]to take away our sins, and [l]in Him there is no sin. 6Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

7Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8[m]He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, [n]that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9Whoever has been [o]born of God does not sin, for [p]His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

The Imperative of Love

10In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother. 11For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, [q]that we should love one another, 12not as [r]Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

13Do not marvel, my brethren, if [s]the world hates you. 14We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother* abides in death. 15[t]Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that [u]no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

The Outworking of Love

16[v]By this we know love, [w]because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. 17But [x]whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

18My little children, [y]let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 19And by this we know* [z]that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. 20[a]For if our heart condemns us, God

*3:14 NU-Text omits *his brother.* *3:19 NU-Text reads *we shall know.*

human beings and that Christians are included in His family.

3:2 We Have a New Family—One of the primary benefits of becoming a Christian is that we also become part of Christ's family. The Bible refers to this change as being *born again* (John 3:3). When an individual places his faith in Christ as Savior, he is born again into a new, spiritual, familial relationship with God (Gal. 3:26). He gains God as Father (Eph. 4:6) and other Christians as brothers and sisters (Heb. 3:1). God also adopts us when we become His children (Eph. 1:5). This image implies a dramatic transformation of status from slave to son (Gal. 4:1–5). One is no longer in bondage to the master but becomes a free son possessing all the rights and privileges of sonship. One of these benefits is the right to call God *Abba*, an affectionate term meaning "Father" (Rom. 8:15). A marvelous relationship is possible when one becomes a part of the family of God. As in any family, there are also responsibilities. The Christian must exhibit the family character and grow into spiritual maturity.

3:3 *everyone who has this hope.* Knowing that Christ is morally pure helps a person pursue purity even more.

3:4 *commits sin.* This verse is not referring to occasional sin but a consistent lifestyle of sin. ***lawlessness.*** This is active rebellion against the law.

3:5–6 *Whosoever abides in Him does not sin.* Habitually sinful conduct indicates an absence of fellowship with Christ. Thus, if we claim to be a Christian but sin is our way of life, our status as children of God can legitimately be questioned.

3:8 *destroy the works of the devil.* A person who sins is of the devil in the sense that he is participating in the devil's activity (2:19). Thus John is indicating that it is possible for believers to do that which is of the devil (Mark 8:31–33; James 3:6).

3:10 *children of the devil.* Believers who sin are not expressing their nature as children of God; instead, they are following the devil's pattern.

3:14 *have passed from death to life.* The tense of the verb "have passed" indicates that something experienced in the past has continuing and abiding results in the present. Thus John is saying that Christians, who have experienced Christ's salvation in the past, should demonstrate their salvation by loving their fellow believers in the present.

3:18 *love in word or in tongue.* This phrase means to speak loving words but to stop short of doing anything to prove that love. The opposite of loving in word is loving *in deed and in truth.*

3:20 *our heart condemns us.* This will happen when we recognize that we do not measure up to the standard of love and feel insecure in approaching God. Our conscience may not acknowledge the loving deeds we have done in the power of the Holy Spirit, but God does, and He is superior to our heart. Unlike our conscience, God takes everything into account, including Christ's atoning work for us. God is more compassionate and understanding toward us than we sometimes are toward ourselves.

3:2 [d] [Rom. 8:15, 16] [e] [Rom. 8:18, 19, 23] [f] Rom. 8:29 [g] [Ps. 16:11] **3:3** [h] 1 John 4:17 **3:4** [i] Rom. 4:15 **3:5** [j] 1 John 1:2; 3:8 [k] John 1:29 [l] [2 Cor. 5:21] **3:8** [m] Matt. 13:38 [n] Luke 10:18 **3:9** [o] John 1:3; 3:3 [p] 1 Pet. 1:23 **3:11** [q] [John 13:34; 15:12] **3:12** [r] Gen. 4:4, 8 **3:13** [s] [John 15:18; 17:14] **3:15** [t] Matt. 5:21 [u] [Gal. 5:20, 21] **3:16** [v] [John 3:16] [w] John 10:11; 15:13 **3:17** [x] Deut. 15:7 **3:18** [y] Ezek. 33:31 **3:19** [z] John 18:37 **3:20** [a] [1 Cor. 4:4, 5]

is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 21Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, [b]we have confidence toward God. 22And [c]whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments [d]and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. 23And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ [e]and love one another, as He gave us* commandment.

The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error

24Now [f]he who keeps His commandments [g]abides in Him, and He in him. And [h]by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

4 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but [a]test the spirits, whether they are of God; because [b]many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2By this you know the Spirit of God: [c]Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3and every spirit that does not confess that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

4You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than [d]he who is in the world. 5[e]They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and [f]the world hears them. 6We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. [g]By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Knowing God Through Love

7[h]Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who [i]loves is born of God and knows God. 8He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9[j]In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten [k]Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10In this is love, [l]not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son [m]*to be* the propitiation for our sins. 11Beloved, [n]if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Seeing God Through Love

12[o]No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. 13[p]By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14And [q]we have seen and testify that [r]the Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world. 15[s]Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and [t]he who abides in love abides in God, and God [u]in him.

The Consummation of Love

17Love has been perfected among us in this: that [v]we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in

* **3:23** M-Text omits *us*. * **4:3** NU-Text omits *that* and *Christ has come in the flesh*.

3:24 We Have a Witness—Some of the benefits of being a believer are best described as being spiritual or even mystical. The whole idea of abiding in Christ while He abides in us is one of those concepts. Abide is best understood as "remain with." God doesn't come and go in our lives. He carries on a permanent relationship with us because He is always there for us and in us. We sense His presence primarily through the work of the Holy Spirit, whose role it is to stand beside us and comfort us. It happens in our hearts and minds and is largely invisible. Yet, it is also what most accurately describes the most important aspect of our day-to-day life as Christians. As we abide in Christ, He nourishes us spiritually the same way a vine gives nourishment to its branches (John 15:16).

4:1 *false prophets.* These persons obey evil spirits. A true prophet is one who receives direct revelation from God. A false prophet claims to have received direct revelation from God but in fact promotes erroneous ideas.

4:2 *Christ has come in the flesh.* This test seems to be aimed at Docetists. They taught that Christ did not have a physical body. The test may also be aimed at the followers of Cerinthus who claimed that Jesus and "the Christ" were two separate beings, one physical and the other spiritual. In this letter, John is careful to use the name and the title of Jesus Christ together to clearly express the complete union of the two titles in one person.

4:4 *he who is in the world.* This phrase refers to the devil.

4:8 *does not know God.* The knowledge of God here refers to an intimate, experiential knowledge (v. 6; 2:3) of God, rather than just information about God. John never says that those who do not love are not born of God (v. 7). Yet it is impossible to know God intimately without loving others, for God is love. Anyone in whom God dwells reflects His character. To claim to know God while failing to love others is to make a false claim (1:6).

4:13 *that we abide in Him, and He in us.* Mutual abiding refers to the fellowship we have with God as a result of our salvation. The evidence that God abides in us and we in Him is the experience of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. In the remainder of this passage, John explains how a believer can know that the Spirit is working in his or her life.

4:15 *Whoever confesses.* To be a Christian, a person must believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

3:21 [b] [1 John 2:28; 5:14] **3:22** [c] Ps. 34:15 [d] John 8:29 **3:23** [e] Matt. 22:39 **3:24** [f] John 14:23 [g] John 14:21; 17:21 [h] Rom. 8:9, 14, 16 **4:1** [a] 1 Cor. 14:29 [b] Matt. 24:5 **4:2** [c] 1 Cor. 12:3 **4:4** [d] John 14:30; 16:11 **4:5** [e] John 3:31 [f] John 15:19; 17:14 **4:6** [g] [1 Cor. 2:12–16] **4:7** [h] 1 John 3:10, 11, 23 [i] 1 Thess. 4:9 **4:9** [j] Rom. 5:8 [k] John 3:16 **4:10** [l] Titus 3:5 [m] 1 John 2:2 **4:11** [n] Matt. 18:33 **4:12** [o] John 1:18 **4:13** [p] John 14:20 **4:14** [q] John 1:14 [r] John 3:17; 4:42 **4:15** [s] [Rom. 10:9] **4:16** [t] [1 John 3:24] [u] [John 14:23] **4:17** [v] 1 John 2:28

this world. 18There is no fear in love; but
perfect love casts out fear, because fear in-
volves torment. But he who fears has not
been made perfect in love. 19[w]We love Him*
because He first loved us.

Obedience by Faith

20[x]If someone says, "I love God," and
hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who
does not love his brother whom he has
seen, how can* he love God [y]whom he
has not seen? 21And [z]this commandment
we have from Him: that he who loves God
must love his brother also.

5 Whoever believes that [a]Jesus is the
Christ is [b]born of God, and everyone
who loves Him who begot also loves him
who is begotten of Him. 2By this we know
that we love the children of God, when we
love God and [c]keep His commandments.
3[d]For this is the love of God, that we keep
His commandments. And [e]His command-
ments are not burdensome. 4For [f]whatever
is born of God overcomes the world. And
this is the victory that [g]has overcome the
world—our* faith. 5Who is he who over-
comes the world, but [h]he who believes that
Jesus is the Son of God?

The Certainty of God's Witness

6This is He who came [i]by water and
blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water,
but by water and blood. [j]And it is the Spirit
who bears witness, because the Spirit is
truth. 7For there are three that bear witness
in heaven: the Father, [k]the Word, and the
Holy Spirit; [l]and these three are one. 8And
there are three that bear witness on earth:*
[m]the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and
these three agree as one.

9If we receive [n]the witness of men, the
witness of God is greater; [o]for this is the
witness of God which* He has testified of
His Son. 10He who believes in the Son of
God [p]has the witness in himself; he who
does not believe God [q]has made Him a
liar, because he has not believed the tes-
timony that God has given of His Son.
11And this is the testimony: that God has
given us eternal life, and this life is in
His Son. 12[r]He who has the Son has life;
he who does not have the Son of God
does not have life. 13These things I have
written to you who believe in the name of
the Son of God, that you may know that
you have eternal life,* and that you may
continue to believe in the name of the Son
of God.

Confidence and Compassion in Prayer

14Now this is the confidence that we
have in Him, that [s]if we ask anything ac-
cording to His will, He hears us. 15And if
we know that He hears us, whatever we
ask, we know that we have the petitions
that we have asked of Him.

16If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin
which does not *lead* to death, he will ask,
and [t]He will give him life for those who
commit sin not *leading* to death. [u]There is
sin *leading* to death. [v]I do not say that he
should pray about that. 17[w]All unrighteous-
ness is sin, and there is sin not *leading* to
death.

Knowing the True—Rejecting the False

18We know that [x]whoever is born of God
does not sin; but he who has been born of

* **4:19** NU-Text omits *Him.* * **4:20** NU-Text reads *he cannot.* * **5:4** M-Text reads *your.* * **5:8** NU-Text and M-Text omit the words from *in heaven* (verse 7) through *on earth* (verse 8). Only four or five very late manuscripts contain these words in Greek. * **5:9** NU-Text reads *God, that.* * **5:13** NU-Text omits the rest of this verse.

5:1 *born of God.* This condition happens when one believes or trusts in Jesus Christ. Only correct, sincere belief produces spiritual birth. This birth is reflected in love for others who also have been born into the family of God (2:3–11).

5:6 *by water and blood.* This phrase has been interpreted at least four ways: (1) as Jesus' baptism and death; (2) as His incarnation; (3) as the water and blood that flowed from His side on the cross; and (4) as the baptism of the believer and the Lord's Supper. Most scholars favor the first interpretation. John is correcting the false teacher, Cerinthus, who claimed that the Spirit came on Jesus at His baptism but left Him before His death (4:2–3).

5:11 *this is the testimony.* God's witness or testimony is that He has given us eternal life in His Son. Eternal life is not a wage to be earned, but a gift to be received from God (Rom. 6:23).

5:14–15 *according to His will.* The key to knowing that God hears is to pray this way.

5:16–17 *There is sin leading to death.* This phrase may refer to blaspheming the Holy Spirit, rejecting Christ as Savior, rejecting the humanity or deity of Jesus, a specific sin such as murder (3:12,15), or a life of habitual sin. Whatever it is, the sin seems to be a flagrant violation of the sanctity of the Christian community (Acts 5:1–11; 1 Cor. 5:5; 11:30). In other words, John is encouraging us to help fellow believers who are straying; we can be the tools God uses to restore an erring brother or sister to the true fellowship.

5:18–20 *We know.* This phrase introduces three concluding absolute truths. The general idea of this concluding section is that a proper relationship with God

4:19 *w* 1 John 4:10 **4:20** *x* [1 John 2:4] *y* 1 John 4:12 **4:21** *z* [Matt. 5:43, 44; 22:39] **5:1** *a* 1 John 2:22; 4:2, 15 *b* John 1:13 **5:2** *c* John 15:10 **5:3** *d* John 14:15 *e* Matt. 11:30; 23:4 **5:4** *f* John 16:33 *g* 1 John 2:13; 4:4 **5:5** *h* 1 Cor. 15:57 **5:6** *i* John 1:31–34 *j* [John 14:17] **5:7** *k* [John 1:1] *l* John 10:30 **5:8** *m* John 15:26 **5:9** *n* John 5:34, 37; 8:17, 18 *o* [Matt. 3:16, 17] **5:10** *p* [Rom. 8:16] *q* John 3:18, 33 **5:12** *r* [John 3:15, 36; 6:47; 17:2, 3] **5:14** *s* [1 John 2:28; 3:21, 22] **5:16** *t* Job 42:8 *u* [Matt. 12:31] *v* Jer. 7:16; 14:11 **5:17** *w* 1 John 3:4 **5:18** *x* [1 Pet. 1:23]

God [y]keeps himself,* and the wicked one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are of God, and [z]the whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one.

20 And we know that the [a]Son of God has come and [b]has given us an understanding, [c]that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. [d]This is the true God [e]and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

* **5:18** NU-Text reads *him.*

results in confidence of our position in Christ with a hostile world.

5:21 *idols.* This term may refer to literal idols, foods sacrificed to idols, false ideas in contrast to God's truth, or doctrines of false teachers. John has just reminded his readers of the true God (v. 20). It is appropriate that he closes by exhorting them to stay away from false gods.

5:18 [y] James 1:27 **5:19** [z] Gal. 1:4 **5:20** [a] 1 John 4:2 [b] Luke 24:45 [c] John 17:3 [d] Is. 9:6 [e] 1 John 5:11, 12

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF
JOHN

▶ **AUTHOR:** Second John was not widely circulated at first because of its brevity and subject matter. Its strong resemblance to the tone and style of 1 John and the Fourth Gospel support the early tradition that John was the author of this epistle sometime after A.D. 90.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 90–95 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** 2 John 9–10

▶ **THEME:** The addressee of 2 John is a woman in a local church that apparently had a strong friendship with John. The apostle writes to warn her about showing hospitality to false teachers. He cautions her against unwittingly aiding these teachers who were sowing seeds of heresy and hurting the church.

Greeting the Elect Lady

The Elder,

To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known [a]the truth, **2**because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:

3[b]Grace, mercy, *and* peace will be with you* from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Walk in Christ's Commandments

4I [c]rejoiced greatly that I have found *some* of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father. **5**And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: [d]that we love one another. **6**[e]This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that [f]as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

Beware of Antichrist Deceivers

7For [g]many deceivers have gone out into the world [h]who do not confess Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. [i]This is a deceiver and an antichrist. **8**[j]Look to yourselves, [k]that we* do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we* may receive a full reward.

9[l]Whoever transgresses* and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does

*3 NU-Text and M-Text read *us*. *8 NU-Text reads *you*. • NU-Text reads *you*. *9 NU-Text reads *goes ahead*.

1 ***The Elder.*** This is probably the apostle John. The title can refer either to an old man, an older person deserving respect, or a church leader. ***the elect lady.*** This may be a specific person, or the phrase may be a figurative description of the local church.

4 ***walking in truth.*** This phrase means having an authentic relationship with God. Our walk with the Lord, if genuine, must be based upon His word.

6 ***His commandments.*** God's love is the basis of His desire for our obedience, and it is the reason He has revealed His will in His word. We prove our obedience to Christ by demonstrating love toward one another. Love is an unlimited resource readily available to us, and it is tremendously effective in furthering the work of Christ.

7 ***coming in the flesh.*** These words refer to the Incarnation, the fact that Jesus is the God-man. The humanity of Jesus provides a test by which false teachers can be identified. The Gnostic heresy, against which John wrote in 1 and 2 John, included a denial of the physical body of Christ. People who deny the physical reality of Jesus are not Christians, but antichrists.

8 ***Look to yourselves.*** Being seduced by false teachers is one way that Christians can lose their reward at the judgment. With this is mind, John writes that the reason to guard against deceivers is our own desire not to lose our reward at the judgment seat of Christ.

9 ***transgresses.*** This phrase has the strong sense of running too far ahead. Departure from Christ into doctrinal error indicates that a person does not have God.

1 [a] Col. 1:5 **3** [b] 1 Tim. 1:2 **4** [c] 3 John 3, 4 **5** [d] [John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17] **6** [e] 1 John 2:5; 5:3 [f] 1 John 2:24 **7** [g] 1 John 2:19; 4:1 [h] 1 John 4:2 [i] 1 John 2:22 **8** [j] Mark 13:9 [k] Gal. 3:4 **9** [l] John 7:16; 8:31

not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10If anyone comes to you and [m]does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

John's Farewell Greeting

12[n]Having many things to write to you, I did not wish *to do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, [o]that our joy may be full.

13[p]The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

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10 ***this doctrine.*** Jesus is completely human and completely divine. A Christian should not only refuse to receive false teachers in the sense of supporting them while they visit the community, a Christian should also avoid appearing to endorse their teachings. The proper response to deceivers is to reject them as unbelievers. This shows how seriously we should take the Scriptures and how careful we should be in evaluating the teachings of everyone.

10 *m* Rom. 16:17 **12** *n* 3 John 13, 14 *o* John 17:13
13 *p* 1 Pet. 5:13

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF
JOHN

▶ **AUTHOR:** Much like 2 John, this letter had a very limited circulation in the early church, but was accepted as authoritative on account of its apostolic authorship. Its style and vocabulary strongly resemble that of John's Gospel and other epistles.

▶ **TIME:** C. A.D. 90–95 ▶ **KEY VERSE:** 3 John 11

▶ **THEME:** Third John has two main purposes. The first is to commend Gaius for being hospitable to itinerant missionaries. The second is to advise Gaius about Diotrephes, a man in the church who refuses to help the same kind of missionaries and who even gossips about them.

Greeting to Gaius

The Elder,

To the beloved Gaius, [a]whom I love in truth:

2Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. 3For I [b]rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you walk in the truth. 4I have no greater [c]joy than to hear that [d]my children walk in truth.*

Gaius Commended for Generosity

5Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and* for strangers, 6who have borne witness of your love before the church. *If* you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, 7because they went forth for His name's sake, [e]taking nothing from the Gentiles. 8We therefore ought to [f]receive* such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

Diotrephes and Demetrius

9I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. 10Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, [g]prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church.

11Beloved, [h]do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. [i]He who does good is of God, but* he who does evil has not seen [j]God.

12Demetrius [k]has a *good* testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, [l]and you know that our testimony is true.

Farewell Greeting

13[m]I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; 14but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face.

Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

* **4** NU-Text reads *the truth.* * **5** NU-Text adds *especially.* * **8** NU-Text reads *support.* * **11** NU-Text and M-Text omit *but.*

2 ***may prosper . . . and be in health.*** John's greeting may imply that Gaius was physically weak though spiritually strong. More probably John is simply following the pattern of greetings common to Greek letters.

4 ***my children.*** This is a description Paul uses of those he has led to saving faith in Christ (1 Cor. 4:14–17) and may indicate that Gaius was one of John's converts. It may also be a term John uses to describe those under his pastoral care as reflected in 1 John 2:1,12,18; 3:7,18; 4:4; 5:21.

5–12 ***you do faithfully.*** In these verses, John affirms Gaius' responsibility to assist Demetrius despite the opposition of Diotrephes and his expulsion of those who receive traveling missionaries.

7 ***Gentiles.*** In this case the term refers to unbelievers, not to Gentile Christians. The majority of Christians in the churches of Asia Minor were Gentile converts rather than Jewish.

11 ***has not seen God.*** Our sin is a result of a faulty vision of God. Therefore, the Scriptures encourage us to look at Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:16–18; Heb. 12:2–3), for the day when we see Him perfectly will be the day that we will be like Him (1 John 3:2–3).

12 ***from the truth itself.*** Demetrius' life measured up to the teaching of Scripture and Christ's commands. His conduct matched his theology.

1 [a] 2 John 1 **3** [b] 2 John 4 **4** [c] 1 Thess. 2:19, 20 [d] [1 Cor. 4:15] **7** [e] 1 Cor. 9:12, 15 **8** [f] Matt. 10:40 **10** [g] Prov. 10:8, 10 **11** [h] Ps. 34:14; 37:27 [i] [1 John 2:29; 3:10] [j] [1 John 3:10] **12** [k] 1 Tim. 3:7 [l] John 19:35; 21:24 **13** [m] 2 John 12

THE EPISTLE OF
JUDE

▶ **AUTHOR:** In spite of its limited subject matter and size, Jude was accepted as authentic and quoted by early church fathers. It is unlikely that the author is the apostle Jude (Luke 6:16), but rather Jude the brother of Jesus and James (called Judas in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3). Because of the silence of the New Testament and tradition concerning Jude's later years, we cannot know where or when this epistle was written.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 66–80 ▶ **KEY VERSE:** Jude 3

▶ **THEME:** Jude's letter is hard-hitting, short, and right to the point. False teachers are on the loose in the church and Jude wants to make sure his readers understand the destructive implications of their teaching. He urges Christians to resist these false teachers and to defend the faith and the body of truth received from the apostles that they have come to know and believe. He finishes by reminding them of the hope they have in knowing Christ is coming again.

Greeting to the Called

Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and [a]brother of James,

To those who are [b]called, sanctified* by God the Father, and [c]preserved in Jesus Christ:

2 Mercy, [d]peace, and love be multiplied to you.

Contend for the Faith

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you [e]concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting [f]you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God* and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Old and New Apostates

5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that [g]the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; 7 as [h]Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 [i]Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and [j]speak evil

* **1** NU-Text reads *beloved.* * **4** NU-Text omits *God.*

2 ***peace.*** This is the state of a person who rests in God completely for salvation and protection.

3 ***common salvation.*** Jude intended to write a more general doctrinal letter, but the present crisis demanded this short, pointed attack on doctrinal error.

4 ***turn the grace of our God into lewdness.*** The teaching of grace can be dangerous when perverted by false teachers or carnal people who believe that because they have been saved by grace they may live as they please (Rom. 6:1–2).

5 ***destroyed those who did not believe.*** The Israelites of the Exodus had a magnificent beginning in Egypt but a disastrous ending in the wilderness. That we have begun with the Lord does not mean that we will have the glorious conclusion we might have envisioned at the beginning of our salvation journey. The false believers who had infiltrated God's people would be judged, just like the false believers who rejected God in the wilderness (Num. 25:1–9).

6 ***angels.*** These are not holy angels of God. Instead these angels could be those who had previously fallen with Satan. Some think that these angels are "the sons of God" of Genesis 6:2, who took on human form and married women before the flood.

8 ***reject authority.*** The false teachers even despised those who were placed in positions of authority in local congregations. They not only preferred error to truth but also demeaned and rejected those who taught the truth.

1 [a] Acts 1:13 [b] Rom. 1:7 [c] John 17:11, 12 **2** [d] 1 Pet. 1:2 **3** [e] Titus 1:4 [f] Phil. 1:27 **5** [g] 1 Cor. 10:5–10 **7** [h] Gen. 19:24 **8** [i] 2 Pet. 2:10 [j] Ex. 22:28

of dignitaries. 9 Yet Michael the archangel,
in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not
bring against him a reviling accusation,
but said, [k]"The Lord rebuke you!" 10 But
these speak evil of whatever they do not
know; and whatever they know naturally,
like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they
have gone in the way [m]of Cain, [n]have run
greedily in the error of Balaam for profit,
and perished [o]in the rebellion of Korah.

Apostates Depraved and Doomed

12 These are spots in your love feasts,
while they feast with you without fear,
serving *only* themselves. *They are* clouds
without water, carried about* by the winds;
late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead,
pulled up by the roots; 13 [p]raging waves of
the sea, [q]foaming up their own shame;
wandering stars [r]for whom is reserved the
blackness of darkness forever.

14 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam,
prophesied about these men also, saying,
"Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment
on all, to convict all who are ungodly
among them of all their ungodly deeds
which they have committed in an ungodly
way, and of all the [s]harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Apostates Predicted

16 These are grumblers, complainers,
walking according to their own lusts; and
they [t]mouth great swelling *words*, [u]flattering people to gain advantage. 17 [v]But
you, beloved, remember the words which
were spoken before by the apostles of our
Lord Jesus Christ: 18 how they told you
that [w]there would be mockers in the last
time who would walk according to their
own ungodly lusts. 19 These are sensual
persons, who cause divisions, not having
the Spirit.

Maintain Your Life with God

20 But you, beloved, [x]building yourselves
up on your most holy faith, [y]praying in the
Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love
of God, [z]looking for the mercy of our Lord
Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And on some have compassion, making a distinction;* 23 but [a]others save with
fear, [b]pulling *them* out of the fire,* hating
even [c]the garment defiled by the flesh.

Glory to God

24 [d]Now to Him who is able to keep you*
from stumbling,
And [e]to present *you* faultless
Before the presence of His glory with
exceeding joy,
25 To God our Savior,*
Who alone is wise,*
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,*
Both now and forever.
Amen.

* **12** NU-Text and M-Text read *along.* * **22** NU-Text reads *who are doubting* (or *making distinctions*). * **23** NU-Text adds *and on some have mercy with fear* and omits *with fear* in first clause. * **24** M-Text reads *them.* * **25** NU-Text reads *To the only God our Savior.* • NU-Text omits *Who … is wise* and adds *Through Jesus Christ our Lord.* • NU-Text adds *Before all time.*

9 *disputed about the body of Moses.* Jude's description here is probably taken from an apocryphal book called *The Assumption of Moses,* written in the first century A.D. There is no record in the Bible itself of the archangel's encounter with Satan, or a detailed account of Moses' body.

11 *they have gone in the way of Cain.* The heretics are compared to three Old Testament failures. Cain did not place his faith in the Lord. The "way of Cain" is the way of pride and self-righteousness (Gen. 4:3–8; Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12). ***Balaam.*** He was the epitome of the sin of greed (Num. 31:16). ***Korah.*** This was the Levite Korah (Num. 16:1–3,31–35) who resented the prominent positions of Moses and Aaron as God's representatives. The Lord brought judgment on him and his followers for rebelling against those He had placed in authority.

13 *raging waves . . . foaming . . . wandering stars.* These godless people put on a great show but lacked any substance. They boasted of liberty but placed the people of God in bondage to sin (2 Pet. 2:19). After they had done their evil deeds and made their profits, they, like wandering stars, moved on to other places to exploit God's people again.

15 *ungodly.* This word is repeated four times, making the verse one of the most striking in the letter. In view of the wicked nature of evil persons, how could the church allow them to stay in their midst?

18 *there would be mockers.* One of the main tactics that the false teachers used to gain credibility was to tear down godly leaders.

22–23 *some have compassion.* We have certain obligations to other believers. First, we need to show compassion to those in any kind of spiritual or physical need. Second, we need to use discernment in helping our brothers and sisters in the church. Some will require tender care and patience to help them grow in Christ. With others we may need to use drastic action to rescue them from the temptations of sin. ***hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*** This is a metaphor for staying wary of sin—as Paul says, "considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

24 *faultless.* This is a Greek word used of sacrificial animals that had no blemish and thus were fit to be offered to God. Only God can save us, cleanse us from our sins, and present us to Himself as faultless, for God is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

9 [k] Zech. 3:2 **10** [l] 2 Pet. 2:12 **11** [m] Gen. 4:3–8 [n] 2 Pet. 2:15 [o] Num. 16:1–3, 31–35 **13** [p] Is. 57:20 [q] [Phil. 3:19] [r] 2 Pet. 2:17 **15** [s] 1 Sam. 2:3 **16** [t] 2 Pet. 2:18 [u] Prov. 28:21 **17** [v] 2 Pet. 3:2 **18** [w] [1 Tim. 4:1] **20** [x] Col. 2:7 [y] [Rom. 8:26] **21** [z] Titus 2:13 **23** [a] Rom. 11:14 [b] Amos 4:11 [c] [Zech. 3:4, 5] **24** [d] [Eph. 3:20] [e] Col. 1:22

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

▶ **AUTHOR:** The style, symmetry, and plan of Revelation show that it was written by one author, four times named "John" (Rev. 1:1,4,9; 22:8). Because of its contents and its address to seven churches, Revelation quickly circulated and became widely known and accepted in the early church. From the beginning, Revelation was considered an authentic work of the apostle John, the same John who wrote the Gospel and Epistles. Revelation was written at a time when Roman hostility to Christianity was erupting into overt persecution. It is likely that John wrote this book in A.D. 95 or 96 when the severe persecution of Christians began under the emperor Domitian.

▶ **TIME:** c. A.D. 95–96 ▶ **KEY VERSES:** Rev. 19:11–15

▶ **THEME:** John wrote this book late in his life while in exile on the island of Patmos off the coast of Asia. It is safe to say that no book of the Bible has generated more theories of interpretation over the last two millennia. In this context probably one of the best approaches to interpreting and understanding Revelation is to concentrate on the major themes such as worship. When the reader does that, one finds great comfort and assurance in the book. Many scholars think the purpose of the book is to provide comfort in the midst of persecution and difficult times, as the form of the book is in the tradition of Jewish apocalyptic literature that is designed to communicate hope through symbolic imagery.

Introduction and Benediction

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, [a]which God gave Him to show His servants—
things which must shortly take place. And
[b]He sent and signified *it* by His angel to
His servant John, **2**[c]who bore witness to
the word of God, and to the testimony of
Jesus Christ, to all things [d]that he saw.
3[e]Blessed *is* he who reads and those who
hear the words of this prophecy, and keep
those things which are written in it; for [f]the
time *is* near.

Greeting the Seven Churches

4John, to the seven churches which are
in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him [g]who
is and [h]who was and who is to come, [i]and
from the seven Spirits who are before His
throne, **5**and from Jesus Christ, [j]the faith-
ful [k]witness, the [l]firstborn from the dead,
and [m]the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him [n]who loved us [o]and washed* us
from our sins in His own blood, **6**and has
[p]made us kings* and priests to His God and
Father, [q]to Him *be* glory and dominion for-
ever and ever. Amen.

7Behold, He is coming with [r]clouds, and
every eye will see Him, even [s]they who

* **1:5** NU-Text reads *loves us and freed;* M-Text reads *loves us and washed.* * **1:6** NU-Text and M-Text read *a kingdom.*

1:1 ***Revelation.*** The word "revelation," which means "unveiling," or "disclosure," indicates that this book is a type of literature known as *apocalyptic literature,* or literature which reveals hidden things. ***of Jesus Christ.*** This revelation is both from Jesus Christ and about Him. ***John.*** John is the human writer, and Jesus is the divine Author.

1:3 ***Blessed.*** The word "blessed" means "spiritually happy." Even though some of the words of this book speak of terrifying and solemn times, it is a blessing to know how thoroughly the Lord holds all time and all times in His hands. Those who take time to read and try to understand this book will find themselves blessed by the hope of heaven and by the nearness of our Lord and Savior.

1:4 ***the seven churches.*** The seven churches are in the Roman province of Asia, which today is southwestern Turkey. Their names are given in order going clockwise from the southwest.

1:5 ***firstborn from the dead.*** This phrase refers to the resurrection of Christ, the first to come back from the dead. This is the basis of the hope of resurrection held by Christians (1 Cor. 15:20–24).

1:7 ***coming with clouds . . . every eye.*** "Coming with clouds" recalls Daniel's vision of the Son of Man (Dan.

1:1 [a] John 3:32 [b] Rev. 22:6 **1:2** [c] 1 Cor. 1:6 [d] 1 John 1:1 **1:3** [e] Luke 11:28 [f] James 5:8 **1:4** [g] Ex. 3:14 [h] John 1:1 [i] [Is. 11:2] **1:5** [j] John 8:14 [k] Is. 55:4 [l] [Col. 1:18] [m] Rev. 17:14 [n] John 13:34 [o] Heb. 9:14 **1:6** [p] 1 Pet. 2:5, 9 [q] 1 Tim. 6:16 **1:7** [r] Matt. 24:30 [s] Zech. 12:10–14

pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.
8[t]"I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End,"* says the Lord,* [u]"who is and who was and who is to come, the [v]Almighty."

Vision of the Son of Man

9I, John, both* your brother and [w]companion in the tribulation and [x]kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10[y]I was in the Spirit on [z]the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me [a]a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and,* "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia:* to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."
12Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned [b]I saw seven golden lampstands, 13[c]and in the midst of the seven lampstands [d]*One* like the Son of Man, [e]clothed with a garment down to the feet and [f]girded about the chest with a golden band. 14His head and [g]hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and [h]His eyes like a flame of fire; 15[i]His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and [j]His voice as the sound of many waters; 16[k]He had in His right hand seven stars, [l]out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, [m]and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. 17And [n]when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But [o]He laid His right hand on me, saying to me,* "Do not be afraid; [p]I am the First and the Last. 18[q]I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, [r]I am alive forevermore. Amen. And [s]I have the keys of Hades and of Death. 19Write* the things which you have [t]seen, [u]and the things which are, [v]and the things which will take place after this. 20The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are [w]the angels of the seven churches, and [x]the seven lampstands which you saw* are the seven churches.

The Loveless Church

2 "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,
'These things says [a]He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, [b]who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2[c]"I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And [d]you have tested those [e]who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have [f]not become weary. 4Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. 5Remember therefore from

* **1:8** NU-Text and M-Text omit *the Beginning and the End.* • NU-Text and M-Text add *God.*
* **1:9** NU-Text and M-Text omit *both.* * **1:11** NU-Text and M-Text omit *I am* through third *and.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *which are in Asia.* * **1:17** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me.*
* **1:19** NU-Text and M-Text read *Therefore, write.*
* **1:20** NU-Text and M-Text omit *which you saw.*

7:13; Matt. 24:30) and the ascension of Christ (Acts 1:11). "Every eye" indicates that Christ will be universally visible at His second coming.
1:8 *the Alpha and the Omega.* The Lord's description of Himself as the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet means that He is the beginning and the end of all creation.
1:9 *tribulation.* The apostle Paul said there would be many tribulations (Acts 14:22), and John identifies both the suffering of others and his own exile on Patmos as part of the "troubles." The great tribulation is the time when the wrath of God is poured out on the earth (Mark 13:14–23); that time is explained in greater detail in this book.
1:12 *seven golden lampstands.* The seven lampstands represent the seven churches.
1:13 *One like the Son of Man.* The term "Son of Man" echoes Daniel 7:13. Comparisons of these two passages, along with Jesus' common use of the name "Son of Man" for Himself, indicate that Christ is the subject of verses 12–18.
1:14 *white.* The white appearance is parallel to the description of the "Ancient of Days" in Daniel 7:9, and of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:2). The similarity of descriptions demonstrates the purity and eternality of both God the Father and God the Son. Overcoming believers will also be "clothed in white garments" (3:5; 19:8) in Christ's presence, symbolizing purity.
1:16 *sharp two-edged sword.* The sword coming out of Christ's mouth is symbolic of the judging power of the Word of God (Is. 49:2; Heb. 4:12).
1:18 *keys of Hades and of Death.* Christ has authority over those who have died physically and over their present resting place, which will be emptied and destroyed at the time of the great white throne judgment (20:11–15). Hades is the place where the dead rest.
1:20 *angels.* Angels are created spirit beings who minister to believers (Heb. 1:14).
2:1 *Ephesus.* Ephesus was the most important city in Asia Minor when Revelation was written. It was the center of the worship of Artemis (or Diana; Acts 19:28), a goddess of fertility. It was a strategic commercial center and a great seaport.
2:5 *Remember.* A generation earlier the same church was commended for love (Eph. 1:15; 6:24).

1:8 [t] Is. 41:4 [u] Rev. 4:8; 11:17 [v] Is. 9:6 **1:9** [w] Phil. 1:7 [x] [2 Tim. 2:12] **1:10** [y] Acts 10:10 [z] Acts 20:7 [a] Rev. 4:1 **1:12** [b] Ex. 25:37 **1:13** [c] Rev. 2:1 [d] Ezek. 1:26 [e] Dan. 10:5 [f] Rev. 15:6 **1:14** [g] Dan. 7:9 [h] Dan. 10:6 **1:15** [i] Ezek. 1:7 [j] Ezek. 1:24; 43:2 **1:16** [k] Rev. 1:20; 2:1; 3:1 [l] Is. 49:2 [m] Matt. 17:2 **1:17** [n] Ezek. 1:28 [o] Dan. 8:18; 10:10, 12 [p] Is. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12 **1:18** [q] Rom. 6:9 [r] Rev. 4:9 [s] Ps. 68:20 **1:19** [t] Rev. 1:9–18 [u] Rev. 2:1 [v] Rev. 4:1 **1:20** [w] Rev. 2:1 [x] Zech. 4:2 **2:1** [a] Rev. 1:16 [b] Rev. 1:13 **2:2** [c] Ps. 1:6 [d] 1 John 4:1 [e] 2 Cor. 11:13 **2:3** [f] Gal. 6:9

where you have fallen; repent and do the
first works, [g]or else I will come to you
quickly and remove your lampstand from
its place—unless you repent. 6But this you
have, that you hate the deeds of the Nico-
laitans, which I also hate.

7[h]"He who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches. To him who
overcomes I will give [i]to eat from [j]the tree
of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise
of God."'

The Persecuted Church

8"And to the angel of the church in
Smyrna write,

'These things says [k]the First and the
Last, who was dead, and came to life: 9"I
know your works, tribulation, and poverty
(but you are [l]rich); and *I know* the blasphe-
my of [m]those who say they are Jews and
are not, [n]but *are* a synagogue of Satan.
10[o]Do not fear any of those things which
you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil
is about to throw *some* of you into prison,
that you may be tested, and you will have
tribulation ten days. [p]Be faithful until
death, and I will give you [q]the crown of life.

11[r]"He who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches. He who
overcomes shall not be hurt by [s]the second
death."'

The Compromising Church

12"And to the angel of the church in Per-
gamos write,

'These things says [t]He who has the
sharp two-edged sword: 13"I know your
works, and where you dwell, where Satan's
throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name,
and did not deny My faith even in the days
in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr,
who was killed among you, where Satan
dwells. 14But I have a few things against
you, because you have there those who
hold the doctrine of [u]Balaam, who taught
Balak to put a stumbling block before the
children of Israel, [v]to eat things sacrificed
to idols, [w]and to commit sexual immorality.
15Thus you also have those who hold the
doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I
hate.* 16Repent, or else I will come to you
quickly and [x]will fight against them with
the sword of My mouth.

17"He who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches. To him who
overcomes I will give some of the hidden
[y]manna to eat. And I will give him a white
stone, and on the stone [z]a new name writ-
ten which no one knows except him who
receives *it*."'

The Corrupt Church

18"And to the angel of the church in Thy-
atira write,

'These things says the Son of God, [a]who
has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet
like fine brass: 19[b]"I know your works, love,
service, faith,* and your patience; and *as*
for your works, the last *are* more than the
first. 20Nevertheless I have a few things
against you, because you allow* that wom-
an* [c]Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet-
ess, to teach and seduce* My servants [d]to
commit sexual immorality and eat things

* **2:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *likewise* for *which thing I hate.* * **2:19** NU-Text and M-Text read *faith, service.* * **2:20** NU-Text and M-Text read *I have against you that you tolerate.* • M-Text reads *your wife Jezebel.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *and teaches and seduces.*

2:6 *Nicolaitans.* The Nicolaitans were a heretical group that troubled the churches at Ephesus and Pergamos (v. 15). Apparently their teaching and practice were immoral, perhaps even idolatrous (v. 14).

2:7 *Paradise.* Jesus told the believing thief on the cross that he would be with Jesus in paradise (Luke 23:42). Paul uses the term interchangeably with "the third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:2,4).

2:8 *Smyrna.* Smyrna was an important seaport 35 miles north of Ephesus. The presence of a Roman imperial cult and a large Jewish population made life difficult for believers in Smyrna. However, the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only two of the seven not rebuked by Christ in some way.

2:10 *crown of life.* The Greek crown or garland of green leaves was given to winners in athletic events. James 1:12 also promises the crown of life to believers who persevere under trial.

2:11 *second death.* The second death refers to the experience of eternal death in the lake of fire (20:14–15). No believer will suffer the second death.

2:12 *Pergamos.* Pergamos was the ancient capital of the province of Asia. It was said to be the place where parchment was first used. Pergamos means "citadel" in Greek. It was located 50 miles north of Smyrna and was situated on a high hill dominating the valley below. ***two-edged sword.*** The two-edged sword is the powerful word of the Lord (1:16; Heb. 4:12).

2:13 *Satan's throne.* This implies that Satan's authority and power were honored either openly or in effect. ***Antipas.*** Antipas (not Herod Antipas) had already suffered martyrdom, thus receiving the promised "crown of life."

2:14 *doctrine of Balaam.* The background for this teaching is in the Old Testament (Num. 22:1—25:31). Balak hired Balaam to turn the hearts of Israel away from the Lord. Apparently seduction similar to that which Balaam instigated was taking place at the church at Pergamos, especially in relation to idols and sexual immorality (Acts 15:20).

2:18 *Thyatira.* Thyatira was a city with a large military detachment about 30 miles southeast of Pergamos. Recognized for its wool and dye industries, the

2:5 [g] Matt. 21:41 **2:7** [h] Matt. 11:15 [i] [Rev. 22:2, 14] [j] [Gen. 2:9; 3:22] **2:8** [k] Rev. 1:8, 17, 18 **2:9** [l] Luke 12:21 [m] Rom. 2:17 [n] Rev. 3:9 **2:10** [o] Matt. 10:22 [p] Matt. 24:13 [q] James 1:12 **2:11** [r] Rev. 13:9 [s] [Rev. 20:6, 14; 21:8] **2:12** [t] Rev. 1:16; 2:16 **2:14** [u] Num. 31:16 [v] Acts 15:29 [w] 1 Cor. 6:13 **2:16** [x] 2 Thess. 2:8 **2:17** [y] Ex. 16:33, 34 [z] Rev. 3:12 **2:18** [a] Rev. 1:14, 15 **2:19** [b] Rev. 2:2 **2:20** [c] 1 Kin. 16:31; 21:25 [d] Ex. 34:15

sacrificed to idols. 21And I gave her time [e]to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.* 22Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their* deeds. 23I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who [f]searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

24"Now to you I say, and* to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the [g]depths of Satan, as they say, [h]I will* put on you no other burden. 25But hold fast [i]what you have till I come. 26And he who overcomes, and keeps [j]My works until the end, [k]to him I will give power over the nations—

27 *'He[l] shall rule them with a rod of iron;*
They shall be dashed to pieces like the
potter's vessels'—*

as I also have received from My Father; 28and I will give him [m]the morning star.

29"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."'

The Dead Church

3 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,

'These things says He who [a]has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.* 3[b]Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and [c]repent. [d]Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you [e]as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4You* have [f]a few names even in Sardis who have not [g]defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me [h]in white, for they are worthy. 5He who overcomes [i]shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not [j]blot out his name from the [k]Book of Life; but [l]I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6[m]"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."'

The Faithful Church

7"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,

'These things says [n]He who is holy, [o]He who is true, [p]*"He who has the key of David,* [q]*He who opens and no one shuts, and* [r]*shuts and no one opens"*:* 8[s]"I know your works. See, I have set before you [t]an open door, and no one can shut it;* for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9Indeed I will make [u]*those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed [v]I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10Because you have kept My command to persevere, [w]I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall

*2:21 NU-Text and M-Text read *time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality.* *2:22 NU-Text and M-Text read *her.* *2:24 NU-Text and M-Text omit *and.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *will.* *2:27 Psalm 2:9 *3:2 NU-Text and M-Text read *My God.* *3:4 NU-Text and M-Text read *Nevertheless you have a few names in Sardis.* *3:7 Isaiah 22:22 *3:8 NU-Text and M-Text read *which no one can shut.*

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city was also noted for its trade guilds. ***eyes like a flame . . . feet like fine brass.*** This is essentially the same wording as Daniel 10:6.

2:24 *depths of Satan.* The deep things may be secrets known by those initiated into the things of the devil. When the apostle Paul addressed the subject of walking in the Light (the revelation of Christ), he not only said not to participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but he went on to say that it is disgraceful even to speak of those things done in secret (Eph. 5:11–12).

2:28 *the morning star.* The morning star is Christ Himself in 22:16. For the believer, Christ's presence is the light in the dark and difficult times. The morning star (the planet Venus, which can be seen in the sky just before sunrise) is the harbinger of day; it is easy to see how the return of Christ could be paralleled with the morning star. When Satan is referred to as the morning star, that is thought to be a description of what Satan was like before he rebelled (Is. 14:12).

3:1 *Sardis.* Sardis, located 30 miles southeast of Thyatira, had been the capital of Lydia. The worship of the Roman Caesar and Artemis, goddess of fertility, were active here.

3:3 *as a thief.* Christ's warning that He will come as unexpectedly as a thief echoes His repeated emphasis in Matthew 24:36—25:13 (see also 16:15).

3:5 *Book of Life.* The Book of Life is the list of the redeemed (20:11–15; Ex. 32:32–33).

3:7 *Philadelphia.* Philadelphia, which means "brotherly love" in Greek, was a small city located about 40 miles southeast of Sardis. Its location, vineyards, and wine production made it wealthy and commercially important. ***key of David.*** This key represents the authority of the One who opens and shuts the door in the Davidic kingdom (Is. 22:22), a prerogative that is Christ's as the rightful "son of David" (Matt. 1:1).

3:8 *an open door, and no one can shut it.* The door, in this context, seems to be entrance into heaven and "the New Jerusalem" (v. 12; chs. 21–22).

3:10 *keep you from the hour of trial.* Christ's promise to keep the believers from the hour of trial is often considered a promise that He will remove them before the period of unparalleled tribulation

2:21 [e] Rev. 9:20; 16:9, 11 **2:23** [f] Jer. 11:20; 17:10 **2:24** [g] 2 Tim. 3:1–9 [h] Acts 15:28 **2:25** [i] Rev. 3:11 **2:26** [j] [John 6:29] [k] [Matt. 19:28] **2:27** [l] Ps. 2:8, 9 **2:28** [m] 2 Pet. 1:19 **3:1** [a] Rev. 1:4, 16 **3:3** [b] 1 Tim. 6:20 [c] Rev. 3:19 [d] Matt. 24:42, 43 [e] [Rev. 16:15] **3:4** [f] Acts 1:15 [g] [Jude 23] [h] Rev. 4:4; 6:11 **3:5** [i] [Rev. 19:8] [j] Ex. 32:32 [k] Phil. 4:3 [l] Luke 12:8 **3:6** [m] Rev. 2:7 **3:7** [n] Acts 3:14 [o] 1 John 5:20 [p] Is. 9:7; 22:22 [q] [Matt. 16:19] [r] Job 12:14 **3:8** [s] Rev. 3:1 [t] 1 Cor. 16:9 **3:9** [u] Rev. 2:9 [v] Is. 45:14; 49:23; 60:14 **3:10** [w] 2 Pet. 2:9

come upon [x]the whole world, to test those
who dwell [y]on the earth. 11Behold,* [z]I am
coming quickly! [a]Hold fast what you have,
that no one may take [b]your crown. 12He
who overcomes, I will make him [c]a pillar
in the temple of My God, and he shall [d]go
out no more. [e]I will write on him the name
of My God and the name of the city of My
God, the [f]New Jerusalem, which [g]comes
down out of heaven from My God. [h]And *I
will write on him* My new name.
13[i]"He who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches."'

The Lukewarm Church

14"And to the angel of the church of the
Laodiceans* write,
[j]'These things says the Amen, [k]the Faith-
ful and True Witness, [l]the Beginning of the
creation of God: 15[m]"I know your works,
that you are neither cold nor hot. I could
wish you were cold or hot. 16So then, be-
cause you are lukewarm, and neither cold
nor hot,* I will vomit you out of My mouth.
17Because you say, [n]"I am rich, have become
wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and
do not know that you are wretched, miser-
able, poor, blind, and naked— 18I counsel
you [o]to buy from Me gold refined in the fire,
that you may be rich; and [p]white garments,
that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of
your nakedness may not be revealed; and
anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you
may see. 19[q]As many as I love, I rebuke and
[r]chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.
20Behold, [s]I stand at the door and knock. [t]If
anyone hears My voice and opens the door,
[u]I will come in to him and dine with him,
and he with Me. 21To him who overcomes
[v]I will grant to sit with Me on My throne,
as I also overcame and sat down with My
Father on His throne.
22[w]"He who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches."'"

The Throne Room of Heaven

4 After these things I looked, and behold,
a door *standing* [a]open in heaven. And
the first voice which I heard *was* like a
[b]trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come
up here, and I will show you things which
must take place after this."
2Immediately [c]I was in the Spirit; and
behold, [d]a throne set in heaven, and *One*
sat on the throne. 3And He who sat there
was* [e]like a jasper and a sardius stone in
appearance; [f]and *there was* a rainbow
around the throne, in appearance like
an emerald. 4[g]Around the throne *were*
twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones
I saw twenty-four elders sitting, [h]clothed
in white robes; and they had crowns* of
gold on their heads. 5And from the throne
proceeded [i]lightnings, thunderings, and
voices.* [j]Seven lamps of fire *were* burning
before the throne, which are [k]the* seven
Spirits of God.
6Before the throne *there was** [l]a sea of
glass, like crystal. [m]And in the midst of the
throne, and around the throne, *were* four
living creatures full of eyes in front and in
back. 7[n]The first living creature *was* like a
lion, the second living creature like a calf,
the third living creature had a face like a
man, and the fourth living creature *was*
like a flying eagle. 8*The* four living crea-
tures, each having [o]six wings, were full of
eyes around and within. And they do not
rest day or night, saying:

[p]"Holy, holy, holy,*
[q]Lord God Almighty,
[r]Who was and is and is to come!"

9Whenever the living creatures give glo-
ry and honor and thanks to Him who sits
on the throne, [s]who lives forever and ever,

* **3:11** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Behold.*
* **3:14** NU-Text and M-Text read *in Laodicea.*
* **3:16** NU-Text and M-Text read *hot nor cold.*
* **4:3** M-Text omits *And He who sat there was* (which makes the description in verse 3 modify the throne rather than God). * **4:4** NU-Text and M-Text read *robes, with crowns.* * **4:5** NU-Text and M-Text read *voices, and thunderings.* • M-Text omits *the.* * **4:6** NU-Text and M-Text add *something like.* * **4:8** M-Text has *holy* nine times.

(1 Thess. 4:16–18). Others believe that this means that believers will not be removed, but will be protected during the trial. The "hour of trial" is another way of referring to the unparalleled judgment of the "great tribulation" (7:14) predicted in Daniel 12:1 and Matthew 24:21.

3:14 *Laodiceans.* Laodicea was 45 miles southeast of Philadelphia and 90 miles east of Ephesus. It was a wealthy city with thriving banks, a textile industry, and a medical school. The city was also known for its sparse water supply. All of these characteristics are played upon in Christ's message to the church.

4:4 *clothed in white . . . crowns.* The white robes point to those who are confirmed in righteousness. The crowns are for those who possess ruling authority, and possibly also indicate that the elders have already been judged and rewarded.

4:6 *four living creatures.* These creatures are remarkably similar to the cherubim (angels) that Ezekiel saw close to God's throne (Ezek. 1:4–10).

4:7 *lion . . . calf . . . man . . . eagle.* This description recalls the four cherubim in Ezekiel 1:4–10.

3:10 [x] Luke 2:1 [y] Is. 24:17 **3:11** [z] Phil. 4:5 [a] Rev. 2:25 [b] [Rev. 2:10] **3:12** [c] 1 Kin. 7:21 [d] Ps. 23:6 [e] [Rev. 14:1; 22:4] [f] [Heb. 12:22] [g] Rev. 21:2 [h] [Rev. 2:17; 22:4] **3:13** [i] Rev. 2:7 **3:14** [j] 2 Cor. 1:20 [k] Rev. 1:5; 3:7; 19:11 [l] [Col. 1:15] **3:15** [m] Rev. 3:1 **3:17** [n] Hos. 12:8 **3:18** [o] Is. 55:1 [p] 2 Cor. 5:3 **3:19** [q] Job 5:17 [r] Heb. 12:6 **3:20** [s] Song 5:2 [t] Luke 12:36, 37 [u] [John 14:23] **3:21** [v] Matt. 19:28 **3:22** [w] Rev. 2:7 **4:1** [a] Ezek. 1:1 [b] Rev. 1:10 **4:2** [c] Rev. 1:10 [d] Is. 6:1 **4:3** [e] Rev. 21:11 [f] Ezek. 1:28 **4:4** [g] Rev. 11:16 [h] Rev. 3:4, 5 **4:5** [i] Rev. 8:5; 11:19; 16:18 [j] Ex. 37:23 [k] [Rev. 1:4] **4:6** [l] Rev. 15:2 [m] Ezek. 1:5 **4:7** [n] Ezek. 1:10; 10:14 **4:8** [o] Is. 6:2 [p] Is. 6:3 [q] Rev. 1:8 [r] Rev. 1:4 **4:9** [s] Rev. 1:18

10 [t]the twenty-four elders fall down before
Him who sits on the throne and worship
Him who lives forever and ever, and cast
their crowns before the throne, saying:

11 "You[u] are worthy, O Lord,*
To receive glory and honor and power;
[v]For You created all things,
And by [w]Your will they exist* and
were created."

The Lamb Takes the Scroll

5 And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who
sat on the throne [a]a scroll written inside
and on the back, [b]sealed with seven seals.
2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with
a loud voice, [c]"Who is worthy to open the
scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one
in heaven or on the earth or under the earth
was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.
4 So I wept much, because no one was
found worthy to open and read* the scroll,
or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said
to me, "Do not weep. Behold, [d]the Lion of
the tribe of [e]Judah, [f]the Root of David, has
[g]prevailed to open the scroll [h]and to loose*
its seven seals."
6 And I looked, and behold,* in the midst
of the throne and of the four living crea-
tures, and in the midst of the elders, stood
[i]a Lamb as though it had been slain, hav-
ing seven horns and [j]seven eyes, which
are [k]the seven Spirits of God sent out into
all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the
scroll out of the right hand [l]of Him who sat
on the throne.

Worthy Is the Lamb

8 Now when He had taken the scroll, [m]the
four living creatures and the twenty-four
elders fell down before the Lamb, each
having a harp, and golden bowls full of in-
cense, which are the [n]prayers of the saints.
9 And [o]they sang a new song, saying:

[p]"You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And [q]have redeemed us to God [r]by
Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and
people and nation,
10 And have made us* [s]kings* and
[t]priests to our God;
And we* shall reign on the earth."

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of
many angels around the throne, the living
creatures, and the elders; and the number
of them was ten thousand times ten thou-
sand, and thousands of thousands, 12 say-
ing with a loud voice:

"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and
wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and
blessing!"

13 And [u]every creature which is in heav-
en and on the earth and under the earth
and such as are in the sea, and all that are
in them, I heard saying:

[v]"Blessing and honor and glory and
power
Be to Him [w]who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"*

14 Then the four living creatures said,
"Amen!" And the twenty-four* elders fell
down and worshiped Him who lives forev-
er and ever.*

First Seal: The Conqueror

6 Now [a]I saw when the Lamb opened
one of the seals;* and I heard [b]one of
the four living creatures saying with a
voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And
I looked, and behold, [c]a white horse. [d]He
who sat on it had a bow; [e]and a crown was

* **4:11** NU-Text and M-Text read *our Lord and God.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *existed.* * **5:4** NU-Text and M-Text omit *and read.* * **5:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to loose.* * **5:6** NU-Text and M-Text read *I saw in the midst … a Lamb standing.* * **5:10** NU-Text and M-Text read *them.* • NU-Text reads *a kingdom.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *they.* * **5:13** M-Text adds *Amen.* * **5:14** NU-Text and M-Text omit *twenty-four.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *Him who lives forever and ever.* * **6:1** NU-Text and M-Text read *seven seals.*

4:10 ***cast their crowns before the throne.*** This act symbolizes the willing surrender of their authority in light of the worthiness of God as Creator. Because no one but God can create, He alone should be worshiped and recognized as sovereign.

5:1 ***a scroll.*** The scroll apparently contains the judgments and redemption seen in later chapters. It may also be the book that was sealed in Daniel 12:4. There appears to be an allusion to the scroll the Lord handed Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:9–10). ***sealed with seven seals.*** A scroll cannot be unrolled until the seals have all been opened.

5:5 ***Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David.*** Both of these titles are messianic titles (Gen. 49:8–10, Is. 11:1,10).

5:7 ***took the scroll.*** The Lamb taking the scroll from the Father demonstrates that judgment and authority over the earth is committed to the Son (Dan. 7:13–14). The scroll may be the same one that was sealed in Daniel 12:9.

6:2 ***white horse . . . conquering.*** Because the first rider is on a white horse and is conquering, some take it to be Christ (19:11). If so, His full conquest is considerably delayed (19:11—20:6). Another view is

4:10 [t] Rev. 5:8, 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4 **4:11** [u] Rev. 1:6; 5:12 [v] Gen. 1:1 [w] Col. 1:16 **5:1** [a] Ezek. 2:9, 10 [b] Is. 29:11 **5:2** [c] Rev. 4:11; 5:9 **5:5** [d] Gen. 49:9 [e] Heb. 7:14 [f] Is. 11:1, 10 [g] Rev. 3:21 [h] Rev. 6:1 **5:6** [i] [John 1:29] [j] Zech. 3:9; 4:10 [k] Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5 **5:7** [l] Rev. 4:2 **5:8** [m] Rev. 4:8–10; 19:4 [n] Rev. 8:3 **5:9** [o] Rev. 14:3 [p] Rev. 4:11 [q] John 1:29 [r] [Heb. 9:12] **5:10** [s] Ex. 19:6 [t] Is. 61:6 **5:13** [u] Phil. 2:10 [v] 1 Chr. 29:11 [w] Rev. 4:2, 3; 6:16; 20:11 **6:1** [a] [Rev. 5:5–7, 12; 13:8] [b] Rev. 4:7 **6:2** [c] Zech. 1:8; 6:3 [d] Ps. 45:4, 5, LXX [e] Zech. 6:11

given to him, and he went out [f]conquering and to conquer.

Second Seal: Conflict on Earth

3When He opened the second seal, [g]I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see."* **4**[h]Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to [i]take peace from the earth, and that *people* should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

Third Seal: Scarcity on Earth

5When He opened the third seal, [j]I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, [k]a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of [l]scales in his hand. **6**And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart* of wheat for a denarius,* and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and [m]do not harm the oil and the wine."

Fourth Seal: Widespread Death on Earth

7When He opened the fourth seal, [n]I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." **8**[o]So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, [p]to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, [q]and by the beasts of the earth.

Fifth Seal: The Cry of the Martyrs

9When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under [r]the altar [s]the souls of those who had been slain [t]for the word of God and for [u]the testimony which they held. **10**And they cried with a loud voice, saying, [v]"How long, O Lord, [w]holy and true, [x]until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" **11**Then a [y]white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them [z]that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were,* was completed.

Sixth Seal: Cosmic Disturbances

12I looked when He opened the sixth seal, [a]and behold,* there was a great earthquake; and [b]the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon* became like blood. **13**[c]And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. **14**[d]Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and [e]every mountain and island was moved out of its place. **15**And the [f]kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders,* the mighty men, every slave and every free man, [g]hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, **16**[h]and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who [i]sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! **17**For the great day of His wrath has come, [j]and who is able to stand?"

The Sealed of Israel

7 After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, [a]holding the four winds of the earth, [b]that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. **2**Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, **3**saying, [c]"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God [d]on their foreheads."

* **6:3** NU-Text and M-Text omit *and see.*
* **6:6** Greek *choinix;* that is, approximately one quart • This was approximately one day's wage for a worker. * **6:12** NU-Text and M-Text omit *behold.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *the whole moon.* * **6:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *the commanders, the rich men.*

that this is a spirit of conquest and delusion (Matt. 23:3–6). The bow suggests that the rider is a warrior. The crown suggests that he is a ruler.

6:8 *pale.* The color of the pale horse is the color of a corpse. It is fitting that this pale horse is ridden by a figure named "Death." This fourth judgment is the inevitable consequence of the first three. ***sword . . . hunger . . . death.*** These plagues are the same means that God used to bring the nation of Israel to repentance (1 Kin. 8:33–39; 1 Chr. 21:12), and in Revelation a godly nucleus does arise as a result of these judgments (7:3–8).

6:9 *under the altar.* Sacrificial blood was poured beside the base of the altar in the temple (Ex. 29:12).

6:12–13 *sun . . . moon . . . stars.* The effects of the great earthquake on the sun, moon, and stars are worded similarly to Matthew 24:29, placing these events in proximity to the coming of the Son of Man (Matt. 24:30).

6:14 *receded . . . rolled up.* When the sky is rolled back, the people on earth can see "Him who sits on the throne" (v. 16). They will suddenly see that God is not far away or nonexistent and they will have to be accountable to Him.

6:17 *who is able to stand.* This rhetorical question is answered in the surrounding context. The unbelievers, no matter how strong, cannot stand. Those who are protected by the Lord are enabled to stand, whether on earth (7:1–8) or in God's presence in heaven (7:9–17).

7:3 *sealed.* The seal was a mark of ownership or authority. In ancient times a seal was fixed to a document by pressing a carved stamp or signet into a

6:2 [f]Matt. 24:5 **6:3** [g]Rev. 4:7 **6:4** [h]Zech. 1:8; 6:2 [i]Matt. 24:6, 7 **6:5** [j]Rev. 4:7 [k]Zech. 6:2, 6 [l]Matt. 24:7 **6:6** [m]Rev. 7:3; 9:4 **6:7** [n]Rev. 4:7 **6:8** [o]Zech. 6:3 [p]Ezek. 5:12, 17; 14:21; 29:5 [q]Lev. 26:22 **6:9** [r]Rev. 8:3 [s][Rev. 20:4] [t]Rev. 1:2, 9 [u]2 Tim. 1:8 **6:10** [v]Zech. 1:12 [w]Rev. 3:7 [x]Rev. 11:18 **6:11** [y]Rev. 3:4, 5; 7:9 [z]Heb. 11:40 **6:12** [a]Matt. 24:7 [b]Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15 **6:13** [c]Rev. 8:10; 9:1 **6:14** [d]Is. 34:4 [e]Rev. 16:20 **6:15** [f]Ps. 2:2–4 [g]Is. 2:10, 19, 21; 24:21 **6:16** [h]Luke 23:29, 30 [i]Rev. 20:11 **6:17** [j]Zeph. 1:14 **7:1** [a]Dan. 7:2 [b]Rev. 7:3; 8:7; 9:4 **7:3** [c]Rev. 6:6 [d]Rev. 22:4

4 [e]And I heard the number of those who were sealed. [f]One hundred *and* forty-four thousand [g]of all the tribes of the children of Israel *were* sealed:

5 of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand *were* sealed;*
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand *were* sealed;
6 of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand *were* sealed;
7 of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand *were* sealed;
8 of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand *were* sealed;
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand *were* sealed.

A Multitude from the Great Tribulation

9 [h]After these things I looked, and behold, [h]a great multitude which no one could number, [i]of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, [j]clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, [k]"Salvation *belongs* to our God [l]who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 [m]All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and [n]worshiped God, 12 [o]saying:

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen."

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in [p]white robes, and where did they come from?"

14 And I said to him, "Sir,* you know."

So he said to me, [q]"These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and [r]washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will [s]dwell among them. 16 [t]They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; [u]the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne [v]will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.* [w]And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Seventh Seal: Prelude to the Seven Trumpets

8 When[a] He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 [b]And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, [c]and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer *it* with [d]the prayers of all the saints upon [e]the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And [f]the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw *it* to the earth. And [g]there were

* **7:5** In NU-Text and M-Text *were sealed* is stated only in verses 5a and 8c; the words are understood in the remainder of the passage. * **7:14** NU-Text and M-Text read *My lord*. * **7:17** NU-Text and M-Text read *to fountains of the waters of life*.

lump of clay or wax at the point where the document was opened and closed.

7:4 ***One hundred and forty-four thousand.*** Those sealed are all the children of Israel, fulfilling the promise that when the "fullness of the Gentiles has come in" all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:25–27).

7:5–8 ***Judah.*** Judah is placed first in this list of the Israelite tribes because Christ, the Messiah, is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (5:5; Gen. 49:8–10). ***Reuben.*** Reuben is next as Jacob's firstborn (Gen. 49:3–4). Dan and Ephraim are omitted, perhaps because of their gross idolatry during the period of the judges, demonstrated by the incident in the territory of Dan (Judg. 18). ***Joseph.*** Joseph and his son Manasseh are both included, bringing the number of tribes to twelve.

7:14 ***great tribulation.*** This vast multitude has come out of the great tribulation, referring to "the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world" (3:10). In view of the great loss of life during this time period, martyrdom is most likely the means of their escape. Tribulation was already being experienced by the church in John's day (2:10; Acts 14:22). However, the great tribulation, predicted in Daniel 12:1, will be of an intensity "such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21).

8:1 ***seventh seal.*** When the seventh seal is broken, the book can finally be opened.

7:4 [e] Rev. 9:16 [f] Rev. 14:1, 3 [g] Gen. 49:1–27 **7:9** [h] Rom. 11:25 [i] Rev. 5:9 [j] Rev. 3:5, 18; 4:4; 6:11 **7:10** [k] Ps. 3:8 [l] Rev. 5:13 **7:11** [m] Rev. 4:6 [n] Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12, 14; 11:16 **7:12** [o] Rev. 5:13, 14 **7:13** [p] Rev. 7:9 **7:14** [q] Rev. 6:9 [r] [Heb. 9:14] **7:15** [s] Is. 4:5, 6 **7:16** [t] Is. 49:10 [u] Ps. 121:6 **7:17** [v] Ps. 23:1 [w] Rev. 21:4 **8:1** [a] Rev. 6:1 **8:2** [b] [Matt. 18:10] [c] 2 Chr. 29:25–28 **8:3** [d] Rev. 5:8 [e] Ex. 30:1 **8:4** [f] Ps. 141:2 **8:5** [g] Rev. 11:19; 16:18

noises, thunderings, [h]lightnings, [i]and an earthquake.
[6]So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck

[7]The first angel sounded: [j]And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown [k]to the earth.* And a third [l]of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

Second Trumpet: The Seas Struck

[8]Then the second angel sounded: [m]And *something* like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, [n]and a third of the sea [o]became blood. [9][p]And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Third Trumpet: The Waters Struck

[10]Then the third angel sounded: [q]And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, [r]and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. [11][s]The name of the star is Wormwood. [t]A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

Fourth Trumpet: The Heavens Struck

[12][u]Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.
[13]And I looked, [v]and I heard an angel* flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, [w]"Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

Fifth Trumpet: The Locusts from the Bottomless Pit

9 Then the fifth angel sounded: [a]And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to [b]the bottomless pit. [2]And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the [c]sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. [3]Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, [d]as the scorpions of the earth have power. [4]They were commanded [e]not to harm [f]the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have [g]the seal of God on their foreheads. [5]And they were not given *authority* to kill them, [h]but to torment them *for* five months. Their torment *was* like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. [6]In those days [i]men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.
[7][j]The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. [k]On their heads were crowns of something like gold, [l]and their faces *were* like the faces of men. [8]They had hair like women's hair, and [m]their teeth were like lions' *teeth*. [9]And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings *was* [n]like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. [10]They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power *was* to hurt men five months. [11]And they had as king over them [o]the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.
[12][p]One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

* **8:7** NU-Text and M-Text add *and a third of the earth was burned up.* * **8:13** NU-Text and M-Text read *eagle.*

8:7 *hail . . . fire . . . blood.* This blend of destruction and horror sounds like a combination of the first and seventh plagues of God upon Egypt (Ex. 7:19–20; 9:22–25).
8:11 *Wormwood.* Wormwood is a plant found in the Middle East, known for its bitter taste. Here and elsewhere (Lam. 3:19) the term is figurative for bitterness. Normally wormwood is not poisonous, but the plague of the third trumpet involves effects far more potent than the taste of this bitter plant: many men die from the water.
8:13 *Woe, woe, woe.* The "woes" refer to the impact of the three remaining trumpet judgments on the unbelieving inhabitants of the earth. The first woe is the fifth trumpet (9:12); the second woe is the sixth trumpet (11:14). The third woe comes quickly and may be the same as the seventh trumpet (11:15–19), although that is not stated. If not, the final woe may be focused on Babylon, the great harlot, because of the climactic use of "woe" in 18:10, 16, and 19.
9:1 *star fallen from heaven.* The star may be a demon (v. 11), Satan himself (12:9), or an angel serving God (20:1). ***bottomless pit.*** The pit is the interim jail for some demons (Luke 8:31). It is also the place of origin of the beast (11:7; 17:8). Furthermore, it will be the place where Satan will be imprisoned during Christ's reign (20:2–3).
9:3 *locusts.* Locusts, or grasshoppers, were greatly feared in agricultural societies because they devoured crops. In Exodus 10:12–15, a plague of locusts wiped out what was left of Egypt's crops. Joel 1:2 tells of an invasion of locusts that the Lord used to judge unrepentant Judah, which was a foreshadowing of the day of the Lord. ***scorpions.*** Scorpions sting with their tails, causing great pain and even death (v. 10).
9:11 *angel of the bottomless pit.* The angel is demonic and controls the demonic locusts (3:10). If

8:5 [h] Rev. 4:5 [i] 2 Sam. 22:8 **8:7** [j] Ezek. 38:22 [k] Rev. 16:2 [l] Rev. 9:4, 15–18 **8:8** [m] Jer. 51:25 [n] Ex. 7:17 [o] Ezek. 14:19 **8:9** [p] Rev. 16:3 **8:10** [q] Is. 14:12 [r] Rev. 14:7; 16:4 **8:11** [s] Ruth 1:20 [t] Ex. 15:23 **8:12** [u] Is. 13:10 **8:13** [v] Rev. 14:6; 19:17 [w] Rev. 9:12; 11:14; 12:12 **9:1** [a] Rev. 8:10 [b] Luke 8:31 **9:2** [c] Joel 2:2, 10 **9:3** [d] Judg. 7:12 **9:4** [e] Rev. 6:6 [f] Rev. 8:7 [g] Rev. 7:2, 3 **9:5** [h] [Rev. 9:10; 11:7] **9:6** [i] Jer. 8:3 **9:7** [j] Joel 2:4 [k] Nah. 3:17 [l] Dan. 7:8 **9:8** [m] Joel 1:6 **9:9** [n] Joel 2:5–7 **9:11** [o] Eph. 2:2 **9:12** [p] Rev. 8:13; 11:14

Sixth Trumpet: The Angels from the Euphrates

13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And
I heard a voice from the four horns of the
[q]golden altar which is before God, 14 saying
to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Re-
lease the four angels who are bound [r]at the
great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels,
who had been prepared for the hour and
day and month and year, were released to
kill a [s]third of mankind. 16 Now [t]the number
of the army [u]of the horsemen *was* two hun-
dred million; [v]I heard the number of them.
17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision:
those who sat on them had breastplates
of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yel-
low; [w]and the heads of the horses *were* like
the heads of lions; and out of their mouths
came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By
these three *plagues* a third of mankind was
killed—by the fire and the smoke and the
brimstone which came out of their mouths.
19 For their power* is in their mouth and in
their tails; [x]for their tails *are* like serpents,
having heads; and with them they do harm.
20 But the rest of mankind, who were not
killed by these plagues, [y]did not repent of
the works of their hands, that they should
not worship [z]demons, [a]and idols of gold,
silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can
neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they
did not repent of their murders [b]or their
sorceries* or their sexual immorality or
their thefts.

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book

10 I saw still another mighty angel com-
ing down from heaven, clothed with
a cloud. [a]And a rainbow *was* on [b]his head,
his face *was* like the sun, and [c]his feet like
pillars of fire. 2 He had a little book open in
his hand. [d]And he set his right foot on the
sea and *his* left *foot* on the land, 3 and cried
with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roars.
When he cried out, [e]seven thunders uttered
their voices. 4 Now when the seven thunders
uttered their voices,* I was about to write;
but I heard a voice from heaven saying to
me,* [f]"Seal up the things which the seven
thunders uttered, and do not write them."
5 The angel whom I saw standing on the
sea and on the land [g]raised up his hand*
to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives
forever and ever, [h]who created heaven and
the things that are in it, the earth and the
things that are in it, and the sea and the
things that are in it, [i]that there should be
delay no longer, 7 but [j]in the days of the
sounding of the seventh angel, when he is
about to sound, the mystery of God would
be finished, as He declared to His servants
the prophets.

John Eats the Little Book

8 Then the voice which I heard from
heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go,
take the little book which is open in the
hand of the angel who stands on the sea
and on the earth."
9 So I went to the angel and said to him,
"Give me the little book."
And he said to me, [k]"Take and eat it; and
it will make your stomach bitter, but it will
be as sweet as honey in your mouth."
10 Then I took the little book out of the
angel's hand and ate it, [l]and it was as sweet
as honey in my mouth. But when I had eat-
en it, [m]my stomach became bitter. 11 And
he* said to me, "You must prophesy again
about many peoples, nations, tongues, and
kings."

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* **9:19** NU-Text and M-Text read *the power of the horses.* * **9:21** NU-Text and M-Text read *drugs.* * **10:4** NU-Text and M-Text read *sounded.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me.* * **10:5** NU-Text and M-Text read *right hand.* * **10:11** NU-Text and M-Text read *they.*

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this angel serves God, this is another instance where the activity of Satan or his demons is under the Lord's sovereign control (2 Cor. 12:7,9).

9:14 *great river Euphrates.* This river is the eastern boundary of the land promised to Abraham for his descendants (Gen. 15:18), as well as the geographic area from which powerful enemies like Assyria and Babylon came to invade Israel (Is. 8:5–8). It may represent the seat of Satan's former victory (in the garden of Eden).

9:18 *a third of mankind.* A third of mankind could number in the billions. Coupled with the former destruction of one-fourth of humanity (6:8), over one-half of the world's population will have been killed.

10:1 *mighty angel.* This mighty angel could be the "strong angel" of 5:2 or the angel "having great authority" of 18:1. It is unlikely that this is Michael, who is referred to by name elsewhere (12:7; Dan. 12:1) or Christ, since He is never called an angel in the New Testament. Furthermore, unlike Christ, this angel comes to earth before the time of tribulation is over.

10:2 *little book.* The little book is not the same as the book that was unsealed in 6:1—8:1. It is more like the scroll eaten by Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:9—3:3), although this scroll caused John's stomach to become bitter (vv. 9–10), not just his spirit (Ezek. 3:14).

10:10 *sweet . . . bitter.* The Word of God is always sweet, but the soberness of the judgments and what this will mean to the "peoples, nations, tongues, and kings," to whom John must prophesy is enough to turn John's stomach. It is a terrible thing to contemplate the fate of those who refuse to repent (9:21).

9:13 [q] Rev. 8:3 **9:14** [r] Rev. 16:12 **9:15** [s] Rev. 8:7–9; 9:18 **9:16** [t] Dan. 7:10 [u] Ezek. 38:4 [v] Rev. 7:4 **9:17** [w] Is. 5:28, 29 **9:19** [x] Is. 9:15 **9:20** [y] Deut. 31:29 [z] 1 Cor. 10:20 [a] Dan. 5:23 **9:21** [b] Rev. 21:8; 22:15 **10:1** [a] Rev. 4:3 [b] Rev. 1:16 [c] Rev. 1:15 **10:2** [d] Matt. 28:18 **10:3** [e] Ps. 29:3–9 **10:4** [f] Dan. 8:26; 12:4, 9 **10:5** [g] Dan. 12:7 **10:6** [h] Rev. 4:11 [i] Rev. 16:17 **10:7** [j] Rev. 11:15 **10:9** [k] Jer. 15:16 **10:10** [l] Ezek. 3:3 [m] Ezek. 2:10

The Two Witnesses

11 Then I was given [a]a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood,* saying, [b]"Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. **2**But leave out [c]the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, [d]for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will [e]tread the holy city underfoot *for* [f]forty-two months. **3**And I will give *power* to my two [g]witnesses, [h]and they will prophesy [i]one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

4These are the [j]two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God* of the earth. **5**And if anyone wants to harm them, [k]fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. [l]And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. **6**These [m]have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

The Witnesses Killed

7When they [n]finish their testimony, [o]the beast that ascends [p]out of the bottomless pit [q]will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. **8**And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of [r]the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, [s]where also our* Lord was crucified. **9**[t]Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, [u]and not allow* their dead bodies to be put into graves. **10**[v]And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, [w]and send gifts to one another, [x]because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

The Witnesses Resurrected

11[y]Now after the three-and-a-half days [z]the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. **12**And they* heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." [a]And they ascended to heaven [b]in a cloud, [c]and their enemies saw them. **13**In the same hour [d]there was a great earthquake, [e]and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid [f]and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14[g]The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

Seventh Trumpet: The Kingdom Proclaimed

15Then [h]the seventh angel sounded: [i]And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, [j]"The kingdoms* of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, [k]and He shall reign forever and ever!" **16**And [l]the twenty-four elders who

* **11:1** NU-Text and M-Text omit *And the angel stood.* * **11:4** NU-Text and M-Text read *Lord.* * **11:8** NU-Text and M-Text read *their.* * **11:9** NU-Text and M-Text read *nations see … and will not allow.* * **11:12** M-Text reads *I.* * **11:15** NU-Text and M-Text read *kingdom … has become.*

11:1 ***reed like a measuring rod.*** John's measuring rod is much like that used by Ezekiel (Ezek. 40:3–5) in his vision of measuring the temple.

11:3 ***two witnesses.*** The two unnamed witnesses are strikingly similar to Elijah (vv. 5–6; 1 Kin. 17; Mal. 4:5) and Moses (v. 6; Ex. 7–11), who appeared together with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:29–32). ***one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*** Forty-two months (v. 2) is the same length of time as twelve hundred and sixty days (12:6). Almost certainly "a time and times and half a time" (12:14) is also a period of three and a half years made up of 42 thirty-day months. These expressions draw from the prophecies in Daniel (Dan. 12:6–7,11–12). ***sackcloth.*** Sackcloth is a sign of mourning.

11:4 ***two olive trees . . . two lampstands.*** The witnesses are described as olive trees and lampstands, linking them to the vision in Zechariah 4 of "the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth" (Zech. 4:14). The passage in Zechariah refers to Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest. But the overarching principle for these and all other witnesses for the Lord is that their testimony to the truth is "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit" (Zech. 4:6).

11:6 ***no rain . . . waters . . . blood . . . plagues.*** The power to prevent rain identifies the witnesses with Elijah (James 5:17), and turning the water into blood and striking the earth with plagues is reminiscent of Moses in Egypt (Ex. 7:11–21).

11:7 ***bottomless pit.*** The beast, who emerges as the satanically empowered world ruler (chs. 13; 17), comes from the bottomless pit, as did the demonic locust plague of the fifth trumpet (9:1–10).

11:8 ***great city.*** The great city in Revelation is often Babylon (14:8), which possibly represents Rome (1 Pet. 5:13). But the further description "where also our Lord was crucified" seems to refer to Jerusalem. ***Sodom and Egypt.*** Sodom is the prototype for the moral degeneration of this great city (Gen. 19) and Egypt was the prototype for its rampant idolatry.

11:14 ***second woe.*** The second woe includes the sixth trumpet (9:12–21) and a second interlude (10:1—11:13). ***third woe.*** The third woe is apparently the seventh trumpet (vv. 15–19), since it "is coming quickly" and 8:13 relates the woes to the last three blasts of the trumpet. The final woe may extend further since the word "woe" recurs in 12:12.

11:1 [a] Ezek. 40:3—42:20 [b] Num. 23:18 **11:2** [c] Ezek. 40:17, 20 [d] Ps. 79:1 [e] Dan. 8:10 [f] Rev. 12:6; 13:5 **11:3** [g] Rev. 20:4 [h] Rev. 19:10 [i] Rev. 12:6 **11:4** [j] Zech. 4:2, 3, 11, 14 **11:5** [k] 2 Kin. 1:10–12 [l] Num. 16:29 **11:6** [m] 1 Kin. 17:1 **11:7** [n] Luke 13:32 [o] Rev. 13:1, 11; 17:8 [p] Rev. 9:1, 2 [q] Dan. 7:21 **11:8** [r] Rev. 14:8 [s] Heb. 13:12 **11:9** [t] Rev. 17:15 [u] Ps. 79:2, 3 **11:10** [v] Rev. 12:12 [w] Esth. 9:19, 22 [x] Rev. 16:10 **11:11** [y] Rev. 11:9 [z] Ezek. 37:5, 9, 10 **11:12** [a] Is. 14:13 [b] Acts 1:9 [c] 2 Kin. 2:11, 12 **11:13** [d] Rev. 6:12; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18 [e] Rev. 16:19 [f] Rev. 14:7; 16:9; 19:7 **11:14** [g] Rev. 8:13; 9:12 **11:15** [h] Rev. 8:2; 10:7 [i] Is. 27:13 [j] Rev. 12:10 [k] Ex. 15:18 **11:16** [l] Rev. 4:4

sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and [m]worshiped God, 17saying:

"We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,
The One [n]who is and who was and who is to come,*
Because You have taken Your great power [o]and reigned.
18 The nations were [p]angry, and Your wrath has come,
And the time of the [q]dead, that they should be judged,
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,
And those who fear Your name, small and great,
And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

19Then [r]the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant* was seen in His temple. And [s]there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, [t]and great hail.

The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon

12 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2Then being with child, she cried out [a]in labor and in pain to give birth.

3And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, [b]a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4[c]His tail drew a third [d]of the stars of heaven [e]and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood [f]before the woman who was ready to give birth, [g]to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5She bore a male Child [h]who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was [i]caught up to God and His throne. 6Then [j]the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there [k]one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Satan Thrown Out of Heaven

7And war broke out in heaven: [l]Michael and his angels fought [m]with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them* in heaven any longer. 9So [n]the great dragon was cast out, [o]that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, [p]who deceives the whole world; [q]he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

* **11:17** NU-Text and M-Text omit *and who is to come.* * **11:19** M-Text reads *the covenant of the Lord.* * **12:8** M-Text reads *him.*

11:17–18 ***We give You thanks.*** The 24 elders (4:10–11; 5:8–10) praise God's power and wrath, and the corresponding distribution of reward and judgment. This stanza of heavenly thanksgiving seems to reflect on the fulfillment of the great messianic prophecy in Psalm 2.

11:19 ***ark of His covenant.*** The ark of the covenant made by Moses disappeared at the time of the Babylonian captivity (2Chr. 36:18–19). The ark represented God's presence, leadership, and protection of Israel (Num. 10:33–36; Josh. 3:3,15–17).

12:1 ***woman clothed with the sun.*** The woman is the nation Israel. To Israel belongs the covenant and the promises. If Satan can make even one of those promises fail, he will have "won." This is why the dragon stands over the woman in such a predatory manner (v. 4).

12:3 ***great, fiery red dragon.*** The sign of the dragon is interpreted in verse 9 as Satan, who first appeared in Scripture as the serpent in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3). The imagery is in keeping with Old Testament and extrabiblical usage (Is. 27:1). ***seven heads . . . ten horns . . . seven diadems.*** The dragon with the seven heads and ten horns refers to Satan and the empire over which he rules during the course of time. The seven heads, ten horns, and seven diadems refer to Satan's brilliance, power, and glory as "god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4). This description is almost identical to that of the beast from the sea in 13:1.

12:4 ***a third of the stars.*** This image may refer to the rebellion of a third of the angelic host following Satan. ***devour her Child.*** The attempt of the dragon to devour the newborn Christ Child reveals that the strategy of Herod to kill the baby Jesus (Matt. 2:3–16) was satanically inspired.

12:5 ***male Child, who was to rule.*** The male Child who will rule with a rod of iron is the messianic figure of Psalm 2:8–9; however, there is no earthly rule over all nations at this point. From the perspective of this heavenly scene, the Child-ruler is soon caught up to the throne of God, apparently referring to the ascension of Christ (Acts 1:9).

12:6 ***one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*** The detailed way in which this same length of time is expressed ("a time and times and half a time," v. 14), suggests half of a literal seven-year tribulation period (Dan. 9:27).

12:7–8 ***Michael.*** Michael is an archangel (Jude 9). According to Daniel 12:1, he is a special guardian angel for the nation of Israel. Apparently he commands an army of angels. Michael and the heavenly forces are victorious, making heaven off-limits to Satan and his demons. (In Job 1 and 1 Kings 22:22 it is clear that at one time Satan did have access to heaven.)

12:9 ***to the earth.*** The devil's expulsion from heaven to the earth means that this world becomes his base of operations, and that his anger is vented toward the remaining inhabitants of the earth (v. 12). It is likely that the end times will be the greatest period of spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10–18) in history.

11:16 [m] Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12, 14; 7:11 **11:17** [n] Rev. 16:5 [o] Rev. 19:6 **11:18** [p] Ps. 2:1 [q] Dan. 7:10 **11:19** [r] Rev. 4:1; 15:5, 8 [s] Rev. 8:5 [t] Rev. 16:21 **12:2** [a] Is. 26:17; 66:6–9 **12:3** [b] Rev. 13:1; 17:3, 7, 9 **12:4** [c] Rev. 9:10, 19 [d] Rev. 8:7, 12 [e] Dan. 8:10 [f] Rev. 12:2 [g] Matt. 2:16 **12:5** [h] Ps. 2:9 [i] Acts 1:9–11 **12:6** [j] Rev. 12:4, 14 [k] Rev. 11:3; 13:5 **12:7** [l] Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1 [m] Rev. 20:2 **12:9** [n] John 12:31 [o] Gen. 3:1, 4 [p] Rev. 20:3 [q] Rev. 9:1

10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in
heaven, [r]"Now salvation, and strength,
and the kingdom of our God, and the
power of His Christ have come, for the ac-
cuser of our brethren, [s]who accused them
before our God day and night, has been
cast down. 11 And [t]they overcame him by
the blood of the Lamb and by the word of
their testimony, [u]and they did not love their
lives to the death. 12 Therefore [v]rejoice, O
heavens, and you who dwell in them! [w]Woe
to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea!
For the devil has come down to you, hav-
ing great wrath, [x]because he knows that
he has a short time."

The Woman Persecuted

13 Now when the dragon saw that he had
been cast to the earth, he persecuted [y]the
woman who gave birth to the male *Child.*
14 [z]But the woman was given two wings
of a great eagle, [a]that she might fly [b]into
the wilderness to her place, where she is
nourished [c]for a time and times and half
a time, from the presence of the serpent.
15 So the serpent [d]spewed water out of his
mouth like a flood after the woman, that he
might cause her to be carried away by the
flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman,
and the earth opened its mouth and swal-
lowed up the flood which the dragon had
spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon
was enraged with the woman, and he went
to make war with the rest of her offspring,
who keep the commandments of God and
have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

The Beast from the Sea

13 Then I* stood on the sand of the sea.
And I saw [a]a beast rising up out
of the sea, [b]having seven heads and ten
horns,* and on his horns ten crowns, and
on his heads a [c]blasphemous name. 2 Now
the beast which I saw was like a leopard,
his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and
his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The
[d]dragon gave him his power, his throne,
and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his
heads [e]as if it had been mortally wounded,
and his deadly wound was healed. And [f]all
the world marveled and followed the beast.
4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave
authority to the beast; and they worshiped
the beast, saying, [g]"Who *is* like the beast?
Who is able to make war with him?"

5 And he was given [h]a mouth speaking
great things and blasphemies, and he was
given authority to continue* for [i]forty-two
months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in
blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His
name, [j]His tabernacle, and those who dwell
in heaven. 7 It was granted to him [k]to make
war with the saints and to overcome them.
And [l]authority was given him over every
tribe,* tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell
on the earth will worship him, [m]whose
names have not been written in the Book
of Life of the Lamb slain [n]from the founda-
tion of the world.

9 [o]If anyone has an ear, let him hear.
10 [p]He who leads into captivity shall go into
captivity; [q]he who kills with the sword
must be killed with the sword. [r]Here is the
patience and the faith of the saints.

* **12:17** NU-Text and M-Text omit *Christ.*
* **13:1** NU-Text reads *he.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *ten horns and seven heads.* * **13:5** M-Text reads *make war.* * **13:7** NU-Text and M-Text add *and people.*

12:11 ***blood of the Lamb . . . word of their testimony . . . did not love their lives.*** The heavenly defeat of Satan (vv. 7–9) is followed by reference to his earthly setbacks, including the crucifixion of Christ, the verbal witness of believers, and the martyrdom of some of the believers. The fact that these witnesses were willing to die for their testimony showed that they knew that Christ had defeated death.

12:14 ***a time.*** A "time" probably equals one year, so the period of protection here is three and a half years, which corresponds to the length of the two witnesses' testimony in 11:3. It is also equivalent to the period of the beast's authority ("forty-two months" in 13:5), which includes his ability to "make war with the saints and to overcome them" (13:7; Ps. 122:7; Dan. 7:25).

12:17 ***the rest of her offspring.*** The rest of the children are believers in Christ.

13:1–2 ***beast.*** The parallel to the four beasts (especially the fourth) in Daniel 7, and the explanation of the beast given in 17:8–11 make it seem that the beast symbolizes both a revived Roman Empire, which exercises universal authority, and a specific ruler, whom John calls the antichrist (1 John 2:18).

13:1 ***a blasphemous name.*** The blasphemous name may be the common claim of ancient Roman emperors to be divine, or blasphemy against the name of the true God (vv. 5–6) as Daniel predicted of the willful king during the tribulation period (Dan. 11:36).

13:3 ***mortally wounded . . . deadly wound.*** The apparently fatal wound that was healed is a satanic attempt to mimic the wounds of Christ from His crucifixion, which Christ still carries after the resurrection. This is part of the fulfillment of the prophecy of the "power, signs, and lying wonders, and . . . unrighteous deception" that accompany the "lawless one" (2 Thess. 2:8–12).

13:4 ***worshiped the dragon . . . and . . . the beast.*** Any false worship or idolatry is ultimately demonic and satanic (1 Cor. 10:20–22).

13:5 ***forty-two months.*** Forty-two months is the duration of the beast's worldwide supremacy, in keeping with the prophecy of Daniel 7:25.

13:9 ***If anyone has an ear, let him hear.*** This phrase is used frequently in the Bible. It seems to imply that

12:10 [r] Rev. 11:15 [s] Zech. 3:1 **12:11** [t] Rom. 16:20 [u] Luke 14:26 **12:12** [v] Ps. 96:11 [w] Rev. 8:13 [x] Rev. 10:6 **12:13** [y] Rev. 12:5 **12:14** [z] Ex. 19:4 [a] Rev. 12:6 [b] Rev. 17:3 [c] Dan. 7:25; 12:7 **12:15** [d] Is. 59:19 **13:1** [a] Dan. 7:2, 7 [b] Rev. 12:3 [c] Rev. 17:3 **13:2** [d] Rev. 12:3, 9; 13:4, 12 **13:3** [e] Rev. 13:12, 14 [f] Rev. 17:8 **13:4** [g] Rev. 18:18 **13:5** [h] Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 11:36 [i] Rev. 11:2 **13:6** [j] [Col. 2:9] **13:7** [k] Dan. 7:21 [l] Rev. 11:18 **13:8** [m] Ex. 32:32 [n] Rev. 17:8 **13:9** [o] Rev. 2:7 **13:10** [p] Is. 33:1 [q] Gen. 9:6 [r] Rev. 14:12

The Beast from the Earth

11 Then I saw another beast [s]coming up
out of the earth, and he had two horns like
a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he
exercises all the authority of the first beast
in his presence, and causes the earth and
those who dwell in it to worship the first
beast, [t]whose deadly wound was healed.
13 [u]He performs great signs, [v]so that he
even makes fire come down from heaven
on the earth in the sight of men. 14 [w]And
he deceives those* who dwell on the earth
[x]by those signs which he was granted to
do in the sight of the beast, telling those
who dwell on the earth to make an image to
the beast who was wounded by the sword
[y]and lived. 15 He was granted *power* to give
breath to the image of the beast, that the
image of the beast should both speak [z]and
cause as many as would not worship the
image of the beast to be killed. 16 He caus-
es all, both small and great, rich and poor,
free and slave, [a]to receive a mark on their
right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that
no one may buy or sell except one who has
the mark or* [b]the name of the beast, [c]or the
number of his name.

18 [d]Here is wisdom. Let him who has [e]un-
derstanding calculate [f]the number of the
beast, [g]for it is the number of a man: His
number *is* 666.

The Lamb and the 144,000

14 Then I looked, and behold, a* [a]Lamb
standing on Mount Zion, and with
Him [b]one hundred *and* forty-four thou-
sand, having* His Father's name [c]written
on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice
from heaven, [d]like the voice of many wa-
ters, and like the voice of loud thunder.
And I heard the sound of [e]harpists play-
ing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a
new song before the throne, before the four
living creatures, and the elders; and no
one could learn that song [f]except the hun-
dred *and* forty-four thousand who were
redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the
ones who were not defiled with women,
[g]for they are virgins. These are the ones
[h]who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.
These [i]were redeemed* from *among* men,
[j]*being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
5 And [k]in their mouth was found no de-
ceit,* for [l]they are without fault before the
throne of God.*

The Proclamations of Three Angels

6 Then I saw another angel [m]flying in the
midst of heaven, [n]having the everlasting
gospel to preach to those who dwell on the
earth—[o]to every nation, tribe, tongue, and
people— 7 saying with a loud voice, [p]"Fear
God and give glory to Him, for the hour of
His judgment has come; [q]and worship Him

* **13:14** M-Text reads *my own people.* * **13:17** NU-Text and M-Text omit *or.* * **14:1** NU-Text and M-Text read *the.* • NU-Text and M-Text add *His name and.* * **14:4** M-Text adds *by Jesus.* * **14:5** NU-Text and M-Text read *falsehood.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *before the throne of God.*

what has just been said has a wider context, or a significant present application. The statement is not just for future reference. Therefore, widespread spiritual delusion and blasphemy, as well as persecution and martyrdom, should not surprise believers at any point in history.

13:11 *another beast.* This beast's actions described in verses 12–17 make it virtually certain that he is the false prophet spoken of in 16:13; 19:20; 20:10. The two beasts may symbolize the intermingling of religious power and of secular, political power during the Roman period and during the last days. ***lamb.*** This is the only place in Revelation where "lamb" does not refer to Christ. The lamb with two horns is an emblem of Jewish worship and religious authority.

13:12–15 *great signs.* Calling fire from heaven and giving speech to the image of the first beast are persuasive signs of power. These signs are similar to those performed by the two witnesses (11:5–6). The performance of great signs and the power of Satan is part of the mass deception prophesied by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:8–12.

13:16 *to receive a mark.* The mark is some sort of identifiable proof of ownership and loyalty, an evil counterfeit of the seal on the foreheads of the servants of God (7:3; 14:1).

13:18 *Let him who has understanding calculate . . . 666.* No one knows exactly what this means. It is the number of the beast, and the number of a man, so the beast is merely a man, not a god. We can be sure that this "man's number" will someday be understood in relation to the number 666, and that when the people who are living at the time of the fulfillment of the prophecies in this book need to understand this clearly, the Lord will make it plain. In the meantime, the warning is enough for all that will hear.

14:5 *they are without fault.* This statement is not a reference to sinless perfection, but it is stating that they are considered pure before God. They have been sealed by God because of their belief in Christ (v. 1; 7:4).

14:6–7 *angel . . . everlasting gospel.* The angel who preaches the gospel to "every nation, tribe, tongue, and people" helps to fulfill God's promise that the gospel "will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations" (Matt. 24:14) before Christ returns. The word "gospel," which literally means "good news," is used in Revelation only once. Even at this late stage in God's judgment He continues to offer everlasting life to the world (John 3:16). The gospel message at this point beseeches unbelievers to fear God and give glory to Him, and to escape the hour of His judgment.

13:11 [s] Rev. 11:7 **13:12** [t] Rev. 13:3, 4 **13:13** [u] Matt. 24:24 [v] 1 Kin. 18:38 **13:14** [w] Rev. 12:9 [x] 2 Thess. 2:9 [y] 2 Kin. 20:7 **13:15** [z] Rev. 16:2 **13:16** [a] Rev. 7:3; 14:9; 20:4 **13:17** [b] Rev. 14:9–11 [c] Rev. 15:2 **13:18** [d] Rev. 17:9 [e] [1 Cor. 2:14] [f] Rev. 15:2 [g] Rev. 21:17 **14:1** [a] Rev. 5:6 [b] Rev. 7:4; 14:3 [c] Rev. 7:3; 22:4 **14:2** [d] Rev. 1:15; 19:6 [e] Rev. 5:8 **14:3** [f] Rev. 5:9 **14:4** [g] [2 Cor. 11:2] [h] Rev. 3:4; 7:17 [i] Rev. 5:9 [j] James 1:18 **14:5** [k] Ps. 32:2 [l] Eph. 5:27 **14:6** [m] Rev. 8:13 [n] Eph. 3:9 [o] Rev. 13:7 **14:7** [p] Rev. 11:18 [q] Neh. 9:6

who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

8 And another angel followed, saying, [r]"Babylon* is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because [s]she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, [t]"If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* [u]mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself [v]shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is [w]poured out full strength into [x]the cup of His indignation. [y]He shall be tormented with [z]fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And [a]the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

12 [b]Here is the patience of the saints; [c]here *are* those* who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me,* "Write: [d]'Blessed *are* the dead [e]who die in the Lord from now on.'"

"Yes," says the Spirit, [f]"that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow [g]them."

Reaping the Earth's Harvest

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel [h]came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, [i]"Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You* to reap, for the harvest [j]of the earth is ripe." 16 So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Reaping the Grapes of Wrath

17 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, [k]who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, [l]"Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." 19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into [m]the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And [n]the winepress was trampled [o]outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, [p]up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

Prelude to the Bowl Judgments

15 Then [a]I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: [b]seven angels having the seven last plagues, [c]for in them the wrath of God is complete.

2 And I saw *something* like [d]a sea of glass [e]mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, [f]over his image and over his mark* *and* over the [g]number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, [h]having harps of God. 3 They sing [i]the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the [j]Lamb, saying:

> [k]"Great and marvelous *are* Your works,
> Lord God Almighty!
> [l]Just and true *are* Your ways,
> O King of the saints!*
> 4 [m]Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and
> glorify Your name?
> For *You* alone *are* [n]holy.
> For [o]all nations shall come and
> worship before You,
> For Your judgments have been
> manifested."

* **14:8** NU-Text reads *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, which has made;* M-Text reads *Babylon the great is fallen. She has made.* * **14:12** NU-Text and M-Text omit *here are those.* * **14:13** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me.* * **14:15** NU-Text and M-Text omit *for You.* * **15:2** NU-Text and M-Text omit *over his mark.* * **15:3** NU-Text and M-Text read *nations.*

14:8 *Babylon.* Babylon is first mentioned in Revelation here, and it becomes the focus of God's judgment in the following sections (chs. 16–18).

14:13 *Blessed.* "Blessed" signals the second of seven beatitudes in Revelation (1:3; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7,14). Six of the seven are clustered in the latter third of the book, perhaps as promises to encourage exemplary Christian response in the extremely difficult circumstances of the end times.

14:16 *thrust in His sickle.* The power of the Son of Man (Jesus Christ) is shown in that, with one swing of His sickle, the harvest of the earth is reaped. This pictures the events of chapters 16–19 as parts of one rapid succession of judgment, which is experienced by the inhabitants of the entire world.

15:1 *another sign.* The previous sign was about the woman clothed with the sun (12:1). This sign is "great and marvelous" because it deals with the seven last plagues sent by the Lord. The plagues, "the bowls of the wrath of God" (16:1), are much stronger and more widespread than the trumpet judgments in 8:2—11:19. The wrath of God is complete with the seven last plagues (15:1—19:5). They are immediately followed by the second coming and the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:6–21).

15:3 *song of Moses.* The song of Moses is a reference to Exodus 15:1–18 in which Israel celebrated its deliverance from Pharaoh's army (Ex. 14). This

14:8 [r] Is. 21:9 [s] Jer. 51:7 **14:9** [t] Rev. 13:14, 15; 14:11 [u] Rev. 13:16 **14:10** [v] Ps. 75:8 [w] Rev. 18:6 [x] Rev. 16:19 [y] Rev. 20:10 [z] 2 Thess. 1:7 **14:11** [a] Is. 34:8–10 **14:12** [b] Rev. 13:10 [c] Rev. 12:17 **14:13** [d] Eccl. 4:1, 2 [e] 1 Cor. 15:18 [f] Heb. 4:9, 10 [g] [1 Cor. 3:11–15; 15:58] **14:15** [h] Rev. 16:17 [i] Joel 3:13 [j] Jer. 51:33 **14:18** [k] Rev. 16:8 [l] Joel 3:13 **14:19** [m] Rev. 19:15 **14:20** [n] Is. 63:3 [o] Heb. 13:12 [p] Is. 34:3 **15:1** [a] Rev. 12:1, 3 [b] Rev. 21:9 [c] Rev. 14:10 **15:2** [d] Rev. 4:6 [e] [Matt. 3:11] [f] Rev. 13:14, 15 [g] Rev. 13:17 [h] Rev. 5:8 **15:3** [i] Ex. 15:1–21 [j] Rev. 15:3 [k] Deut. 32:3, 4 [l] Ps. 145:17 **15:4** [m] Ex. 15:14 [n] Lev. 11:44 [o] Is. 66:23

5 After these things I looked, and behold,* [p]the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. 6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, [q]clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. 7 [r]Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God [s]who lives forever and ever. 8 [t]The temple was filled with smoke [u]from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying [a]to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls* [b]of the wrath of God on the earth."

First Bowl: Loathsome Sores

2 So the first went and poured out his bowl [c]upon the earth, and a foul and [d]loathsome sore came upon the men [e]who had the mark of the beast and those [f]who worshiped his image.

Second Bowl: The Sea Turns to Blood

3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl [g]on the sea, and [h]it became blood as of a dead *man;* [i]and every living creature in the sea died.

Third Bowl: The Waters Turn to Blood

4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl [j]on the rivers and springs of water, [k]and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying:

[l]"You are righteous, O Lord,*
The One [m]who is and who was and
who is to be,*
Because You have judged these things.
6 For [n]they have shed the blood [o]of
saints and prophets,
[p]And You have given them blood to drink.
For* it is their just due."

7 And I heard another from* the altar saying, "Even so, [q]Lord God Almighty, [r]true and righteous *are* Your judgments."

Fourth Bowl: Men Are Scorched

8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl [s]on the sun, [t]and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they [u]blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; [v]and they did not repent [w]and give Him glory.

Fifth Bowl: Darkness and Pain

10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl [x]on the throne of the beast, [y]and his kingdom became full of darkness; [z]and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. 11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

Sixth Bowl: Euphrates Dried Up

12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl [a]on the great river Euphrates, [b]and its water was dried up, [c]so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. 13 And I saw three unclean [d]spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of [e]the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of [f]the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, [g]performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and*

* **15:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit *behold.*
* **16:1** NU-Text and M-Text read *seven bowls.*
* **16:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit *O Lord.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *who was, the Holy One.*
* **16:6** NU-Text and M-Text omit *For.* * **16:7** NU-Text and M-Text omit *another from.* * **16:14** NU-Text and M-Text omit *of the earth and.*

song was sung by Jews in their Sabbath gatherings, as well as by early Christians at Easter. ***song of the Lamb.*** The song of the Lamb celebrates the finished work of God, when all of His righteous acts have been revealed, from creation to atonement to judgment.

16:6 ***saints.*** Saints are those who are set apart because of their relationship with Jesus Christ. ***prophets.*** The prophets are God's spokesmen. Probably this passage is referring both to the saints and prophets (11:3–18) who have been killed and persecuted during the tribulation as well as those from past history. Jesus referred to the pattern of killing prophets (Matt. 23:35) when He spoke to the Pharisees of the coming judgment.

16:8 ***fourth . . . bowl.*** The fourth bowl and the fourth trumpet both affect the sun, but in the bowl judgment the sun's heat is intensified instead of diminished.

16:9–10 ***did not repent.*** They cannot argue against the existence or power of God, but even so they will not repent and give glory to God. The good news of Christ is still in effect even just before His return (19:11–21), though it is apparently rejected by all unbelievers who are still alive.

16:12 ***sixth . . . bowl.*** The sixth bowl involves the Euphrates River, as does the sixth trumpet (9:14). Both judgments deal with demonically inspired military forces. The army of two hundred million (9:16) will kill a third of all humankind (9:18); the army of verses 12–14 will do battle against God (19:19–21).

16:13–14 ***unclean spirits . . . go out to the kings.*** The kings of the earth recoil in fear before the judgment of the Lamb (6:15–16), yet because of the deceptive words of the demons, they are willing to wage war

15:5 [p] Num. 1:50 **15:6** [q] Ex. 28:6 **15:7** [r] Rev. 4:6 [s] 1 Thess. 1:9 **15:8** [t] Ex. 19:18; 40:34 [u] 2 Thess. 1:9 **16:1** [a] Rev. 15:1 [b] Rev. 14:10 **16:2** [c] Rev. 8:7 [d] Ex. 9:9–11 [e] Rev. 13:15–17; 14:9 [f] Rev. 13:14 **16:3** [g] Rev. 8:8; 11:6 [h] Ex. 7:17–21 [i] Rev. 8:9 **16:4** [j] Rev. 8:10 [k] Ex. 7:17–20 **16:5** [l] Rev. 15:3, 4 [m] Rev. 1:4, 8 **16:6** [n] Matt. 23:34 [o] Rev. 11:18 [p] Is. 49:26 **16:7** [q] Rev. 15:3 [r] Rev. 13:10; 19:2 **16:8** [s] Rev. 8:12 [t] Rev. 9:17, 18 **16:9** [u] Rev. 16:11 [v] Dan. 5:22 [w] Rev. 11:13 **16:10** [x] Rev. 13:2 [y] Rev. 8:12; 9:2 [z] Rev. 11:10 **16:12** [a] Rev. 9:14 [b] Jer. 50:38 [c] Is. 41:2, 25; 46:11 **16:13** [d] 1 John 4:1 [e] Rev. 12:3, 9 [f] Rev. 13:11, 14; 19:20; 20:10 **16:14** [g] 2 Thess. 2:9

of [h]the whole world, to gather them to [i]the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15 [j]"Behold, I am coming as a thief.
Blessed *is* he who watches, and keeps his
garments, [k]lest he walk naked and they see
his shame."

16 [l]And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.*

Seventh Bowl: The Earth Utterly Shaken

17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, [m]"It is done!" 18 And [n]there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; [o]and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake [p]as had not occurred since men were on the earth. 19 Now [q]the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And [r]great Babylon [s]was remembered before God, [t]to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. 20 Then [u]every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, *each hailstone* about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

The Scarlet Woman and the Scarlet Beast

17 Then [a]one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me,* "Come, [b]I will show you the judgment of [c]the great harlot [d]who sits on many waters, 2 [e]with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and [f]the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

3 So he carried me away in the Spirit [g]into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting [h]on a scarlet beast *which was* full of [i]names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman [j]was arrayed in purple and scarlet, [k]and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, [l]having in her hand a golden cup [m]full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.* 5 And on her forehead a name *was* written:

[n]MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS
OF THE EARTH.

6 I saw [o]the woman, drunk [p]with the blood of the saints and with the blood of [q]the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

The Meaning of the Woman and the Beast

7 But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and [r]will ascend out of the bottomless pit and [s]go to perdition. And those who [t]dwell on the earth [u]will marvel, [v]whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

9 [w]"Here *is* the mind which has wisdom:
[x]The seven heads are seven mountains on

* **16:16** M-Text reads *Megiddo.* * **17:1** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me.* * **17:4** M-Text reads *the filthiness of the fornication of the earth.* * **17:8** NU-Text and M-Text read *and shall be present.*

against God. The difference seems to be their confidence in the power of the beast, since they reason, "Who is able to make war with him?" (13:4). ***great day of God.*** The battle of that great day takes place at Armageddon (Mount of Megiddo) (v. 16; 19:17–21).

16:15 ***Blessed.*** This is the third of seven beatitudes in Revelation (see note at 14:13). Jesus warned believers to be vigilant because of the unexpected timing of His return (Matt. 24:43–44). The warning to watch is a reminder of the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1–13): "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

16:17 ***It is done.*** The seventh bowl is the climax of all of Revelation's judgments. This is God's final act of judgment before Christ comes.

16:19 ***Babylon.*** Babylon may refer to the rebuilt ancient city, or it may be a symbolic name for Rome (17:9). It may also be a way of referring to any proud human society that attempts to exist apart from God. Babylon's classic manifestations of rebellion against God are the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9) and the Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:30).

17:1 ***judgment of the great harlot.*** Babylon is called "the harlot" in verses 1,5,16, and 19:2. Her habitual immorality was introduced in 14:8, as was her imminent and well-deserved judgment. Both the kings of the earth and the inhabitants of the earth are seduced into committing spiritual adultery with Babylon. The indication is that she made them drunk with power, material possessions, false worship, and pride. The wine of Babylon's immorality (14:8) is judged forcefully and finally by God in the "wine of the fierceness of His wrath" (16:19).

17:9 ***seven mountains.*** The word that is translated "mountains" can also be translated "hills." Most interpreters understand this as a reference to the seven hills along the Tiber River, a well-known designation of the city of Rome.

16:14 [h] Luke 2:1 [i] Rev. 17:14; 19:19; 20:8 **16:15** [j] Matt. 24:43 [k] 2 Cor. 5:3 **16:16** [l] Rev. 19:19 **16:17** [m] Rev. 10:6; 21:6 **16:18** [n] Rev. 4:5 [o] Rev. 11:13 [p] Dan. 12:1 **16:19** [q] Rev. 14:8 [r] Rev. 17:5, 18 [s] Rev. 14:8; 18:5 [t] Is. 51:17 **16:20** [u] Rev. 6:14; 20:11 **17:1** [a] Rev. 1:1; 21:9 [b] Rev. 16:19 [c] Nah. 3:4 [d] Jer. 51:13 **17:2** [e] Rev. 2:22; 18:3, 9 [f] Jer. 51:7 **17:3** [g] Rev. 12:6, 14; 21:10 [h] Rev. 12:3 [i] Rev. 13:1 **17:4** [j] Rev. 18:12, 16 [k] Dan. 11:38 [l] Jer. 51:7 [m] Rev. 14:8 **17:5** [n] 2 Thess. 2:7 **17:6** [o] Rev. 18:24 [p] Rev. 13:15 [q] Rev. 6:9, 10 **17:8** [r] Rev. 11:7 [s] Rev. 13:10; 17:11 [t] Rev. 3:10 [u] Rev. 13:3 [v] Rev. 13:8 **17:9** [w] Rev. 13:18 [x] Rev. 13:1

which the woman sits. 10There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must [y]continue a short time. 11The [z]beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

12[a]"The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. 13These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14[b]These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will [c]overcome them, [d]for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; [e]and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful."

15Then he said to me, [f]"The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, [g]are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. 16And the ten horns which you saw on* the beast, [h]these will hate the harlot, make her [i]desolate [j]and naked, eat her flesh and [k]burn her with fire. 17[l]For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, [m]until the words of God are fulfilled. 18And the woman whom you saw [n]is that great city [o]which reigns over the kings of the earth."

The Fall of Babylon the Great

18 After[a] these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, [b]and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 2And he cried mightily* with a loud voice, saying, [c]"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and [d]has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and [e]a cage for every unclean and hated bird! 3For all the nations [f]have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, [g]and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."

4And I heard another voice from heaven saying, [h]"Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5[i]For her sins have reached* to heaven, and [j]God has remembered her iniquities. 6[k]Render to her just as she rendered to you,* and repay her double according to her works; [l]in the cup which she has mixed, [m]mix double for her. 7[n]In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit *as* [o]queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' 8Therefore her plagues will come [p]in one day—death and mourning and famine. And [q]she will be utterly burned with fire, [r]for strong *is* the Lord God who judges* her.

The World Mourns Babylon's Fall

9[s]"The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her [t]will weep and lament for her, [u]when they

* **17:16** NU-Text and M-Text read *saw, and the beast.* * **18:2** NU-Text and M-Text omit *mightily.* * **18:5** NU-Text and M-Text read *have been heaped up.* * **18:6** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to you.* * **18:8** NU-Text and M-Text read *has judged.*

17:10 ***Five have fallen.*** The five that have fallen would be past kingdoms, perhaps Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. ***one is.*** The Roman Empire was the current power at the time of this writing. ***has not yet come.*** People speculate that the future kingdom may be a revived Roman Empire.

17:11 ***the eighth, and is of the seven.*** The beast is related to the seventh king, but also has a separate identity. It seems that the eighth world empire may be some form of a revived Roman Empire over which the antichrist establishes the imperial authority of a dictator. He will overcome three horns, or nations (Dan. 7:20), and will claim universal authority.

17:12 ***one hour.*** The time frame for these events may coincide with 16:14, in which the preparations for the battle at Armageddon are described.

17:14 ***make war with the Lamb.*** The Lamb (Christ) will easily overcome the ten kings at His second coming (19:19–21). The beast and his forces are allowed by God to "make war with the saints and to overcome them" (13:7). Many of those whom the beast defeated and even killed are now numbered in the conquering army of the Lamb. The Lord's army is composed of the called, chosen, and faithful, probably the heavenly soldiers of 19:14.

17:16–17 ***ten horns . . . will hate the harlot.*** Since this description is similar to God's judgment on Babylon in 18:8, it seems that the Lord uses the forces of the beast as His instrument of judgment on the kingdom of antichrist (ch. 18) before they themselves are destroyed (19:19–21). With the advent of the beast as a supreme ruler given to self-deification (Dan. 11:36; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2), Satan has originated an entirely new order. This order is so radically different from the great harlot (vv. 1–6) that the beast, or perhaps the political aspect of Babylon, turns upon and destroys the religious aspect of Babylon.

17:18 ***that great city.*** The woman in John's vision is the great city Babylon (16:19), yet she is also the ancient "mother of harlots" (v. 5). The satanic influence of this city over the world's leaders has continued from Babel through Babylon to Rome (vv. 9–10), its classic manifestation in the first century A.D.

18:4 ***Come out.*** The command echoes Isaiah 52:11 and especially Jeremiah 51:45, prophecies proclaimed at a time when the Babylonian Empire was ripe for judgment.

18:9–19 ***weep and lament for her.*** This section is framed like an ancient lament and is especially similar

17:10 [y] Rev. 13:5 **17:11** [z] Rev. 13:3, 12, 14; 17:8 **17:12** [a] Dan. 7:20 **17:14** [b] Rev. 16:14; 19:19 [c] Rev. 19:20 [d] 1 Tim. 6:15 [e] Jer. 50:44 **17:15** [f] Is. 8:7 [g] Rev. 13:7 **17:16** [h] Jer. 50:41 [i] Rev. 18:17, 19 [j] Ezek. 16:37, 39 [k] Rev. 18:8 **17:17** [l] 2 Thess. 2:11 [m] Rev. 10:7 **17:18** [n] Rev. 11:8; 16:19 [o] Rev. 12:4 **18:1** [a] Rev. 17:1, 7 [b] Ezek. 43:2 **18:2** [c] Is. 13:19; 21:9 [d] Is. 13:21; 34:11, 13–15 [e] Is. 14:23 **18:3** [f] Rev. 14:8 [g] Is. 47:15 **18:4** [h] Is. 48:20 **18:5** [i] Gen. 18:20 [j] Rev. 16:19 **18:6** [k] Ps. 137:8 [l] Rev. 14:10 [m] Rev. 16:19 **18:7** [n] Ezek. 28:2–8 [o] Is. 47:7, 8 **18:8** [p] Rev. 18:10 [q] Rev. 17:16 [r] Jer. 50:34 **18:9** [s] Ezek. 26:16; 27:35 [t] Jer. 50:46 [u] Rev. 19:3

see the smoke of her burning, 10standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, [v]"Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! [w]For in one hour your judgment has come.'

11"And [x]the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: 12[y]merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; 13and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and [z]souls of men. 14The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you,* and you shall find them no more at all. 15The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16and saying, 'Alas, alas, [a]that great city [b]that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! 17[c]For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' [d]Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance 18[e]and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, [f]'What *is* like this great city?'

19[g]"They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! [h]For in one hour she is made desolate.'

20[i]"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and *you* holy apostles* and prophets, for [j]God has avenged you on her!"

Finality of Babylon's Fall

21Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw *it* into the sea, saying, [k]"Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and [l]shall not be found anymore. 22[m]The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. 23[n]The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, [o]and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For [p]your merchants were the great men of the earth, [q]for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. 24And [r]in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who [s]were slain on the earth."

Heaven Exults over Babylon

19 After these things [a]I heard* a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! [b]Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord* our God! 2For [c]true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He [d]has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her." 3Again they said, "Alleluia! [e]Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" 4And [f]the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, [g]"Amen! Alleluia!" 5Then a voice came from the throne, saying, [h]"Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, [i]both* small and great!"

6[j]And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For [k]the* Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 7Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for [l]the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8And [m]to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, [n]for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

9Then he said to me, "Write: [o]'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, [p]"These are the true sayings of God." 10And

* **18:14** NU-Text and M-Text read *been lost to you.* * **18:20** NU-Text and M-Text read *saints and apostles.* * **19:1** NU-Text and M-Text add *something like.* • NU-Text and M-Text omit *the Lord.* * **19:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit *both.* * **19:6** NU-Text and M-Text read *our.*

in content to Ezekiel's lament over the destruction of Tyre (Ezek. 27).

18:20 ***Rejoice . . . heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets.*** This call to rejoice is a compressed introduction to the longer praise hymn in 19:1–5. Judgment for killing God's prophets is mentioned in 16:6, but this is the only place in Revelation other than 21:14 where Christ's apostles are mentioned. If specific apostles are in mind here, Peter and Paul's deaths at the hands of the state in Rome probably apply. If Babylon is the symbol of all the enemies of God and His people, and not just the Babylonian or Roman manifestations, even the killing of James in Acts 12:1–2 is being avenged here.

19:9 ***Blessed.*** This is the fourth of the seven beatitudes in Revelation (see note at 14:13). ***marriage supper.*** The

18:10 [v] Is. 21:9 [w] Rev. 18:17, 19 **18:11** [x] Ezek. 27:27–34 **18:12** [y] Rev. 17:4 **18:13** [z] Ezek. 27:13 **18:16** [a] Rev. 17:18 [b] Rev. 17:4 **18:17** [c] Rev. 18:10 [d] Is. 23:14 **18:18** [e] Ezek. 27:30 [f] Rev. 13:4 **18:19** [g] Josh. 7:6 [h] Rev. 18:8 **18:20** [i] Jer. 51:48 [j] Luke 11:49 **18:21** [k] Jer. 51:63, 64 [l] Rev. 12:8; 16:20 **18:22** [m] Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10 **18:23** [n] Jer. 25:10 [o] Jer. 7:34; 16:9 [p] Is. 23:8 [q] 2 Kin. 9:22 **18:24** [r] Rev. 16:6; 17:6 [s] Jer. 51:49 **19:1** [a] Rev. 11:15; 19:6 [b] Rev. 4:11 **19:2** [c] Rev. 15:3; 16:7 [d] Deut. 32:43 **19:3** [e] Is. 34:10 **19:4** [f] Rev. 4:4, 6, 10 [g] 1 Chr. 16:36 **19:5** [h] Ps. 134:1 [i] Rev. 11:18 **19:6** [j] Ezek. 1:24 [k] Rev. 11:15 **19:7** [l] [Matt. 22:2; 25:10] **19:8** [m] Ezek. 16:10 [n] Ps. 132:9 **19:9** [o] Luke 14:15 [p] Rev. 22:6

[q]I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, [r]"See *that you do* not *do that!* I am your [s]fellow servant, and of your brethren [t]who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the [u]testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Christ on a White Horse

11[v]Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, [w]a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called [x]Faithful and True, and [y]in righteousness He judges and makes war. **12**[z]His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. [a]He had* a name written that no one knew except Himself. **13**[b]He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called [c]The Word of God. **14**[d]And the armies in heaven, [e]clothed in fine linen, white and clean,* followed Him on white horses. **15**Now [f]out of His mouth goes a sharp* sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And [g]He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. [h]He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. **16**And [i]He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:

[j]KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.

The Beast and His Armies Defeated

17Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, [k]"Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,* **18**[l]that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people,* free* and slave, both small and great."

19[m]And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. **20**[n]Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and [o]those who worshiped his image. [p]These two were cast alive into the lake of fire [q]burning with brimstone. **21**And the rest [r]were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. [s]And all the birds [t]were filled with their flesh.

Satan Bound 1,000 Years

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, [a]having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. **2**He laid hold of [b]the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; **3**and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and [c]set a seal on him, [d]so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

The Saints Reign with Christ 1,000 Years

4And I saw [e]thrones, and they sat on them, and [f]judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* [g]the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, [h]who had

* **19:12** M-Text adds *names written, and.*
* **19:14** NU-Text and M-Text read *pure white linen.*
* **19:15** M-Text adds *two-edged.* * **19:17** NU-Text and M-Text read *the great supper of God.*
* **19:18** NU-Text and M-Text read *both free.*

marriage supper of John's day would begin on the evening of the wedding, but the celebration might continue for days. The marriage supper here is a time of joyous feasting to be enjoyed by the saints.

19:15 ***sharp sword.*** The sharp sword that comes out of Christ's mouth is the two-edged sword spoken of in 1:16. ***rod of iron.*** Christ will rule with a rod of iron in fulfillment of the messianic prophecies in Psalm 2:8–9 and Isaiah 11:4.

19:20–21 ***beast . . . false prophet . . . cast alive into the lake of fire.*** The lake of fire is the eternal destiny of all unbelievers (20:10,14–15). They are apparently the first to suffer the torment of the lake. The rest of the beast's allies are killed by the word from the mouth of the victorious Christ. Apparently all those who now suffer death go to hades (Matt. 16:18), to which Jesus has the keys (1:8), until death and hades are emptied and cast into the lake of fire (20:13–15).

20:1 ***angel.*** The angel here may be the same one who had the key to the bottomless pit in 9:1–2.

20:2–3 ***bottomless pit . . . shut him up . . . till the thousand years.*** The abyss, or bottomless pit, is presently the place of imprisonment of some demons (Luke 8:31) and will be the place from which the beast ascends (17:8). Thus, it is fitting that the devil will be held there for a thousand years. The dragon of 12:3,9, known as Satan, was in control of the serpent in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3). God has a plan for Satan. He will be shut up in the abyss for a thousand years and then will be briefly released to deceive the nations one final time (vv. 7–9) before being cast into the lake of fire (v. 10). ***must be released.*** This phrase indicates that Satan will not escape from the pit but instead will be allowed to go forth from the pit to fulfill God's plan.

20:4 ***thrones . . . reigned.*** This may be a partial fulfillment of Daniel 7:18,27. The aspect of judgment in ruling is referred to in 1 Corinthians 6:2–4. At the onset of the kingdom, authority is officially transferred

19:10 [q]Rev. 22:8 [r]Acts 10:26 [s][Heb. 1:14] [t]1 John 5:10 [u]Luke 24:27 **19:11** [v]Rev. 15:5 [w]Rev. 6:2; 19:19, 21 [x]Rev. 3:7, 14 [y]Is. 11:4 **19:12** [z]Rev. 1:14 [a]Rev. 2:17; 19:16 **19:13** [b]Is. 63:2, 3 [c][John 1:1, 14] **19:14** [d]Rev. 14:20 [e]Matt. 28:3 **19:15** [f]Is. 11:4 [g]Ps. 2:8, 9 [h]Is. 63:3–6 **19:16** [i]Rev. 2:17; 19:12 [j]Dan. 2:47 **19:17** [k]Ezek. 39:17 **19:18** [l]Ezek. 39:18–20 **19:19** [m]Rev. 16:13–16 **19:20** [n]Rev. 16:13 [o]Rev. 13:8, 12, 13 [p]Dan. 7:11 [q]Rev. 14:10 **19:21** [r]Rev. 19:15 [s]Rev. 19:17, 18 [t]Rev. 17:16 **20:1** [a]Rev. 1:18; 9:1 **20:2** [b]2 Pet. 2:4 **20:3** [c]Dan. 6:17 [d]Rev. 12:9; 20:8, 10 **20:4** [e]Dan. 7:9 [f][1 Cor. 6:2, 3] [g]Rev. 6:9 [h]Rev. 13:12

not worshiped the beast [i]or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they [j]lived and [k]reigned with Christ for a* thousand years. **5**But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. **6**Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such [l]the second death has no power, but they shall be [m]priests of God and of Christ, [n]and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Satanic Rebellion Crushed

7Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison **8**and will go out [o]to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, [p]Gog and Magog, [q]to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. **9**[r]They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. **10**The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone [s]where* the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they [t]will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne Judgment

11Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face [u]the earth and the heaven fled away. [v]And there was found no place for them. **12**And I saw the dead, [w]small and great, standing before God,* [x]and books were opened. And another [y]book was opened, which is *the Book* of Life. And the dead were judged [z]according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. **13**The sea gave up the dead who were in it, [a]and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. [b]And they were judged, each one according to his works. **14**Then [c]Death and Hades were cast into

* **20:4** M-Text reads *the*. * **20:10** NU-Text and M-Text add *also*. * **20:12** NU-Text and M-Text read *the throne*.

from angels to men (Heb. 2:5,8). Christ, as the second Adam, fulfills God's original purpose for the earth. A new world order is established with the overcoming saints of the church age ruling together with Christ in His kingdom (Rom. 8:17). Incredible as it may seem, with a perfect Ruler who is totally just, totally kind, and totally wise, there will still be men who will rebel (vv. 7–9).

20:5 ***did not live again.*** The resurrection of the dead will not encompass all people at the same time (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29). This passage indicates that there will be a first resurrection of dead believers before the thousand years of Christ's reign (1 Cor. 15:23,52) and a final resurrection after the millennium is finished, before the great white throne judgment (vv. 11–13). It is generally considered that this is the time of resurrection of the Old Testament saints as well as those martyred in the great tribulation.

20:6 ***Blessed.*** This is the fifth of the seven beatitudes in Revelation (see note at 14:13). All look forward to life with Christ beyond the first resurrection (v. 5). Resurrection is assured for all believers. But the blessedness mentioned here belongs more precisely to those martyrs who will have a part as rulers with Christ in the first resurrection. ***second death.*** The second death is the everlasting death of torment in the lake of fire for unbelievers who face the great white throne judgment (vv. 11–15). John has previously stated that the one who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death (2:11).

20:8 ***Gog and Magog.*** Gog and Magog was a common rabbinical title for the nations in rebellion against the Lord, and the names recall the prophesied invasion of Israel in Ezekiel 38:39. Some hold that the battle of verses 8–9 is the one spoken of in Ezekiel, but there are major differences as well as similarities in the two passages.

20:9 ***beloved city.*** The beloved city may symbolically refer to the home of God's people. However, the New Jerusalem is commonly called "the city of My God" (3:12) and "the holy city" (21:2). The city here may be the renewed earthly Jerusalem, ready to give way to the everlasting sinless glory of the New Jerusalem (21:1—22:5).

20:11 ***great white throne.*** The great white throne is a picture of God's holy rule and judgment. The One occupying the throne may be God the Father (1 Cor. 15:24–28) or both the Father and the Lamb (Christ), as in the New Jerusalem (22:1–3). ***the earth and the heaven fled away.*** There is no place for this sin-polluted creation in the new heaven and new earth (21:1—22:5). The earth and all of its works will be burned up (2 Pet. 3:10–13).

20:12 ***the dead.*** The dead, called "the rest of the dead" (v. 5), are raised and made to stand before God's throne of judgment. ***books.*** The books are thought to refer to the record of all works done in this life. Since all have sinned and fall short of God's standard (Rom. 3:23), the opening of these books will certainly lead to eternal sentences in the lake of fire. ***Book of Life.*** The Book of Life is God's register of those who have believed in Jesus (17:8). Although no one can be judged acceptable based on works (Eph. 2:8–9) many will be saved by God's grace received by faith in Jesus Christ.

20:14 ***Death and Hades.*** Death and Hades refers not only to dying, but to existence beyond the grave (1:18; 6:8). If one considers "death" as a place, it would be the place where the body lies, and Hades would be the place for the soul. The picture here is of all human bodies being given up to God's judgment. While unbelieving humanity is judged according to its works, Death and Hades, the Lord's final enemy (1 Cor. 15:26), is also destroyed by being cast into the

20:4 [i] Rev. 13:15 [j] John 14:19 [k] Rom. 8:17 **20:6** [l] [Rev. 2:11; 20:14] [m] Is. 61:6 [n] Rev. 20:4 **20:8** [o] Rev. 12:9; 20:3, 10 [p] Ezek. 38:2; 39:1, 6 [q] Rev. 16:14 **20:9** [r] Ezek. 38:9, 16 **20:10** [s] Rev. 19:20; 20:14, 15 [t] Rev. 14:10 **20:11** [u] 2 Pet. 3:7 [v] Dan. 2:35 **20:12** [w] Rev. 19:5 [x] Dan. 7:10 [y] Ps. 69:28 [z] Matt. 16:27 **20:13** [a] Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 21:4 [b] Rev. 2:23; 20:12 **20:14** [c] 1 Cor. 15:26

the lake of fire. [d]This is the second death.* 15And anyone not found written in the Book of Life [e]was cast into the lake of fire.

All Things Made New

21 Now [a]I saw a new heaven and a new earth, [b]for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2Then I, John,* saw [c]the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared [d]as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, [e]the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. 4[f]And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; [g]there shall be no more death, [h]nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

5Then [i]He who sat on the throne said, [j]"Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me,* "Write, for [k]these words are true and faithful."

6And He said to me, [l]"It is done!* [m]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. [n]I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7He who overcomes shall inherit all things,* and [o]I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8[p]But the cowardly, unbelieving,* abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in [q]the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

The New Jerusalem

9Then one of [r]the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me* and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you [s]the bride, the Lamb's wife."* 10And he carried me away [t]in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me [u]the great city, the holy* Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11[v]having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. 12Also she had a great and high wall with [w]twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13[x]three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

14Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and [y]on them were the names* of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15And he who talked with me [z]had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17Then he measured its

* **20:14** NU-Text and M-Text add *the lake of fire.* * **21:2** NU-Text and M-Text omit *John.* * **21:5** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me.* * **21:6** M-Text omits *It is done.* * **21:7** M-Text reads *overcomes, I shall give him these things.* * **21:8** M-Text adds *and sinners.* * **21:9** NU-Text and M-Text omit *to me.* • M-Text reads *I will show you the woman, the Lamb's bride.* * **21:10** NU-Text and M-Text omit *the great* and read *the holy city, Jerusalem.* * **21:14** NU-Text and M-Text read *twelve names.*

lake of fire. ***second death.*** The second death is spiritual and eternal, the just punishment of the wicked. The first death is physical dying. Both are included in the overall meaning of the death that came upon the human race because of Adam and Eve's sin (Gen. 2:16–17; 3:1–19; Rom. 5:12).

20:15 ***not found written in the Book of Life.*** Only those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior will be found in the book. The rejection of the eternal gospel results in eternal condemnation (14:6–7).

21:1 ***new.*** "New" here suggest freshness, not just a second beginning. This is the fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 and 2 Peter 3:13. Significantly, this eternal renewal has already begun in the life of the believer because, using the same term, Paul says, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). ***passed away . . . no more sea.*** The present heaven and earth, including the sea, were burned up in the great white throne judgment (20:11–13). There will be a continuation of some features of the present creation in the new heaven and new earth, yet the drastic difference in the new eternal state is obvious from the fact that there will be no more sea, which was a major part of the original creation (Gen. 1:6–10).

21:2 ***bride.*** Christ's bride (v. 9) is the New Jerusalem, the redeemed inhabitants of the holy city (vv. 3–7,24–27).

21:6 ***It is done.*** For the third time, it is done. The first statement of "finishing" was on the cross (John 19:30), the second was at the end of God's wrath (16:17), and the third is when there is no more death, a new heaven and a new earth. ***water of life.*** The water of life may be recalling Jesus' references to living water in John 4:14 and 7:38, in connection with eternal life and life in the Holy Spirit. This water is further described in 22:1. A similar offer of God's grace to him who spiritually thirsts is repeated in 22:17.

21:12 ***twelve gates . . . twelve tribes.*** The description of the high wall and the twelve gates echoes Ezekiel 48:30–35. It is a glorious picture of the place that Israel holds in the New Jerusalem when the new covenant with Israel is at last fulfilled.

21:14 ***twelve foundations . . . apostles.*** This picture calls to mind Paul's imagery of the apostles as the foundation of the house of God in Ephesians 2:20.

20:14 [d] Rev. 21:8 **20:15** [e] Rev. 19:20 **21:1** [a] [2 Pet. 3:13] [b] Rev. 20:11 **21:2** [c] Is. 52:1 [d] 2 Cor. 11:2 **21:3** [e] Lev. 26:11 **21:4** [f] Is. 25:8 [g] 1 Cor. 15:26 [h] Is. 35:10; 51:11; 65:19 **21:5** [i] Rev. 4:2, 9; 20:11 [j] Is. 43:19 [k] Rev. 19:9; 22:6 **21:6** [l] Rev. 10:6; 16:17 [m] Rev. 1:8; 22:13 [n] John 4:10 **21:7** [o] Zech. 8:8 **21:8** [p] 1 Cor. 6:9 [q] Rev. 20:14 **21:9** [r] Rev. 15:1 [s] Rev. 19:7; 21:2 **21:10** [t] Rev. 1:10 [u] Ezek. 48 **21:11** [v] Rev. 15:8; 21:23; 22:5 **21:12** [w] Ezek. 48:31–34 **21:13** [x] Ezek. 48:31–34 **21:14** [y] Eph. 2:20 **21:15** [z] Ezek. 40:3

wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18The construction of its wall was *of* jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like clear glass. 19*a*The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation *was* jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21The twelve gates *were* twelve *b*pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. *c*And the street of the city *was* pure gold, like transparent glass.

The Glory of the New Jerusalem

22*d*But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23*e*The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it,* for the glory* of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. 24*f*And the nations of those who are saved* shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.* 25*g*Its gates shall not be shut at all by day *h*(there shall be no night there). 26*i*And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.* 27But *j*there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes* an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's *k*Book of Life.

The River of Life

22 And he showed me *a*a pure* river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2*b*In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* *c*the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* *d*for the healing of the nations. 3And *e*there shall be no more curse, *f*but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His *g*servants shall serve Him. 4*h*They shall see His face, and *i*His name *shall be* on their foreheads. 5*j*There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor *k*light of the sun, for *l*the Lord God gives them light. *m*And they shall reign forever and ever.

The Time Is Near

6Then he said to me, *n*"These words *are* faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy* prophets *o*sent His angel to show His servants the things which must *p*shortly take place.

7*q*"Behold, I am coming quickly! *r*Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8Now I, John, saw and heard* these things. And when I heard and saw, *s*I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

9Then he said to me, *t*"See *that you do* not *do that*. For* I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." 10*u*And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, *v*for the time is at hand. 11He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is

* **21:23** NU-Text and M-Text omit *in it*. • M-Text reads *the very glory*. * **21:24** NU-Text and M-Text omit *of those who are saved*. • M-Text reads *the glory and honor of the nations to Him*. * **21:26** M-Text adds *that they may enter in*. * **21:27** NU-Text and M-Text read *anything profane, nor one who causes*. * **22:1** NU-Text and M-Text omit *pure*. * **22:6** NU-Text and M-Text read *spirits of the prophets*. * **22:8** NU-Text and M-Text read *am the one who heard and saw*. * **22:9** NU-Text and M-Text omit *For*.

21:19–20 ***all kinds of precious stones.*** The exact color of some of the stones is uncertain, but it is probable that jasper is colorless, sapphire is blue, chalcedony is green or greenish-blue, emerald is bright green, sardonyx has layers of red and white, sardius is blood red, chrysolite is yellow, beryl is blue or blue-green, topaz is golden, and amethyst is purple or violet.

22:2 ***tree of life.*** The tree of life in the original creation was in the middle of the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9), from which all of humanity was excluded after sin entered the world (Gen. 3:22–24). Ezekiel's apocalyptic vision included trees bearing fruit every month with medicinal leaves (Ezek. 47:12). Since only one tree of life is mentioned here, even though it is on both sides of the river, it is probably meant as a parallel to Genesis 2, implying that a new, better, and everlasting Eden has come.

22:3 ***no more curse.*** The affliction of sin, especially on the human race and creation (Gen. 3:14–19), will be erased. As God had fellowship with Adam and Eve before their fall into sin (Gen. 3:8), so the Lord will again be with His servants eternally. In turn, His servants will worship and serve Him (Rom. 12:1).

22:4 ***see His face.*** The believer's hope today is to see the Lord face to face (1 Cor. 13:12), something neither Moses nor any other human was previously allowed to do (Ex. 33:20).

22:7 ***Blessed.*** "Blessed" begins the sixth of seven beatitudes in Revelation (see note at 14:13). And indeed, those who pay attention to this book will be blessed. The Lord has shown the things that must come to pass, the things that His servants must pay attention to, the ultimate fate of unbelievers, and a beautiful glimpse of eternity, which leaves all believers with an eagerness for the return of the Lord.

22:11 ***unjust . . . filthy . . . righteous . . . holy.*** This verse, on the surface, seems to be a statement that believers and unbelievers will live out their lives true

21:19 *a* Is. 54:11 **21:21** *b* Matt. 13:45, 46 *c* Rev. 22:2 **21:22** *d* John 4:21, 23 **21:23** *e* Is. 24:23; 60:19, 20 **21:24** *f* Is. 60:3, 5; 66:12 **21:25** *g* Is. 60:11 *h* Is. 60:20 **21:26** *i* Rev. 21:24 **21:27** *j* Joel 3:17 *k* Phil. 4:3 **22:1** *a* Ezek. 47:1 **22:2** *b* Ezek. 47:12 *c* Gen. 2:9 *d* Rev. 21:24 **22:3** *e* Zech. 14:11 *f* Ezek. 48:35 *g* Rev. 7:15 **22:4** *h* [Matt. 5:8] *i* Rev. 14:1 **22:5** *j* Rev. 21:23 *k* Rev. 7:15 *l* Ps. 36:9 *m* Dan. 7:18, 27 **22:6** *n* Rev. 19:9 *o* Rev. 1:1 *p* Heb. 10:37 **22:7** *q* [Rev. 3:11] *r* Rev. 1:3 **22:8** *s* Rev. 19:10 **22:9** *t* Rev. 19:10 **22:10** *u* Dan. 8:26 *v* Rev. 1:3

filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous* still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

Jesus Testifies to the Churches

12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and [w]My reward *is* with Me, [x]to give to every one according to his work. 13 [y]I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last."*

14 [z]Blessed *are* those who do His commandments,* that they may have the right [a]to the tree of life, [b]and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But* [c]outside *are* [d]dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

16 [e]"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. [f]I am the Root and the Offspring of David, [g]the Bright and Morning Star."

17 And the Spirit and [h]the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" [i]And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

A Warning

18 For* I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: [j]If anyone adds to these things, God will add* to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, [k]God shall take away* his part from the Book* of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

I Am Coming Quickly

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all.* Amen.

* **22:11** NU-Text and M-Text read *do right.*
* **22:13** NU-Text and M-Text read *the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.* * **22:14** NU-Text reads *wash their robes.* * **22:15** NU-Text and M-Text omit *But.* * **22:18** NU-Text and M-Text omit *For.* • M-Text reads *may God add.*
* **22:19** M-Text reads *may God take away.* • NU-Text and M-Text read *tree of life.* * **22:21** NU-Text reads *with all;* M-Text reads *with all the saints.*

to their nature until the final judgment (20:12–15). However, because this book is to be read before the events it foretells take place, it is almost certainly an implied, indirect evangelistic appeal based on the continuing offer of the gospel (v. 17; 14:6–7).

22:12–13 ***My reward is with Me.*** The rewarding of each believer according to his or her works is taught in 2 Corinthians 5:10. Christ's rewards are meant to provide a powerful incentive for an obedient life. Little wonder that the apostle Paul rigorously disciplined himself so that he would not be disqualified from the prize (1 Cor. 9:24–27; Phil. 3:10–14). The judgment seat of Christ can be a time of great regret (1 Cor. 3:5–10), or it can be an occasion of supreme joy (2 Cor. 5:9–11). After Christ comes again, He will give rewards to His own. This can be counted on because Christ is in control of all history and all eternity.

22:14 ***Blessed.*** This is the last of the seven beatitudes in Revelation (see note at 14:13). This beatitude is speaking of those justified by faith who express that faith in obedience (Eph. 2:8–10).

22:15 ***dogs.*** According to the context of Deuteronomy 23:18 a "dog" is a male prostitute.

22:16 ***the Root and the Offspring of David.*** Jesus is both the Source and Son of David, echoing the words of Isaiah 11:1,10. Jesus is both greater than David and the rightful heir to the throne of David.

22:17 ***Come.*** This book, so full of the pictures of the fulfillment of God's righteous judgment, still closes with the sweet and compelling invitation to come to Christ. This is one of the reasons it is "blessed" to read this book.

22:18–19 ***add to . . . take away.*** The Book of Revelation was intended to be heard and obeyed (v. 7; 1:3), not tampered with. The person who either adds to or takes away from its contents will receive from God the strictest punishment, a punishment with eternal consequences.

22:20 ***I am coming quickly.*** The fact that Jesus is coming quickly within the scope of God's overall plan for this creation is a repeated theme in Revelation (3:11; 22:7–12). John adds the hope of all believers to the declaration of Christ with his prayer, "come, Lord Jesus."

22:21 ***grace.*** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ begins and concludes the Book of Revelation (1:4), implying that the message of grace and the free gift of eternal life in Christ (Eph. 2:8–9), not merely the message of judgment upon unbelievers, can be found in this book.

22:12 [w] Is. 40:10; 62:11 [x] Rev. 20:12 **22:13** [y] Is. 41:4 **22:14** [z] Dan. 12:12 [a] [Prov. 11:30] [b] Rev. 21:27 **22:15** [c] 1 Cor. 6:9 [d] Phil. 3:2 **22:16** [e] Rev. 1:1 [f] Rev. 5:5 [g] Num. 24:17 **22:17** [h] [Rev. 21:2, 9] [i] Is. 55:1 **22:18** [j] Deut. 4:2; 12:32 **22:19** [k] Ex. 32:33

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Be kindly *a* to one.....Rom 12:10

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a Your heritage.....Ps 94:5
For He does not *a*.....Lam 3:33

AFFLICTED
To him who is *a*.....Job 6:14
hears the cry of the *a*.....Job 34:28
days of the *a* are evil.....Prov 15:15
Smitten by God, and *a*.....Is 53:4
"O you *a* one.....Is 54:11
being destitute, *a*.....Heb 11:37

AFFLICTION
is, the bread of *a*.....Deut 16:3
a take hold of me.....Job 30:16
and it is an evil *a*.....Eccl 6:2
For our light *a*.....2 Cor 4:17
supposing to add *a*.....Phil 1:16

AFRAID
garden, and I was *a*.....Gen 3:10
saying, "Do not be *a*.....Gen 15:1
none will make you *a*.....Lev 26:6
ungodliness made me *a*.....Ps 18:4
Whenever I am *a*.....Ps 56:3
one will make them *a*.....Is 17:2
do not be *a*.....Matt 14:27
if you do evil, be *a*.....Rom 13:4
do good and are not *a*.....1 Pet 3:6

AFTERWARD
a receive me to glory.....Ps 73:24
you shall follow Me *a*....John 13:36

AGAIN
'You must be born *a*..... John 3:7
having been born *a*..... 1 Pet 1:23

AGAINST
come to 'set a man *a*.....Matt 10:35
or house divided *a* .....Matt 12:25
Me is *a* Me.....Matt 12:30
a the Spirit will not.....Matt 12:31
lifted up his heel *a*.....John 13:18
LORD and *a* His Christ.....Acts 4:26
to kick *a* the goads.....Acts 9:5
a the promises of God.....Gal 3:21
we do not wrestle *a*.....Eph 6:12
I have a few things *a*..... Rev 2:20

AGE
the grave at a full *a*.....Job 5:26
and in the *a* to come..... Mark 10:30

AGED
one as Paul, the *a*.....Philem 9

AGES
ordained before the *a*..... 1 Cor 2:7

AGONY
And being in *a*.....Luke 22:44

AGREE
that if two of you *a* .....Matt 18:19

AGREEMENT
what *a* has the temple.... 2 Cor 6:16

AIR
the birds of the *a*.....Gen 1:26
of the *a* have nests.....Luke 9:58
of the power of the *a* .....Eph 2:2
the Lord in the *a*..... 1 Thess 4:17

ALIENATED
darkened, being *a* .....Eph 4:18
you, who once were *a* .....Col 1:21

ALIENS
A have devoured his.....Hos 7:9
Christ, being *a* .....Eph 2:12

ALIVE
I kill and I make *a*..... Deut 32:39
was dead and is *a*.....Luke 15:24
presented Himself *a*.....Acts 1:3
indeed to sin, but *a* ..... Rom 6:11
all shall be made *a*..... 1 Cor 15:22
that we who are *a* ..... 1 Thess 4:15
and behold, I am *a* .....Rev 1:18
These two were cast *a*.....Rev 19:20

ALLELUIA
Again they said, "*A*..... Rev 19:3

ALPHA
"I am the *A* and the ..... Rev 1:8
"I am the *A* and the .....Rev 22:13

ALTAR(S)
Then Noah built an *a* .....Gen 8:20
'An *a* of earth you..... Ex 20:24
your gift to the *a*.....Matt 5:23
swears by the *a*.....Matt 23:18
I even found an *a* .....Acts 17:23
We have an *a* from .....Heb 13:10
Even Your *a*, O LORD.....Ps 84:3
and torn down Your *a*..... Rom 11:3

ALWAYS
delight, Rejoicing *a*.....Prov 8:30
the poor with you *a* .....Matt 26:11
lo, I am with you *a*.....Matt 28:20
to them, that men *a*.....Luke 18:1
immovable, *a* ..... 1 Cor 15:58
Rejoice in the Lord *a*.....Phil 4:4
thus we shall *a*..... 1 Thess 4:17
a be ready to give a ..... 1 Pet 3:15

AM
to Moses, "I *A* WHO I..... Ex 3:14
First and I *a* the Last ..... Is 44:6
in My name, I *a* .....Matt 18:20
a the bread of life..... John 6:35
a the light of the ..... John 8:12
I *a* from above ..... John 8:23
Abraham was, I *A*..... John 8:58
"I *a* the door ..... John 10:9
a the good shepherd..... John 10:11
a the resurrection..... John 11:25
to him, "I *a* the way ..... John 14:6
of God I *a* what I *a*..... 1 Cor 15:10

AMBASSADOR(S)
for which I am an *a* .....Eph 6:20
we are *a* for Christ..... 2 Cor 5:20

AMBITION
Christ from selfish *a*.....Phil 1:16

AMEN
are Yes, and in Him *A*.... 2 Cor 1:20
creatures said, "*A*..... Rev 5:14

ANCHOR
hope we have as an *a*.....Heb 6:19

ANCIENT
Do not remove the *a*..... Prov 23:10
"until the *A* of Days..... Dan 7:22

ANGEL
"Behold, I send an *A*..... Ex 23:20
Manoah said to the *A*.... Judg 13:17
the *A* of His Presence.....Is 63:9
things, behold, an *a* .....Matt 1:20
for an *a* of the Lord .....Matt 28:2
Then an *a* of the Lord .....Luke 1:11
And behold, an *a*.....Luke 2:9
a appeared to Him .....Luke 22:43
For an *a* went down at ..... John 5:4
a has spoken to Him..... John 12:29
But at night an *a*..... Acts 5:19
A who appeared to him ... Acts 7:35
immediately an *a*.....Acts 12:23
himself into an *a* ..... 2 Cor 11:14
even if we, or an *a* .....Gal 1:8
Then I saw a strong *a*..... Rev 5:2
Jesus, have sent My *a* .....Rev 22:16

ANGELS
If He charges His *a* .....Job 4:18
lower than the *a* .....Ps 8:5
He shall give His *a*.....Ps 91:11
He shall give His *a*.....Matt 4:6
not even the *a* .....Matt 24:36
and all the holy *a* .....Matt 25:31
twelve legions of *a*.....Matt 26:53
And she saw two *a* ..... John 20:12
and worship of *a* .....Col 2:18
much better than the *a*.....Heb 1:4
entertained *a*.....Heb 13:2
things which *a* desire ..... 1 Pet 1:12
did not spare the *a*..... 2 Pet 2:4
a who did not keep .....Jude 6

ANGER
For His *a* is but for a.....Ps 30:5
gracious, Slow to *a* .....Ps 103:8
Nor will He keep His *a*.....Ps 103:9
around at them with *a*..... Mark 3:5
bitterness, wrath, *a* .....Eph 4:31

ANGRY
Cain. "Why are you *a*.....Gen 4:6
"Let not the Lord be *a*.....Gen 18:30
the Son, lest He be *a*.....Ps 2:12
a man stirs up strife..... Prov 29:22
right for you to be *a*.....Jon 4:4
you that whoever is *a*.....Matt 5:22
"Be *a*, and do not.....Eph 4:26

ANGUISH
remembers the *a* ..... John 16:21
tribulation and *a*.....Rom 2:9

ANIMAL(S)
of every clean *a* .....Gen 7:2
of *a* after their kind.....Gen 6:20
of four-footed *a*..... Acts 10:12

ANOINT
a my head with oil .....Ps 23:5
when you fast, *a*.....Matt 6:17
a My body for burial ..... Mark 14:8
a your eyes with eye..... Rev 3:18

ANOINTED
"Surely the LORD's *a*.....1 Sam 16:6
destroy the LORD's *a*.....2 Sam 1:14
"Do not touch My *a* ..... 1 Chr 16:22
Because He has *a*.....Luke 4:18
but this woman has *a*.....Luke 7:46
a the eyes of the ..... John 9:6
that Mary who *a*..... John 11:2
Jesus, whom You *a*.....Acts 4:27
and has *a* us is God ..... 2 Cor 1:21

ANOINTING
But you have an *a*..... 1 John 2:20

ANOTHER
that you love one *a* ..... John 13:34

ANSWER
Call, and I will *a*.....Job 13:22
How shall I *a* Him.....Job 31:14
the day that I call, *a*.....Ps 102:2
In Your faithfulness *a* .....Ps 143:1
a turns away wrath.....Prov 15:1
a a fool according .....Prov 26:4
or what you should *a*.....Luke 12:11
you may have an *a* ..... 2 Cor 5:12

ANT
Go to the *a*.....Prov 6:6

ANTICHRIST
heard that the *A* ..... 1 John 2:18
a who denies the ..... 1 John 2:22
is a deceiver and an *a*..... 2 John 7

ANXIETY
A in the heart of man.... Prov 12:25

ANXIOUS
Be *a* for nothing .....Phil 4:6

APOSTLE
called to be an *a* .....Rom 1:1
consider the *A* .....Heb 3:1

APOSTLES
of the twelve *a* .....Matt 10:2
He also named *a*.....Luke 6:13
am the least of the *a* ..... 1 Cor 15:9
none of the other *a*.....Gal 1:19
gave some to be *a* .....Eph 4:11

APPAREL
gold rings, in fine *a*.....James 2:2
or putting on fine *a*..... 1 Pet 3:3

APPEAL
love's sake I rather *a* .....Philem 9

APPEAR
and let the dry land *a*.....Gen 1:9
also outwardly *a*.....Matt 23:28
God would *a*.....Luke 19:11
For we must all *a*..... 2 Cor 5:10

APPEARANCE
Do not look at his *a* .....1 Sam 16:7
judge according to *a*..... John 7:24
those who boast in *a*..... 2 Cor 5:12
found in *a* as a man.....Phil 2:8

APPEARED
an angel of the Lord *a*.....Luke 1:11
who *a* in glory and.....Luke 9:31
brings salvation has *a*.....Titus 2:11
of the ages, He has *a* .....Heb 9:26

APPEARING
Lord Jesus Christ's *a*.....1 Tim 6:14
and the dead at His *a* .....2 Tim 4:1
who have loved His *a*.....2 Tim 4:8

APPEARS
can stand when He *a*.....Mal 3:2
who is our life *a*.....Col 3:4
the Chief Shepherd *a*..... 1 Pet 5:4
that when He *a*..... 1 John 2:28

APPETITE
are a man given to *a*.....Prov 23:2

APPLES
fitly spoken is like *a* ..... Prov 25:11

APPROACHING
as you see the Day *a*.....Heb 10:25

APPROVED
to God and *a* by men..... Rom 14:18
to present yourself *a*.....2 Tim 2:15

ARBITRATOR
Me a judge or an *a*.....Luke 12:14

ARCHANGEL
the voice of an *a*..... 1 Thess 4:16

ARISE
A, shine.....Is 60:1
But the LORD will *a*.....Is 60:2
you who sleep, *A*.....Eph 5:14

ARK
"Make yourself an *a*.....Gen 6:14
him, she took an *a*.....Ex 2:3
Bezalel made the *a*.....Ex 37:1
in heaven, and the *a*.....Rev 11:19

ARM
with an outstretched *a*.....Ex 6:6
Have you an *a* like God.....Job 40:9
strength with His *a*.....Luke 1:51
a yourselves also with.....1 Pet 4:1

ARMIES
And he sent out his *a*.....Matt 22:7
surrounded by *a*.....Luke 21:20
And the *a* in heaven.....Rev 19:14
the earth, and their *a*.....Rev 19:19

ARMOR
Put on the whole *a*.....Eph 6:11

ARMS
are the everlasting *a*.....Deut 33:27
took Him up in his *a*.....Luke 2:28

AROMA
the one we are the *a*.....2 Cor 2:16
for a sweet-smelling *a*.....Eph 5:2

AROUSED
LORD was greatly *a*.....Num 11:10
Then Joseph, being *a*.....Matt 1:24

ARRAYED
his glory was not *a*.....Matt 6:29
"Who are these *a*.....Rev 7:13

ARROGANCE
Pride and *a* and the.....Prov 8:13

ARROWS
a pierce me deeply.....Ps 38:2
Like *a* in the hand of.....Ps 127:4

ASCEND
Who may *a* into the.....Ps 24:3
If I *a* into heaven.....Ps 139:8
'I will *a* into heaven.....Is 14:13
see the Son of Man *a*.....John 6:62

ASCENDED
You have *a* on high.....Ps 68:18
"No one has *a*.....John 3:13
"When He *a* on high.....Eph 4:8

ASCRIBE
A strength to God.....Ps 68:34

ASHAMED
Let me not be *a*.....Ps 25:2
And Israel shall be *a*.....Hos 10:6
For whoever is *a*.....Mark 8:38
am not *a* of the gospel.....Rom 1:16
Therefore God is not *a*.....Heb 11:16

ASHES
become like dust and *a*.....Job 30:19
in sackcloth and *a*.....Luke 10:13

ASIDE
lay something *a*.....1 Cor 16:2
lay *a* all filthiness.....James 1:21
Therefore, laying *a*.....1 Pet 2:1

ASK
when your children *a*.....Josh 4:6
"*A* a sign for yourself.....Is 7:11
whatever things
you *a*.....Matt 21:22
a, and it will be.....Luke 11:9
that whatever You *a*.....John 11:22
a anything in My.....John 14:14
in that day you will *a*.....John 16:23
wisdom, let him *a*.....James 1:5
But let him *a* in faith.....James 1:6
because you do not *a*.....James 4:2

ASKS
For everyone who *a*.....Matt 7:8
you who, if his son *a*.....Matt 7:9
Or if he *a* for a fish.....Luke 11:11

ASLEEP
But He was *a*.....Matt 8:24
some have fallen *a*.....1 Cor 15:6
those who are *a*.....1 Thess 4:15

ASSEMBLING
not forsaking the *a*.....Heb 10:25

ASSEMBLY
a I will praise You.....Ps 22:22
fast, Call a sacred *a*.....Joel 1:14
a I will sing praise.....Heb 2:12
to the general *a*.....Heb 12:23

ASSURANCE
riches of the full *a*.....Col 2:2
Spirit and in much *a*.....1 Thess 1:5
to the full *a* of hope.....Heb 6:11

ASSURE
a our hearts before.....1 John 3:19

ASTONISHED
Just as many were *a*.....Is 52:14
who heard Him were *a*.....Luke 2:47

ASTRAY
one of them goes *a*.....Matt 18:12
like sheep going *a*.....1 Pet 2:25

ATONEMENT
the blood that makes *a*.....Lev 17:11
for it is the Day of *A*.....Lev 23:28
there will be no *a*.....Is 22:14

ATTAIN
It is high, I cannot *a*.....Ps 139:6
worthy to *a* that age.....Luke 20:35
by any means, I may *a*.....Phil 3:11

ATTENTION
My son, give *a* to my.....Prov 4:20

AUTHOR
For God is not the *a*.....1 Cor 14:33
unto Jesus, the *a*.....Heb 12:2

AUTHORITIES
a that exist are.....Rom 13:1

AUTHORITY
them as one having *a*.....Matt 7:29
"All *a* has been given.....Matt 28:18
a I will give You.....Luke 4:6
and has given Him *a*.....John 5:27
You have given Him *a*.....John 17:2
the flesh, reject *a*.....Jude 8

AVAILS
of a righteous man *a*.....James 5:16

AVENGE
Beloved, do not *a*.....Rom 12:19
a our blood on those.....Rev 6:10

AVENGER
the Lord is the *a*.....1 Thess 4:6

AWAKE
be satisfied when I *a*.....Ps 17:15
it is high time to *a*.....Rom 13:11
A to righteousness.....1 Cor 15:34

AWAY
the wind drives *a*.....Ps 1:4
Do not cast me *a*.....Ps 51:11
A time to cast *a*.....Eccl 3:5
fair one, And come *a*.....Song 2:10
minded to put her *a*.....Matt 1:19
and earth will pass *a*.....Matt 24:35
"I am going *a*.....John 8:21
they cried out, "*A*.....John 19:15
unless the falling *a*.....2 Thess 2:3
in Asia have turned *a*.....2 Tim 1:15
heard, lest we drift *a*.....Heb 2:1
if they fall *a*.....Heb 6:6
can never take *a*.....Heb 10:11
world is passing *a*.....1 John 2:17
if anyone takes *a*.....Rev 22:19

AWESOME
a is this place.....Gen 28:17
God, the great and *a*.....Deut 7:21
By *a* deeds in.....Ps 65:5
O God,You are more *a*.....Ps 68:35
Your great and *a* name.....Ps 99:3

B

BABE
the *b* leaped in my.....Luke 1:44
You will find a *B*.....Luke 2:12
for he is a *b*.....Heb 5:13

BABES
Out of the mouth of *b*.....Ps 8:2
revealed them to *b*.....Matt 11:25
of the mouth of *b*.....Matt 21:16
as to carnal, as to *b*.....1 Cor 3:1
as newborn *b*.....1 Pet 2:2

BACK
for the fool's *b*.....Prov 26:3
I gave My *b* to those.....Is 50:6
plow, and looking *b*.....Luke 9:62
of those who draw *b*.....Heb 10:39
someone turns him *b*.....James 5:19

BACKBITING
b tongue an angry.....Prov 25:23

BACKSLIDER
The *b* in heart will be.....Prov 14:14

BACKSLIDINGS
And I will heal your *b*.....Jer 3:22

BAD
b tree bears *b* fruit.....Matt 7:17

BALANCES
Falsifying the *b*.....Amos 8:5

BALD
every head shall be *b*.....Jer 48:37

BALM
no *b* in Gilead.....Jer 8:22

BANDAGED
and *b* his wounds.....Luke 10:34

BANKERS
my money with the *b*.....Matt 25:27

BANNERS
we will set up our *b*.....Ps 20:5
as an army with *b*.....Song 6:4

BAPTISM(S)
coming to his *b*.....Matt 3:7
b that I am baptized.....Matt 20:22
"But I have a *b*.....Luke 12:50
said, "Into John's *b*.....Acts 19:3
Lord, one faith, one *b*.....Eph 4:5
buried with Him in *b*.....Col 2:12
of the doctrine of *b*.....Heb 6:2

BAPTIZE(D)
"I indeed *b* you with.....Matt 3:11
Himself did not *b*.....John 4:2
b will be saved.....Mark 16:16
every one of you be *b*.....Acts 2:38
all his family were *b*.....Acts 16:33
Arise and be *b*.....Acts 22:16
were *b* into Christ.....Rom 6:3
I thank God that I *b*.....1 Cor 1:14
Spirit we were all *b*.....1 Cor 12:13

BAPTIZING
b them in the name of.....Matt 28:19

BARLEY
here who has five *b*.....John 6:9

BARN(S)
the wheat into my *b*.....Matt 13:30
reap nor gather into *b*.....Matt 6:26
I will pull down my *b*.....Luke 12:18

BARREN
But Sarai was *b*.....Gen 11:30
"Sing, O *b*.....Is 54:1

BASKET(S)
and put it under a *b*.....Matt 5:15
I was let down in a *b*.....2 Cor 11:33
they took up twelve *b*.....Matt 14:20

BATHED
to him, "He who is *b*.....John 13:10

BATTLE
b is the LORD's.....1 Sam 17:47
the *b* to the strong.....Eccl 9:11
became valiant in *b*.....Heb 11:34

BEAR
greater than I can *b* .....Gen 4:13
whom Sarah shall *b*.....Gen 17:21
not *b* false witness .....Ex 20:16
b their iniquities .....Is 53:11
child, and *b* a Son .....Matt 1:23
A good tree cannot *b*.....Matt 7:18
how long shall I *b* .....Matt 17:17
by, to *b* His cross..... Mark 15:21
whoever does not *b*.....Luke 14:27
are strong ought to *b*..... Rom 15:1
B one another's .....Gal 6:2
b the sins of many.....Heb 9:28

BEARD
the edges of your *b* ..... Lev 19:27
Running down on the *b* .....Ps 133:2

BEARING
goes forth weeping, *B*.....Ps 126:6
And He, *b* His cross..... John 19:17
b His reproach.....Heb 13:13

BEAST
You preserve man and *b* .....Ps 36:6
And I saw a *b* rising .....Rev 13:1
the mark of the *b*.....Rev 19:20

BEAT
b their swords into.....Is 2:4
spat in His face and *b*.....Matt 26:67

BEATEN
Three times I was *b* ..... 2 Cor 11:25

BEAUTIFUL
B in elevation.....Ps 48:2
has made everything *b*..... Eccl 3:11
my love, you are as *b* .....Song 6:4
How *b* upon the.....Is 52:7
indeed appear *b*.....Matt 23:27

BEAUTY
"The *b* of Israel is.....2 Sam 1:19
To behold the *b* .....Ps 27:4
see the King in His *b* .....Is 33:17
no *b* that we should.....Is 53:2

BECAME
b a living being.....Gen 2:7
to the Jews I *b*..... 1 Cor 9:20

BED
I remember You on my *b* ....Ps 63:6
if I make my *b* in hell .....Ps 139:8
"Arise; take up your *b* .....Matt 9:6
be two men in one *b* .....Luke 17:34
and the *b* undefiled.....Heb 13:4

BEFOREHAND
up, do not worry *b* ..... Mark 13:11
told you all things *b*..... Mark 13:23
when He testified *b*..... 1 Pet 1:11

BEG
b you as sojourners..... 1 Pet 2:11

BEGGAR
there was a certain *b* .....Luke 16:20

BEGGARLY
weak and *b* elements.....Gal 4:9

BEGINNING
b God created the.....Gen 1:1
In the *b* was the Word..... John 1:1
a murderer from the *b*..... John 8:44
True Witness, the *B* .....Rev 3:14
and the Omega, the *B*.....Rev 21:6

BEGOTTEN
I have *b* You.....Ps 2:7
glory as of the only *b*..... John 1:14
loves him who is *b* ..... 1 John 5:1

BEGUILING
b unstable souls.....2 Pet 2:14

BEGUN
Having *b* in the Spirit.....Gal 3:3

BEHALF
you on Christ's *b* ..... 2 Cor 5:20

BEHAVE
does not *b* rudely ..... 1 Cor 13:5

BEHAVED
blamelessly we *b* ..... 1 Thess 2:10

BEHAVIOR
of good *b*, hospitable .....1 Tim 3:2

BEHEADED
and had John *b*.....Matt 14:10

BEHOLD
B, the virgin shall.....Is 7:14
Judah, "*B* your God .....Is 40:9
"*B* the Lamb of God..... John 1:36
to them, "*B* the Man..... John 19:5
B what manner of ..... 1 John 3:1

BEHOLDING
with unveiled face, *b* ..... 2 Cor 3:18

BEING
move and have our *b*.....Acts 17:28
who, *b* in the form of.....Phil 2:6

BELIEVE
tears, "Lord, I *b*..... Mark 9:24
have no root, who *b*.....Luke 8:13
slow of heart to *b* .....Luke 24:25
to those who *b* ..... John 1:12
this, that they may *b*..... John 11:42
that you may *b*..... John 20:31
the Lord Jesus and *b* ..... Rom 10:9
Christ, not only to *b*.....Phil 1:29
comes to God must *b*.....Heb 11:6
b that there is one .....James 2:19
Even the demons *b* .....James 2:19

BELIEVED
And he *b* in the LORD .....Gen 15:6
Who has *b* our report.....Is 53:1
seen Me, you have *b*..... John 20:29
"Abraham *b* God.....Rom 4:3
whom I have *b*.....2 Tim 1:12

BELIEVERS
example to the *b*.....1 Tim 4:12

BELIEVES
The simple *b* every ..... Prov 14:15
that whoever *b* in Him .... John 3:16
"He who *b* in the Son ..... John 3:36
with the heart one *b* ..... Rom 10:10

BELLY
On your *b* you shall go.....Gen 3:14
and Jonah was in the *b*.....Jon 1:17
whose god is their *b* .....Phil 3:19

BELOVED
so He gives His *b*.....Ps 127:2
My *b* is mine .....Song 2:16
"This is My *b*.....Matt 3:17
us accepted in the *B*.....Eph 1:6
Luke the *b* physician.....Col 4:14
"This is My *b*.....2 Pet 1:17

BESEECH
b you therefore ..... Rom 12:1

BESIDE
He leads me *b* the .....Ps 23:2
"Paul, you are *b*.....Acts 26:24

BEST
desire the *b*..... 1 Cor 12:31

BESTOWED
love the Father has *b*..... 1 John 3:1

BETRAY
you, one of you will *b*.....Matt 26:21

BETRAYED
Man is about to be *b*.....Matt 17:22

BETRAYING
"Judas, are you *b*.....Luke 22:48

BETRAYS
who is the one who *b* .... John 21:20

BETROTHED
to a virgin *b* to a man.....Luke 1:27

BETTER
b than sacrifice.....1 Sam 15:22
It is *b* to trust in.....Ps 118:8
For it is *b* to marry..... 1 Cor 7:9
Christ, which is far *b*.....Phil 1:23
b than the angels.....Heb 1:4
b things concerning.....Heb 6:9

BEWARE
"*B* of false prophets .....Matt 7:15

BIND
and whatever you *b*.....Matt 16:19
'*B* him hand and foot.....Matt 22:13

BIRD
soul, "Flee as a *b* .....Ps 11:1

BIRDS
b make their nests.....Ps 104:17
"Look at the *b* .....Matt 6:26
have holes and *b* .....Matt 8:20

BIRTH
the day of one's *b*..... Eccl 7:1
Now the *b* of Jesus.....Matt 1:18
will rejoice at his *b*.....Luke 1:14
conceived, it gives *b* .....James 1:15

BIRTHRIGHT
Esau despised his *b*.....Gen 25:34

BISHOP
the position of a *b* .....1 Tim 3:1
b must be blameless .....Titus 1:7

BITE
A serpent may *b*..... Eccl 10:11
But if you *b* and.....Gal 5:15

BITTER
b herbs they .....Ex 12:8
and do not be *b*.....Col 3:19
But if you have *b*.....James 3:14

BITTERLY
And Hezekiah wept *b* .... 2 Kin 20:3
went out and wept *b*.....Matt 26:75

BITTERNESS
you are poisoned by *b*.....Acts 8:23
b springing up cause .....Heb 12:15

BLACK
one hair white or *b* .....Matt 5:36
a *b* horse.....Rev 6:5
and the sun became *b* .....Rev 6:12

BLADE
first the *b* ..... Mark 4:28

BLAME
be holy and without *b* .....Eph 1:4

BLAMELESS
and that man was *b*.....Job 1:1
body be preserved *b* ... 1 Thess 5:23

BLASPHEME
b Your name forever.....Ps 74:10
compelled them to *b* .....Acts 26:11
b that noble name.....James 2:7

BLASPHEMED
who passed by *b* Him.....Matt 27:39
great heat, and they *b* .....Rev 16:9

BLASPHEMER
I was formerly a *b*..... 1 Tim 1:13

BLASPHEMES
b the name of the ..... Lev 24:16
"This Man *b*.....Matt 9:3

BLASPHEMIES
is this who speaks *b* .....Luke 5:21

BLASPHEMY
but the *b* against.....Matt 12:31
was full of names of *b* .....Rev 17:3

BLEMISH
be holy and without *b* .....Eph 5:27
as of a lamb without *b*..... 1 Pet 1:19

BLEMISHED
to the Lord what is *b* .....Mal 1:14

BLESS
b those who *b* you.....Gen 12:3
You go unless You *b* .....Gen 32:26
"The LORD *b* you and ..... Num 6:24
b the LORD at all.....Ps 34:1
b You while I live.....Ps 63:4

b His holy name ..... Ps 103:1
b those who curse ..... Luke 6:28
B those who ..... Rom 12:14
Being reviled, we *b* ..... 1 Cor 4:12

BLESSED
B is the man who walks ..... Ps 1:1
B is the man to whom ..... Ps 32:2
B is the nation whose ..... Ps 33:12
B is he who comes ..... Ps 118:26
rise up and call her *b* ..... Prov 31:28
"*B* are the poor in ..... Matt 5:3
B are those who mourn ..... Matt 5:4
B are the meek ..... Matt 5:5
B are those who hunger ..... Matt 5:6
B are the merciful ..... Matt 5:7
B are the pure in ..... Matt 5:8
B are the peacemakers ..... Matt 5:9
B are those who are ..... Matt 5:10
B is He who comes ..... Matt 21:9
'It is more *b* to give ..... Acts 20:35
B be the God and ..... Eph 1:3
"*B* are the dead who ..... Rev 14:13

BLESSING
And you shall be a *b* ..... Gen 12:2
before you today a *b* ..... Deut 11:26
shall be showers of *b* ..... Ezek 34:26
and you shall be a *b* ..... Zech 8:13
that the *b* of Abraham ..... Gal 3:14
with every spiritual *b* ..... Eph 1:3

BLIND
To open *b* eyes ..... Is 42:7
His watchmen are *b* ..... Is 56:10
b leads the *b* ..... Matt 15:14
to Him, "Are we *b* ..... John 9:40
miserable, poor, *b* ..... Rev 3:17

BLOOD
of your brother's *b* ..... Gen 4:10
b shall be shed ..... Gen 9:6
b that makes ..... Lev 17:11
hands are full of *b* ..... Is 1:15
And the moon into *b* ..... Joel 2:31
For this is My *b* ..... Matt 26:28
"His *b* be on us and ..... Matt 27:25
covenant in My *b* ..... Luke 22:20
were born, not of *b* ..... John 1:13
b has eternal life ..... John 6:54
with His own *b* ..... Acts 20:28
propitiation by His *b* ..... Rom 3:25
justified by His *b* ..... Rom 5:9
through His *b* ..... Eph 1:7
brought near by the *b* ..... Eph 2:13
against flesh and *b* ..... Eph 6:12
peace through the *b* ..... Col 1:20
with the precious *b* ..... 1 Pet 1:19
b of Jesus Christ His ..... 1 John 1:7
our sins in His own *b* ..... Rev 1:5
us to God by Your *b* ..... Rev 5:9
them white in the *b* ..... Rev 7:14
overcame him by the *b* ... Rev 12:11
a robe dipped in *b* ..... Rev 19:13

BLOODTHIRSTY
The LORD abhors the *b* ..... Ps 5:6

BLOSSOM
and *b* as the rose ..... Is 35:1

BLOT
from my sins, and *b* ..... Ps 51:9
and I will not *b* ..... Rev 3:5

BLOTTED
your sins may be *b* ..... Acts 3:19

BOAST
puts on his armor *b* ..... 1 Kin 20:11
and make your *b* ..... Rom 2:17
lest anyone should *b* ..... Eph 2:9

BOASTERS
God, violent, proud, *b* ..... Rom 1:30

BOASTING
Where is *b* then ..... Rom 3:27

BODIES
b a living sacrifice ..... Rom 12:1
not know that your *b* ..... 1 Cor 6:15
wives as their own *b* ..... Eph 5:28

BODILY
b form like a dove ..... Luke 3:22
of the Godhead *b* ..... Col 2:9

BODY
of the *b* is the eye ..... Matt 6:22
those who kill the *b* ..... Matt 10:28
this is My *b* ..... Matt 26:26
of the temple of His *b* ..... John 2:21
deliver me from this *b* ..... Rom 7:24
redemption of our *b* ..... Rom 8:23
members in one *b* ..... Rom 12:4
But I discipline my *b* ..... 1 Cor 9:27
b which is broken ..... 1 Cor 11:24
baptized into one *b* ..... 1 Cor 12:13
are the *b* of Christ ..... 1 Cor 12:27
though I give my *b* ..... 1 Cor 13:3
It is sown a natural *b* ..... 1 Cor 15:44
in the *b* of His flesh ..... Col 1:22
our sins in His own *b* ..... 1 Pet 2:24

BOILS
Job with painful *b* ..... Job 2:7

BOLDLY
therefore come *b* ..... Heb 4:16

BOLDNESS
in whom we have *b* ..... Eph 3:12
that we may have *b* ..... 1 John 4:17

BOND
love, which is the *b* ..... Col 3:14

BONDAGE
out of the house of *b* ..... Ex 13:14
again with a yoke of *b* ..... Gal 5:1

BONDSERVANTS
B, be obedient to ..... Eph 6:5
Masters, give your *b* ..... Col 4:1

BONE
b clings to my skin ..... Job 19:20

BONES
I can count all My *b* ..... Ps 22:17
and my *b* waste away ..... Ps 31:10
I kept silent, my *b* ..... Ps 32:3
the wind, Or how the *b* .... Eccl 11:5
say to them, 'O dry *b* ..... Ezek 37:4
of dead men's *b* ..... Matt 23:27
b shall be broken ..... John 19:36

BOOK
are written in the *b* ..... Gal 3:10
in the Lamb's *B* ..... Rev 21:27
the prophecy of this *b* ..... Rev 22:18

BORDERS
and enlarge the *b* ..... Matt 23:5

BORE
And to Sarah who *b* ..... Is 51:2
b the sin of many ..... Is 53:12
b our sicknesses ..... Matt 8:17
Himself *b* our sins ..... 1 Pet 2:24
b a male Child who was ... Rev 12:5

BORN
A time to be *b* ..... Eccl 3:2
unto us a Child is *b* ..... Is 9:6
b Jesus who is called ..... Matt 1:16
unless one is *b* again ..... John 3:3
"That which is *b* ..... John 3:6
having been *b* again ..... 1 Pet 1:23
who loves is *b* of God ..... 1 John 4:7

BORROWER
b is servant to the ..... Prov 22:7

BORROWS
The wicked *b* and does ..... Ps 37:21

BOSOM
to Abraham's *b* ..... Luke 16:22
Son, who is in the *b* ..... John 1:18

BOTTOMLESS
ascend out of the *b* ..... Rev 17:8
the key to the *b* ..... Rev 20:1

BOUGHT
b the threshing floor .... 2 Sam 24:24
all that he had and *b* ..... Matt 13:46
For you were *b* at a ..... 1 Cor 6:20
denying the Lord who *b* ... 2 Pet 2:1

BOUND
on earth will be *b* ..... Matt 16:19
And see, now I go *b* ..... Acts 20:22
who has a husband is *b* ..... Rom 7:2
Are you *b* to a wife ..... 1 Cor 7:27
Devil and Satan, and *b* ..... Rev 20:2

BOW
"You shall not *b* ..... Ex 23:24
let us worship and *b* ..... Ps 95:6
who sat on it had a *b* ..... Rev 6:2

BOWED
stood all around and *b* ..... Gen 37:7
And they *b* the knee ..... Matt 27:29

BOWL(S)
and poured out his *b* ..... Rev 16:2
Go and pour out the *b* ..... Rev 16:1

BRANCH
raise to David a *B* ..... Jer 23:5
forth My Servant the *B* ..... Zech 3:8
b that bears fruit He ..... John 15:2

BRANCHES
vine, you are the *b* ..... John 15:5

BRASS
become sounding *b* ..... 1 Cor 13:1

BRAVE
in the faith, be *b* ..... 1 Cor 16:13

BREAD
brought out *b* ..... Gen 14:18
shall eat unleavened *b* ..... Ex 23:15
not live by *b* alone ..... Deut 8:3
b eaten in secret is ..... Prov 9:17
B gained by deceit is ..... Prov 20:17
Cast your *b* upon the ..... Eccl 11:1
for what is not *b* ..... Is 55:2
these stones become *b* ..... Matt 4:3
not live by *b* alone ..... Matt 4:4
this day our daily *b* ..... Matt 6:11
eating, Jesus took *b* ..... Matt 26:26
"I am the *b* of life ..... John 6:48
betrayed took *b* ..... 1 Cor 11:23

BREAK
covenant I will not *b* ..... Ps 89:34
together to *b* bread ..... Acts 20:7

BREAKING
in the *b* of bread ..... Acts 2:42
b bread from house to ..... Acts 2:46

BREASTPLATE
righteousness as a *b* ..... Is 59:17
having put on the *b* ..... Eph 6:14

BREASTS
Your two *b* are like ..... Song 4:5
b which nursed You ..... Luke 11:27

BREATH
nostrils the *b* of life ..... Gen 2:7
that there was no *b* ..... 1 Kin 17:17
Man is like a *b* ..... Ps 144:4
everything that has *b* ..... Ps 150:6
"Surely I will cause *b* ..... Ezek 37:5
gives to all life, *b* ..... Acts 17:25
power to give *b* ..... Rev 13:15

BRETHREN
and you are all *b* ..... Matt 23:8
least of these My *b* ..... Matt 25:40
among many *b* ..... Rom 8:29
thus sin against the *b* ..... 1 Cor 8:12
over five hundred *b* ..... 1 Cor 15:6
perils among false *b* ..... 2 Cor 11:26
sincere love of the *b* ..... 1 Pet 1:22
we love the *b* ..... 1 John 3:14
our lives for the *b* ..... 1 John 3:16

BRIBE(S)
you shall take no *b* ..... Ex 23:8
b blinds the eyes ..... Deut 16:19
hand is full of *b* ..... Ps 26:10

BRICK(S)
people straw to make *b* ..... Ex 5:7
"Come, let us make *b* ..... Gen 11:3

BRIDE
I will show you the *b* ..... Rev 21:9
the Spirit and the *b* ..... Rev 22:17

BRIDEGROOM
And as the *b* rejoices ..... Is 62:5
mourn as long as the *b* ..... Matt 9:15

went out to meet the *b* .....Matt 25:1
the friend of the *b* ..... John 3:29

BRIDLE
b the whole body.....James 3:2

BRIGHTER
a light from heaven, *b* ....Acts 26:13

BRIGHTNESS
And kings to the *b* .....Is 60:3
who being the *b*.....Heb 1:3

BRIMSTONE
the lake of fire and *b* .....Rev 20:10

BRING
b back his soul.....Job 33:30
b My righteousness.....Is 46:13
Who shall *b* a charge ..... Rom 8:33
b Christ down from ..... Rom 10:6
even so God will *b* ..... 1 Thess 4:14

BROAD
b is the way that.....Matt 7:13

BROKE
b them at the foot of .....Ex 32:19
He blessed and *b*.....Matt 14:19
b the legs of the .....John 19:32

BROKEN
this stone will be *b*.....Matt 21:44
Scripture cannot be *b*.... John 10:35
body which is *b* ..... 1 Cor 11:24

BROKENHEARTED
He heals the *b* And .....Ps 147:3

BRONZE
So Moses made a *b*..... Num 21:9
b walls against the ..... Jer 1:18
a third kingdom of *b*..... Dan 2:39

BROOD
"*B* of vipers.....Matt 12:34
hen gathers her *b* .....Luke 13:34

BROTHER
"Where is Abel your *b*.....Gen 4:9
b offended is harder ..... Prov 18:19
b will deliver up.....Matt 10:21
how often shall my *b*.....Matt 18:21
b will rise again.....John 11:23
b goes to law against..... 1 Cor 6:6
Whoever hates his *b*..... 1 John 3:15

BROTHERHOOD
Love the *b*..... 1 Pet 2:17

BROTHERLY
b love continue .....Heb 13:1

BROTHER'S
Am I my *b* keeper .....Gen 4:9
at the speck in your *b*.....Matt 7:3

BROTHERS
is My mother, or My *b* ... Mark 3:33
b are these who hear.....Luke 8:21

BRUISE
He shall *b* your head .....Gen 3:15
the LORD to *b* Him .....Is 53:10

BRUISED
He was *b* for our .....Is 53:5
b reed He will not.....Matt 12:20

BUCKLER
be your shield and *b* .....Ps 91:4

BUILD
b ourselves a city .....Gen 11:4
"Would you *b* a house.....2 Sam 7:5
labor in vain who *b*.....Ps 127:1
down, And a time to *b*..... Eccl 3:3
'This man began to *b*.....Luke 14:30
What house will you *b* .....Acts 7:49
"For if I *b* again .....Gal 2:18

BUILDER
foundations, whose *b* .....Heb 11:10

BUILT
has *b* her house .....Prov 9:1
to a wise man who *b* .....Matt 7:24
having been *b* on the.....Eph 2:20

BUNDLE
man's *b* of money.....Gen 42:35

BURDEN(S)
Cast your *b* on the .....Ps 55:22
easy and My *b* is light ....Matt 11:30
we might not be a *b*..... 1 Thess 2:9
on you no other *b*.....Rev 2:24
"For they bind heavy *b*.....Matt 23:4
Bear one another's *b* .....Gal 6:2

BURIAL
she did it for My *b*.....Matt 26:12
for the day of My *b* ..... John 12:7

BURIED
Therefore we were *b* .....Rom 6:4
and that He was *b*..... 1 Cor 15:4
b with Him in baptism .....Col 2:12

BURN
the bush does not *b*..... Ex 3:3
"Did not our heart *b* .....Luke 24:32

BURNED
If anyone's work is *b*..... 1 Cor 3:15
my body to be *b*..... 1 Cor 13:3

BURNING
b torch that passed .....Gen 15:17
b fire shut up in my ..... Jer 20:9
plucked from the *b*.....Amos 4:11

BURNT
lamb for a *b* offering .....Gen 22:7
delight in *b* offering.....Ps 51:16

BUSH
from the midst of a *b* ..... Ex 3:2

BUSYBODIES
at all, but are *b*..... 2 Thess 3:11

BUTTER
were smoother than *b* .....Ps 55:21

BUY
Yes, come, *b* wine and .....Is 55:1
"I counsel you to *b* .....Rev 3:18
and that no one may *b* ....Rev 13:17

C

CAKE(S)
Ephraim is a *c*.....Hos 7:8
and love the raisin *c* .....Hos 3:1

CALF
and made a molded *c* ..... Ex 32:4
bring the fatted *c*.....Luke 15:23

CALL
C upon Him while He.....Is 55:6
c His name JESUS.....Matt 1:21
c the righteous.....Matt 9:13
Lord our God will *c* .....Acts 2:39
c them My people ..... Rom 9:25
c and election sure.....2 Pet 1:10

CALLED
c the light Day .....Gen 1:5
c his wife's name Eve.....Gen 3:20
I have *c* you by your.....Is 43:1
"Out of Egypt I *c* .....Matt 2:15
city *c* Nazareth .....Matt 2:23
For many are *c* .....Matt 20:16
to those who are the *c*..... Rom 8:28
these He also *c*..... Rom 8:30
c children of God ..... 1 John 3:1

CALLING
the gifts and the *c* ..... Rom 11:29
For you see your *c* ..... 1 Cor 1:26
remain in the same *c*..... 1 Cor 7:20

CAPTIVE(S)
and be led away *c* .....Luke 21:24
He led captivity *c* .....Eph 4:8
and make *c*.....2 Tim 3:6

CAPTIVITY
every thought into *c*..... 2 Cor 10:5

CARE
"Lord, do You not *c* .....Luke 10:40
how will he take *c*.....1 Tim 3:5

CARELESS
But, he who is *c* ..... Prov 19:16

CARES
No one *c* for my soul .....Ps 142:4
for He *c* for you..... 1 Pet 5:7

CARNAL
c mind is enmity.....Rom 8:7

CARPENTER
"Is this not the *c* ..... Mark 6:3

CARRY
for you to *c* your bed..... John 5:10
it is certain we can *c*.....1 Tim 6:7

CASSIA
myrrh and aloes and *c* .....Ps 45:8

CAST
Why are you *c* down .....Ps 42:5
whole body to be *c*.....Matt 5:29
My name they will *c*..... Mark 16:17
by no means *c* out..... John 6:37
c their crowns before ..... Rev 4:10
the great dragon was *c*..... Rev 12:9

CASTING
c down arguments ..... 2 Cor 10:5
c all your care..... 1 Pet 5:7

CASTS
perfect love *c* out..... 1 John 4:18

CATCH
c Him in His words..... Mark 12:13
now on you will *c*.....Luke 5:10

CATCHES
and the wolf *c* the ..... John 10:12
c the wise in their..... 1 Cor 3:19

CAUGHT
him was a ram *c*.....Gen 22:13
her Child was *c* up..... Rev 12:5

CAUSE
hated Me without a *c*..... John 15:25
For this *c* I was born..... John 18:37

CEASE
and night Shall not *c* .....Gen 8:22
He makes wars *c*.....Ps 46:9
tongues, they will *c* ..... 1 Cor 13:8

CEASING
pray without *c* ..... 1 Thess 5:17

CEDAR
dwell in a house of *c*.....2 Sam 7:2

CELESTIAL
but the glory of the *c* .... 1 Cor 15:40

CHAFF
be chased like the *c* .....Is 17:13
He will burn up the *c*.....Matt 3:12

CHAIN(S)
pit and a great *c* .....Rev 20:1
And his *c* fell off.....Acts 12:7
am, except for these *c* ....Acts 26:29

CHAMBERS
brought me into his *c* .....Song 1:4

CHANGE
now and to *c* my tone.....Gal 4:20
there is also a *c*.....Heb 7:12

CHANGED
c the glory of the..... Rom 1:23
but we shall all be *c*..... 1 Cor 15:51

CHARIOT(S)
that suddenly a *c*..... 2 Kin 2:11
Some trust in *c* .....Ps 20:7

CHARITABLE
you do not do your *c* .....Matt 6:1
c deeds which she.....Acts 9:36

CHARM
C is deceitful and ..... Prov 31:30

CHARMS
who sew magic *c*.....Ezek 13:18

CHASTE
present you as a *c* ..... 2 Cor 11:2

CHASTEN
a father does not *c* .....Heb 12:7
I love, I rebuke and *c*.....Rev 3:19

CHASTENED
c us as seemed best .....Heb 12:10

CHASTENING
do not despise the *c* .....Job 5:17
Now no *c* seems to be .....Heb 12:11

CHASTISEMENT
The *c* for our peace.....Is 53:5

CHATTER
c leads only to..... Prov 14:23

CHEAT
Beware lest anyone *c* .....Col 2:8

CHEEK(S)
on your right *c*.....Matt 5:39
His *c* are like a bed.....Song 5:13

CHEER
"Son, be of good *c*.....Matt 9:2

CHEERFUL
for God loves a *c* .....2 Cor 9:7

CHEERFULNESS
shows mercy, with *c*..... Rom 12:8

CHERISHES
but nourishes and *c* .....Eph 5:29

CHERUBIM
above it were the *c*.....Heb 9:5

CHIEF
of whom I am *c*.....1 Tim 1:15
Zion a *c* cornerstone..... 1 Pet 2:6

CHILD
Train up a *c* in the.....Prov 22:6
For unto us a *C*.....Is 9:6
virgin shall be with *c*.....Matt 1:23
of God as a little *c*..... Mark 10:15
So the *c* grew and .....Luke 1:80
When I was a *c*..... 1 Cor 13:11
She bore a male *C*.....Rev 12:5

CHILDBEARING
she will be saved in *c* .....1 Tim 2:15

CHILDBIRTH
pain as a woman in *c* .....Is 13:8

CHILDLESS
give me, seeing I go *c*.....Gen 15:2
this man down as *c*..... Jer 22:30

CHILDREN
c are a heritage.....Ps 127:3
c rise up and call her..... Prov 31:28
and become as little *c*.....Matt 18:3
"Let the little *c* .....Matt 19:14
the right to become *c*..... John 1:12
now we are *c* of God ..... 1 John 3:2

CHOOSE
therefore *c* life ..... Deut 30:19
"You did not *c*..... John 15:16

CHOSE
Just as He *c* us in Him .....Eph 1:4

CHOSEN
servant whom I have *c*.....Is 43:10
whom I have *c* .....John 13:18
c the foolish things ..... 1 Cor 1:27
Has God not *c* the .....James 2:5

CHRIST
Jesus who is called *C* .....Matt 1:16
"You are the *C*.....Matt 16:16
a Savior, who is *C*.....Luke 2:11
It is *C* who died ..... Rom 8:34
to be justified by *C*.....Gal 2:17
been crucified with *C* .....Gal 2:20
C is head of the.....Eph 5:23
to me, to live is *C*.....Phil 1:21
which is *C* in you .....Col 1:27
C who is our.....Col 3:4
Jesus *C* is the same.....Heb 13:8
C His Son cleanses us .... 1 John 1:7
that Jesus is the *C*..... 1 John 5:1

CHRISTIAN(S)
anyone suffers as a *C*..... 1 Pet 4:16
were first called *C*.....Acts 11:26

CHURCH
rock I will build My *c* .....Matt 16:18
c daily those who were .... Acts 2:47
Himself a glorious *c*.....Eph 5:27
as the Lord does the *c* .....Eph 5:29
body, which is the *c*.....Col 1:24
assembly and *c*.....Heb 12:23

CIRCUMCISED
among you shall be *c* .....Gen 17:10
who will justify the *c* ..... Rom 3:30
if you become *c* .....Gal 5:2

CIRCUMCISION
c is that of the heart..... Rom 2:29
C is nothing and ..... 1 Cor 7:19
Christ Jesus neither *c*.....Gal 5:6

CIRCUMSPECTLY
then that you walk *c*.....Eph 5:15

CITIES
He overthrew those *c* .....Gen 19:25
three parts, and the *c*.....Rev 16:19

CITIZEN(S)
But I was born a *c*.....Acts 22:28
but fellow *c* with the.....Eph 2:19

CITIZENSHIP
For our *c* is in heaven.....Phil 3:20

CITY
shall make glad the *c* .....Ps 46:4
c has become a harlot .....Is 1:21
How lonely sits the *c* .....Lam 1:1
c that is set on a .....Matt 5:14
He has prepared a *c*.....Heb 11:16
have no continuing *c* .....Heb 13:14
John, saw the holy *c*..... Rev 21:2

CLAY
pit, out of the miry *c* .....Ps 40:2
We are the *c*.....Is 64:8
blind man with the *c*..... John 9:6
have power over the *c*..... Rom 9:21

CLEAN
He who has *c* hands and .....Ps 24:4
make yourselves *c* .....Is 1:16
c out His threshing .....Matt 3:12
You can make me *c* .....Matt 8:2
"You are not all *c* ..... John 13:11
"You are already *c* ..... John 15:3

CLEANSE
C me from secret.....Ps 19:12
And *c* me from my sin .....Ps 51:2
How can a young man *c* ....Ps 119:9
might sanctify and *c* .....Eph 5:26
us our sins and to *c*..... 1 John 1:9

CLEANSED
"Were there not ten *c* ....Luke 17:17

CLOAK
let him have your *c*.....Matt 5:40
using liberty as a *c*..... 1 Pet 2:16

CLOTHED
of skin, and *c* them .....Gen 3:21
A man *c* in soft .....Matt 11:8
naked and you *c*.....Matt 25:36
legion, sitting and *c* ..... Mark 5:15
desiring to be *c* ..... 2 Cor 5:2
that you may be *c* ..... Rev 3:18

CLOTHES
c became shining ..... Mark 9:3
many spread their *c*.....Luke 19:36
a poor man in filthy *c*.....James 2:2

CLOTHING
c they cast lots .....Ps 22:18
do you worry about *c* .....Matt 6:28
to you in sheep's *c* .....Matt 7:15
c they cast lots..... John 19:24

CLOTHS
in swaddling *c* .....Luke 2:12

CLOUD
My rainbow in the *c* .....Gen 9:13
day in a pillar of *c*..... Ex 13:21
He led them with the *c*.....Ps 78:14
behold, a bright *c* .....Matt 17:5
of Man coming in a *c*.....Luke 21:27
c received Him out of.....Acts 1:9
by so great a *c* .....Heb 12:1

CLOUDS
Man coming on the *c*.....Matt 24:30
with them in the *c*..... 1 Thess 4:17
are *c* without water.....Jude 12
He is coming with *c* ..... Rev 1:7

CLOVEN
chew the cud or have *c* ... Deut 14:7

COAL(S)
in his hand a live *c*.....Is 6:6
doing you will heap *c*.... Rom 12:20

COBRA
the lion and the *c* .....Ps 91:13

COFFIN
and he was put in a *c* .....Gen 50:26
touched the open *c*.....Luke 7:14

COIN
if she loses one *c* .....Luke 15:8

COLD
and harvest, *C* and.....Gen 8:22
of many will grow *c*.....Matt 24:12
that you are neither *c*..... Rev 3:15

COLT
on a donkey, A *c* .....Zech 9:9
on a donkey, A *c* .....Matt 21:5

COME
He will *c* and save you.....Is 35:4
who have no money, *C* .....Is 55:1
Your kingdom *c* .....Matt 6:10
"*C* to Me.....Matt 11:28
I have *c* in My..... John 5:43
thirsts, let him *c*..... John 7:37
c as a light into the ..... John 12:46
O Lord, *c*..... 1 Cor 16:22
the door, I will *c* ..... Rev 3:20

COMELINESS
He has no form or *c*.....Is 53:2

COMFORT
and Your staff, they *c*.....Ps 23:4
yes, *c* My people.....Is 40:1
c each other..... 1 Thess 5:11

COMFORTED
So Isaac was *c* after.....Gen 24:67
Refusing to be *c*..... Jer 31:15

COMFORTS
I, even I, am He who *c* .....Is 51:12

COMING
see the Son of Man *c* .... Mark 13:26
mightier than I is *c*.....Luke 3:16
are Christ's at His *c* ..... 1 Cor 15:23
Behold, I am *c*.....Rev 3:11
"Surely I am *c* ..... Rev 22:20

COMMAND
c I have received ..... John 10:18
and I know that
His *c*..... John 12:50
If you do whatever
I *c* ..... John 15:14

COMMANDMENT(S)
c of the LORD is pure.....Ps 19:8
which is the great *c*.....Matt 22:36
"A new *c* I give to.....John 13:34
which is the first *c*.....Eph 6:2
And this is His *c*..... 1 John 3:23
covenant, the Ten *C*.....Ex 34:28
as doctrines the *c* .....Matt 15:9
c hang all the Law .....Matt 22:40
"He who has My *c*..... John 14:21

COMMANDS
with authority He *c*..... Mark 1:27

COMMENDABLE
patiently, this is *c* ..... 1 Pet 2:20

COMMENDS
but whom the Lord *c*.... 2 Cor 10:18

COMMIT
"You shall not *c*.....Ex 20:14
into Your hands I *c*.....Luke 23:46

COMMON
c people heard Him .....Mark 12:37
had all things in *c* .....Acts 2:44
concerning our *c* .....Jude *3*

COMMUNION
c of the Holy Spirit .....2 Cor 13:14

COMPANION(S)
a man my equal, My *c*.....Ps 55:13
while you became *c*.....Heb 10:33

COMPANY
Great was the *c*.....Ps 68:11
to an innumerable *c*.....Heb 12:22

COMPARE
c ourselves with.....2 Cor 10:12

COMPASSION
are a God full of *c* .....Ps 86:15
He was moved with *c*.....Matt 9:36
whomever *I* will have *c*... Rom 9:15
He can have *c* on those.....Heb 5:2

COMPASSIONATE
the Lord is very *c*.....James 5:11

COMPASSIONS
because His *c* fail not .....Lam 3:22

COMPELS
the love of Christ *c*.....2 Cor 5:14

COMPLAINED
some of them also *c*.....1 Cor 10:10

COMPLAINERS
These are grumblers, *c*.....Jude 16

COMPLAINING
all things without *c* .....Phil 2:14

COMPLAINT
For the LORD has a *c* ..... Mic 6:2

COMPLETE
work in you will *c* .....Phil 1:6
and you are *c* in Him.....Col 2:10
of God may be *c* .....2 Tim 3:17

COMPLETELY
sanctify you *c*..... 1 Thess 5:23

COMPREHEND
which we cannot *c* .....Job 37:5
the darkness did not *c*..... John 1:5

CONCEALED
Than love carefully *c*.....Prov 27:5

CONCEIT
selfish ambition or *c* .....Phil 2:3

CONCEITED
Let us not become *c*.....Gal 5:26

CONCEIVE
the virgin shall *c*.....Is 7:14
And behold, you will *c*....Luke 1:31

CONDEMN
world to *c* the world .....John 3:17

CONDEMNATION
can you escape the *c* .....Matt 23:33
"And this is the *c*..... John 3:19
Their *c* is just .....Rom 3:8
therefore now no *c*.....Rom 8:1

CONDEMNED
does not believe is *c*..... John 3:18
c sin in the flesh .....Rom 8:3

CONDEMNS
Who is he who *c*..... Rom 8:34

CONDUCT
from your aimless *c*..... 1 Pet 1:8
may be won by the *c* ..... 1 Pet 3:1

CONFESS
c my transgressions.....Ps 32:5
that if you *c* with ..... Rom 10:9
every tongue shall *c*..... Rom 14:11
If we *c* our sins ..... 1 John 1:9

CONFESSED
c that He was Christ ..... John 9:22

CONFESSES
c that Jesus is the ..... 1 John 4:15

CONFESSION
with the mouth *c* ..... Rom 10:10
High Priest of our *c* .....Heb 3:1
let us hold fast our *c*.....Heb 4:14

CONFIDENCE
c shall be your .....Is 30:15
Jesus, and have no *c*.....Phil 3:3

CONFIRMED
covenant that was *c*.....Gal 3:17
c it by an oath.....Heb 6:17

CONFIRMING
c the word through ..... Mark 16:20

CONFLICT(S)
to know what a great *c* .....Col 2:1
Outside were *c*..... 2 Cor 7:5

CONFORMED
predestined to be *c*..... Rom 8:29
And do not be *c* ..... Rom 12:2

CONFUSE
c their language.....Gen 11:7

CONFUSED
the assembly was *c*.....Acts 19:32

CONGREGATION
Nor sinners in the *c* .....Ps 1:5
God stands in the *c*.....Ps 82:1

CONQUER
conquering and to *c*.....Rev 6:2

CONQUERORS
we are more than *c*..... Rom 8:37

CONSCIENCE
convicted by their *c* ..... John 8:9
strive to have a *c* .....Acts 24:16

CONSECRATED
c this house which you..... 1 Kin 9:3

CONSIDER
When I *c* Your heavens .....Ps 8:3
My people do not *c* .....Is 1:3
C the lilies of the .....Matt 6:28
"*C* the ravens .....Luke 12:24
c Him who endured .....Heb 12:3

CONSIST
in Him all things *c*.....Col 1:17

CONSOLATION
if there is any *c*.....Phil 2:1
us everlasting *c*..... 2 Thess 2:16

CONSOLE
c those who mourn .....Is 61:3

CONSUMED
but the bush was not *c* .....Ex 3:2
mercies we are not *c*.....Lam 3:22
beware lest you be *c*.....Gal 5:15

CONSUMING
our God is a *c* fire .....Heb 12:29

CONTAIN
of heavens cannot *c*.....2 Chr 2:6
c the books that..... John 21:25

CONTEMPTIBLE
and his speech *c*.....2 Cor 10:10

CONTEND
c earnestly for the.....Jude 3

CONTENT
state I am, to be *c*.....Phil 4:11
covetousness: be *c*.....Heb 13:5

CONTENTIOUS
anyone seems to be *c* ... 1 Cor 11:16

CONTENTMENT
c is great gain .....1 Tim 6:6

CONTINUAL
a merry heart has a *c* .... Prov 15:15
c coming she weary.....Luke 18:5

CONTINUALLY
heart was only evil *c* .....Gen 6:5
will give ourselves *c* .....Acts 6:4
remains a priest *c*.....Heb 7:3

CONTINUE
Shall we *c* in sin that.....Rom 6:1
C earnestly in prayer.....Col 4:2
Let brotherly love *c* .....Heb 13:1

CONTRARY
to worship God *c*.....Acts 18:13

CONTRITE
A broken and a *c*.....Ps 51:17
poor and of a *c* spirit .....Is 66:2

CONVERSION
describing the *c* .....Acts 15:3

CONVERTED
unless you are *c*.....Matt 18:3

CONVICT
He has come, He will *c* ... John 16:8

CONVINCED
Let each be fully *c*..... Rom 14:5

COOL
and *c* my tongue.....Luke 16:24

COPPER
sold for two *c* coins.....Luke 12:6

COPPERSMITH
c did me much harm.....2 Tim 4:14

CORD
this line of scarlet *c*.....Josh 2:18

CORDS
had made a whip of *c*..... John 2:15

CORNERSTONE
become the chief *c* .....Matt 21:42
in Zion A chief *c*..... 1 Pet 2:6

CORRECT
C your son ..... Prov 29:17

CORRECTED
human fathers who *c*.....Heb 12:9

CORRECTION
Do not withhold *c* ..... Prov 23:13
for reproof, for *c*.....2 Tim 3:16

CORRECTS
the LORD loves He *c*.....Prov 3:12

CORRUPT
in these things they *c* .....Jude 10

CORRUPTED
for all flesh had *c* .....Gen 6:12
Your riches are *c*.....James 5:2

CORRUPTIBLE
redeemed with *c*..... 1 Pet 1:18

CORRUPTION
Your Holy One to see *c*.....Ps 16:10
c inherit incorruption ... 1 Cor 15:50
having escaped the *c* ..... 2 Pet 1:4

COST
and count the *c* .....Luke 14:28

COULD
c remove mountains ..... 1 Cor 13:2
which no one *c* number ..... Rev 7:9

COUNSEL
Who walks not in the *c* .....Ps 1:1
We took sweet *c*.....Ps 55:14
guide me with Your *c*.....Ps 73:24
according to the *c* .....Eph 1:11
immutability of His *c*.....Heb 6:17
"I *c* you to buy from..... Rev 3:18

COUNSELOR
be called Wonderful, *C* .....Is 9:6

COUNSELORS
c there is safety ..... Prov 11:14

COUNTED
Even a fool is *c* ..... Prov 17:28
who rule well be *c*.....1 Tim 5:17

COUNTENANCE
The LORD lift up His *c*..... Num 6:26
with a sad *c*.....Matt 6:16
His *c* was like.....Matt 28:3
of the glory of his *c*.....2 Cor 3:7

COUNTRY
"Get out of your *c*.....Gen 12:1
that is, a heavenly *c*.....Heb 11:16

COURAGE
strong and of good *c*..... Deut 31:6

COURTEOUS
be tenderhearted, be *c*..... 1 Pet 3:8

COURTS
and into His *c*.....Ps 100:4

COVENANT
I will establish My *c*.....Gen 6:18
the LORD made a *c*.....Gen 15:18
will show them His *c*.....Ps 25:14
sons will keep My *c*.....Ps 132:12
I will make a new *c*..... Jer 31:31
the Messenger of the *c*..... Mal 3:1
cup is the new *c*.....Luke 22:20
He says, "A new *c*.....Heb 8:13
Mediator of the new *c*.....Heb 12:24
of the everlasting *c*.....Heb 13:20

COVENANTS
the glory, the *c*.....Rom 9:4

COVER
He shall *c* you with.....Ps 91:4
c a multitude of sins .....James 5:20

COVERED
Whose sin is *c*.....Ps 32:1
c all their sin .....Ps 85:2
For there is nothing *c*.....Matt 10:26

COVERINGS
and made themselves *c*.....Gen 3:7

COVET
"You shall not *c*..... Ex 20:17

COVETED
c no one's silver..... Acts 20:33

COVETOUS
nor thieves, nor *c* ..... 1 Cor 6:10

COVETOUSNESS
heed and beware of *c*....Luke 12:15

COWARDLY
the *c*, unbelieving..... Rev 21:8

CRAFTILY
His people, to deal *c* .....Ps 105:25

CRAFTINESS
deceived Eve by his *c*..... 2 Cor 11:3
in the cunning *c*.....Eph 4:14

CRAFTY
the devices of the *c* .....Job 5:12
Nevertheless, being *c* ... 2 Cor 12:16

CREATED
So God *c* man in His .....Gen 1:27
Has not one God *c* ..... Mal 2:10
c in Christ Jesus.....Eph 2:10
new man which was *c*.....Eph 4:24

CREATION
know that the whole *c*..... Rom 8:22
Christ, he is a new *c* ..... 2 Cor 5:17
anything, but a new *c*.....Gal 6:15

CREATOR
Remember now your *C*.... Eccl 12:1
God, the LORD, The *C*.....Is 40:28
rather than the *C*..... Rom 1:25

CREATURE
the gospel to every *c*..... Mark 16:15

CREDITOR
There was a certain *c*.....Luke 7:41

CREEP
sort are those who *c* .....2 Tim 3:6

CREEPING
c thing and beast of .....Gen 1:24

CRIED
the poor who *c* out.....Job 29:12
of the depths I have *c* .....Ps 130:1

CRIMES
land is filled with *c* ..... Ezek 7:23

CRIMINALS
also two others, *c* .....Luke 23:32

CROOKED
c places shall be made .....Is 40:4
in the midst of a *c* .....Phil 2:15

CROSS
does not take his *c* .....Matt 10:38
to bear His *c*.....Matt 27:32
down from the *c* .....Matt 27:40
lest the *c* of Christ..... 1 Cor 1:17
boast except in the *c*.....Gal 6:14
the enemies of the *c*.....Phil 3:18
Him endured the *c* .....Heb 12:2
shall not follow a *c*..... Ex 23:2

CROWN
c the year with Your.....Ps 65:11
they had twisted a *c*.....Matt 27:29
obtain a perishable *c* ..... 1 Cor 9:25
laid up for me the *c*.....2 Tim 4:8
on his head a golden *c* ....Rev 14:14

CROWNED
angels, And You have *c* .....Ps 8:5
athletics, he is not *c* .....2 Tim 2:5

CROWNS
His head were many *c*.....Rev 19:12

CRUCIFIED
"Let Him be *c*.....Matt 27:22
Calvary, there they *c* .....Luke 23:33
lawless hands, have *c*..... Acts 2:23
that our old man was *c* .....Rom 6:6
Jesus Christ and
Him *c*..... 1 Cor 2:2
"I have been *c* .....Gal 2:20

CRUCIFY
out again, "C Him ..... Mark 15:13

CRUEL
hate me with *c* hatred .....Ps 25:19

CRUELTY
the haunts of *c* .....Ps 74:20

CRUSH
of peace will *c*..... Rom 16:20

CRUSHED
every side, yet not *c*..... 2 Cor 4:8

CRY
and their *c* came up to ..... Ex 2:23
Does not wisdom *c* .....Prov 8:1
at midnight a *c*.....Matt 25:6
His own elect who *c* .....Luke 18:7

CRYING
nor sorrow, nor *c* ..... Rev 21:4

CRYSTAL
a sea of glass, like *c*..... Rev 4:6

CUNNING
the serpent was more *c*.....Gen 3:1
c craftiness of deceitful .....Eph 4:14

CUP
My *c* runs over .....Ps 23:5
Then He took the *c* .....Matt 26:27
possible, let this *c*.....Matt 26:39
c is the new covenant....Luke 22:20
cannot drink the *c*..... 1 Cor 10:21
c is the new ..... 1 Cor 11:25

CURE
and to *c* diseases .....Luke 9:1

CURES
and perform *c* .....Luke 13:32

CURSE
c the ground for man's.....Gen 8:21
C God and die.....Job 2:9
"I will send a *c* .....Mal 2:2
law are under the *c*.....Gal 3:10

CURSED
c more than all cattle.....Gen 3:14
from Me, you *c* .....Matt 25:41

CURSES
I will curse him who *c*.....Gen 12:3

CUT
evildoers shall be *c* .....Ps 37:9
the wicked will be *c*.....Prov 2:22

CYMBAL
or a clanging *c*..... 1 Cor 13:1

D

DAILY
Give us this day our *d* .....Matt 6:11
take up his cross *d* .....Luke 9:23
the Scriptures *d* ..... Acts 17:11

DANCE
mourn, And a time to *d*..... Eccl 3:4
And you did not *d* .....Matt 11:17

DANCED
Then David *d* before.....2 Sam 6:14

DANCING
saw the calf and the *d* ..... Ex 32:19
he heard music and *d*....Luke 15:25

DARK
I tell you in the *d* .....Matt 10:27
shines in a *d* place.....2 Pet 1:19

DARKENED
their understanding *d*.....Eph 4:18

DARKNESS
d He called Night .....Gen 1:5
Those who sat in *d*.....Ps 107:10
d Have seen a.....Is 9:2
And deep *d* the people .....Is 60:2
body will be full of *d*.....Matt 6:23
cast out into outer *d*.....Matt 8:12
d rather than light..... John 3:19
For you were once *d*.....Eph 5:8
called you out of *d* ..... 1 Pet 2:9
d is reserved.....2 Pet 2:17
and in Him is no *d* ..... 1 John 1:5
d is passing away..... 1 John 2:8

DASH
You shall *d* them to .....Ps 2:9
Lest you *d* your foot .....Matt 4:6

DAUGHTER
"Rejoice greatly, O *d*..... Zech 9:9
"Fear not, *d* of Zion..... John 12:15
the son of Pharaoh's *d*....Heb 11:24

DAUGHTERS
of God saw the *d* .....Gen 6:2
d shall prophesy ..... Acts 2:17

DAY
God called the light *D* .....Gen 1:5
And *d* and night .....Gen 8:22
the Sabbath *d*..... Ex 20:8
For a *d* in Your courts.....Ps 84:10
d the LORD has .....Ps 118:24
not strike you by *d*.....Ps 121:6
For the *d* of the LORD .....Joel 2:11
who can endure the *d*..... Mal 3:2
d our daily bread.....Matt 6:11
sent Me while it is *d*..... John 9:4
person esteems one *d* ..... Rom 14:5
D will declare it ..... 1 Cor 3:13
again the third *d*..... 1 Cor 15:4
with the Lord one *d* ..... 2 Pet 3:8

DAYS
d are swifter than a.....Job 7:6
of woman is of few *d*.....Job 14:1
The *d* of our lives are .....Ps 90:10
Before the difficult *d*..... Eccl 12:1
shortened those *d*..... Mark 13:20
raise it up in three *d*..... John 2:20

DAYSPRING
With which the *D*.....Luke 1:78

DEACONS
with the bishops and *d*.....Phil 1:1
d must be reverent.....1 Tim 3:8
d be the husbands.....1 Tim 3:12

DEAD
But the *d* know nothing.....Eccl 9:5
d bury their own *d*.....Matt 8:22
not the God of the *d*.....Matt 22:32
this my son was *d*.....Luke 15:24
d will hear the voice.....John 5:25
was raised from the *d*.....Rom 6:4
yourselves to be *d*.....Rom 6:11
be Lord of both the *d*.....Rom 14:9
resurrection of the *d*.....1 Cor 15:12
And the *d* in Christ.....1 Thess 4:16
without works is *d*.....James 2:26
And the *d* were judged....Rev 20:12

DEADLY
drink anything *d*.....Mark 16:18
evil, full of *d* poison.....James 3:8

DEAF
d shall be unstopped.....Is 35:5
are cleansed and the *d*.....Matt 11:5

DEATH
d parts you and me.....Ruth 1:17
and the shadow of *d*.....Job 10:21
I sleep the sleep of *d*.....Ps 13:3
of the shadow of *d*.....Ps 23:4
house leads down to *d*.....Prov 2:18
who hate me love *d*.....Prov 8:36
swallow up *d* forever.....Is 25:8
no pleasure in the *d*.....Ezek 18:32
who shall not taste *d*.....Matt 16:28
but has passed from *d*.....John 5:24
Nevertheless *d* reigned....Rom 5:14
D no longer has.....Rom 6:9
the wages of sin is *d*.....Rom 6:23
the Lord's *d*.....1 Cor 11:26
since by man came *d*....1 Cor 15:21
D is swallowed up in....1 Cor 15:54
The sting of *d* is sin.....1 Cor 15:56
is sin leading to *d*.....1 John 5:16
Be faithful until *d*.....Rev 2:10
shall be no more *d*.....Rev 21:4
which is the second *d*.....Rev 21:8

DEBTOR
I am a *d* both to.....Rom 1:14
that he is a *d* to keep.....Gal 5:3

DEBTORS
as we forgive our *d*.....Matt 6:12
of his master's *d*.....Luke 16:5
brethren, we are *d*.....Rom 8:12

DECEIT
Nor was any *d* in His.....Is 53:9
philosophy and empty *d*.....Col 2:8
no sin, nor was *d*.....1 Pet 2:22
mouth was found no *d*.....Rev 14:5

DECEITFUL
deliver me from the *d*.....Ps 43:1
"The heart is *d*.....Jer 17:9
are false apostles, *d*.....2 Cor 11:13

DECEITFULLY
an idol, Nor sworn *d*.....Ps 24:4
the word of God *d*.....2 Cor 4:2

DECEITFULNESS
this world and the *d*.....Matt 13:22

DECEIVE
rise up and *d* many.....Matt 24:11
Let no one *d* you with.....Eph 5:6
we have no sin, we *d*.....1 John 1:8

DECEIVED
"The serpent *d*.....Gen 3:13
the commandment, *d*.....Rom 7:11
deceiving and being *d*....2 Tim 3:13

DECEIVER
how that *d* said.....Matt 27:63
This is a *d* and an.....2 John 7

DECEIVES
heed that no one *d*.....Matt 24:4

DECEPTIVE
you with *d* words.....2 Pet 2:3

DECLARE
The heavens *d* the.....Ps 19:1
d Your name to My.....Ps 22:22
seen and heard we *d*.....1 John 1:3

DECREE
"I will declare the *d*.....Ps 2:7
in those days that a *d*.....Luke 2:1

DEDICATION
it was the Feast of *D*.....John 10:22

DEED(S)
you do in word or *d*.....Col 3:17
because their *d*.....John 3:19
"You do the *d*.....John 8:41
one according to his *d*.....Rom 2:6
you put to death the *d*.....Rom 8:13

DEEP
LORD God caused a *d*.....Gen 2:21
d uttered its voice.....Hab 3:10
"Launch out into the *d*.....Luke 5:4
I have been in the *d*.....2 Cor 11:25

DEER
As the *d* pants for the.....Ps 42:1
shall leap like a *d*.....Is 35:6

DEFEND
D the fatherless.....Is 1:17

DEFENSE
For wisdom is a *d*.....Eccl 7:12
am appointed for the *d*.....Phil 1:17
be ready to give a *d*.....1 Pet 3:15

DEFILED
lest they should be *d*.....John 18:28
and conscience are *d*.....Titus 1:15

DEFILES
mouth, this *d* a man.....Matt 15:11
it anything that *d*.....Rev 21:27

DEFRAUD
d his brother in this.....1 Thess 4:6

DELICACIES
of the king's *d*.....Dan 1:5

DELICATE
a lovely and *d* woman.....Jer 6:2

DELIGHT
But his *d* is in the.....Ps 1:2
I *d* to do Your will.....Ps 40:8
And I was daily His *d*.....Prov 8:30
And let your soul *d*.....Is 55:2
call the Sabbath a *d*.....Is 58:13
For I *d* in the law of.....Rom 7:22

DELIGHTS
For the LORD *d* in you.....Is 62:4

DELIVER
Let Him *d* Him.....Ps 22:8
I will *d* him and honor.....Ps 91:15
into temptation, But *d*.....Matt 6:13
let Him *d* Him now if.....Matt 27:43
And the Lord will *d*.....2 Tim 4:18
d the godly out of.....2 Pet 2:9

DELIVERED
who was *d* up because....Rom 4:25
was once for all *d*.....Jude 3

DELIVERER
D will come out of.....Rom 11:26

DELIVERS
even Jesus who *d*.....1 Thess 1:10

DEMON
Jesus rebuked the *d*.....Matt 17:18
and have a *d*.....John 8:48

DEMONIC
is earthly, sensual, *d*.....James 3:15

DEMONS
authority over all *d*.....Luke 9:1
the *d* are subject.....Luke 10:17
Even the *d* believe.....James 2:19

DEMONSTRATE
faith, to *d* His.....Rom 3:25

DEMONSTRATES
d His own love toward.....Rom 5:8

DEN
cast him into the *d*.....Dan 6:16
it a '*d* of thieves.....Matt 21:13

DENARIUS
the laborers for a *d*.....Matt 20:2

DENIED
before men will be *d*.....Luke 12:9
Peter then *d* again.....John 18:27
d the Holy One and the....Acts 3:14
things cannot be *d*.....Acts 19:36
household, he has *d*.....1 Tim 5:8

DENIES
But whoever *d*.....Matt 10:33
d that Jesus is the.....1 John 2:22

DENY
let him *d* himself.....Matt 16:24
He cannot *d* Himself.....2 Tim 2:13

DENYING
but *d* its power.....2 Tim 3:5
d the Lord who bought.....2 Pet 2:1

DEPART
scepter shall not *d*.....Gen 49:10
on the left hand, '*D*.....Matt 25:41
will *d* from the faith.....1 Tim 4:1

DEPARTING
heart of unbelief in *d*.....Heb 3:12

DEPRESSION
of man causes *d*.....Prov 12:25

DEPTH
nor height nor *d*.....Rom 8:39
Oh, the *d* of the.....Rom 11:33

DEPTHS
our sins Into the *d*.....Mic 7:19

DESCEND
d now from the cross....Mark 15:32
Lord Himself will *d*.....1 Thess 4:16

DESCENDANTS
"We are Abraham's *d*.....John 8:33

DESCENDING
God ascending and *d*.....John 1:51
the holy Jerusalem, *d*.....Rev 21:10

DESERT
d shall rejoice.....Is 35:1
'Look, He is in the *d*.....Matt 24:26

DESERTED
d place by Himself.....Matt 14:13

DESERTS
They wandered in *d*.....Heb 11:38

DESIGN
with an artistic *d*.....Ex 26:31

DESIRABLE
the eyes, and a tree *d*.....Gen 3:6

DESIRE
d shall be for your.....Gen 3:16
Behold,You *d* truth in.....Ps 51:6
"Father, I *d* that.....John 17:24
all manner of evil *d*.....Rom 7:8
Brethren, my heart's *d*....Rom 10:1
d the best gifts.....1 Cor 12:31
the two, having a *d*.....Phil 1:23

DESIRED
d are they than gold.....Ps 19:10
One thing I have *d*.....Ps 27:4

DESIRES
shall give you the *d*.....Ps 37:4
the devil, and the *d*.....John 8:44
not come from your *d*.....James 4:1

DESOLATE
any more be termed *D*.....Is 62:4
house is left to you *d*.....Matt 23:38

DESOLATION
the 'abomination of *d*.....Matt 24:15

DESPAIRED
strength, so that we *d*.....2 Cor 1:8

DESPISE
one and *d* the other.....Matt 6:24
d the riches of His.....Rom 2:4

DESPISED
He is *d* and rejected.....Is 53:3
the things which are *d*.... 1 Cor 1:28

DESPISES
d his neighbor sins..... Prov 14:21

DESPISING
the cross, *d* the shame.....Heb 12:2

DESTROY
Why should you *d*..... Eccl 7:16
shall not hurt nor *d*.....Is 11:9
I did not come to *d*.....Matt 5:17
Him who is able to *d*.....Matt 10:28
Barabbas and *d* Jesus.....Matt 27:20
to save life or to *d* .....Luke 6:9
d men's lives but to.....Luke 9:56
d the wisdom of the..... 1 Cor 1:19
able to save and to *d*.....James 4:12

DESTROYED
d all living things.....Gen 7:23
house, this tent, is *d*.....2 Cor 5:1

DESTRUCTION
You turn man to *d*.....Ps 90:3
d that lays waste .....Ps 91:6
your life from *d*.....Ps 103:4
Pride goes before *d*..... Prov 16:18
whose end is *d*.....Phil 3:19
with everlasting *d*..... 2 Thess 1:9

DESTRUCTIVE
bring in *d* heresies .....2 Pet 2:1

DETERMINED
d their preappointed.....Acts 17:26
For I *d* not to know..... 1 Cor 2:2

DEVICES
not ignorant of his *d*..... 2 Cor 2:11

DEVIL
to be tempted by the *d*.....Matt 4:1
prepared for the *d*.....Matt 25:41
of your father the *d*..... John 8:44
give place to the *d*.....Eph 4:27
the snare of the *d* .....2 Tim 2:26
the works of the *d*..... 1 John 3:8

DEVIOUS
And who are *d*.....Prov 2:15

DEVISES
d wickedness on his.....Ps 36:4
But a generous man *d* .....Is 32:8

DEVOID
who is *d* of wisdom..... Prov 11:12

DEVOUR
For you *d* widows'.....Matt 23:14
bite and *d* one another.....Gal 5:15
whom he may *d*..... 1 Pet 5:8
d her Child as .....Rev 12:4

DEVOURED
wild beast has *d*.....Gen 37:20
birds came and *d* them.....Matt 13:4
of heaven and *d* them.....Rev 20:9

DEVOUT
man was just and *d*.....Luke 2:25
d soldier from among.....Acts 10:7

DIAMOND
d it is engraved..... Jer 17:1

DIE
it you shall surely *d* .....Gen 2:17
but a person shall *d* .....2 Chr 25:4
I shall not *d* .....Ps 118:17
born, And a time to *d* ..... Eccl 3:2
eat of it and not *d*..... John 6:50
to you that you will *d* ..... John 8:24
though he may *d* .....John 11:25
one man should *d*..... John 11:50
the flesh you will *d*..... Rom 8:13
For as in Adam all *d* ..... 1 Cor 15:22
and to *d* is gain.....Phil 1:21
for men to *d* once.....Heb 9:27
are the dead who *d* .....Rev 14:13

DIED
And all flesh *d* .....Gen 7:21
in due time Christ *d*.....Rom 5:6
Christ *d* for us.....Rom 5:8
Now if we *d* with.....Rom 6:8
and He *d* for all.....2 Cor 5:15
for if we *d* with Him .....2 Tim 2:11

DILIGENCE
d it produced in you.....2 Cor 7:11

DILIGENT
d makes rich .....Prov 10:4

DILIGENTLY
d lest anyone fall.....Heb 12:15

DIMLY
we see in a mirror, *d*..... 1 Cor 13:12

DINE
come in to him and *d*.....Rev 3:20

DINNER
invites you to *d* ..... 1 Cor 10:27

DIRECT
Now may the Lord *d* .... 2 Thess 3:5

DISARMED
d principalities .....Col 2:15

DISASTER
will end with *d*.....Acts 27:10

DISCERN
d the face of the sky .....Matt 16:3
senses exercised to *d*.....Heb 5:14

DISCERNED
they are spiritually *d* ..... 1 Cor 2:14

DISCERNER
d of the thoughts .....Heb 4:12

DISCERNS
a wise man's heart *d*..... Eccl 8:5

DISCIPLE(S)
he cannot be My *d* .....Luke 14:26
d whom Jesus loved ..... John 21:7
word, you are My *d* ..... John 8:31
but we are Moses' *d*..... John 9:28

DISCIPLINES
he who loves him *d*..... Prov 13:24

DISCORD
And one who sows *d* .....Prov 6:19

DISCOURAGED
lest they became *d* .....Col 3:21
become weary and *d* .....Heb 12:3

DISCRETION
d will preserve you .....Prov 2:11

DISHONOR
Father, and you *d* Me ..... John 8:49
d their bodies among..... Rom 1:24
It is sown in *d* ..... 1 Cor 15:43

DISHONORED
But you have *d* the.....James 2:6

DISHONORS
For son *d* father..... Mic 7:6

DISOBEDIENT
out My hands To a *d*..... Rom 10:21

DISORDERLY
for this *d* gathering.....Acts 19:40

DISPERSION
the pilgrims of the *D*..... 1 Pet 1:1

DISPLEASE(D)
LORD see it, and it *d*..... Prov 24:18
they were greatly *d*.....Matt 20:24
it, He was greatly *d*..... Mark 10:14

DISPUTES
But avoid foolish *d*..... Titus 3:9

DISQUALIFIED
should become *d* ..... 1 Cor 9:27

DISSENSION
had no small *d* and .....Acts 15:2

DISSOLVED
the heavens will be *d*.....2 Pet 3:12

DISTRESS
d them in His deep.....Ps 2:5
tribulation, or *d*..... Rom 8:35

DISTRESSED
and deeply *d*..... Mark 14:33

DISTRESSES
Bring me out of my *d* .....Ps 25:17

DISTRIBUTED
and they *d* to each as.....Acts 4:35

DISTRIBUTING
d to the needs of the ..... Rom 12:13

DIVERSITIES
There are *d*..... 1 Cor 12:4

DIVIDE
d the spoil with the ..... Prov 16:19
"Take this and *d* .....Luke 22:17

DIVIDED
and the waters were *d*..... Ex 14:21
they were not *d*.....2 Sam 1:23
"Every kingdom *d*.....Matt 12:25
Is Christ *d*..... 1 Cor 1:13

DIVIDES
at home *d* the spoil .....Ps 68:12

DIVIDING
rightly *d* the word of.....2 Tim 2:15

DIVINATION
shall you practice *d*..... Lev 19:26
a spirit of *d* met us .....Acts 16:16

DIVINE
d service and the .....Heb 9:1

DIVISION(S)
So there was a *d*.....John 7:43
those who cause *d*..... Rom 16:17
persons, who cause *d* .....Jude 19

DIVISIVE
Reject a *d* man after .....Titus 3:10

DIVORCE
her a certificate of *d*..... Deut 24:1
a certificate of *d*..... Mark 10:4

DO
men to *d* to you, *d* .....Matt 7:12
He sees the Father *d* ..... John 5:19
without Me you can *d*..... John 15:5
"Sirs, what must I *d* .....Acts 16:30
d evil that good may.....Rom 3:8
or whatever you *d*, *d*..... 1 Cor 10:31

DOCTRINE
What new *d* is this ..... Mark 1:27
"My *d* is not Mine..... John 7:16
with every wind of *d*.....Eph 4:14
is contrary to sound *d* ....1 Tim 1:10
is profitable for *d*.....2 Tim 3:16
not endure sound *d*.....2 Tim 4:3

DOCTRINES
commandments and *d*.....Col 2:22
various and strange *d*.....Heb 13:9

DOERS
But be *d* of the word.....James 1:22

DOG
d is better than a ..... Eccl 9:4
d returns to his own.....2 Pet 2:22

DOGS
what is holy to the *d*.....Matt 7:6
d eat the crumbs.....Matt 15:27
But outside are *d* .....Rev 22:15

DOMINION
let them have *d*.....Gen 1:26
d is an everlasting..... Dan 4:34
sin shall not have *d*..... Rom 6:14
glory and majesty, *D* .....Jude 25

DONKEY
d its master's crib.....Is 1:3
and riding on a *d*.....Zech 9:9
colt, the foal of a *d*.....Matt 21:5
d speaking with a.....2 Pet 2:16

DOOM
for the day of *d*.....Prov 16:4

DOOR
stone against the *d*.....Matt 27:60
to you, I am the *d*.....John 10:7
before you an open *d*.....Rev 3:8
I stand at the *d*.....Rev 3:20

DOORPOSTS
write them on the *d*..... Deut 6:9

DOUBLE
from the LORD's hand *D*.....Is 40:2
worthy of *d* honor.....1 Tim 5:17

DOUBLE-MINDED
he is a *d* man.....James 1:8

DOUBT
faith, why did you *d*.....Matt 14:31

DOUBTING
in faith, with no *d*.....James 1:6

DOUBTS
why do *d* arise in.....Luke 24:38
for I have *d* about you.....Gal 4:20

DOVE
d found no resting.....Gen 8:9
descending like a *d*.....Matt 3:16

DOVES
and harmless as *d*.....Matt 10:16

DOWNCAST
who comforts the *d*..... 2 Cor 7:6

DRAGON
they worshiped the *d*..... Rev 13:4
He laid hold of the *d*..... Rev 20:2

DRAW
d honey from the..... Deut 32:13
me to *d* near to God.....Ps 73:28
And the years *d*..... Eccl 12:1
will *d* all peoples.....John 12:32
D near to God and He.....James 4:8

DREAM
Now Joseph had a *d*.....Gen 37:5
Your old men shall *d*.....Joel 2:28
to Joseph in a *d*.....Matt 2:13
things today in a *d*.....Matt 27:19

DREAMERS
d defile the flesh.....Jude *8*

DREAMS
Nebuchadnezzar had *d*..... Dan 2:1

DRIED
of her blood was *d*..... Mark 5:29
saw the fig tree *d*..... Mark 11:20

DRINK
gave me vinegar to *d*.....Ps 69:21
Lest they *d* and forget.....Prov 31:5
follow intoxicating *d*.....Is 5:11
d the milk of the.....Is 60:16
bosom, That you may *d*.....Is 66:11
"Bring wine, let us *d*.....Amos 4:1
that day when I *d*.....Matt 26:29
mingled with gall to *d*....Matt 27:34
with myrrh to *d*..... Mark 15:23
to her, "Give Me a *d*..... John 4:7
him come to Me and *d*.... John 7:37
do, as often as you *d*..... 1 Cor 11:25
No longer *d* only.....1 Tim 5:23

DRINKS
to her, "Whoever *d*..... John 4:13
d My blood has..... John 6:54
he who eats and *d*..... 1 Cor 11:29

DROSS
purge away your *d*.....Is 1:25

DROUGHT
in the year of *d*..... Jer 17:8
"For I called for a *d*.....Hag 1:11

DROVE
So He *d* out the man.....Gen 3:24
temple of God and *d*.....Matt 21:12

DROWN
Nor can the floods *d*.....Song 8:7
harmful lusts which *d*.....1 Tim 6:9

DRUNK
of the wine and was *d*.....Gen 9:21
the guests have well *d*..... John 2:10
"For these are not *d*.....Acts 2:15
and another is *d*.....1 Cor 11:21
I saw the woman, *d*.....Rev 17:6

DRUNKARD
to and fro like a *d*.....Is 24:20
or a reviler, or a *d*..... 1 Cor 5:11

DRUNKENNESS
will be filled with *d*.....Ezek 23:33
not in revelry and *d*..... Rom 13:13
envy, murders, *d*.....Gal 5:21

DRY
place, and let the *d*.....Gen 1:9
made the sea into *d*.....Ex 14:21
It was *d* on the fleece..... Judg 6:40
will be done in the *d*.....Luke 23:31

DUE
pay all that was *d*.....Matt 18:34
d time Christ died.....Rom 5:6
d season we shall.....Gal 6:9
exalt you in *d* time..... 1 Pet 5:6

DULL
heart of this people *d*.....Is 6:10
people have grown *d*.....Matt 13:15

DUMB
the tongue of the *d*.....Is 35:6

DUST
formed man of the *d*.....Gen 2:7
d you shall return.....Gen 3:19
And repent in *d*.....Job 42:6
that we are *d*.....Ps 103:14
counted as the small *d*.....Is 40:15
city, shake off the *d*.....Matt 10:14
of the man of *d*..... 1 Cor 15:49

DUTY
done what was our *d*.....Luke 17:10

DWELL
Who may *d* in Your holy.....Ps 15:1
"I *d* in the high and.....Is 57:15
"*I* will *d* in them..... 2 Cor 6:16
that Christ may *d*.....Eph 3:17
men, and He will *d*..... Rev 21:3

DWELLING
built together for a *d*.....Eph 2:22
a foreign country, *d*.....Heb 11:9

DWELLS
He who *d* in the secret.....Ps 91:1
but the Father who *d*..... John 14:10
d all the fullness.....Col 2:9
which righteousness *d*.....2 Pet 3:13
you, where Satan *d*..... Rev 2:13

DWELT
became flesh and *d*..... John 1:14
By faith he *d* in the.....Heb 11:9

DYING
in the body the *d*..... 2 Cor 4:10

E

EAGLE
fly away like an *e*.....Prov 23:5
The way of an *e*..... Prov 30:19
like a flying *e*..... Rev 4:7

EAGLES
up with wings like *e*.....Is 40:31
e will be gathered.....Matt 24:28

EAR
shall pierce his *e*..... Ex 21:6
And the *e* of the wise..... Prov 18:15
e is uncircumcised..... Jer 6:10
you hear in the *e*.....Matt 10:27
cut off his right *e*..... John 18:10
not seen, nor *e* heard..... 1 Cor 2:9
"He who has an *e*..... Rev 2:7

EARLY
Very *e* in the morning.... Mark 16:2
arrived at the tomb *e*.....Luke 24:22

EARNESTLY
He prayed more *e*.....Luke 22:44
e that it would not.....James 5:17
you to contend *e*.....Jude 3

EARS
And hear with their *e*.....Is 6:10
"He who has *e*.....Matt 11:15
they have itching *e*.....2 Tim 4:3

EARTH
to judge the *e*.....1 Chr 16:33
foundations of the *e*.....Job 38:4
e is the LORD's.....Ps 24:1
You had formed the *e*.....Ps 90:2
there was ever an *e*.....Prov 8:23
e abides forever..... Eccl 1:4
for the meek of the *e*.....Is 11:4
e is My footstool.....Is 66:1
I will darken the *e*.....Amos 8:9
shall inherit the *e*.....Matt 5:5
heaven and *e* pass.....Matt 5:18
e as it is in heaven.....Matt 6:10
treasures on *e*.....Matt 6:19
then shook the *e*.....Heb 12:26
heaven and a new *e*..... Rev 21:1

EARTHLY
"If I have told you *e*..... John 3:12
that if our *e* house..... 2 Cor 5:1
their mind on *e* things.....Phil 3:19
from above, but is *e*.....James 3:15

EARTHQUAKE(S)
after the wind an *e*..... 1 Kin 19:11
there was a great *e*.....Matt 28:2
And there will be *e*..... Mark 13:8

EASIER
"Which is *e*, to say..... Mark 2:9
"It is *e* for a camel..... Mark 10:25

EAST
goes toward the *e*.....Gen 2:14
wise men from the *E*.....Matt 2:1
many will come from *e*....Matt 8:11
will come from the *e*.....Luke 13:29

EAT
you may freely *e*.....Gen 2:16
"You shall not *e*.....Gen 3:17
e this scroll..... Ezek 3:1
life, what you will *e*.....Matt 6:25
give us His flesh to *e*..... John 6:52
one believes he may *e*..... Rom 14:2
e meat nor drink wine... Rom 14:21
I will never again *e*..... 1 Cor 8:13
neither shall he *e*..... 2 Thess 3:10

EATEN
Have you *e* from the.....Gen 3:11
he was *e* by worms.....Acts 12:23

EATS
receives sinners and *e*.....Luke 15:2
"Whoever *e* My flesh..... John 6:54
e this bread will live..... John 6:58
He who *e*, *e* to the..... Rom 14:6
unworthy manner *e*..... 1 Cor 11:29

EDIFICATION
has given me for *e*.....2 Cor 13:10
rather than godly *e*.....1 Tim 1:4

EDIFIES
puffs up, but love *e*..... 1 Cor 8:1

EDIFY
but not all things *e*..... 1 Cor 10:23

EDIFYING
of the body for the *e*.....Eph 4:16

ELDERS
the tradition of the *e*.....Matt 15:2
be rejected by the *e*.....Luke 9:22
they had appointed *e*.....Acts 14:23
e who rule well be.....1 Tim 5:17
lacking, and appoint *e*.....Titus 1:5
e obtained a good.....Heb 11:2

e who are among you I ..... 1 Pet 5:1
I saw twenty-four *e*..... Rev 4:4

ELDERSHIP
of the hands of the *e*.....1 Tim 4:14

ELECT
gather together His *e*.....Matt 24:31
e have obtained it..... Rom 11:7
e according to the ..... 1 Pet 1:2
A chief cornerstone, *e* ..... 1 Pet 2:6

ELECTION
call and *e* sure.....2 Pet 1:10

ELEMENTS
weak and beggarly *e* .....Gal 4:9
e will melt with.....2 Pet 3:10

ELOQUENT
an *e* man and mighty .....Acts 18:24

EMBALM
to *e* his father.....Gen 50:2

ENCOURAGED
is, that I may be *e*..... Rom 1:12
and all may be *e*..... 1 Cor 14:31

END
make me to know my *e*.....Ps 39:4
shall keep it to the *e* .....Ps 119:33
e is the way of death..... Prov 14:12
Declaring the *e* .....Is 46:10
what shall be the *e*..... Dan 12:8
the harvest is the *e*.....Matt 13:39
always, even to the *e*.....Matt 28:20
He loved them to the *e*.... John 13:1
For Christ is the *e*..... Rom 10:4
But the *e* of all ..... 1 Pet 4:7
the latter *e* is worse .....2 Pet 2:20
My works until the *e* .....Rev 2:26
Beginning and the *E*.....Rev 22:13

ENDLESS
and *e* genealogies.....1 Tim 1:4
to the power of an *e*.....Heb 7:16

ENDURANCE
e the race that.....Heb 12:1

ENDURE
as the sun and moon *e* .....Ps 72:5
His name shall *e*.....Ps 72:17
persecuted, we *e*..... 1 Cor 4:12

ENDURED
he had patiently *e* .....Heb 6:15
e as seeing Him who .....Heb 11:27
consider Him who *e*.....Heb 12:3

ENDURES
And His truth *e*.....Ps 100:5
For His mercy *e*.....Ps 136:1
But he who *e* to the.....Matt 10:22
e only for a while .....Matt 13:21
for the food which *e* .....John 6:27
he has built on it *e* ..... 1 Cor 3:14
hopes all things, *e* ..... 1 Cor 13:7
word of the LORD *e* ..... 1 Pet 1:25

ENEMIES
the presence of my *e* .....Ps 23:5
e will lick the dust.....Ps 72:9
to you, love your *e* .....Matt 5:44
e will be those.....Matt 10:36
e we were reconciled..... Rom 5:10
till He has put all *e*..... 1 Cor 15:25
were alienated and *e* .....Col 1:21
His *e* are made His.....Heb 10:13

ENEMY
If your *e* is hungry ..... Prov 25:21
rejoice over me, my *e*..... Mic 7:8
and hate your *e*.....Matt 5:43
last *e* that will be..... 1 Cor 15:26
become your *e* because.....Gal 4:16
count him as an *e*..... 2 Thess 3:15
makes himself an *e*.....James 4:4

ENJOY
richly all things to *e*.....1 Tim 6:17
than to *e* the passing .....Heb 11:25

ENLIGHTEN
E my eyes .....Ps 13:3

ENLIGHTENED
those who were once *e*.....Heb 6:4

ENMITY
And I will put *e*.....Gen 3:15
the carnal mind is *e*.....Rom 8:7
in His flesh the *e* .....Eph 2:15

ENSNARES
sin which so easily *e*.....Heb 12:1

ENTER
E into His gates .....Ps 100:4
you will by no means *e* ....Matt 5:20
"*E* by the narrow.....Matt 7:13
e the kingdom of God.....Matt 19:24
E into the joy of your.....Matt 25:21
and pray, lest you *e* .....Matt 26:41
"Strive to *e* through .....Luke 13:24
who have believed do *e*.....Heb 4:3
e the temple till the ..... Rev 15:8

ENTERED
Then Satan *e* Judas .....Luke 22:3
through one man sin *e* .... Rom 5:12
ear heard, Nor have *e*..... 1 Cor 2:9
the forerunner has *e*.....Heb 6:20
e the Most Holy Place .....Heb 9:12

ENTERS
If anyone *e* by Me ..... John 10:9

ENVY
e slays a simple .....Job 5:2
e is rottenness..... Prov 14:30
not let your heart *e* ..... Prov 23:17
full of *e*..... Rom 1:29
not in strife and *e*..... Rom 13:13
love does not *e*..... 1 Cor 13:4
e, murders .....Gal 5:21
living in malice and *e* .....Titus 3:3

EPISTLE
You are our *e* written ..... 2 Cor 3:2

ERROR(S)
a sinner from the *e*.....James 5:20
led away with the *e*..... 2 Pet 3:17
run greedily in the *e* .....Jude 11
can understand his *e* .....Ps 19:12

ESCAPE
e all these things .....Luke 21:36
same, that you will *e*.....Rom 2:3
make the way of *e*..... 1 Cor 10:13
how shall we *e* if we .....Heb 2:3

ESTABLISH
seeking to *e* their own..... Rom 10:3
faithful, who will *e* ..... 2 Thess 3:3
E your hearts .....James 5:8
a while, perfect, *e* ..... 1 Pet 5:10

ESTABLISHED
Your throne is *e*.....Ps 93:2
built up in Him and *e*.....Col 2:7
covenant, which was *e* .....Heb 8:6

ESTEEM
and we did not *e*.....Is 53:3
e others better than.....Phil 2:3

ESTEEMED
For what is highly *e*.....Luke 16:15

ETERNAL
e God is your refuge..... Deut 33:27
For man goes to his *e* ..... Eccl 12:5
and inherit *e* life.....Matt 19:29
in the age to come, *e*..... Mark 10:30
not perish but have *e*..... John 3:15
you think you have *e*..... John 5:39
I give them *e* life.....John 10:28
"And this is *e* life.....John 17:3
the gift of God is *e*..... Rom 6:23
are not seen are *e*..... 2 Cor 4:18
lay hold on *e* life.....1 Tim 6:12
e life which was..... 1 John 1:2

ETERNITY
Also He has put *e*..... Eccl 3:11
One who inhabits *e*.....Is 57:15

EUNUCH(S)
of Ethiopia, a *e* .....Acts 8:27
made themselves *e*.....Matt 19:12

EVANGELIST(S)
of Philip the *e*.....Acts 21:8
do the work of an *e*.....2 Tim 4:5
some prophets, some *e*.....Eph 4:11

EVERLASTING
from *E* is Your name.....Is 63:16
awake, Some to *e* life ..... Dan 12:2
not perish but have *e*..... John 3:16
who sent Me has *e* ..... John 5:24
endures to *e* life..... John 6:27
in Him may have *e*..... John 6:40
believes in Me has *e* ..... John 6:47
e destruction from..... 2 Thess 1:9

EVIDENCE
e of things not seen.....Heb 11:1

EVIL
of good and *e* .....Gen 2:9
knowing good and *e* .....Gen 3:5
his heart was only *e*.....Gen 6:5
I will fear no *e*.....Ps 23:4
e more than good .....Ps 52:3
To do *e* is like sport ..... Prov 10:23
e will bow before the..... Prov 14:19
Keeping watch on the *e* ...Prov 15:3
e All the days of her ..... Prov 31:12
to those who call *e* .....Is 5:20
of peace and not of *e* ..... Jer 29:11
Seek good and not *e* .....Amos 5:14
deliver us from the *e*.....Matt 6:13
"If you then, being *e* .....Matt 7:11
e treasure brings .....Matt 12:35
everyone practicing *e* ..... John 3:20
done any good or *e* ..... Rom 9:11
Repay no one *e* for..... Rom 12:17
provoked, thinks no *e*..... 1 Cor 13:5

EVILDOER
"If He were not an *e*..... John 18:30
suffer trouble as an *e*.....2 Tim 2:9

EVILDOERS
e shall be cut off.....Ps 37:9
from me, you *e*.....Ps 119:115
iniquity, A brood of *e* .....Is 1:4
against you as *e*..... 1 Pet 2:12

EXALT
e His name together .....Ps 34:3
E the humble.....Ezek 21:26
And he shall *e* himself ..... Dan 8:25

EXALTATION
who rejoice in My *e* .....Is 13:3
brother glory in his *e*.....James 1:9

EXALTED
Let God be *e*.....2 Sam 22:47
I will be *e* among the.....Ps 46:10
You are *e* far above .....Ps 97:9
His name alone is *e*.....Ps 148:13
valley shall be *e*.....Is 40:4
"Him God has *e* .....Acts 5:31
And lest I should be *e*..... 2 Cor 12:7
also has highly *e* .....Phil 2:9

EXALTS
Righteousness *e*..... Prov 14:34
high thing that *e*..... 2 Cor 10:5
e himself above all ..... 2 Thess 2:4

EXAMINE
But let a man *e* ..... 1 Cor 11:28
But let each one *e*.....Gal 6:4

EXAMPLE
to make her a public *e*.....Matt 1:19
I have given you an *e* .... John 13:15
youth, but be an *e* .....1 Tim 4:12
us, leaving us an *e*..... 1 Pet 2:21
are set forth as an *e* .....Jude 7

EXAMPLES
to them as *e*..... 1 Cor 10:11
to you, but being *e* ..... 1 Pet 5:3

EXCHANGED
Nor can it be *e* .....Job 28:17
e the truth of God for ..... Rom 1:25

EXCUSE(S)
now they have no *e*..... John 15:22
they are without *e*..... Rom 1:20
began to make *e*.....Luke 14:18

EXECUTE(S)
e judgment also ..... John 5:27
e wrath on him who ..... Rom 13:4
e justice for me ..... Mic 7:9

EXHORT
e him as a father ..... 1 Tim 5:1
Speak these things, *e*..... Titus 2:15
e one another ..... Heb 3:13

EXHORTATION
he who exhorts, in *e* ..... Rom 12:8
to reading, to *e*..... 1 Tim 4:13

EXPECTATION
the people were in *e* ..... Luke 3:15
a certain fearful *e*..... Heb 10:27

EXPLAIN
no one who could *e*..... Gen 41:24
"*E* this parable to us ..... Matt 15:15
to say, and hard to *e*..... Heb 5:11

EXTORTION
they are full of *e* ..... Matt 23:25

EXTORTIONERS
e will inherit ..... 1 Cor 6:10

EYE
the ear, But now my *e* ..... Job 42:5
guide you with My *e*..... Ps 32:8
e is not satisfied..... Eccl 1:8
the apple of His *e* ..... Zech 2:8
if your right *e* ..... Matt 5:29
it was said, 'An *e*..... Matt 5:38
plank in your own *e* ..... Matt 7:3
e causes you to sin..... Matt 18:9
Or is your *e* evil..... Matt 20:15
the *e* of a needle..... Luke 18:25
the twinkling of an *e* .... 1 Cor 15:52
every *e* will see Him ..... Rev 1:7
your eyes with *e* salve..... Rev 3:18

EYES
e will be opened ..... Gen 3:5
And my *e* shall behold ..... Job 19:27
e are ever toward the ..... Ps 25:15
The *e* of the LORD are..... Ps 34:15
I will lift up my *e* ..... Ps 121:1
but the *e* of a fool ..... Prov 17:24
be wise in his own *e* ..... Prov 26:5
You have dove's *e*..... Song 1:15
e have seen the King ..... Is 6:5
Who have *e* and see ..... Jer 5:21
rims were full of *e*..... Ezek 1:18
You are of purer *e*..... Hab 1:13
blessed are your *e*..... Matt 13:16
"He put clay on my *e*..... John 9:15
e they have closed..... Acts 28:27
E that they should not..... Rom 11:8
have seen with our *e* ..... 1 John 1:1
the lust of the *e*..... 1 John 2:16
as snow, and His *e*..... Rev 1:14
creatures full of *e* ..... Rev 4:6
horns and seven *e* ..... Rev 5:6

EYESERVICE
not with *e*..... Eph 6:6

EYEWITNESSES
the beginning were *e* ..... Luke 1:2
e of His majesty..... 2 Pet 1:16

F

FABLES
nor give heed to *f* ..... 1 Tim 1:4
cunningly devised *f*..... 2 Pet 1:16

FACE
"For I have seen God *f*..... Gen 32:30
f shone while he ..... Ex 34:29
sins have hidden His *f*..... Is 59:2
f shone like the sun..... Matt 17:2
dimly, but then *f*..... 1 Cor 13:12
with unveiled *f*..... 2 Cor 3:18
withstood him to his *f*..... Gal 2:11
They shall see His *f*..... Rev 22:4

FAIL
tittle of the law to *f*..... Luke 16:17
faith should not *f*..... Luke 22:32
they will *f*..... 1 Cor 13:8
Your years will not *f*..... Heb 1:12

FAILS
Love never *f* ..... 1 Cor 13:8

FAINTS
My soul *f* for Your ..... Ps 119:81
And the whole heart *f*..... Is 1:5
the earth, Neither *f*..... Is 40:28

FAITH
shall live by his *f* ..... Hab 2:4
you, O you of little *f*..... Matt 6:30
not found such great *f* ..... Matt 8:10
that you have no *f*..... Mark 4:40
"Increase our *f* ..... Luke 17:5
will He really find *f*..... Luke 18:8
are sanctified by *f*..... Acts 26:18
God is revealed from *f*..... Rom 1:17
f apart from the deeds ..... Rom 3:28
his *f* is accounted for ..... Rom 4:5
those who are of the *f*..... Rom 4:16
f which we preach..... Rom 10:8
f comes by hearing..... Rom 10:17
and you stand by *f* ..... Rom 11:20
in proportion to our *f*..... Rom 12:6
Do you have *f*..... Rom 14:22
though I have all *f*..... 1 Cor 13:2
And now abide *f*..... 1 Cor 13:13
For we walk by *f* ..... 2 Cor 5:7
the flesh I live by *f* ..... Gal 2:20
f are sons of Abraham..... Gal 3:7
But after *f* has come..... Gal 3:25
of the household of *f*..... Gal 6:10
been saved through *f*..... Eph 2:8
one Lord, one *f* ..... Eph 4:5
taking the shield of *f*..... Eph 6:16
your work of *f*..... 1 Thess 1:3
for not all have *f*..... 2 Thess 3:2
the mystery of the *f*..... 1 Tim 3:9
I have kept the *f*..... 2 Tim 4:7
in our common *f*..... Titus 1:4
not being mixed with *f*..... Heb 4:2
f is the substance..... Heb 11:1
without *f* it is ..... Heb 11:6
says he has *f*..... James 2:14
Show me your *f* ..... James 2:18
and not by *f* only ..... James 2:24
f will save the sick..... James 5:15
add to your *f* virtue ..... 2 Pet 1:5
the patience and the *f*..... Rev 13:10

FAITHFUL
God, He is God, the *f*..... Deut 7:9
LORD preserves the *f*..... Ps 31:23
eyes shall be on the *f*..... Ps 101:6
But who can find a *f*..... Prov 20:6
the Holy One who is *f*..... Hos 11:12
"Who then is a *f*..... Matt 24:45
good and *f* servant ..... Matt 25:23
"He who is *f* in what ..... Luke 16:10
Judged me to be *f*..... Acts 16:15
God is *f*..... 1 Cor 1:9
is my beloved and *f*..... 1 Cor 4:17
But as God is *f* ..... 2 Cor 1:18
f brethren in Christ ..... Col 1:2
who calls you is *f*..... 1 Thess 5:24
This is a *f* saying and..... 1 Tim 1:15
f High Priest in ..... Heb 2:17
He who promised is *f* ..... Heb 10:23
He is *f* and just to ..... 1 John 1:9
Be *f* until death ..... Rev 2:10
words are true and *f*..... Rev 21:5

FAITHFULNESS
I have declared Your *f*..... Ps 40:10
Your *f* also surrounds..... Ps 89:8
f endures to all..... Ps 119:90
Great is Your *f*..... Lam 3:23
unbelief make the *f*..... Rom 3:3

FAITHLESS
"O *f* generation ..... Mark 9:19
If we are *f* ..... 2 Tim 2:13

FALL
a deep sleep to *f*..... Gen 2:21
Let them *f* by their ..... Ps 5:10
righteous man may *f*..... Prov 24:16
But the wicked shall *f*.... Prov 24:16
the blind, both will *f*..... Matt 15:14
the stars will *f* ..... Matt 24:29
"I saw Satan *f*..... Luke 10:18
take heed lest he *f*..... 1 Cor 10:12
if they *f* away ..... Heb 6:6
lest anyone *f* short of..... Heb 12:15
and rocks, "*F* on us ..... Rev 6:16

FALSE
"You shall not bear *f*..... Ex 20:16
I hate every *f* way ..... Ps 119:104
f witness shall perish..... Prov 21:28
"Beware of *f* prophets..... Matt 7:15
f christs and *f* ..... Matt 24:24
and we are found *f*..... 1 Cor 15:15
of *f* brethren ..... Gal 2:4
f prophets have gone ..... 1 John 4:1
mouth of the *f* prophet .... Rev 16:13

FAMILIES
in you all the *f*..... Gen 12:3
the God of all the *f* ..... Jer 31:1
in your seed all the *f*..... Acts 3:25

FAMINES
And there will be *f* ..... Matt 24:7

FAR
Your judgments are *f*..... Ps 10:5
Be not *f* from Me ..... Ps 22:11
The LORD is *f* from..... Prov 15:29
their heart is *f* from..... Matt 15:8
going to a *f* country ..... Mark 13:34
though He is not *f*..... Acts 17:27
you who once were *f* ..... Eph 2:13

FARMER
The hard-working *f*..... 2 Tim 2:6
See how the *f* waits..... James 5:7

FAST
f as you do this day..... Is 58:4
f that *I* have chosen ..... Is 58:5
"Moreover, when you *f*..... Matt 6:16
disciples do not *f* ..... Matt 9:14
'I *f* twice a week ..... Luke 18:12

FASTED
'When you *f* and..... Zech 7:5
And when He had *f*..... Matt 4:2

FASTING
by prayer and *f*..... Matt 17:21
give yourselves to *f*..... 1 Cor 7:5

FATHER
man shall leave his *f*..... Gen 2:24
and you shall be a *f*..... Gen 17:4
I was a *f* to the poor..... Job 29:16
A *f* of the fatherless ..... Ps 68:5
f pities his children ..... Ps 103:13
God, Everlasting *F* ..... Is 9:6
You, O LORD, are our *F*..... Is 63:16
time cry to Me, 'My *F* ..... Jer 3:4
For I am a *F* to Israel..... Jer 31:9
"A son honors his *f* ..... Mal 1:6
Have we not all one *F* ..... Mal 2:10
Our *F* in heaven..... Matt 6:9
"He who loves *f* ..... Matt 10:37
know the *F* ..... Matt 11:27
'He who curses *f*..... Matt 15:4
for One is your *F*..... Matt 23:9
"*F* will be divided ..... Luke 12:53
F loves the Son ..... John 3:35
F raises the dead ..... John 5:21
F judges no one ..... John 5:22
He has seen the *F*..... John 6:46
F who sent Me bears ..... John 8:18
we have one *F*..... John 8:41
of your *f* the devil..... John 8:44
"I and My *F* are one..... John 10:30
'I am going to the *F*..... John 14:28
came forth from the *F* ... John 16:28
that he might be the *f* ..... Rom 4:11
one God and *F* of all ..... Eph 4:6
"*I* will be to Him a *F* ..... Heb 1:5
down from the *F*..... James 1:17
if you call on the *F*..... 1 Pet 1:17
and testify that the *F* .... 1 John 4:14

FATHERLESS
the helper of the *f*..... Ps 10:14
He relieves the *f*..... Ps 146:9
do not defend the *f*..... Is 1:23
they may rob the *f*..... Is 10:2
You the *f* finds mercy..... Hos 14:3

FATHER'S
you in My *F* kingdom..... Matt 26:29
I must be about My *F* ..... Luke 2:49

F house are many ..... John 14:2
that a man has his *f* ..... 1 Cor 5:1

FATHERS
the LORD God of our *f* .....Ezra 7:27
f trusted in You.....Ps 22:4
our ears, O God, our *f*.....Ps 44:1
f ate the manna.....John 6:31
of whom are the *f*.....Rom 9:5
unaware that all our *f*..... 1 Cor 10:1

FAULT
I have found no *f*.....Luke 23:14
does He still find *f*..... Rom 9:19
of God without *f* .....Phil 2:15

FAULTLESS
covenant had been *f* .....Heb 8:7
to present you *f*.....Jude 24

FAULTS
"I remember my *f*.....Gen 41:9
me from secret *f* .....Ps 19:12

FAVOR
granted me life and *f* .....Job 10:12
His *f* is for life .....Ps 30:5
A good man obtains *f*.....Prov 12:2
and stature, and in *f*.....Luke 2:52
God and having *f*.....Acts 2:47

FAVORED
"Rejoice, highly *f*.....Luke 1:28

FAVORITISM
not show personal *f*.....Luke 20:21
God shows personal *f*.....Gal 2:6

FEAR
live, for I *f* God.....Gen 42:18
to put the dread and *f*..... Deut 2:25
said, "Does Job *f*.....Job 1:9
Yes, you cast off *f*.....Job 15:4
The *f* of the LORD is .....Ps 19:9
of death, I will *f* .....Ps 23:4
Whom shall I *f*.....Ps 27:1
Oh, *f* the LORD .....Ps 34:9
There is no *f* of God.....Ps 36:1
The *f* of the LORD is .....Ps 111:10
The *f* of man brings a .... Prov 29:25
F God and keep His..... Eccl 12:13
Let Him be your *f*.....Is 8:13
"Be strong, do not *f*.....Is 35:4
who would not *f* ..... Jer 10:7
f Him who is able .....Matt 10:28
"Do not *f* .....Luke 12:32
"Do you not even *f*.....Luke 23:40
And walking in the *f*.....Acts 9:31
given us a spirit of *f*.....2 Tim 1:7
those who through *f*.....Heb 2:15
because of His godly *f*.....Heb 5:7
F God..... 1 Pet 2:17
love casts out *f*..... 1 John 4:18

FEARED
He is also to be *f*..... 1 Chr 16:25
f God more than .....Neh 7:2
Yourself, are to be *f*.....Ps 76:7
Then those who *f*.....Mal 3:16

FEARFULLY
f and wonderfully.....Ps 139:14

FEARS
upright man, one who *f*.....Job 1:8
me from all my *f*.....Ps 34:4
nation whoever *f*.....Acts 10:35
f has not been made ..... 1 John 4:18

FEAST
and you shall keep a *f* ... Num 29:12
hate, I despise your *f* .....Amos 5:21
every year at the *F*.....Luke 2:41
when you give a *f*.....Luke 14:13
Now the Passover, a *f*..... John 6:4
great day of the *f*..... John 7:37

FEASTS
the best places at *f* .....Luke 20:46
spots in your love *f* .....Jude 12

FEEBLE
strengthened the *f* .....Job 4:4
And there was none *f* .....Ps 105:37
And my flesh is *f* .....Ps 109:24
hang down, and the *f*.....Heb 12:12

FEED
ravens to *f* you there..... 1 Kin 17:4
and *f* your flocks .....Is 61:5
to him, "*F* My lambs ..... John 21:15
your enemy
hungers, *f*..... Rom 12:20
goods to *f* the poor..... 1 Cor 13:3

FEEDS
your heavenly Father *f*.....Matt 6:26

FEET
all things under his *f*.....Ps 8:6
He makes my *f* like the .....Ps 18:33
You have set my *f* .....Ps 31:8
For their *f* run to.....Prov 1:16
Her *f* go down to death .....Prov 5:5
mountains Are the *f*.....Is 52:7
place of My *f* glorious.....Is 60:13
in that day His *f*..... Zech 14:4
two hands or two *f*.....Matt 18:8
began to wash His *f*.....Luke 7:38
wash the disciples' *f*..... John 13:5
f are swift to shed..... Rom 3:15
beautiful are the *f*..... Rom 10:15
things under His *f* ..... 1 Cor 15:27
and having shod your *f*.....Eph 6:15
fell at His *f* as dead ..... Rev 1:17

FELLOWSHIP
doctrine and *f*.....Acts 2:42
were called into the *f*..... 1 Cor 1:9
f has righteousness ..... 2 Cor 6:14
the right hand of *f*.....Gal 2:9
And have no *f* with the.....Eph 5:11
of love, if any *f*..... Phil 2:1
and the *f* of His.....Phil 3:10
we say that we have *f*..... 1 John 1:6
the light, we have *f*..... 1 John 1:7

FERVENT
f prayer of a.....James 5:16
will melt with *f*..... 2 Pet 3:10

FEW
let your words be *f*..... Eccl 5:2
and there are *f* .....Matt 7:14
but the laborers are *f*.....Matt 9:37
called, but *f* chosen .....Matt 20:16
"Lord, are there *f*.....Luke 13:23

FIELD
Let the *f* be joyful .....Ps 96:12
"The *f* is the world.....Matt 13:38
and buys that *f*.....Matt 13:44
you are God's *f* ..... 1 Cor 3:9

FIERY
LORD sent *f* serpents..... Num 21:6
shall make them as a *f* .....Ps 21:9
burning *f* furnace ..... Dan 3:6
concerning the *f*..... 1 Pet 4:12

FIG
f leaves together .....Gen 3:7
"Look at the *f* .....Luke 21:29
'I saw you under the *f*..... John 1:50

FIGHT
"The LORD will *f* ..... Ex 14:14
Our God will *f* for us.....Neh 4:20
My servants would *f* ..... John 18:36
to him, let us not *f* .....Acts 23:9
F the good *f* .....1 Tim 6:12
have fought the good *f* .....2 Tim 4:7

FIGHTS
your God is He who *f* .....Josh 23:10
because my lord *f*.....1 Sam 25:28
f come from among.....James 4:1

FILL
f the earth and subdue .....Gen 1:28
"Do I not *f* heaven..... Jer 23:24
f this temple with .....Hag 2:7
"*F* the waterpots..... John 2:7
that He might *f*.....Eph 4:10

FILLED
the whole earth be *f*.....Ps 72:19
For they shall be *f* .....Matt 5:6
"Let the children be *f*..... Mark 7:27
would gladly have *f* .....Luke 15:16
being *f* with all..... Rom 1:29
but be *f* with the .....Eph 5:18
be warmed and *f* .....James 12:16

FILTHY
with *f* garments ..... Zech 3:3
poor man in *f* clothes.....James 2:2
oppressed by the *f*..... 2 Pet 2:7
let him be *f* ..... Rev 22:11

FIND
sure your sin will *f*..... Num 32:23
waters, For you will *f*..... Eccl 11:1
seek, and you will *f*.....Matt 7:7
f a Babe wrapped .....Luke 2:12
f no fault in this Man .....Luke 23:4
f grace to help in .....Heb 4:16

FINDS
f me *f* life.....Prov 8:35
f a wife *f* a good ..... Prov 18:22
and he who seeks *f* .....Matt 7:8
f his life will lose .....Matt 10:39
and he who seeks *f* .....Luke 11:10

FINGER
written with the *f*..... Ex 31:18
dip the tip of his *f* .....Luke 16:24
"Reach your *f* ..... John 20:27

FINISHED
f the work which You..... John 17:4
He said, "It is *f* ..... John 19:30
I have *f* the race.....2 Tim 4:7

FIRE
rained brimstone and *f*....Gen 19:24
to him in a flame of *f* ..... Ex 3:2
who answers by *f* ..... 1 Kin 18:24
LORD was not in the *f*... 1 Kin 19:12
We went through *f*.....Ps 66:12
f goes before Him.....Ps 97:3
burns as the *f* .....Is 9:18
you walk through the *f*.....Is 43:2
f that burns all the.....Is 65:5
He break out like *f* .....Amos 5:6
for conflict by *f* .....Amos 7:4
like a refiner's *f* ..... Mal 3:2
the Holy Spirit and *f*.....Matt 3:11
f is not quenched..... Mark 9:44
"I came to send *f*.....Luke 12:49
tongues, as of *f*.....Acts 2:3
f taking vengeance..... 2 Thess 1:8
and that burned with *f* ....Heb 12:18
And the tongue is a *f* .....James 3:6
vengeance of eternal *f*.....Jude 7
into the lake of *f*..... Rev 20:14

FIRMAMENT
Thus God made the *f*.....Gen 1:7
f shows His handiwork .....Ps 19:1

FIRST
f father sinned.....Is 43:27
desires to be *f*.....Matt 20:27
f shall be slave ..... Mark 10:44
the gospel must *f* ..... Mark 13:10
evil, of the Jew *f* .....Rom 2:9
f man Adam became .... 1 Cor 15:45
that we who *f* trusted.....Eph 1:12
Him because He *f*..... 1 John 4:19
I am the *F* and the..... Rev 1:17
you have left your *f*..... Rev 2:4
is the *f* resurrection..... Rev 20:5

FIRSTBORN
LORD struck all the *f*..... Ex 12:29
brought forth her *f* .....Matt 1:25
that He might be the *f* ..... Rom 8:29
invisible God, the *f*..... Col 1:15
the beginning, the *f*..... Col 1:18
witness, the *f* from ..... Rev 1:5

FIRSTFRUITS
also who have the *f*..... Rom 8:23
and has become the *f*.... 1 Cor 15:20
Christ the *f*..... 1 Cor 15:23

FISH
had prepared a great *f*.....Jon 1:17
belly of the great *f*.....Matt 12:40
five loaves and two *f*.....Matt 14:17
and likewise the *f* ..... John 21:13

FISHERS
and I will make you *f*.....Matt 4:19

FIVE
f smooth stones.....1 Sam 17:40
about *f* thousand men.....Matt 14:21
and *f* were foolish .....Matt 25:2

FLAME
appeared to him in a *f* ..... Ex 3:2
tormented in this *f*.....Luke 16:24
and His ministers a *f*.....Heb 1:7
and His eyes like a *f* ..... Rev 1:14

FLATTERING
f speech deceive ..... Rom 16:18
swelling words, *f* .....Jude 16

FLEE
Or where can I *f* .....Ps 139:7
And the shadows *f*.....Song 2:17
who are in Judea *f* .....Matt 24:16
F sexual immorality..... 1 Cor 6:18
f these things and.....1 Tim 6:11
devil and he will *f*.....James 4:7

FLESH
bone of my bones And *f*....Gen 2:23
shall become one *f*.....Gen 2:24
f had corrupted their.....Gen 6:12
f I shall see God.....Job 19:26
My *f* also will rest in.....Ps 16:9
is wearisome to the *f* ..... Eccl 12:12
And all *f* shall see it ..... Is 40:5
"All *f* is grass.....Is 40:6
out My Spirit on all *f* .....Joel 2:28
two shall become one *f* ....Matt 19:5
were shortened, no *f*.....Matt 24:22
shall become one *f* ..... Mark 10:8
the Word became *f*..... John 1:14
I shall give is My *f*..... John 6:51
f profits nothing..... John 6:63
of God, but with the *f* ..... Rom 7:25
on the things of the *f* .....Rom 8:5
to the *f* you will die ..... Rom 8:13
f should glory in His ..... 1 Cor 1:29
"shall become one *f*..... 1 Cor 6:16
For the *f* lusts .....Gal 5:17
have crucified the *f* .....Gal 5:24
may boast in your *f*.....Gal 6:13
the lust of the *f*..... 1 John 2:16
has come in the *f*..... 1 John 4:2

FLESHLY
f wisdom but by the..... 2 Cor 1:12
f lusts which..... 1 Pet 2:11

FLOAT
and he made the iron *f* ..... 2 Kin 6:6

FLOCK
lead Joseph like a *f* .....Ps 80:1
He will feed His *f*.....Is 40:11
you do not feed the *f*..... Ezek 34:3
my God, "Feed the *f*..... Zech 11:4
sheep of the *f*.....Matt 26:31
"Do not fear, little *f*.....Luke 12:32
there will be one *f* ..... John 10:16
Shepherd the *f* of God..... 1 Pet 5:2
examples to the *f*..... 1 Pet 5:3

FLOOD
the waters of the *f* .....Gen 7:10
them away like a *f*.....Ps 90:5
the days before the *f*.....Matt 24:38
bringing in the *f*..... 2 Pet 2:5
of his mouth like a *f*..... Rev 12:15

FLOODS
me, And the *f* of.....Ps 18:4
f on the dry ground.....Is 44:3
rain descended, the *f* .....Matt 7:25

FLOWER
As a *f* of the field.....Ps 103:15
beauty is a fading *f* .....Is 28:4
grass withers, the *f*.....Is 40:7
of man as the *f*..... 1 Pet 1:24

FLOWING
'a land *f* with milk..... Deut 6:3
the Gentiles like a *f*.....Is 66:12

FLUTE(S)
play the harp and *f*.....Gen 4:21
instruments and *f* .....Ps 150:4

FOLLOW
f You wherever You go....Matt 8:19
He said to him, "*F* .....Matt 9:9
up his cross, and *f*..... Mark 8:34
will by no means *f*..... John 10:5
serves Me, let him *f*..... John 12:26
that you should *f* ..... 1 Pet 2:21
f the Lamb wherever ..... Rev 14:4
and their works *f*..... Rev 14:13

FOLLOWED
f the LORD my God .....Josh 14:8
we have left all and *f* .... Mark 10:28

FOLLY
taken much notice of *f*.....Job 35:15
not turn back to *f* .....Ps 85:8
F is joy to him who is .... Prov 15:21
F is set in great ..... Eccl 10:6

FOOD
you it shall be for *f*.....Gen 1:29
that lives shall be *f*.....Gen 9:3
f which you eat shall ..... Ezek 4:10
the fields yield no *f*..... Hab 3:17
That there may be *f* ..... Mal 3:10
to give them *f*.....Matt 24:45
and you gave Me *f* .....Matt 25:35
and he who has *f*.....Luke 3:11
have you any *f*..... John 21:5
they ate their *f* .....Acts 2:46
our hearts with *f*.....Acts 14:17
destroy with your *f* ..... Rom 14:15
f makes my brother ..... 1 Cor 8:13
the same spiritual *f* ..... 1 Cor 10:3
sower, and bread for *f*.... 2 Cor 9:10
And having *f* and .....1 Tim 6:8
and not solid *f*.....Heb 5:12
But solid *f* belongs to.....Heb 5:14
of *f* sold his.....Heb 12:16
destitute of dally *f* .....James 2:15

FOOL
f has said in his.....Ps 14:1
is like sport to a *f*..... Prov 10:23
f is right in his own..... Prov 12:15
is too lofty for a *f*.....Prov 24:7
whoever says, 'You *f* .....Matt 5:22
I have become a *f* ..... 2 Cor 12:11

FOOLISH
I was so *f* and.....Ps 73:22
f pulls it down with.....Prov 14:1
f man squanders it ..... Prov 21:20
Has not God made *f*..... 1 Cor 1:20
O *f* Galatians.....Gal 3:1
were also once *f*..... Titus 3:3
But avoid *f* disputes ..... Titus 3:9

FOOLISHNESS
F is bound up in the..... Prov 22:15
devising of *f* is sin .....Prov 24:9
of the cross is *f*..... 1 Cor 1:18
Because the *f* of God..... 1 Cor 1:25

FOOLS
f despise wisdom.....Prov 1:7
folly of *f* is deceit.....Prov 14:8
F mock at sin .....Prov 14:9
We are *f* for Christ's ..... 1 Cor 4:10

FOOT
will not allow your *f* .....Ps 121:3
f will not stumble .....Prov 3:23
From the sole of the *f* .....Is 1:6
f causes you to sin.....Matt 18:8
you dash your *f*.....Luke 4:11
If the *f* should say..... 1 Cor 12:15

FORBID
said, "Do not *f*..... Mark 9:39
"Can anyone *f*.....Acts 10:47
f that *I* should boast.....Gal 6:14

FOREHEADS
put a mark on the *f* ..... Ezek 9:4
seal of God on their *f*..... Rev 9:4
his mark on their *f*..... Rev 20:4

FOREIGNER
"I am a *f* and a .....Gen 23:4
of me, since I am a *f*..... Ruth 2:10
to God except this *f*.....Luke 17:18

FOREIGNERS
f who were there .....Acts 17:21
longer strangers and *f*.....Eph 2:19

FOREKNEW
For whom He *f*..... Rom 8:29
His people whom He *f*..... Rom 11:2

FOREKNOWLEDGE
purpose and *f* of God.....Acts 2:23

FOREVER
and eat, and live *f*.....Gen 3:22
to our children *f*..... Deut 29:29
LORD sits as King *f*.....Ps 29:10
Do not cast us off *f*.....Ps 44:23
throne, O God, is *f*.....Ps 45:6
"You are a priest *f*.....Ps 110:4
His mercy endures *f*.....Ps 136:1
of our God stands *f*.....Is 40:8
My salvation will be *f*.....Is 51:6
will not cast off *f*.....Lam 3:31
Like the stars *f*..... Dan 12:3
and the glory *f* .....Matt 6:13
the Christ remains *f*..... John 12:34
who is blessed *f*..... 2 Cor 11:31
to whom be glory *f*.....Gal 1:5
generation, *f* and ever .....Eph 3:21
and Father be glory *f*.....Phil 4:20
throne, O God, is *f*.....Heb 1:8
lives and abides *f*..... 1 Pet 1:23
of darkness *f* .....Jude 13
power, Both now and *f*.....Jude 25
And they shall reign *f*..... Rev 22:5

FOREVERMORE
Blessed be the LORD *f*.....Ps 89:52
this time forth and *f*.....Ps 113:2
behold, I am alive *f*..... Rev 1:18

FORGAVE
to repay, he freely *f*.....Luke 7:42
God in Christ *f*.....Eph 4:32
even as Christ *f*.....Col 3:13

FORGET
f the LORD who..... Deut 6:12
I will not *f* Your word.....Ps 119:16
If I *f* you .....Ps 137:5
My son, do not *f* .....Prov 3:1
f the LORD your Maker.....Is 51:13
f your work and labor .....Heb 6:10

FORGETTING
f those things which.....Phil 3:13

FORGIVE
f their sin and heal..... 2 Chr 7:14
good, and ready to *f*.....Ps 86:5
And *f* us our debts.....Matt 6:12
Father will also *f*.....Matt 6:14
his heart, does not *f* .....Matt 18:35
Who can *f* sins but
God ..... Mark 2:7
f the sins of any ..... John 20:23
you ought rather to *f*..... 2 Cor 2:7
F me this wrong ..... 2 Cor 12:13
f us our sins and to ..... 1 John 1:9

FORGIVEN
sins be *f* them..... Mark 4:12
to whom little is *f* .....Luke 7:47
f you all trespasses.....Col 2:13
your sins are *f*..... 1 John 2:12

FORGIVENESS
But there is *f* with.....Ps 130:4
preached to you the *f*.....Acts 13:38
they may receive *f*..... Acts 26:18
His blood, the *f* .....Eph 1:7

FORGIVES
f all your iniquities.....Ps 103:3
is this who even *f* .....Luke 7:49

FORGIVING
tenderhearted, *f*.....Eph 4:32
and *f* one another.....Col 3:13

FORGOTTEN
f the God who..... Deut 32:18
not one of them is *f*.....Luke 12:6
f the exhortation.....Heb 12:5
f that he was..... 2 Pet 1:9

FORM
earth was without *f*.....Gen 1:2
Who would *f* a god or.....Is 44:10
f the light and create.....Is 45:7
descended in bodily *f*.....Luke 3:22
time, nor seen His *f*.....John 5:37
For the *f* of this ..... 1 Cor 7:31
who, being in the *f* .....Phil 2:6
having a *f* of .....2 Tim 3:5

FORMED
And the LORD God *f* .....Gen 2:7
f my inward parts.....Ps 139:13
say of him who *f*.....Is 29:16
"Before I *f* you in.....Jer 1:5
Will the thing *f*..... Rom 9:20
until Christ is *f*.....Gal 4:19

FORNICATION
"We were not born of *f*.... John 8:41
of the wrath of her *f*.....Rev 14:8

FORNICATOR(S)
you know, that no *f*.....Eph 5:5
lest there be any *f*.....Heb 12:16
but *f* and adulterers .....Heb 13:4

FORSAKE
But I did not *f*.....Ps 119:87
father, And do not *f* .....Prov 1:8
of you does not *f*.....Luke 14:33
never leave you nor *f*.....Heb 13:5

FORSAKEN
My God, why have You *f*.....Ps 22:1
seen the righteous *f*.....Ps 37:25
a mere moment I have *f*.....Is 54:7
God, why have You *f*.....Matt 27:46
persecuted, but not *f*..... 2 Cor 4:9
for Demas has *f* .....2 Tim 4:10

FORSAKING
f the assembling .....Heb 10:25

FORTRESS
is my rock, my *f*.....2 Sam 22:2
my rock of refuge, a *f*.....Ps 31:2

FOUND
f a helper comparable .....Gen 2:20
a thousand *I* have *f* ..... Eccl 7:28
LORD while He may be *f*.....Is 55:6
fruit on it and *f* none.....Luke 13:6
he was lost and is *f* .....Luke 15:24
f the Messiah" (which.....John 1:41
and be *f* in Him.....Phil 3:9

FOUNDATION
Of old You laid the *f*.....Ps 102:25
the earth without a *f*.....Luke 6:49
loved Me before the *f*.... John 17:24
I have laid the *f*..... 1 Cor 3:10
f can anyone lay than..... 1 Cor 3:11
us in Him before the *f*.....Eph 1:4
not laying again the *f* .....Heb 6:1
Lamb slain from the *f*.....Rev 13:8

FOUNDATIONS
when I laid the *f* .....Job 38:4
And the *f* of the wall.....Rev 21:19

FOUNTAIN(S)
will become in him a *f*..... John 4:14
on that day all the *f*.....Gen 7:11
lead them to living *f*.....Rev 7:17

FRAGRANCE
was filled with the *f*..... John 12:3
we are to God the *f* .....2 Cor 2:15

FREE
'You will be made *f*..... John 8:33
And having been set *f* ..... Rom 6:18
Jesus has made me *f*.....Rom 8:2
is neither slave nor *f*.....Gal 3:28
Christ has made us *f*.....Gal 5:1
he is a slave or *f* .....Eph 6:8

FREELY
the garden you may *f* .....Gen 2:16
F you have received.....Matt 10:8
f give us all ..... Rom 8:32
the water of life *f*..... Rev 22:17

FRIEND
of Abraham Your *f* .....2 Chr 20:7
f who sticks closer ..... Prov 18:24
a *f* of tax collectors .....Matt 11:19
of you shall have a *f* .....Luke 11:5
f Lazarus sleeps..... John 11:11
he was called the *f* .....James 2:23
wants to be a *f* .....James 4:4

FRIENDS
My *f* scorn me.....Job 16:20
the rich has many *f*..... Prov 14:20
one's life for his *f*..... John 15:13
I have called you *f*..... John 15:15
to forbid any of his *f*.....Acts 24:23

FROGS
your territory with *f*..... Ex 8:2
f coming out of the.....Rev 16:13

FRUIT
showed them the *f*..... Num 13:26
brings forth its *f*.....Ps 1:3
f is better than gold.....Prov 8:19
with good by the *f*..... Prov 12:14
like the first *f*.....Is 28:4
does not bear good *f*.....Matt 3:10
good tree bears good *f*.....Matt 7:17
not drink of this *f* .....Matt 26:29
and blessed is the *f*.....Luke 1:42
life, and bring no *f* .....Luke 8:14
and he came seeking *f*.....Luke 13:6
'And if it bears *f*.....Luke 13:9
branch that bears *f*..... John 15:2
that you bear much *f* ..... John 15:8
should go and bear *f*..... John 15:16
God, you have your *f*..... Rom 6:22
that we should bear *f*.....Rom 7:4
But the *f* of the.....Gal 5:22
yields the peaceable *f* .....Heb 12:11
Now the *f* of .....James 3:18
autumn trees without *f*.....Jude 12
tree yielding its *f*..... Rev 22:2

FRUITFUL
them, saying, "Be *f*.....Gen 1:22
wife shall be like a *f*.....Ps 128:3
pleasing Him, being *f* .....Col 1:10

FRUITS
Therefore bear *f* .....Matt 3:8
know them by their *f*.....Matt 7:16
of mercy and good *f*.....James 3:17
which bore twelve *f* ..... Rev 22:2

FULFILL
for us to *f* all.....Matt 3:15
f the law of Christ .....Gal 6:2
f my joy by being .....Phil 2:2
and *f* all the good ..... 2 Thess 1:11
If you really *f* .....James 2:8

FULFILLED
the law till all is *f*.....Matt 5:18
of the Gentiles are *f* .....Luke 21:24
all things must be *f* .....Luke 24:44
of the law might be *f*.....Rom 8:4
loves another has *f*..... Rom 13:8
For all the law is *f* .....Gal 5:14

FULLNESS
f we have all received..... John 1:16
But when the *f* of the.....Gal 4:4
filled with all the *f*.....Eph 3:19
Him dwells all the *f*.....Col 2:9

FURNACE
you out of the iron *f*..... Deut 4:20
of a burning fiery *f*..... Dan 3:6
cast them into the *f*.....Matt 13:42
the smoke of a great *f*..... Rev 9:2

G

GAIN
and to die is *g* .....Phil 1:21
rubbish, that I may *g* .....Phil 3:8
is a means of *g*.....1 Tim 6:5
contentment is great *g*.....1 Tim 6:6
for dishonest *g*..... 1 Pet 5:2

GALL
They also gave me *g*.....Ps 69:21
wine mingled with *g*.....Matt 27:34

GARDEN
LORD God planted a *g* .....Gen 2:8
g enclosed Is my.....Song 4:12
Eden, the *g* of God .....Ezek 28:13
where there was a *g* ..... John 18:1
g a new tomb in..... John 19:41

GARMENT
the hem of His *g*.....Matt 9:20
on a wedding *g*.....Matt 22:11
cloth on an old *g* ..... Mark 2:21
all grow old like a *g*.....Heb 1:11
hating even the *g*.....Jude 23

GARMENTS
g did not wear out on ..... Deut 8:4
They divide My *g* .....Ps 22:18
from Edom, With dyed *g* .....Is 63:1
"Take away the filthy *g*..... Zech 3:4
man clothed in soft *g*.....Matt 11:8
spread their *g* on the .....Matt 21:8
and divided His *g* .....Matt 27:35
by them in shining *g*.....Luke 24:4
g are moth-eaten .....James 5:2
be clothed in white *g* ..... Rev 3:5

GATE
by the narrow *g*.....Matt 7:13
by the Sheep *G* a pool ..... John 5:2
laid daily at the *g* .....Acts 3:2
suffered outside the *g*.....Heb 13:12

GATES
up your heads, O you *g*.....Ps 24:7
The LORD loves the *g*.....Ps 87:2
is known in the *g*..... Prov 31:23
Go through the *g*.....Is 62:10
and the *g* of Hades.....Matt 16:18
wall with twelve *g*..... Rev 21:12
g were twelve pearls..... Rev 21:21
g shall not be shut..... Rev 21:25

GATHER(S)
And a time to *g* stones ..... Eccl 3:5
g the lambs with His.....Is 40:11
g His wheat into the .....Matt 3:12
sow nor reap nor *g* .....Matt 6:26
Do men *g* grapes from .....Matt 7:16
g where I have not .....Matt 25:26
g together His ..... Mark 13:27
The Lord GOD, who *g* .....Is 56:8
together, as a hen *g* .....Matt 23:37

GAVE
to be with me, she *g*.....Gen 3:12
g You this authority.....Matt 21:23
that He *g* His only..... John 3:16
Those whom You *g*..... John 17:12
but God *g* the increase..... 1 Cor 3:6
g Himself for our sins.....Gal 1:4
g Himself for me .....Gal 2:20
g Himself for it .....Eph 5:25

GENERATION(S)
One *g* passes away ..... Eccl 1:4
who will declare His *g*.....Is 53:8
and adulterous *g*.....Matt 12:39
this *g* will by no.....Matt 24:34
from this perverse *g*..... Acts 2:40
But you are a chosen *g*..... 1 Pet 2:9
be remembered in all *g*.....Ps 45:17
g will call me blessed .....Luke 1:48

GENTILES
G were separated .....Gen 10:5
As a light to the *G*.....Is 42:6
G shall come to your .....Is 60:3
all these things the *G*.....Matt 6:32
into the way of the *G*.....Matt 10:5
revelation to the *G* .....Luke 2:32
G are fulfilled.....Luke 21:24
My name before *G*.....Acts 9:15
poured out on the *G*.....Acts 10:45
a light to the *G*.....Acts 13:47
also the God of the *G*..... Rom 3:29
mystery among the *G*.....Col 1:27
a teacher of the *G*.....1 Tim 2:7

GENTLE
from Me, for I am *g* .....Matt 11:29
we were *g* among..... 1 Thess 2:7
to be peaceable, *g*.....Titus 3:2
only to the good and *g* .... 1 Pet 2:18
ornament of a *g* ..... 1 Pet 3:4

GENTLENESS
love and a spirit of *g*..... 1 Cor 4:21
g, self-control.....Gal 5:23

all lowliness and *g* .....Eph 4:2
Let your *g* be known to.....Phil 4:5
love, patience, *g*.....1 Tim 6:11

GHOST

supposed it was a *g*..... Mark 6:49

GIFT

it is the *g* of God..... Eccl 3:13
"If you knew the *g*..... John 4:10
but the *g* of God is ..... Rom 6:23
each one has his own *g*.... 1 Cor 7:7
though I have the *g*..... 1 Cor 13:2
it is the *g* of God.....Eph 2:8
Do not neglect the *g* .....1 Tim 4:14
you to stir up the *g*.....2 Tim 1:6
tasted the heavenly *g*.....Heb 6:4
Every good *g* and.....James 1:17

GIFTS

You have received *g*.....Ps 68:18
and Seba Will offer *g* .....Ps 72:10
how to give good *g* .....Matt 7:11
rich putting their *g*.....Luke 21:1
g differing..... Rom 12:6
are diversities of *g*..... 1 Cor 12:4
and desire spiritual *g*..... 1 Cor 14:1
captive, And gave *g* .....Eph 4:8

GIVE

g you the desires .....Ps 37:4
G me understanding.....Ps 119:34
"*G* to him who asks .....Matt 5:42
G us this day our.....Matt 6:11
authority *I* will *g*.....Luke 4:6
g them eternal life..... John 10:28
commandment *I g*..... John 13:34
g us all things..... Rom 8:32
g him who has need .....Eph 4:28
g thanks to God..... 2 Thess 2:13
g yourself entirely.....1 Tim 4:15

GIVEN

to him more will be *g* .....Matt 13:12
has, more will be *g*.....Matt 25:29

GIVES

g life to the world..... John 6:33
"All that the Father *g*..... John 6:37
The good shepherd *g*..... John 10:11
not as the world *g* ..... John 14:27
g us richly all things.....1 Tim 6:17
who *g* to all liberally.....James 1:5
g grace to the humble.....James 4:6

GLAD

streams shall make *g*.....Ps 46:4
I was *g* when they said .....Ps 122:1
make merry and be *g* ....Luke 15:32
he saw it and was *g* ..... John 8:56

GLADNESS

me hear joy and *g* .....Ps 51:8
Serve the LORD with *g* .....Ps 100:2

GLORIFIED

and they *g* the God of.....Matt 15:31
Jesus was not yet *g*..... John 7:39
when Jesus was *g* ..... John 12:16
this My Father is *g*..... John 15:8
"I have *g* You on the..... John 17:4
g His Servant Jesus .....Acts 3:13
these He also *g* ..... Rom 8:30
things God may be *g* ..... 1 Pet 4:11

GLORIFY

g your Father in.....Matt 5:16
"Father, *g* Your name.... John 12:28
"He will *g* Me..... John 16:14
"And now, O Father, *g* .... John 17:5
death he would *g*..... John 21:19
therefore *g* God in..... 1 Cor 6:20
also Christ did not *g* .....Heb 5:5
ashamed, but let him *g*.... 1 Pet 4:16

GLORIOUS

G things are spoken.....Ps 87:3
g splendor of Your.....Ps 145:5
habitation, holy and *g* .....Is 63:15
it to Himself a *g*.....Eph 5:27
be conformed to His *g*.....Phil 3:21
g appearing of our ..... Titus 2:13

GLORY

show me Your *g*.....Ex 33:18
g has departed from .....1 Sam 4:21
Who is this King of *g*.....Ps 24:8
Your power and Your *g*.....Ps 63:2
wise shall inherit *g*.....Prov 3:35
It is the *g* of God to .....Prov 25:2
g I will not give.....Is 42:8
that they may have *g*.....Matt 6:2
the power and the *g*.....Matt 6:13
g was not arrayed .....Matt 6:29
will come in the *g*.....Matt 16:27
power and great *g*.....Matt 24:30
"*G* to God in the .....Luke 2:14
and we beheld His *g*..... John 1:14
and manifested His *g*..... John 2:11
not seek My own *g* ..... John 8:50
"Give God the *g*..... John 9:24
g which I had with..... John 17:5
g which You gave Me.... John 17:22
he did not give *g*.....Acts 12:23
doing good seek for *g*.....Rom 2:7
fall short of the *g*..... Rom 3:23
in faith, giving *g* ..... Rom 4:20
the adoption, the *g*.....Rom 9:4
the riches of His *g*..... Rom 9:23
God, alone wise, be *g* .... Rom 16:27
who glories, let him *g*..... 1 Cor 1:31
to His riches in *g* .....Phil 4:19
appear with Him in *g* .....Col 3:4
For you are our *g* ..... 1 Thess 2:20
many sons to *g* .....Heb 2:10
grass, And all the *g*..... 1 Pet 1:24
to whom belong the *g*..... 1 Pet 4:11
for the Spirit of *g*..... 1 Pet 4:14
the presence of His *g*.....Jude 24
O Lord, to receive *g*..... Rev 4:11
g of God illuminated..... Rev 21:23

GLUTTON(S)

g shames his .....Prov 28:7
you say, 'Look, a *g*.....Luke 7:34
evil beasts, lazy *g*..... Titus 1:12

GO

'Let My people *g*..... Ex 5:1
Where can I *g* from.....Ps 139:7
to whom shall we *g*..... John 6:68
g you cannot come..... John 8:21
I *g* to prepare a place..... John 14:2

GOAL

I press toward the *g*.....Phil 3:14

GOD

G created the heavens.....Gen 1:1
Abram of *G* Most .....Gen 14:19
and I will be their *G*.....Gen 17:8
"I am the LORD your *G*..... Ex 20:2
G is a consuming fire ..... Deut 4:24
If the LORD is *G* ..... 1 Kin 18:21
G is greater than all..... 2 Chr 2:5
You have been My *G*.....Ps 22:10
G is our refuge.....Ps 46:1
G is in the midst of.....Ps 46:5
me a clean heart, O *G*.....Ps 51:10
Our *G* is the *G*.....Ps 68:20
Who is so great a *G* .....Ps 77:13
Restore us, O *G* .....Ps 80:7
You alone are *G* .....Ps 86:10
Exalt the LORD our *G* .....Ps 99:9
Yes, our *G* is merciful .....Ps 116:5
For *G* is in heaven..... Eccl 5:2
Counselor, Mighty *G* .....Is 9:6
G is my salvation .....Is 12:2
stricken, Smitten by *G* .....Is 53:4
"*G* with us.....Matt 1:23
in *G* my Savior .....Luke 1:47
the Word was with *G* ..... John 1:1
"For *G* so loved the ..... John 3:16
"*G* is Spirit..... John 4:24
"My Lord and my *G*..... John 20:28
Christ is the Son of *G*.....Acts 8:37
Indeed, let *G* be true .....Rom 3:4
If *G* is for us ..... Rom 8:31
G is faithful ..... 1 Cor 1:9
G shall supply all .....Phil 4:19
and *I* will be their *G*.....Heb 8:10
G is a consuming fire .....Heb 12:29
for *G* is love..... 1 John 4:8
No one has seen *G*..... 1 John 4:12
G Himself will be ..... Rev 21:3
and *I* will be his *G*..... Rev 21:7

GODDESS

after Ashtoreth the *g* ..... 1 Kin 11:5
of the great *g* Diana.....Acts 19:35

GODHEAD

eternal power and *G*..... Rom 1:20
the fullness of the *G*.....Col 2:9

GODLINESS

is the mystery of *g* .....1 Tim 3:16
g with contentment.....1 Tim 6:6
having a form of *g* .....2 Tim 3:5
to perseverance *g*..... 2 Pet 1:6

GODLY

who desire to live *g*.....2 Tim 3:12
reverence and *g* fear.....Heb 12:28
to deliver the *g*..... 2 Pet 2:9

GOLD

g I do not have..... Acts 3:6
with braided hair or *g* .....1 Tim 2:9
a man with *g* rings.....James 2:2
Your *g* and silver are.....James 5:3
more precious than *g*..... 1 Pet 1:7
like silver or *g*..... 1 Pet 1:18
of the city was pure *g*..... Rev 21:21

GOOD

God saw that it was *g*.....Gen 1:10
but God meant it for *g*.....Gen 50:20
indeed accept *g*.....Job 2:10
is none who does *g* .....Ps 14:1
Truly God is *g* to .....Ps 73:1
g word makes it glad..... Prov 12:25
on the evil and the *g*.....Prov 15:3
A merry heart does *g* .... Prov 17:22
Learn to do *g* .....Is 1:17
talked to me, with *g*.....Zech 1:13
they may see your *g* .....Matt 5:16
"A *g* man out of the .....Matt 12:35
No one is *g* but One.....Matt 19:17
For she has done a *g*.....Matt 26:10
g works I have shown ... John 10:32
went about doing *g*..... Acts 10:38
g man someone would .....Rom 5:7
in my flesh) nothing *g*..... Rom 7:18
overcome evil with *g* ..... Rom 12:21
Jesus for *g* works .....Eph 2:10
fruitful in every *g* .....Col 1:10
know that the law is *g*.....1 Tim 1:8
For this is *g* and.....1 Tim 2:3
bishop, he desires a *g*.....1 Tim 3:1
for this is *g* and.....1 Tim 5:4
prepared for every *g*.....2 Tim 2:21
Every *g* gift and.....James 1:17

GOODNESS

"I will make all My *g*..... Ex 33:19
and abounding in *g*..... Ex 34:6
"You are my Lord, My *g*.....Ps 16:2
Surely *g* and mercy .....Ps 23:6
That I would see the *g*.....Ps 27:13
the riches of His *g*.....Rom 2:4
consider the *g* and ..... Rom 11:22
kindness, *g* .....Gal 5:22

GOSPEL

The beginning of the *g*..... Mark 1:1
and believe in the *g*..... Mark 1:15
g must first be..... Mark 13:10
separated to the *g*..... Rom 1:1
not ashamed of the *g*..... Rom 1:16
to a different *g* .....Gal 1:6
the everlasting *g*..... Rev 14:6

GRACE

But Noah found *g*.....Gen 6:8
G is poured upon Your .....Ps 45:2
The LORD will give *g* .....Ps 84:11
the Spirit of *g*..... Zech 12:10
and the *g* of God was .....Luke 2:40
g and truth came..... John 1:17
And great *g* was upon.....Acts 4:33
receive abundance of *g*... Rom 5:17
g is no longer *g*..... Rom 11:6
For you know the *g*.....2 Cor 8:9
g is sufficient..... 2 Cor 12:9
The *g* of the Lord .....2 Cor 13:14
you have fallen from *g*.....Gal 5:4
to the riches of His *g* .....Eph 1:7
g you have been .....Eph 2:8
g was given according .....Eph 4:7
G be with all those.....Eph 6:24
shaken, let us have *g*.....Heb 12:28
But He gives more *g* .....James 4:6
but grow in the *g*.....2 Pet 3:18

GRACIOUS
he said, "God be *g*.....Gen 43:29
I will be *g* to whom I.....Ex 33:19
at the *g* words which.....Luke 4:22
that the Lord is *g*.....1 Pet 2:3

GRAIN
it treads out the *g*.....Deut 25:4
be revived like *g*.....Hos 14:7
to pluck heads of *g*.....Matt 12:1
unless a *g* of wheat.....John 12:24

GRAPES
brought forth wild *g*.....Is 5:2
have eaten sour *g*.....Ezek 18:2
Do men gather *g*.....Matt 7:16
g are fully ripe.....Rev 14:18

GRASS
The *g* withers.....Is 40:7
so clothes the *g*.....Matt 6:30
"All flesh is as *g*.....1 Pet 1:24

GRAVE(S)
my soul up from the *g*.....Ps 30:3
And they made His *g*.....Is 53:9
the power of the *g*.....Hos 13:14
g were opened.....Matt 27:52
g which are not.....Luke 11:44
g will hear His voice.....John 5:28

GREAT
and make your name *g*.....Gen 12:2
For the LORD is *g*.....1 Chr 16:25
Who does *g* things.....Job 5:9
g is the Holy One.....Is 12:6
G is Your faithfulness.....Lam 3:23
he shall be called *g*.....Matt 5:19
one pearl of *g* price.....Matt 13:46
desires to become *g*.....Matt 20:26
g drops of blood.....Luke 22:44
appearing of our *g*.....Titus 2:13
Mystery, Babylon the *G*....Rev 17:5

GREATER
of heaven is *g*.....Matt 11:11
place there is One *g*.....Matt 12:6
a servant is not *g*.....John 13:16
"*G* love has no one.....John 15:13
'A servant is not *g*.....John 15:20
who prophesies is *g*.....1 Cor 14:5
God is *g*.....1 John 3:20
witness of God is *g*.....1 John 5:9

GREATEST
little child is the *g*.....Matt 18:4
but the *g* of these is.....1 Cor 13:13

GREEDINESS
all uncleanness with *g*.....Eph 4:19

GREEDY
of everyone who is *g*.....Prov 1:19
not violent, not *g*.....1 Tim 3:3

GREEK
written in Hebrew, *G*.....John 19:20
and also for the *G*.....Rom 1:16
is neither Jew nor *G*.....Gal 3:28

GRIEF
and acquainted with *g*.....Is 53:3
joy and not with *g*.....Heb 13:17

GRIEVE(D)
g the Holy Spirit.....Eph 4:30
earth, and He was *g*.....Gen 6:6
g His Holy Spirit.....Is 63:10
with anger, being *g*.....Mark 3:5

GROANING(S)
I am weary with my *g*.....Ps 6:6
Then Jesus, again *g*.....John 11:38
g which cannot.....Rom 8:26

GROUND
"Cursed is the *g*.....Gen 3:17
you stand is holy *g*.....Ex 3:5
up your fallow *g*.....Jer 4:3
others fell on good *g*.....Matt 13:8
bought a piece of *g*.....Luke 14:18
God, the pillar and *g*.....1 Tim 3:15

GROW
truth in love, may *g*.....Eph 4:15
but *g* in the grace and.....2 Pet 3:18

GUARANTEE
in our hearts as a *g*.....2 Cor 1:22
us the Spirit as a *g*.....2 Cor 5:5
who is the *g* of our.....Eph 1:14

GUIDE
He will be our *g*.....Ps 48:14
g our feet into the.....Luke 1:79
has come, He will *g*.....John 16:13

GUILTLESS
g who takes His name.....Ex 20:7
have condemned the *g*.....Matt 12:7

GUILTY
"We are truly *g*.....Gen 42:21
world may become *g*.....Rom 3:19
in one point, he is *g*.....James 2:10

H

HADES
be brought down to *H*....Matt 11:23
H shall not.....Matt 16:18
in torments in *H*.....Luke 16:23
not leave my soul in *H*.....Acts 2:27
I have the keys of *H*.....Rev 1:18
H were cast into the.....Rev 20:14

HAIR(S)
you cannot make
one *h*.....Matt 5:36
"But not a *h* of your.....Luke 21:18
not with braided *h*.....1 Tim 2:9
h like women's *h*.....Rev 9:8
"But the very *h*.....Matt 10:30

HALLOWED
the Sabbath day and *h*.....Ex 20:11
who is holy shall be *h*.....Is 5:16
heaven, *H* be Your
name.....Matt 6:9

HAND
the *h* of God was.....1 Sam 5:11
My times are in Your *h*.....Ps 31:15
"Sit at My right *h*.....Ps 110:1
heart is in the *h*.....Prov 21:1
Whatever your *h*.....Eccl 9:10
is at his right *h*.....Eccl 10:2
do not withhold your *h*....Eccl 11:6
My *h* has laid the.....Is 48:13
Behold, the LORD's *h*.....Is 59:1
are the work of Your *h*.....Is 64:8
"Am I a God near at *h*.....Jer 23:23
of heaven is at *h*.....Matt 3:2
if your right *h*.....Matt 5:30
do not let your left *h*.....Matt 6:3
h causes you to sin.....Mark 9:43
sitting at the right *h*.....Mark 14:62
at the right *h* of God.....Acts 7:55
The Lord is at *h*.....Phil 4:5
"Sit at My right *h*.....Heb 1:13
down at the right *h*.....Heb 10:12

HANDIWORK
firmament shows His *h*.....Ps 19:1

HANDLE
H Me and see.....Luke 24:39
do not taste, do not *h*.....Col 2:21

HANDS
took his life in his *h*.....1 Sam 19:5
but His *h* make whole.....Job 5:18
They pierced My *h*.....Ps 22:16
h formed the dry land.....Ps 95:5
than having two *h*.....Matt 18:8
"Behold My *h* and.....Luke 24:39
h the print of the.....John 20:25
his *h* what is good.....Eph 4:28
the laying on of the *h*.....1 Tim 4:14
to fall into the *h*.....Heb 10:31

HANGED
went and *h* himself.....Matt 27:5

HAPPY
H is the man who has.....Ps 127:5

HARDENED
But Pharaoh *h* his.....Ex 8:32
their heart was *h*.....Mark 6:52
and *h* their hearts.....John 12:40
lest any of you be *h*.....Heb 3:13

HARLOT
of a *h* named Rahab.....Josh 2:1
h is one body with.....1 Cor 6:16
of the great *h* who.....Rev 17:1

HARLOTRY
are the children of *h*.....Hos 2:4
For the spirit of *h*.....Hos 5:4

HARLOTS
h enter the.....Matt 21:31
Great, The Mother of *H*....Rev 17:5

HARP(S)
Lamb, each having a *h*.....Rev 5:8
We hung our *h* Upon the...Ps 137:2

HARVEST
Seedtime and *h*.....Gen 8:22
"The *h* is past.....Jer 8:20
h truly is plentiful.....Matt 9:37
sickle, because the *h*.....Mark 4:29
already white for *h*.....John 4:35

HATE
love the LORD, *h* evil.....Ps 97:10
h every false way.....Ps 119:104
h the double-minded.....Ps 119:113
I *h* and abhor lying.....Ps 119:163
love, And a time to *h*.....Eccl 3:8
You who *h* good and.....Mic 3:2
either he will *h*.....Matt 6:24

HATED
But Esau I have *h*.....Mal 1:3
"And you will be *h*.....Matt 10:22
have seen and also *h*.....John 15:24
but Esau *I* have *h*.....Rom 9:13
For no one ever *h*.....Eph 5:29

HATEFUL
h woman when she is....Prov 30:23
in malice and envy, *h*.....Titus 3:3

HATES
six things the LORD *h*.....Prov 6:16
lose it, and he who *h*.....John 12:25
"If the world *h*.....John 15:18
h his brother is.....1 John 2:11

HAUGHTY
bring down *h* looks.....Ps 18:27
my heart is not *h*.....Ps 131:1
h spirit before a fall.....Prov 16:18

HEAD
He shall bruise your *h*.....Gen 3:15
and gave Him to be *h*.....Eph 1:22
For the husband is *h*.....Eph 5:23

HEAL
O LORD, *h* me.....Ps 6:2
h your backslidings.....Jer 3:22
torn, but He will *h*.....Hos 6:1
"*H* the sick.....Matt 10:8
So that *I* should *h*.....Matt 13:15
sent Me to *h* the.....Luke 4:18
Physician, *h* yourself.....Luke 4:23

HEALED
And return and be *h*.....Is 6:10
His stripes we are *h*.....Is 53:5
"When I would have *h*.....Hos 7:1
and He *h* them.....Matt 4:24
that you may be *h*.....James 5:16
his deadly wound was *h*...Rev 13:3

HEALING(S)
shall arise With *h*.....Mal 4:2
and *h* all kinds of.....Matt 4:23
tree were for the *h*.....Rev 22:2
to another gifts of *h*.....1 Cor 12:9

HEALS
h all your diseases.....Ps 103:3
Jesus the Christ *h*.....Acts 9:34

HEAR
"*H*, O Israel.....Deut 6:4
Him you shall *h*.....Deut 18:15
H me when *I* call.....Ps 4:1
O You who *h* prayer.....Ps 65:2
ear, shall He not *h*.....Ps 94:9
h rather than to give.....Eccl 5:1
'Hearing you will *h*.....Matt 13:14
heed what you *h*.....Mark 4:24

that God does not *h* ..... John 9:31
And how shall they *h* .... Rom 10:14
man be swift to *h* ..... James 1:19
h what the Spirit says ..... Rev 2:7

HEARD

h their cry because of ..... Ex 3:7
that they will be *h* ..... Matt 6:7
h the word believed ..... Acts 4:4
not seen, nor ear *h* ..... 1 Cor 2:9
things that you have *h* ..... 2 Tim 2:2
the word which they *h* ..... Heb 4:2
which we have *h* ..... 1 John 1:1
Lord's Day, and I *h* ..... Rev 1:10

HEARERS

for not the *h* of the ..... Rom 2:13
the word, and not *h* ..... James 1:22

HEARING

'Keep on *h* ..... Is 6:9
h they do not ..... Matt 13:13
h they may hear ..... Mark 4:12
or by the *h* of faith ..... Gal 3:2

HEARS

out, and the LORD *h* ..... Ps 34:17
of God *h* God's words ..... John 8:47
"And if anyone *h* ..... John 12:47
who is of the truth *h* ..... John 18:37
He who knows God *h* ..... 1 John 4:6
And let him who *h* ..... Rev 22:17

HEART

h was only evil ..... Gen 6:5
h rejoices in the LORD ..... 1 Sam 2:1
gave him another *h* ..... 1 Sam 10:9
LORD looks at the *h* ..... 1 Sam 16:7
his wives turned his *h* .... 1 Kin 11:4
He pierces my *h* ..... Job 16:13
My *h* also instructs me ..... Ps 16:7
h is overflowing ..... Ps 45:1
h shall depart from me ..... Ps 101:4
look and a proud *h* ..... Ps 101:5
with my whole *h* ..... Ps 111:1
as he thinks in his *h* ..... Prov 23:7
h reveals the man ..... Prov 27:19
trusts in his own *h* ..... Prov 28:26
The *h* of the wise is ..... Eccl 7:4
And a wise man's *h* ..... Eccl 8:5
h yearned for him ..... Song 5:4
And the whole *h* ..... Is 1:5
The yearning of Your *h* ..... Is 63:15
h is deceitful above ..... Jer 17:9
I will give them a *h* ..... Jer 24:7
and take the stony *h* ..... Ezek 11:19
yourselves a new *h* ..... Ezek 18:31
are the pure in *h* ..... Matt 5:8
is, there your *h* ..... Matt 6:21
of the *h* proceed evil ..... Matt 15:19
h will flow rivers ..... John 7:38
"Let not your *h* ..... John 14:1
Satan filled your *h* ..... Acts 5:3
h that God has raised ..... Rom 10:9
refresh my *h* in the ..... Philem 20
and shuts up his *h* ..... 1 John 3:17

HEARTILY

you do, do it *h* ..... Col 3:23

HEARTS

God tests the *h* ..... Ps 7:9
And he will turn The *h* ..... Mal 4:6
h failing them from ..... Luke 21:26
will guard your *h* ..... Phil 4:7
of God rule in your *h* ..... Col 3:15

HEAVEN

called the firmament *H* ..... Gen 1:8
LORD looks down
from *h* ..... Ps 14:2
word is settled in *h* ..... Ps 119:89
For God is in *h* ..... Eccl 5:2
"*H* is My throne ..... Is 66:1
for the kingdom of *h* ..... Matt 3:2
your Father in *h* ..... Matt 5:16
On earth as it is in *h* ..... Matt 6:10
"*H* and earth will ..... Matt 24:35
Him a sign from *h* ..... Mark 8:11
have sinned against *h* .... Luke 15:18
you shall see *h* ..... John 1:51
one has ascended to *h* ..... John 3:13
the true bread from *h* ..... John 6:32
a voice came from *h* ..... John 12:28
sheet, let down from *h* ..... Acts 11:5
laid up for you in *h* ..... Col 1:5
there was silence in *h* ..... Rev 8:1
Now I saw a new *h* ..... Rev 21:1

HEAVENLY

your *h* Father will ..... Matt 6:14
h host praising God ..... Luke 2:13
if I tell you *h* things ..... John 3:12
blessing in the *h* ..... Eph 1:3
a better, that is, a *h* ..... Heb 11:16
the living God, the *h* ..... Heb 12:22

HEAVENS

and the highest *h* ..... Deut 10:14
h cannot contain ..... 1 Kin 8:27
h declare the glory ..... Ps 19:1
For as the *h* are high ..... Ps 103:11
behold, I create new *h* ..... Is 65:17
and behold, the *h* ..... Matt 3:16
h will be shaken ..... Matt 24:29
h are the work of Your ..... Heb 1:10
h will pass away ..... 2 Pet 3:10

HEEL

you shall bruise His *h* ..... Gen 3:15
has lifted up his *h* ..... Ps 41:9
Me has lifted up his *h* .... John 13:18

HEIGHT

nor *h* nor depth ..... Rom 8:39
length and depth and *h* ..... Eph 3:18

HEIR(S)

He has appointed *h* ..... Heb 1:2
world and became *h* ..... Heb 11:7
if children, then *h* ..... Rom 8:17
should be fellow *h* ..... Eph 3:6

HELL

shall be turned into *h* ..... Ps 9:17
go down alive into *h* ..... Ps 55:15
H and Destruction are ... Prov 27:20
be in danger of *h* fire ..... Matt 5:22
to be cast into *h* ..... Matt 18:9
condemnation of *h* ..... Matt 23:33
power to cast into *h* ..... Luke 12:5

HELP

May He send you *h* ..... Ps 20:2
A very present *h* ..... Ps 46:1
He is their *h* and ..... Ps 115:9
Our *h* is in the name ..... Ps 124:8
h my unbelief ..... Mark 9:24
and find grace to *h* ..... Heb 4:16

HELPER

I will make him a *h* ..... Gen 2:18
Behold, God is my *h* ..... Ps 54:4
give you another *H* ..... John 14:16
"But when the *H* ..... John 15:26
"The LORD is my *h* ..... Heb 13:6

HELPFUL

all things are not *h* ..... 1 Cor 6:12

HERESIES

dissensions, *h* ..... Gal 5:20

HERITAGE

for that is his *h* ..... Eccl 3:22
This is the *h* of the ..... Is 54:17
of My people, My *h* ..... Joel 3:2
The flock of Your *h* ..... Mic 7:14

HIDDEN

And my sins are not *h* ..... Ps 69:5
Your word I have *h* ..... Ps 119:11
h that will not ..... Matt 10:26
the *h* wisdom which ..... 1 Cor 2:7
bring to light the *h* ..... 1 Cor 4:5
have renounced the *h* ..... 2 Cor 4:2
rather let it be the *h* ..... 1 Pet 3:4
give some of the *h* ..... Rev 2:17

HIDE

H me under the shadow ..... Ps 17:8
You shall *h* them in ..... Ps 31:20
You *h* Your face ..... Ps 104:29
darkness shall not *h* ..... Ps 139:12
You are God, who *h* ..... Is 45:15
"Fall on us and *h* ..... Rev 6:16

HIDING

You are my *h* place ..... Ps 32:7

HIGH

priest of God Most *H* ..... Gen 14:18
For the LORD Most *H* ..... Ps 47:2
"I dwell in the *h* ..... Is 57:15
know That the Most *H* ..... Dan 4:17
up on a *h* mountain by ..... Matt 17:1
your mind on *h* things ... Rom 12:16
h thing that exalts ..... 2 Cor 10:5
and faithful *H* Priest ..... Heb 2:17

HILL

My King on My holy *h* ..... Ps 2:6
h cannot be hidden ..... Matt 5:14
and *h* brought low ..... Luke 3:5

HINDERED

Who *h* you from obeying ..... Gal 5:7
prayers may not be *h* ..... 1 Pet 3:7

HOLINESS

You, glorious in *h* ..... Ex 15:11
I have sworn by My *h* ..... Ps 89:35
the Highway of *H* ..... Is 35:8
to the Spirit of *h* ..... Rom 1:4
spirit, perfecting *h* ..... 2 Cor 7:1
uncleanness, but in *h* .... 1 Thess 4:7
be partakers of His *h* ..... Heb 12:10

HOLY

where you stand is *h* ..... Ex 3:5
day, to keep it *h* ..... Ex 20:8
LORD your God am *h* ..... Lev 19:2
h seed is mixed ..... Ezra 9:2
God sits on His *h* ..... Ps 47:8
God, in His *h* mountain ..... Ps 48:1
"*H, h, h* ..... Is 6:3
child of the *H* Spirit ..... Mark 1:18
baptize you with the *H* ..... Mark 1:8
who speak, but the *H* ... Mark 13:11
H Spirit will come ..... Luke 1:35
H Spirit descended ..... Luke 3:22
Father give the *H* ..... Luke 11:3
H Spirit will teach ..... Luke 12:12
H Spirit was not ..... John 7:39
H Spirit has come ..... Acts 1:8
all filled with the *H* ..... Acts 2:4
receive the *H* Spirit ..... Acts 19:2
joy in the *H* ..... Rom 14:17
H Spirit teaches ..... 1 Cor 2:13
that we should be *h* ..... Eph 1:4
were sealed with the *H* ..... Eph 1:13
partakers of the *H* ..... Heb 6:4
H Spirit sent from ..... 1 Pet 1:12
it is written, "Be *h* ..... 1 Pet 1:16
moved by the *H* Spirit ..... 2 Pet 1:21
anointing from the *H* .... 1 John 2:20
says He who is *h* ..... Rev 3:7
For You alone are *h* ..... Rev 15:4
is *h*, let him be *h* ..... Rev 22:11

HOME

sparrow has found a *h* ..... Ps 84:3
to his eternal *h* ..... Eccl 12:5
that while we are at *h* ..... 2 Cor 5:6
to show piety at *h* ..... 1 Tim 5:4

HOMEMAKERS

be discreet, chaste, *h* ..... Titus 2:5

HONEY

and with *h* from the ..... Ps 81:16
was locusts and wild *h* ..... Matt 3:4

HONEYCOMB

than honey and the *h* ..... Ps 19:10
fish and some *h* ..... Luke 24:42

HONOR

"*H* your father and your ... Ex 20:12
will deliver him and *h* ..... Ps 91:15
H and majesty are ..... Ps 96:6
H the LORD with your ..... Prov 3:9
before *h* is humility ..... Prov 15:33
spirit will retain *h* ..... Prov 29:23
Father, where is My *h* ..... Mal 1:6
is not without *h* ..... Matt 13:57
'*H* your father and ..... Matt 15:4
h the Son just as they ..... John 5:23
"I do not receive *h* ..... John 5:41
but I *h* My Father ..... John 8:49
"If I *h* Myself ..... John 8:54
him My Father will *h* ..... John 12:26
to whom fear, *h* ..... Rom 13:7
sanctification and *h* ..... 1 Thess 4:4

alone is wise, be *h*.....1 Tim 1:17
and clay, some for *h*.....2 Tim 2:20
no man takes this *h*.....Heb 5:4
from God the Father *h*.....2 Pet 1:17
give glory and *h*.....Rev 4:9

HONORABLE

His work is *h* and.....Ps 111:3
holy day of the LORD *h*.....Is 58:13
providing *h* things.....2 Cor 8:21
Marriage is *h* among.....Heb 13:4
having your conduct *h*....1 Pet 2:12

HOPE

h He has uprooted.....Job 19:10
also will rest in *h*.....Ps 16:9
My *h* is in You.....Ps 39:7
For You are my *h*.....Ps 71:5
I *h* in Your word.....Ps 119:147
good that one should *h*.....Lam 3:26
to *h*, in *h* believed.....Rom 4:18
h does not disappoint.....Rom 5:5
were saved in this *h*.....Rom 8:24
now abide faith, *h*.....1 Cor 13:13
life only we have *h*.....1 Cor 15:19
may know what is the *h*....Eph 1:18
were called in one *h*.....Eph 4:4
Christ in you, the *h*.....Col 1:27
Jesus Christ, our *h*.....1 Tim 1:1
for the blessed *h*.....Titus 2:13
to lay hold of the *h*.....Heb 6:18
in of a better *h*.....Heb 7:19
who has this *h* in Him....1 John 3:3

HOSANNA

H in the highest.....Matt 21:9

HOSPITABLE

Be *h* to one another.....1 Pet 4:9

HOUR

is coming at an *h*.....Matt 24:44
"But the *h* is coming.....John 4:23
save Me from this *h*.....John 12:27
keep you from the *h*.....Rev 3:10

HOUSE

as for me and my *h*.....Josh 24:15
Through wisdom a *h*.....Prov 24:3
better to go to the *h*.....Eccl 7:2
h was filled with.....Is 6:4
h divided against.....Matt 12:25
h shall be called a.....Matt 21:13
make My Father's *h*.....John 2:16
h are many mansions.....John 14:2
publicly and from *h*.....Acts 20:20
who rules his own *h*.....1 Tim 3:4
the church in your *h*.....Philem 2
For every *h* is built.....Heb 3:4
His own *h*, whose *h*.....Heb 3:6

HOUSEHOLD

the ways of her *h*.....Prov 31:27
be those of his own *h*.....Matt 10:36
h were baptized.....Acts 16:15
saved, you and your *h*....Acts 16:31
who are of Caesar's *h*.....Phil 4:22

HOUSES

H and riches are an.....Prov 19:14
who has left *h* or.....Matt 19:29
you devour widows' *h*....Matt 23:14

HUMBLE

man Moses was very *h*....Num 12:3
the cry of the *h*.....Ps 9:12
h shall hear of it and.....Ps 34:2
contrite and *h* spirit.....Is 57:15
A meek and *h* people.....Zeph 3:12
associate with the *h*.....Rom 12:16
gives grace to the *h*.....James 4:6
H yourselves in the.....James 4:10
gives grace to the *h*.....1 Pet 5:5
h yourselves under the.....1 Pet 5:6

HUMBLED

as a man, He *h* Himself.....Phil 2:8

HUMILITY

the Lord with all *h*.....Acts 20:19
delight in false *h*.....Col 2:18
mercies, kindness, *h*.....Col 3:12
h correcting those.....2 Tim 2:25
gentle, showing all *h*.....Titus 3:2
and be clothed with *h*.....1 Pet 5:5

HUNGER

They shall neither *h*.....Is 49:10
are those who *h*.....Matt 5:6
for you shall *h*.....Luke 6:25
to Me shall never *h*.....John 6:35
hour we both *h*.....1 Cor 4:11
"They shall neither *h*.....Rev 7:16

HUNGRY

and fills the *h*.....Ps 107:9
gives food to the *h*.....Ps 146:7
'for I was *h* and you.....Matt 25:35
did we see You *h*.....Matt 25:37
to be full and to be *h*.....Phil 4:12

HURT

h a woman with child.....Ex 21:22
but *I* was not *h*.....Prov 23:35
another to his own *h*.....Eccl 8:9
They shall not *h*.....Is 11:9
it will by no means *h*....Mark 16:18
shall not be *h* by the.....Rev 2:11

HUSBAND(S)

h safely trusts her.....Prov 31:11
your Maker is your *h*.....Is 54:5
now have is not your *h*...John 4:18
you will save your *h*.....1 Cor 7:16
the *h* of one wife.....1 Tim 3:2
H, love your wives.....Eph 5:25
Let deacons be the *h*.....1 Tim 3:12

HYMN(S)

they had sung a *h*.....Matt 26:30
praying and singing *h*....Acts 16:25
in psalms and *h*.....Eph 5:19

HYPOCRISY

you are full of *h*.....Matt 23:28
Pharisees, which is *h*.....Luke 12:1
Let love be without *h*.....Rom 12:9
away with their *h*.....Gal 2:13
and without *h*.....James 3:17
malice, all deceit, *h*.....1 Pet 2:1

HYPOCRITE

and the joy of the *h*.....Job 20:5
For everyone is a *h*.....Is 9:17
also played the *h*.....Gal 2:13

HYPOCRITES

not be like the *h*.....Matt 6:5
do you test Me, you *h*.....Matt 22:18
and Pharisees, *h*.....Matt 23:13

I

IDLE

i person will suffer.....Prov 19:15
i word men may.....Matt 12:36
saw others standing *i*.....Matt 20:3
they learn to be *i*.....1 Tim 5:13

IDOL

thing offered to an *i*.....1 Cor 8:7
That an *i* is anything....1 Cor 10:19

IDOLATER(S)

or covetous, or an *i*.....1 Cor 5:11
fornicators, nor *i*.....1 Cor 6:9
and murderers and *i*.....Rev 22:15

IDOLATRIES

and abominable *i*.....1 Pet 4:3

IDOLATRY

beloved, flee from *i*.....1 Cor 10:14
i, sorcery.....Gal 5:20

IDOLS

land is also full of *i*.....Is 2:8
in the room of his *i*.....Ezek 8:12
who regard worthless *i*.....Jon 2:8
You who abhor *i*.....Rom 2:22
yourselves from *i*.....1 John 5:21
worship demons, and *i*.....Rev 9:20

IGNORANCE

that you did it in *i*.....Acts 3:17
i God overlooked.....Acts 17:30
sins committed in *i*.....Heb 9:7

ILLUMINATED

after you were *i*.....Heb 10:32
and the earth was *i*.....Rev 18:1
for the glory of God *i*.....Rev 21:23

IMAGE

Us make man in Our *i*.....Gen 1:26
since he is the *i*.....1 Cor 11:7
He is the *i* of the.....Col 1:15
and not the very *i*.....Heb 10:1
the beast and his *i*.....Rev 14:9

IMMANUEL

shall call His name *I*.....Is 7:14
shall call His name *I*.....Matt 1:23

IMMORAL

murderers, sexually *i*.....Rev 21:8

IMMORALITY

except sexual *i*.....Matt 5:32
abstain from sexual *i*....1 Thess 4:3

IMMORTAL

to the King eternal, *i*.....1 Tim 1:17

IMMORTALITY

mortal must put on *i*.....1 Cor 15:53
who alone has *i*.....1 Tim 6:16

IMPOSSIBLE

God nothing will be *i*.....Luke 1:37
without faith it is *i*.....Heb 11:6

IMPUTED

might be *i* to them.....Rom 4:11
but sin is not *i*.....Rom 5:13

IMPUTES

i righteousness apart.....Rom 4:6

INCORRUPTIBLE

the glory of the *i*.....Rom 1:23
dead will be raised *i*.....1 Cor 15:52
to an inheritance *i*.....1 Pet 1:4

INCREASE

Of the *i* of His.....Is 9:7
Lord "*I* our faith.....Luke 17:5
"He must *i*.....John 3:30
but God gave the *i*.....1 Cor 3:6

INDIGNATION

i which will devour.....Heb 10:27
into the cup of His *i*.....Rev 14:10

INEXPRESSIBLE

Paradise and heard *i*.....2 Cor 12:4
you rejoice with joy *i*.....1 Pet 1:8

INFIRMITIES

"He Himself took our *i*.....Matt 8:17

INHERIT

love me to *i* wealth.....Prov 8:21
i the kingdom.....Matt 25:34
unrighteous will not *i*.....1 Cor 6:9
who overcomes shall *i*.....Rev 21:7

INHERITANCE

"You shall have no *i*.....Num 18:20
is the place of His *i*.....Deut 32:9
the portion of my *i*.....Ps 16:5
i shall be forever.....Ps 37:18
He will choose our *i*.....Ps 47:4
will arise to your *i*.....Dan 12:13
God gave him no *i*.....Acts 7:5
and give you an *i*.....Acts 20:32
For if the *i* is of the.....Gal 3:18
we have obtained an *i*.....Eph 1:11
be partakers of the *i*.....Col 1:12
receive as an *i*.....Heb 11:8
i incorruptible.....1 Pet 1:4

INIQUITIES

i have overtaken me.....Ps 40:12
forgives all your *i*.....Ps 103:3
LORD, should mark *i*.....Ps 130:3
was bruised for our *i*.....Is 53:5
He shall bear their *i*.....Is 53:11
i have separated you.....Is 59:2

INIQUITY

God, visiting the *i* of the.....Ex 20:5
was brought forth in *i*.....Ps 51:5
If I regard *i* in my.....Ps 66:18
i have dominion.....Ps 119:133
i will reap sorrow.....Prov 22:8
A people laden with *i*.....Is 1:4
i is taken away.....Is 6:7
has laid on Him the *i*.....Is 53:6
will remember their *i*.....Hos 9:9

to those who devise *i*..... Mic 2:1
like You, Pardoning *i* ..... Mic 7:18
all you workers of *i*.....Luke 13:27
a fire, a world of *i*.....James 3:6

INN
room for them in the *i*.....Luke 2:7
brought him to an *i*.....Luke 10:34

INNOCENT
because I was found *i*..... Dan 6:22
saying, "I am *i*.....Matt 27:24
this day that I am *i*.....Acts 20:26

INSPIRATION
is given by *i* of God.....2 Tim 3:16

INSTRUCT
I will *i* you and teach.....Ps 32:8
LORD that he may *i*..... 1 Cor 2:16

INSTRUCTED
This man had been *i*.....Acts 18:25
are excellent, being *i* ..... Rom 2:18
Moses was divinely *i* .....Heb 8:5

INSTRUCTION
seeing you hate *i* .....Ps 50:17
Hear *i* and be wise .....Prov 8:33
Give *i* to a wise man .....Prov 9:9
for correction, for *i*.....2 Tim 3:16

INSTRUMENTS
your members as *i* ..... Rom 6:13

INSUBORDINATE
for the lawless and *i* .....1 Tim 1:9

INSULTED
will be mocked and *i* .....Luke 18:32
i the Spirit of grace .....Heb 10:29

INTEGRITY
In the *i* of my heart .....Gen 20:5
in doctrine showing *i*.....Titus 2:7

INTERCEDE
the LORD, who will *i* .....1 Sam 2:25

INTERCESSION
of many, And made *i*.....Is 53:12
Spirit Himself makes *i*..... Rom 8:26
always lives to make *i*.....Heb 7:25

INTERPRET
Do all *i* ?..... 1 Cor 12:30
pray that he may *i*..... 1 Cor 14:13

INTERPRETATION(S)
to another the *i* ..... 1 Cor 12:10
of any private *i* .....2 Pet 1:20
"Do not *i* belong to.....Gen 40:8

INVISIBLE
of the world His *i* ..... Rom 1:20
is the image of the *i* .....Col 1:15
eternal, immortal, *i* .....1 Tim 1:17
as seeing Him who
is *i*.....Heb 11:27

INWARD
You have formed my *i*.....Ps 139:13
God according to the *i*..... Rom 7:22
i man is being ..... 2 Cor 4:16

INWARDLY
i they are.....Matt 7:15
is a Jew who is one *i*..... Rom 2:29

IRON
i sharpens *i*..... Prov 27:17
its feet partly of *i*..... Dan 2:33

ISRAEL
"Hear, O *I* ..... Deut 6:4
For they are not all *I*.....Rom 9:6
and upon the *I* of God .....Gal 6:16

ITCHING
they have *i* ears .....2 Tim 4:3

J

JEALOUS
God, am a *j* God ..... Ex 20:5
a consuming fire, a *j*..... Deut 4:24
For I am *j* for you ..... 2 Cor 11:2

JEALOUSY
provoked Him to *j*..... Deut 32:16
as strong as death, *j*.....Song 8:6
for you with godly *j* .....2 Cor 11:2

JESUS
J Christ was as.....Matt 1:18
shall call His name *J*.....Matt 1:21
J was led up by the .....Matt 4:1
and laid hands on *J*.....Matt 26:50
and destroy *J*.....Matt 27:20
J withdrew with His..... Mark 3:7
J went into..... Mark 11:11
they were eating, *J*..... Mark 14:22
and he delivered *J*..... Mark 15:15
truth came through *J*..... John 1:17
J lifted up His eyes..... John 6:5
J wept..... John 11:35
J was crucified..... John 19:20
"This *J* God has raised ..... Acts 2:32
of Your holy Servant *J*..... Acts 4:30
believed on the Lord *J*.... Acts 11:17
your mouth the Lord *J*.... Rom 10:9
among you except *J*..... 1 Cor 2:2
perfect in Christ *J*.....Col 1:28
But we see *J* .....Heb 2:9
looking unto *J*.....Heb 12:2
Revelation of *J* Christ..... Rev 1:1
so, come, Lord *J* .....Rev 22:20

JOINED
and mother and be *j* .....Gen 2:24
what God has *j*.....Matt 19:6
the whole body, *j*.....Eph 4:16

JOINT
j as He wrestled.....Gen 32:25
My bones are out of *j*.....Ps 22:14
j heirs with Christ ..... Rom 8:17

JOINTS
and knit together by *j*.....Col 2:19
and spirit, and of *j*.....Heb 4:12

JOT
one *j* or one tittle .....Matt 5:18

JOY
is fullness of *j*.....Ps 16:11
j comes in the morning .....Ps 30:5
j you will draw.....Is 12:3
ashes, The oil of *j* .....Is 61:3
shall sing for *j*.....Is 65:14
receives it with *j* .....Matt 13:20
Enter into the *j*.....Matt 25:21
in my womb for *j*.....Luke 1:44
there will be more *j*.....Luke 15:7
did not believe for *j*.....Luke 24:41
My *j* may remain in ..... John 15:11
they may have My *j*..... John 17:13
the Spirit is love, *j* .....Gal 5:22
are our glory and *j*..... 1 Thess 2:20
j that was set before.....Heb 12:2
count it all *j* .....James 1:2
with exceeding *j* ..... 1 Pet 4:13

JOYFUL
Make a *j* shout to the.....Ps 100:1
And make them *j*.....Is 56:7

JUDGE
The LORD *j* between.....Gen 16:5
coming to *j* the earth .... 1 Chr 16:33
sword The LORD will *j*.....Is 66:16
deliver you to the *j* .....Matt 5:25
"*J* not .....Matt 7:1
who made Me a *j*.....Luke 12:14
j who did not fear God ....Luke 18:2
As I hear, I *j* ..... John 5:30
"Do not *j* according..... John 7:24
I *j* no one..... John 8:15
j the world but to..... John 12:47
this, O man, you who *j*.....Rom 2:3
Therefore let us not *j* ..... Rom 14:13
Christ, who will *j* .....2 Tim 4:1
But if you *j* the law.....James 4:11

JUDGES
He makes the *j* of the .....Is 40:23
For the Father *j*..... John 5:22
he who is spiritual *j* ..... 1 Cor 2:15
j me is the Lord ..... 1 Cor 4:4
Him who *j* righteously..... 1 Pet 2:23

JUDGMENT
Teach me good *j*.....Ps 119:66
from prison and from *j*.....Is 53:8
be in danger of the *j*.....Matt 5:21
shall not come into *j* ..... John 5:24
and My *j* is righteous..... John 5:30
if I do judge, My *j* ..... John 8:16
"Now is the *j*..... John 12:31
the righteous *j*..... Rom 1:32
j which came from one.... Rom 5:16
appear before the *j*..... 2 Cor 5:10
after this the *j*.....Heb 9:27
time has come for *j* ..... 1 Pet 4:17
a long time their *j* ..... 2 Pet 2:3
darkness for the *j* .....Jude 6

JUDGMENTS
The *j* of the LORD are .....Ps 19:9
unsearchable are
His *j*..... Rom 11:33

JUST
Noah was a *j* man .....Gen 6:9
j man who perishes..... Eccl 7:15
j shall live by his .....Hab 2:4
her husband, being a *j*.....Matt 1:19
resurrection of the *j* .....Luke 14:14
j persons who need no ....Luke 15:7
the Holy One and the *J* ....Acts 3:14
dead, both of the *j*.....Acts 24:15
j shall live by faith ..... Rom 1:17
that He might be *j* ..... Rom 3:26
j men made perfect .....Heb 12:23
have murdered the *j*.....James 5:6
He is faithful and *j* ..... 1 John 1:9

JUSTICE
j as the noonday.....Ps 37:6
And Your poor with *j*.....Ps 72:2
j the measuring line.....Is 28:17
the LORD is a God of *j* .....Is 30:18
He will bring forth *j*.....Is 42:1
J is turned back .....Is 59:14
I, the LORD, love *j*.....Is 61:8
truth, and His ways *j* ..... Dan 4:37
'Execute true *j*..... Zech 7:9
"Where is the God of *j*..... Mal 2:17
And He will declare *j*.....Matt 12:18
His humiliation His *j*.....Acts 8:33

JUSTIFICATION
because of our *j* ..... Rom 4:25
offenses resulted in *j*..... Rom 5:16

JUSTIFIED
Me that you may be *j*.....Job 40:8
words you will be *j*.....Matt 12:37
"But wisdom is *j* .....Luke 7:35
j rather than the.....Luke 18:14
who believes is *j* .....Acts 13:39
"That You may be *j*.....Rom 3:4
law no flesh will be *j*..... Rom 3:20
j freely by His grace ..... Rom 3:24
having been *j* by .....Rom 5:1
these He also *j* ..... Rom 8:30
that we might be *j* .....Gal 2:16
no flesh shall be *j* .....Gal 2:16
the harlot also *j*.....James 2:25

K

KEEP
k you wherever you.....Gen 28:15
day, to *k* it holy..... Ex 20:8
Let all the earth *k*..... Hab 2:20
k the commandments.....Matt 19:17
"If you love Me, *k*..... John 14:15
k through Your name.... John 17:11
orderly and *k* the law..... Acts 21:24
k the unity of the.....Eph 4:3
k His commandments .... 1 John 2:3

KEEPER
Am I my brother's *k* .....Gen 4:9
The LORD is your *k* .....Ps 121:5

KEY
taken away the *k*.....Luke 11:52
"He who has the *k*..... Rev 3:7

KILL
k the Passover ..... Ex 12:21
I *k* and I make alive..... Deut 32:39
"Am I God, to *k* ..... 2 Kin 5:7

A time to *k*..... Eccl 3:3
of them they will *k*.....Luke 11:49
afraid of those who *k* .....Luke 12:4
Why do you seek to *k* ..... John 7:19
k and eat.....Acts 10:13

KILLED
Abel his brother and *k* .....Gen 4:8
k the Prince of life.....Acts 3:15
Your sake we are *k*..... Rom 8:36
k both the Lord..... 1 Thess 2:15

KIND
animals after their *k* .....Gen 6:20
k can come out by..... Mark 9:29
suffers long and is *k* ..... 1 Cor 13:4
And be *k* to one.....Eph 4:32

KINDNESS
For His merciful *k* .....Ps 117:2
k shall not depart .....Is 54:10
I remember you, The *k*.....Jer 2:2
by longsuffering, by *k* ..... 2 Cor 6:6
longsuffering, *k* .....Gal 5:22
and to brotherly *k* ..... 2 Pet 1:7

KING
"Yet I have set My *K* .....Ps 2:6
The LORD is *K* forever.....Ps 10:16
And the *K* of glory .....Ps 24:7
For God is my *K*.....Ps 74:12
when your *k* is a child.... Eccl 10:16
and the everlasting *K* ..... Jer 10:10
the LORD shall be *K*.....Zech 14:9
who has been born *K* .....Matt 2:2
This Is Jesus The *K*.....Matt 27:37
"Behold your *K*..... John 19:14
Now to the *K* eternal.....1 Tim 1:17
only Potentate, the *K*.....1 Tim 6:15
this Melchizedek, *k*.....Heb 7:1
K of Kings and Lord.....Rev 19:16

KINGDOM
Yours is the *k*..... 1 Chr 29:11
k is the LORD'S.....Ps 22:28
the scepter of Your *k*.....Ps 45:6
is an everlasting *k*.....Ps 145:13
k which shall never be ..... Dan 2:44
High rules in the *k* ..... Dan 4:17
"Repent, for the *k*.....Matt 3:2
for Yours is the *k* .....Matt 6:13
"But seek first the *k* .....Matt 6:33
the mysteries of the *k*.....Matt 13:11
are the sons of the *k* .....Matt 13:38
of such is the *k*.....Matt 19:14
back, is fit for the *k*.....Luke 9:62
against nation, and *k*.....Luke 21:10
he cannot see the *k* ..... John 3:3
he cannot enter the *k*..... John 3:5
If My *k* were of this ..... John 18:36
for the *k* of God is..... Rom 14:17
will not inherit the *k* .....Gal 5:21
the scepter of Your *k*.....Heb 1:8
we are receiving a *k* .....Heb 12:28

KINGDOMS
the *k* were moved.....Ps 46:6
showed Him all the *k* .....Matt 4:8
have become the *k* .....Rev 11:15

KINGS
The *k* of the earth set .....Ps 2:2
By me *k* reign .....Prov 8:15
governors and *k* .....Matt 10:18
k have desired to see .....Luke 10:24
You have reigned as *k* ..... 1 Cor 4:8
and has made us *k* ..... Rev 1:6
that the way of the *k*.....Rev 16:12

KISS
K the Son.....Ps 2:12
"You gave Me no *k* .....Luke 7:45
one another with a *k* ..... 1 Pet 5:14

KISSED
they *k* one another.....1 Sam 20:41
and *k* Him.....Matt 26:49
and she *k* His feet
and.....Luke 7:38

KNEE
That to Me every *k*.....Is 45:23
have not bowed the *k* ..... Rom 11:4
of Jesus every *k*.....Phil 2:10

KNEW
in the womb I *k* .....Jer 1:5
to them, 'I never *k*.....Matt 7:23
k what was in man ..... John 2:25
He made Him who *k*..... 2 Cor 5:21

KNOCK
k, and it will be.....Matt 7:7
at the door and *k*..... Rev 3:20

KNOW
k good and evil.....Gen 3:22
k that I am the LORD ..... Ex 6:7
k that my Redeemer .....Job 19:25
make me to *k* wisdom .....Ps 51:6
Who can *k* it..... Jer 17:9
saying, 'K*K* the LORD ..... Jer 31:34
k what hour your .....Matt 24:42
an oath, "I do not *k* .....Matt 26:72
the world did not *k* ..... John 1:10
We speak what We *k* ..... John 3:11
k that You are..... John 6:69
My voice, and I *k*..... John 10:27
If you *k* these things ..... John 13:17
k whom I have..... John 13:18
are sure that You *k* ..... John 16:30
k that I love You..... John 21:15
k times or seasons..... Acts 1:7
and said, "Jesus I *k* ..... Acts 19:15
wisdom did not *k* ..... 1 Cor 1:21
nor can he *k* them..... 1 Cor 2:14
For we *k* in part and ..... 1 Cor 13:9
k the love of Christ .....Eph 3:19
k whom I have.....2 Tim 1:12
we *k* that we *k* Him ..... 1 John 2:3
and you *k* all things..... 1 John 2:20
By this we *k* love..... 1 John 3:16
k that He abides ..... 1 John 3:24
k that we are of God..... 1 John 5:19
"I *k* your works..... Rev 2:2

KNOWLEDGE
and the tree of the *k* .....Gen 2:9
unto night reveals *k*.....Ps 19:2
k is too wonderful.....Ps 139:6
people store up *k*..... Prov 10:14
k spares his words ..... Prov 17:27
and he who
increases *k*..... Eccl 1:18
k is that wisdom..... Eccl 7:12
k shall increase..... Dan 12:4
more accurate *k*.....Acts 24:22
having the form of *k*..... Rom 2:20
law is the *k* of sin..... Rom 3:20
whether there is *k* ..... 1 Cor 13:8
Christ which passes *k* .....Eph 3:19
is falsely called *k*.....1 Tim 6:20
in the grace and *k* .....2 Pet 3:18

KNOWN
If you had *k* Me..... John 8:19
My sheep, and am *k* ..... John 10:14
The world has not *k*..... John 17:25
peace they have not *k* ..... Rom 3:17
"For who has *k* ..... Rom 11:34
after you have *k* .....Gal 4:9
requests be made *k*.....Phil 4:6
k the Holy Scriptures .....2 Tim 3:15

KNOWS
"For God *k* that in .....Gen 3:5
k what is in the..... Dan 2:22
k the things you have.....Matt 6:8
and hour no one *k*.....Matt 24:36
God *k* your hearts.....Luke 16:15
searches the hearts *k*..... Rom 8:27
k the things of God ..... 1 Cor 2:11
k those who are His.....2 Tim 2:19
to him who *k* to do.....James 4:17
and *k* all things..... 1 John 3:20

L

LABOR
Six days you shall *l*..... Ex 20:9
things are full of *l*..... Eccl 1:8
has man for all his *l*..... Eccl 2:22
He shall see the *l*.....Is 53:11
to Me, all you who *l* .....Matt 11:28
"Do not *l* for the..... John 6:27
knowing that your *l* ..... 1 Cor 15:58
but rather let him *l*.....Eph 4:28
mean fruit from my *l* .....Phil 1:22
your work of faith, *l*..... 1 Thess 1:3
forget your work and *l* .....Heb 6:10
your works, your *l* ..... Rev 2:2

LABORERS
but the *l* are few .....Matt 9:37

LACK
What do I still *l*.....Matt 19:20
"One thing you *l* ..... Mark 10:21

LADDER
and behold, a *l* .....Gen 28:12

LAKE
cast alive into the *l*..... Rev 19:20

LAMB
but where is the *l*.....Gen 22:7
He was led as a *l* .....Is 53:7
The *L* of God who..... John 1:29
the elders, stood a *L* ..... Rev 5:6
"Worthy is the *L*..... Rev 5:12
by the blood of the *L* ..... Rev 12:11

LAME
l shall leap like a .....Is 35:6
blind see and the *l*.....Matt 11:5
And a certain man *l*..... Acts 3:2

LAMP
Your word is a *l*.....Ps 119:105
the *l* of the wicked.....Prov 13:9
his *l* will be put out ..... Prov 20:20
"Nor do they light a *l*.....Matt 5:15
"The *l* of the body.....Matt 6:22
when he has lit a *l*..... Luke 8:16
l gives you light .....Luke 11:36
does not light a *l*.....Luke 15:8
burning and shining *l*..... John 5:35

LAMPSTAND
branches of the *l*..... Ex 25:32
a basket, but on a *l*.....Matt 5:15
and remove your *l*..... Rev 2:5

LAND
l that I will show you .....Gen 12:1
l flowing with milk..... Ex 3:8
They will see the *l*.....Is 33:17
Bethlehem, in the *l*.....Matt 2:6

LANGUAGE
whole earth had one *l*.....Gen 11:1
speak in his own *l* .....Acts 2:6
blasphemy, filthy *l* .....Col 3:8

LAST
He shall stand at *l* .....Job 19:25
First and I am the *L* .....Is 44:6
l will be first .....Matt 20:16
the First and the *L*..... Rev 1:11

LAUGH
"Why did Sarah *l*.....Gen 18:13
Woe to you who *l*.....Luke 6:25

LAW
stones a copy of the *l*.....Josh 8:32
The *l* of the LORD is .....Ps 19:7
I delight in Your *l*.....Ps 119:70
Oh, how I love Your *l*.....Ps 119:97
And Your *l* is truth.....Ps 119:142
l will proceed from Me.....Is 51:4
in whose heart is My *l*.....Is 51:7
The *L* is no more ..... Lam 2:9
The *l* of truth was in ..... Mal 2:6
to destroy the *L* .....Matt 5:17
for this is the *L* .....Matt 7:12
hang all the *L* and
the .....Matt 22:40
"The *l* and the .....Luke 16:16
l was given through ..... John 1:17
"Does our *l* judge a ..... John 7:51
l is the knowledge ..... Rom 3:20
because the *l* brings..... Rom 4:15
when there is no *l*..... Rom 5:13
you are not under *l* ..... Rom 6:14
For what the *l* could.....Rom 8:3
l that I might live.....Gal 2:19
under guard by the *l*.....Gal 3:23
born under the *l*.....Gal 4:4
l is fulfilled in one .....Gal 5:14
into the perfect *l*.....James 1:25
fulfill the royal *l*.....James 2:8

LAWFUL
Is it *l* to pay taxes.....Matt 22:17
All things are *l*..... 1 Cor 6:12

LAWLESSNESS
Me, you who practice *l*.....Matt 7:23
l is already at work..... 2 Thess 2:7

LAZY
l man will be put to..... Prov 12:24
wicked and *l* servant .....Matt 25:26
liars, evil beasts, *l*.....Titus 1:12

LEAD
L me in Your truth and.....Ps 25:5
And do not *l* us into.....Matt 6:13
"Can the blind *l*.....Luke 6:39

LEADS
He *l* me in the paths.....Ps 23:3
And if the blind *l*.....Matt 15:14

LEAN
all your heart, And *l* .....Prov 3:5

LEARN
L to do good.....Is 1:17
yoke upon you and *l*.....Matt 11:29

LEARNED
Me The tongue of the *l*.....Is 50:4
have not so *l* Christ.....Eph 4:20
in all things I have *l*.....Phil 4:12

LEAST
so, shall be called *l*.....Matt 5:19

LEAVE
a man shall *l* his .....Gen 2:24
For You will not *l*.....Ps 16:10
"I will never *l*.....Heb 13:5

LEAVEN
of heaven is like *l*.....Matt 13:33
l leavens the whole .....Gal 5:9

LEAVES
and they sewed fig *l*.....Gen 3:7
The *l* of the tree .....Rev 22:2

LENDER
is servant to the *l*.....Prov 22:7

LEPERS
"And many *l* were in .....Luke 4:27

LETTER
for the *l* kills.....2 Cor 3:6
or by word or by *l*..... 2 Thess 2:2

LEVIATHAN
"Can you draw out *L*.....Job 41:1

LEVITE
"Likewise a *L*.....Luke 10:32

LEWDNESS
wickedness, deceit, *l*..... Mark 7:22

LIAR
for he is a *l* and the..... John 8:44
but every man a *l* .....Rom 3:4
we make Him a *l*..... 1 John 1:10
his brother, he is a *l*..... 1 John 4:20

LIARS
"All men are *l*.....Ps 116:11
l shall have their.....Rev 21:8

LIBERALLY
who gives to all *l*.....James 1:5

LIBERTY
year, and proclaim *l*..... Lev 25:10
'To proclaim *l* to the .....Luke 4:18
into the glorious *l*..... Rom 8:21
Lord is, there is *l* .....2 Cor 3:17
therefore in the *l*.....Gal 5:1

LIE
Do not *l* to one.....Col 3:9
God, who cannot *l*.....Titus 1:2
an abomination or a *l*.....Rev 21:27

LIED
You have not *l* to men..... Acts 5:4

LIES
sin *l* at the door.....Gen 4:7
speaking *l* in.....1 Tim 4:2

LIFE
the breath of *l* .....Gen 2:7
'For the *l* of the .....Lev 17:11
before you today *l*..... Deut 30:15
He will redeem their *l*.....Ps 72:14
word has given me *l* .....Ps 119:50
She is a tree of *l*.....Prov 3:18
finds me finds *l*.....Prov 8:35
L is more than.....Luke 12:23
l was the light ..... John 1:4
so the Son gives *l* ..... John 5:21
spirit, and they are *l*..... John 6:63
have the light of *l* ..... John 8:12
and I lay down My *l*..... John 10:15
resurrection and the *l*.... John 11:25
you lay down your *l*..... John 13:38
l which I now live.....Gal 2:20
l is hidden with.....Col 3:3
For what is your *l*.....James 4:14
l was manifested..... 1 John 1:2
and the pride of *l*..... 1 John 2:16
has given us eternal *l*.... 1 John 5:11
the Lamb's Book of *L*..... Rev 21:27
right to the tree of *l*..... Rev 22:14
the water of *l* freely ..... Rev 22:17
from the Book of *L* ..... Rev 22:19

LIFT
I will *l* up my eyes to .....Ps 121:1
Lord, and He will *l*.....James 4:10

LIFTED
your heart is *l*.....Ezek 28:2
in Hades, he *l* up his .....Luke 16:23
the Son of Man be *l* ..... John 3:14
"And I, if I am *l*..... John 12:32

LIGHT
"Let there be *l* .....Gen 1:3
The LORD is my *l*.....Ps 27:1
and a *l* to my path.....Ps 119:105
The *l* of the righteous .....Prov 13:9
The LORD gives *l* ..... Prov 29:13
Truly the *l* is sweet..... Eccl 11:7
let us walk in the *l*.....Is 2:5
l shall break forth.....Is 58:8
"You are the *l*.....Matt 5:14
"Let your *l* so shine.....Matt 5:16
than the sons of *l*.....Luke 16:8
and the life was the *l* ..... John 1:4
darkness rather than *l*..... John 3:19
saying, "I am the *l* ..... John 8:12
God who commanded *l*.... 2 Cor 4:6
Walk as children of *l* .....Eph 5:8
You are all sons of *l*..... 1 Thess 5:5
into His marvelous *l*..... 1 Pet 2:9
to you, that God is *l* ..... 1 John 1:5
l as He is in the..... 1 John 1:7
says he is in the *l*..... 1 John 2:9
The Lamb is its *l*.....Rev 21:23

LIGHTNING
"For as the *l*.....Matt 24:27
countenance was like *l*.....Matt 28:3

LIGHTS
"Let there be *l* .....Gen 1:14
whom you shine as *l*.....Phil 2:15

LIKENESS
according to Our *l*.....Gen 1:26
carved image—any *l*..... Ex 20:4
when I awake in Your *l* .....Ps 17:15
and coming in the *l*.....Phil 2:7

LINEN
wrapped Him in the *l*.... Mark 15:46

LIPS
off all flattering *l* .....Ps 12:3
The *l* of the righteous .... Prov 10:21
But the *l* of..... Prov 20:15
am a man of unclean *l*.....Is 6:5
other *l* I will speak ..... 1 Cor 14:21
from evil, And his *l*..... 1 Pet 3:10

LISTEN(S)
you are not able to *l*..... John 8:43
you who fear God, *l*.....Acts 13:16
But whoever *l* to me .....Prov 1:33

LITTLE
Though you are *l*..... Mic 5:2
l ones only a cup .....Matt 10:42
"O you of *l* faith.....Matt 14:31
to whom *l* is forgiven..... Luke 7:47
faithful in a very *l*.....Luke 19:17

LIVE
eat, and *l* forever .....Gen 3:22
a man does, he shall *l*..... Lev 18:5
"Seek Me and *l* .....Amos 5:4
But the just shall *l* .....Hab 2:4
l by bread alone.....Matt 4:4
"for in Him we *l*.....Acts 17:28
l peaceably with all..... Rom 12:18
the life which I now *l*.....Gal 2:20
If we *l* in the Spirit .....Gal 5:25
to me, to *l* is Christ.....Phil 1:21

LIVES
but man *l* by every..... Deut 8:3
but Christ *l* in me .....Gal 2:20
to lay down our *l*..... 1 John 3:16
"I am He who *l*.....Rev 1:18

LIVING
and man became a *l*.....Gen 2:7
in the light of the *l*.....Ps 56:13
the dead, but of the *l*.....Matt 22:32
do you seek the *l* .....Luke 24:5
the word of God is *l*.....Heb 4:12
l creature was like a ..... Rev 4:7

LOAVES
have here only five *l*.....Matt 14:17
you ate of the *l*.....John 6:26

LOCUST(S)
What the chewing *l*.....Joel 1:4
and his food was *l*.....Matt 3:4

LOFTY
Wisdom is too *l*.....Prov 24:7

LONG
your days may be *l* ..... Deut 5:16
Who *l* for death .....Job 3:21
I *l* for Your salvation .....Ps 119:174
go around in *l* robes..... Mark 12:38

LONGSUFFERING
is love, joy, peace, *l*.....Gal 5:22
and gentleness, with *l*.....Eph 4:2
for all patience and *l*.....Col 1:11
might show all *l*.....1 Tim 1:16
once the Divine *l* ..... 1 Pet 3:20
and consider that the *l* .... 2 Pet 3:15

LOOK
A proud *l*.....Prov 6:17
"*L* to Me .....Is 45:22
l on Me whom they..... Zech 12:10
say to you, '*L* here.....Luke 17:23
while we do not *l*..... 2 Cor 4:18

LOOKING
the plow, and *l* back .....Luke 9:62
l for the blessed hope .....Titus 2:13
l unto Jesus.....Heb 12:2
l carefully lest .....Heb 12:15
l for the mercy of.....Jude 21

LOOSE
and whatever you *l* .....Matt 16:19
said to them, "*L* him ..... John 11:44

LORD
L is my strength .....Ex 15:2
L our God, the *L*..... Deut 6:4
You alone are the *L*.....Neh 9:6
The *L* of hosts.....Ps 24:10
Gracious is the *L*.....Ps 116:5
L surrounds His people.....Ps 125:2
The *L* is righteous .....Ps 129:4
L is near to all who.....Ps 145:18
L is a God of justice.....Is 30:18
L Our Righteousness ..... Jer 23:6
"The *L* is one.....Zech 14:9
shall not tempt the *L* .....Matt 4:7
shall worship the *L* .....Matt 4:10
Son of Man is also *L*..... Mark 2:28
who is Christ the *L* .....Luke 2:11
L is risen indeed.....Luke 24:34
Me Teacher and *L*..... John 13:13
He is *L* of all.....Acts 10:36

with your mouth the *L* .... Rom 10:9
say that Jesus is *L* ..... 1 Cor 12:3
second Man is the *L* ..... 1 Cor 15:47
the Spirit of the *L* ..... 2 Cor 3:17
that Jesus Christ is *L* ..... Phil 2:11
and deny the only *L* ..... Jude 4
L God Omnipotent ..... Rev 19:6

LORDS
for He is Lord of *l* ..... Rev 17:14

LOSES
but if the salt *l* ..... Matt 5:13
and *l* his own soul ..... Matt 16:26

LOST
save that which was *l* ..... Matt 18:11
and none of them is *l* ..... John 17:12
You gave Me I have *l* ..... John 18:9

LOTS
garments, casting *l* ..... Mark 15:24
And they cast their *l* ..... Acts 1:26

LOVE
l your neighbor as ..... Lev 19:18
l the LORD your God ..... Deut 6:5
Oh, *l* the LORD ..... Ps 31:23
he has set his *l* ..... Ps 91:14
Oh, how I *l* Your law ..... Ps 119:97
l covers all sins ..... Prov 10:12
A time to *l* ..... Eccl 3:8
banner over me was *l* ..... Song 2:4
l is as strong as ..... Song 8:6
do justly, To *l* mercy ..... Mic 6:8
to you, *l* your enemies ..... Matt 5:44
which of them will *l* ..... Luke 7:42
you do not have the *l* ..... John 5:42
If you have *l* for one ..... John 13:35
"If you *l* Me ..... John 14:15
and My Father will *l* ..... John 14:23
l one another as I ..... John 15:12
l has no one than this .... John 15:13
because the *l* of God ..... Rom 5:5
to *l* one another ..... Rom 13:8
L suffers long and is ..... 1 Cor 13:4
L never fails ..... 1 Cor 13:8
greatest of these is *l* ..... 1 Cor 13:13
For the *l* of Christ ..... 2 Cor 5:14
of the Spirit is *l* ..... Gal 5:22
Husbands, *l* your wives ..... Eph 5:25
the commandment is *l* ..... 1 Tim 1:5
For the *l* of money is ..... 1 Tim 6:10
Let brotherly *l* ..... Heb 13:1
having not seen you *l* ..... 1 Pet 1:8
for "*l* will cover a ..... 1 Pet 4:8
brotherly kindness *l* ..... 2 Pet 1:7
By this we know *l* ..... 1 John 3:16
Beloved, let us *l* ..... 1 John 4:7
for God is *l* ..... 1 John 4:8
There is no fear in *l* ..... 1 John 4:18
l Him because He ..... 1 John 4:19
loves God must *l* ..... 1 John 4:21
For this is the *l* ..... 1 John 5:3
have left your first *l* ..... Rev 2:4

LOVED
L one and friend You ..... Ps 88:18
Yet Jacob I have *l* ..... Mal 1:2
forgiven, for she *l* ..... Luke 7:47
so *l* the world that ..... John 3:16
whom Jesus *l* ..... John 13:23
"As the Father *l* ..... John 15:9
l them as You have ..... John 17:23
the Son of God, who *l* ..... Gal 2:20
l the church and gave ..... Eph 5:25
Beloved, if God so *l* ..... 1 John 4:11
To Him who *l* us and ..... Rev 1:5

LOVELY
he is altogether *l* ..... Song 5:16
whatever things are *l* ..... Phil 4:8

LOVES
"He who *l* father or ..... Matt 10:37
l his life will lose ..... John 12:25
l Me will be loved ..... John 14:21
l a cheerful giver ..... 2 Cor 9:7
If anyone *l* the world .... 1 John 2:15
l God must love his ..... 1 John 4:21

LOWER
made him a little *l* ..... Heb 2:7

LOWLY
for I am gentle and *l* ..... Matt 11:29
in presence am *l* ..... 2 Cor 10:1
l brother glory ..... James 1:9

LUKEWARM
because you are *l* ..... Rev 3:16

LUST
looks at a woman to *l* ..... Matt 5:28
not fulfill the *l* ..... Gal 5:16
You *l* and do not
have ..... James 4:2
the *l* of the flesh ..... 1 John 2:16

LUSTS
to fulfill its *l* ..... Rom 13:14
also youthful *l* ..... 2 Tim 2:22
and worldly *l* ..... Titus 2:12
to the former *l* ..... 1 Pet 1:14
abstain from fleshly *l* ..... 1 Pet 2:11
to their own ungodly *l* ..... Jude 18

LUXURY
in pleasure and *l* ..... James 5:5
the abundance of her *l* ..... Rev 18:3

LYING
I hate and abhor *l* ..... Ps 119:163
righteous man hates *l* ..... Prov 13:5
not trust in these *l* ..... Jer 7:4
signs, and *l* wonders ..... 2 Thess 2:9

M

MADE
m the stars also ..... Gen 1:16
things My hand has *m* ..... Is 66:2
All things were *m* ..... John 1:3

MAGIC
m brought their books ... Acts 19:19

MAGNIFIED
let Your name be *m* ..... 2 Sam 7:26
the Lord Jesus was *m* ..... Acts 19:17
also Christ will be *m* ..... Phil 1:20

MAGNIFIES
"My soul *m* the Lord ..... Luke 1:46

MAGNIFY
m the LORD with me ..... Ps 34:3

MAJESTY
right hand of the *M* ..... Heb 1:3
eyewitnesses of His *m* ..... 2 Pet 1:16
wise, Be glory and *m* ..... Jude 25

MAKE
"Let Us *m* man in Our ..... Gen 1:26
m you a great nation ..... Gen 12:2
"You shall not *m* ..... Ex 20:4
m Our home with ..... John 14:23

MAKER
M is your husband ..... Is 54:5
has forgotten his *M* ..... Hos 8:14
builder and *m* is God ..... Heb 11:10

MALICE
in *m* be babes ..... 1 Cor 14:20
laying aside all *m* ..... 1 Pet 2:1

MAN
"Let Us make *m* ..... Gen 1:26
m that You are mindful ..... Ps 8:4
of the Son of *M* ..... Matt 24:27
"Behold the *M* ..... John 19:5
by *m* came death ..... 1 Cor 15:21
our outward *m* ..... 2 Cor 4:16
the *m* of God may ..... 2 Tim 3:17
is the number of a *m* ..... Rev 13:18

MANGER
and laid Him in a *m* ..... Luke 2:7

MANIFESTED
"I have *m* Your name ..... John 17:6
God was *m* in the ..... 1 Tim 3:16
the life was *m* ..... 1 John 1:2

MANNA
of Israel ate *m* ..... Ex 16:35
"Our fathers ate the *m* ..... John 6:31

MANNER
Is this the *m* of man ..... 2 Sam 7:19
in an unworthy *m* ..... 1 Cor 11:27
what *m* of love ..... 1 John 3:1

MANSIONS
house are many *m* ..... John 14:2

MARK
And the LORD set a *m* ..... Gen 4:15
receives the *m* ..... Rev 14:11

MARRIAGE
M is honorable among ..... Heb 13:4

MARRIED
But he who is *m* ..... 1 Cor 7:33

MARRY
they neither *m* nor ..... Matt 22:30
forbidding to *m* ..... 1 Tim 4:3

MARTYRS
the blood of the *m* ..... Rev 17:6

MARVELED
Jesus heard it, He *m* ..... Matt 8:10
so that Pilate *m* ..... Mark 15:5

MARVELOUS
It is *m* in our eyes ..... Ps 118:23
of darkness into His *m* ..... 1 Pet 2:9

MASTER
a servant like his *m* ..... Matt 10:25
greater than his *m* ..... John 15:20
and useful for the *M* ..... 2 Tim 2:21

MASTERS
can serve two *m* ..... Luke 16:13
who have believing *m* ..... 1 Tim 6:2

MATURE
understanding be *m* ..... 1 Cor 14:20
us, as many as are *m* ..... Phil 3:15

MEASURE
a perfect and just *m* ..... Deut 25:15
give the Spirit by *m* ..... John 3:34
to each one a *m* ..... Rom 12:3

MEASURED
m the waters in the ..... Is 40:12
you use, it will be *m* ..... Matt 7:2

MEASURING
behold, a man with a *m* .... Zech 2:1
m themselves by ..... 2 Cor 10:12

MEAT
will never again eat *m* .... 1 Cor 8:13

MEDIATOR
by the hand of a *m* ..... Gal 3:19
is one God and one *M* ..... 1 Tim 2:5
to Jesus the *M* of the ..... Heb 12:24

MEDICINE
does good, like *m* ..... Prov 17:22

MEDITATE
but you shall *m* ..... Josh 1:8
M within your heart on ..... Ps 4:4
I will *m* on Your ..... Ps 119:15
m beforehand on ..... Luke 21:14
m on these things ..... Phil 4:8

MEDITATES
in His law he *m* ..... Ps 1:2

MEDITATION
of my mouth and the *m* ..... Ps 19:14
It is my *m* all the day ..... Ps 119:97

MEDIUM(S)
a woman who is a *m* ..... Lev 20:27
"Seek those who are *m* ..... Is 8:19

MEEK
with equity for the *m* ..... Is 11:4
Blessed are the *m* ..... Matt 5:5

MEEKNESS
are done in the *m* ..... James 3:13

MELODY
singing and making *m* ..... Eph 5:19

MEMBER
body is not one *m*..... 1 Cor 12:14

MEMBERS
you that one of your *m*.....Matt 5:29
do not present your *m*..... Rom 6:13
neighbor, for we are *m*.....Eph 4:25

MEMORIAL
and this is My *m*..... Ex 3:15
also be told as a *m*.....Matt 26:13

MEN
m began to call on the.....Gen 4:26
make you fishers of *m*.....Matt 4:19
goodwill toward *m*.....Luke 2:14
heaven or from *m* .....Luke 20:4
Likewise also the *m*..... Rom 1:27
the Lord, and not to *m* .....Eph 6:7
between God and *m*.....1 Tim 2:5

MERCIFUL
LORD, the LORD God, *m*..... Ex 34:6
He is ever *m*.....Ps 37:26
Blessed are the *m*.....Matt 5:7
saying, 'God be *m* .....Luke 18:13
"For I will be *m*.....Heb 8:12

MERCY
but showing *m* to ..... Ex 20:6
and abundant in *m*.....Num 14:18
m endures forever.....1 Chr 16:34
M and truth have met.....Ps 85:10
m is everlasting .....Ps 100:5
Let not *m* and truth.....Prov 3:3
For I desire *m* and not.....Hos 6:6
do justly, To love *m* ..... Mic 6:8
'I desire *m* and not .....Matt 9:13
And His *m* is on those.....Luke 1:50
"I will have *m*..... Rom 9:15
that He might have *m*.... Rom 11:32
m has made..... 1 Cor 7:25
as we have received *m*..... 2 Cor 4:1
God, who is rich in *m*.....Eph 2:4
but I obtained *m*.....1 Tim 1:13
that he may find *m* .....2 Tim 1:18
to His *m* He saved us..... Titus 3:5
that we may obtain *m* .....Heb 4:16

MERRY
m heart makes a..... Prov 15:13
we should make *m*.....Luke 15:32

MESSIAH
Until *M* the Prince..... Dan 9:25
"We have found the *M*.... John 1:41

MIDST
God is in the *m* .....Ps 46:5
I am there in the *m* .....Matt 18:20

MIGHT
'My power and the *m* ..... Deut 8:17
'Not by *m* nor by..... Zech 4:6
in the power of His *m*.....Eph 6:10
honor and power and *m* ... Rev 7:12

MIGHTIER
coming after me is *m*.....Matt 3:11

MIGHTY
He was a *m* hunter.....Gen 10:9
m have fallen .....2 Sam 1:19
The LORD *m* in battle.....Ps 24:8
their Redeemer is *m* ..... Prov 23:11
m has done great.....Luke 1:49
the flesh, not many *m*..... 1 Cor 1:26
the working of His *m*.....Eph 1:19

MILK
come, buy wine and *m* .....Is 55:1
shall flow with *m* .....Joel 3:18
have come to need *m*.....Heb 5:12
desire the pure *m* ..... 1 Pet 2:2

MIND
put wisdom in the *m*.....Job 38:36
perfect peace, Whose *m*.....Is 26:3
have an anxious *m*.....Luke 12:29
m I myself serve the ..... Rom 7:25
who has known the *m*... Rom 11:34
Be of the same *m*..... Rom 12:16
in his own *m* ..... Rom 14:5
has known the *m*..... 1 Cor 2:16
are out of your *m* ..... 1 Cor 14:23
Let this *m* be in you.....Phil 2:5
love and of a sound *m*.....2 Tim 1:7

MINDFUL
is man that You are *m*.....Ps 8:4
for you are not *m* .....Matt 16:23
is man that You are *m*.....Heb 2:6

MINDS
put My law in their *m*..... Jer 31:33
I stir up your pure *m* ..... 2 Pet 3:1

MINISTER
For he is God's *m* ..... Rom 13:4
you will be a good *m* .....1 Tim 4:6

MINISTERS
for they are God's *m*..... Rom 13:6
If anyone *m*..... 1 Pet 4:11

MINISTRIES
are differences of *m*..... 1 Cor 12:5

MINISTRY
But if the *m* of death..... 2 Cor 3:7
since we have this *m* ..... 2 Cor 4:1
has given us the *m* ..... 2 Cor 5:18
for the work of *m*.....Eph 4:12
fulfill your *m*.....2 Tim 4:5
a more excellent *m* .....Heb 8:6

MIRACLE(S)
one who works a *m* ..... Mark 9:39
worked unusual *m* .....Acts 19:11
the working of *m*..... 1 Cor 12:10

MOCK
Fools *m* at sin.....Prov 14:9
to the Gentiles to *m* .....Matt 20:19

MOCKED
noon, that Elijah *m* ..... 1 Kin 18:27
deceived, God is not *m*.....Gal 6:7

MOCKER
Wine is a *m* .....Prov 20:1

MOCKS
He who *m* the poor .....Prov 17:5

MODERATION
with propriety and *m*.....1 Tim 2:9

MOMENT
in a *m* they die.....Job 34:20
in a *m*, in the..... 1 Cor 15:52

MONEY
be redeemed without *m* .....Is 52:3
And you who have no *m* .....Is 55:1
and hid his lord's *m*.....Matt 25:18
to give him *m*.....Mark 14:11
"Carry neither *m* .....Luke 10:4
I sent you without *m*.....Luke 22:35
be purchased with *m*..... Acts 8:20
not greedy for *m*.....1 Tim 3:3
m is a root of all .....1 Tim 6:10

MONEY CHANGERS
the tables of the *m* .....Matt 21:12

MOON
until the *m* is no more .....Ps 72:7
m will not give its..... Mark 13:24

MORNING
Evening and *m* and at .....Ps 55:17
Lucifer, son of the *m* .....Is 14:12
very early in the *m*.....Luke 24:1
the Bright and *M* Star .... Rev 22:16

MORTAL
sin reign in your *m* ..... Rom 6:12
and this *m* must put..... 1 Cor 15:53

MOTH
where *m* and rust .....Matt 6:19

MOTHER
because she was the *m*.....Gen 3:20
leave his father and *m*.....Matt 19:5
"Behold your *m* ..... John 19:27
The *M* of Harlots..... Rev 17:5

MOUNT
come up to *M* Sinai..... Ex 19:23
They shall *m* up with.....Is 40:31

MOUNTAIN
to Horeb, the *m*..... Ex 3:1
let us go up to the *m* .....Is 2:3
became a great *m*..... Dan 2:35
are you, O great *m* ..... Zech 4:7
you will say to this *m* .....Matt 17:20
Him on the holy *m* .....2 Pet 1:18

MOUNTAINS
m were brought forth .....Ps 90:2
m shall depart And the .....Is 54:10
in Judea flee to the *m*.....Matt 24:16
that I could remove *m*.... 1 Cor 13:2

MOURN
A time to *m* ..... Eccl 3:4
are those who *m*.....Matt 5:4
of the earth will *m*..... Rev 1:7

MOURNING
shall be a great *m*.....Zech 12:11
be turned to *m* and .....James 4:9

MOUTH
"Who has made man's *m*.... Ex 4:11
Out of the *m* of babes.....Ps 8:2
knowledge, But the *m* ... Prov 10:14
The *m* of an immoral..... Prov 22:14
And a flattering *m*..... Prov 26:28
m speaking pompous ..... Dan 7:8
m defiles a man.....Matt 15:11
m I will judge you .....Luke 19:22
I will give you a *m* .....Luke 21:15
m confession is made.... Rom 10:10
m great swelling words.....Jude 16
vomit you out of My *m*.....Rev 3:16

MOVED
she shall not be *m*.....Ps 46:5
spoke as they were *m*..... 2 Pet 1:21

MUCH
m study is ..... Eccl 12:12
to whom *m* is given .....Luke 12:48

MULTIPLIED
of the disciples *m* .....Acts 6:7
of God grew and *m*.....Acts 12:24

MULTIPLY
"Be fruitful and *m* .....Gen 1:22
m the descendants ..... Jer 33:22

MULTITUDE
stars of heaven in *m* ..... Deut 1:10
In the *m* of words sin .... Prov 10:19
compassion on the *m* .....Matt 15:32
with the angel a *m* .....Luke 2:13
"love will cover a *m* ..... 1 Pet 4:8
and behold, a great *m* ..... Rev 7:9

MURDER
"You shall not *m* ..... Ex 20:13
'You shall not *m* .....Matt 5:21
You *m* and covet and .....James 4:2

MURDERED
up Jesus whom you *m*.....Acts 5:30

MURDERER
He was a *m* from the .....John 8:44
his brother is a *m*..... 1 John 3:15

MURDERERS
and profane, for *m*.....1 Tim 1:9
abominable, *m*..... Rev 21:8

MURDERS
evil thoughts, *m*.....Matt 15:19

MYSTERIES
to you to know the *m* .....Matt 13:11
and understand all *m* ..... 1 Cor 13:2

MYSTERY
given to know the *m*..... Mark 4:11
wisdom of God in a *m*..... 1 Cor 2:7
I tell you a *m* ..... 1 Cor 15:51
made known to us the *m* ....Eph 1:9
the *m* of godliness.....1 Tim 3:16

N

NAILED
n it to the cross .....Col 2:14

NAKED
And they were both *n*.....Gen 2:25
knew that they were *n* .....Gen 3:7
"*N* I came from my .....Job 1:21
'I was *n* and you .....Matt 25:36
but all things are *n*.....Heb 4:13
brother or sister is *n* .....James 2:15
poor, blind, and *n*.....Rev 3:17

NAKEDNESS
or famine, or *n*..... Rom 8:35
n may not be revealed.....Rev 3:18

NAME
Abram called on the *n*.....Gen 13:4
Israel shall be your *n*.....Gen 35:10
This is My *n* forever ..... Ex 3:15
shall not take the *n* ..... Ex 20:7
and awesome *n*..... Deut 28:58
excellent is Your *n*.....Ps 8:1
n will put their trust.....Ps 9:10
be His glorious *n* .....Ps 72:19
do not call on Your *n*.....Ps 79:6
to Your *n* give glory.....Ps 115:1
above all Your *n*.....Ps 138:2
A good *n* is to be .....Prov 22:1
what is His Son's *n* .....Prov 30:4
be called by a new *n*.....Is 62:2
Everlasting is Your *n*.....Is 63:16
They will call on
My *n*.....Zech 13:9
to you who fear My *n*..... Mal 4:2
Hallowed be Your *n*.....Matt 6:9
prophesied in Your *n*.....Matt 7:22
n Gentiles will trust .....Matt 12:21
together in My *n*.....Matt 18:20
will come in My *n* .....Matt 24:5
who believe in His *n*..... John 1:12
comes in his own *n*..... John 5:43
his own sheep by *n*..... John 10:3
through faith in His *n*.....Acts 3:16
there is no other *n*.....Acts 4:12
which is above every *n* .....Phil 2:9
deed, do all in the *n* .....Col 3:17
a more excellent *n*.....Heb 1:4
you hold fast to My *n* ..... Rev 2:13
n that you are alive..... Rev 3:1
having His Father's *n* ..... Rev 14:1
and glorify Your *n* ..... Rev 15:4
n written that no one..... Rev 19:12

NARROW
"Enter by the *n* gate.....Matt 7:13

NATION
make you a great *n*.....Gen 12:2
exalts a *n* ..... Prov 14:34
n that was not called .....Is 65:1
make them one *n* .....Ezek 37:22
since there was a *n* ..... Dan 12:1
n will rise against.....Matt 24:7
"for he loves our *n* .....Luke 7:5
those who are not a *n*.... Rom 10:19
tribe, tongue, and *n*..... Rev 13:7

NATIONS
Why do the *n* rage .....Ps 2:1
I will give You the *n* .....Ps 2:8
n shall serve Him .....Ps 72:11
disciples of all the *n*.....Matt 28:19
who was to rule all *n*..... Rev 12:5
the healing of the *n*..... Rev 22:2

NATURAL
exchanged the *n*..... Rom 1:26
the men, leaving the *n*..... Rom 1:27
did not spare the *n*..... Rom 11:21
n man does not ..... 1 Cor 2:14
It is sown a *n* body..... 1 Cor 15:44

NATURE
"We who are Jews by *n* ....Gal 2:15
by *n* children of wrath.....Eph 2:3
of the divine *n*..... 2 Pet 1:4

NEAR
the word is very *n* ..... Deut 30:14
upon Him while He is *n* .....Is 55:6
know that it is *n* .....Matt 24:33
kingdom of God is *n*.....Luke 21:31
"The word is *n* ..... Rom 10:8
to those who were *n* .....Eph 2:17
for the time is *n* ..... Rev 1:3

NEED
the things you have *n* .....Matt 6:8
supply all your *n* .....Phil 4:19
to help in time of *n*.....Heb 4:16

NEIGHBOR
'you shall love your *n* ..... Lev 19:18
"You shall love your *n*.....Matt 5:43
"And who is my *n* .....Luke 10:29
"You shall love your *n*..... Rom 13:9

NEVER
in Me shall *n* thirst..... John 6:35
in Me shall *n* die..... John 11:26
Love *n* fails..... 1 Cor 13:8
n take away sins.....Heb 10:11
"I will *n* leave you .....Heb 13:5
prophecy *n* came by .....2 Pet 1:21

NEW
And there is nothing *n* ..... Eccl 1:9
"For behold, I create *n*.....Is 65:17
n every morning.....Lam 3:23
wine into *n* wineskins .....Matt 9:17
of the *n* covenant.....Matt 26:28
n commandment I..... John 13:34
he is a *n* creation..... 2 Cor 5:17
when I will make a *n*.....Heb 8:8
n heavens and a *n*..... 2 Pet 3:13
n name written which ..... Rev 2:17
And they sang a *n*..... Rev 5:9
And I saw a *n* heaven..... Rev 21:1
I make all things *n* ..... Rev 21:5

NIGHT
darkness He called *N* .....Gen 1:5
It is a *n* of solemn..... Ex 12:42
pillar of fire by *n* ..... Ex 13:22
gives songs in the *n* .....Job 35:10
and continued all *n* .....Luke 6:12
man came to Jesus by *n*.... John 3:2
n is coming when no ..... John 9:4
came to Jesus by *n*..... John 19:39
as a thief in the *n*..... 1 Thess 5:2
there shall be no *n* .....Rev 21:25

NOTHING
"I can of Myself do *n* ..... John 5:30
Me you can do *n*..... John 15:5
men, it will come to *n*.....Acts 5:38
have not love, I am *n*..... 1 Cor 13:2
Be anxious for *n*..... Phil 4:6
For we brought *n*..... 1 Tim 6:7

NUMBER
if a man could *n*.....Gen 13:16
teach us to *n* our days .....Ps 90:12
which no one could *n* ..... Rev 7:9
His *n* is 666..... Rev 13:18

O

OATH(S)
for the sake of your *o* ..... Eccl 8:2
he denied with an *o* .....Matt 26:72
o which He swore .....Luke 1:73
shall perform your *o*.....Matt 5:33

OBEDIENCE
o many will be made ..... Rom 5:19
captivity to the *o*..... 2 Cor 10:5
yet He learned *o*..... Heb 5:8

OBEDIENT
you are willing and *o*.....Is 1:19
of the priests were *o* .....Acts 6:7
make the Gentiles *o*..... Rom 15:18
Himself and became *o*.....Phil 2:8
as *o* children..... 1 Pet 1:14

OBEY
God and *o* His voice ..... Deut 4:30
His voice we will *o*.....Josh 24:24
o is better than.....1 Sam 15:22
o God rather than men..... Acts 5:29
and do not *o* the truth .....Rom 2:8
yourselves slaves to *o*..... Rom 6:16
o your parents in all ..... Col 3:20
Bondservants, *o* in all.....Col 3:22
those who do not *o* ..... 2 Thess 1:8
O those who rule.....Heb 13:17

OBEYED
of sin, yet you *o* ..... Rom 6:17
they have not all *o* ..... Rom 10:16
By faith Abraham *o* .....Heb 11:8

OBTAIN
also may *o* mercy..... Rom 11:31
o salvation through..... 1 Thess 5:9

OBTAINED
o a part in this.....Acts 1:17
yet have now *o* mercy ... Rom 11:30
endured, he *o* the .....Heb 6:15

OFFEND
lest we *o* them.....Matt 17:27
than that he should *o*.....Luke 17:2
them, "Does this *o*..... John 6:61

OFFENSE
and a rock of *o* .....Is 8:14
You are an *o* to Me.....Matt 16:23
by the one man's *o*..... Rom 5:17
the *o* of the cross.....Gal 5:11
sincere and without *o*.....Phil 1:10
And a rock of *o*..... 1 Pet 2:8

OFFENSES
For *o* must come.....Matt 18:7
impossible that no *o* .....Luke 17:1

OFFERED
to eat those things *o* ..... 1 Cor 8:10
so Christ was *o* .....Heb 9:28
o one sacrifice.....Heb 10:12

OFFERING
o You did not require .....Ps 40:6
You make His soul an *o*.....Is 53:10
Himself for us, an *o* .....Eph 5:2
o You did not .....Heb 10:5
o He has perfected .....Heb 10:14

OFFERINGS
and offered burnt *o*.....Gen 8:20
In burnt *o*.....Heb 10:6

OFFSPRING
wife and raise up *o* .....Matt 22:24
we are also His *o*.....Acts 17:28
am the Root and
the *O*..... Rev 22:16

OIL
a bin, and a little *o* ..... 1 Kin 17:12
very costly fragrant *o*.....Matt 26:7
anointing him with *o* .....James 5:14
and do not harm the *o*..... Rev 6:6

OLD
young, and now am *o*.....Ps 37:25
was said to those of *o*.....Matt 5:21
but when you are *o*..... John 21:18
Your *o* men shall
dream..... Acts 2:17
o man was crucified .....Rom 6:6
o things have passed ..... 2 Cor 5:17
have put off the *o* man.....Col 3:9
that serpent of *o* ..... Rev 20:2

OLIVE
a freshly plucked *o* .....Gen 8:11
o tree which is wild..... Rom 11:24

OMNIPOTENT
For the Lord God *O* ..... Rev 19:6

ONCE
died, He died to sin *o*..... Rom 6:10
for men to die *o* .....Heb 9:27
also suffered *o* ..... 1 Pet 3:18

ONE
"*O* thing you lack ..... Mark 10:21
o thing is needed .....Luke 10:42
I and My Father are *o*.... John 10:30
that they may be *o* ..... John 17:11
o accord in the temple.....Acts 2:46
for you are all *o* .....Gal 3:28
to create in Himself *o* .....Eph 2:15
o Lord.....Eph 4:5
o faith.....Eph 4:5
o baptism.....Eph 4:5
o God and Father of.....Eph 4:6
For there is *o* God and .....1 Tim 2:5
o Mediator between.....1 Tim 2:5
a thousand years as *o*..... 2 Pet 3:8

OPENED
o not His mouth.....Is 53:7
o the Scriptures .....Luke 24:32

o their understanding....Luke 24:45
Now I saw heaven *o* .....Rev 19:11

OPPORTUNITY
But sin, taking *o* .....Rom 7:8
as we have *o* .....Gal 6:10
but you lacked *o*.....Phil 4:10

OPPRESS
he loves to *o* .....Hos 12:7
o the widow or the.....Zech 7:10
Do not the rich *o* .....James 2:6

OPPRESSED
for all who are *o*.....Ps 103:6
The tears of the *o* ..... Eccl 4:1
He was *o* and He was.....Is 53:7
all who were *o* .....Acts 10:38

OPPRESSION
have surely seen the *o*..... Ex 3:7
their life from *o* .....Ps 72:14
brought low through *o* .....Ps 107:39
me from the *o* .....Ps 119:134
considered all the *o*..... Eccl 4:1
o destroys a wise..... Eccl 7:7
justice, but behold, *o*.....Is 5:7
surely seen the *o* .....Acts 7:34

ORACLES
received the living *o* .....Acts 7:38
were committed the *o*.....Rom 3:2
principles of the *o* .....Heb 5:12

ORDAINED
o you a prophet .....Jer 1:5
whom He has *o*.....Acts 17:31

ORPHANS
will not leave you *o*..... John 14:18
to visit *o* and widows.....James 1:27

OUTSIDE
and dish, that the *o* .....Matt 23:26
Pharisees make the *o* ....Luke 11:39
toward those who
are *o*.....Col 4:5
to Him, *o* the camp .....Heb 13:13
But *o* are dogs and.....Rev 22:15

OUTWARD
at the *o* appearance .....1 Sam 16:7
adornment be merely *o*..... 1 Pet 3:3

OVERCOME
good cheer, I have *o* ..... John 16:33
and the Lamb will *o*..... Rev 17:14

OVERCOMES
of God *o* the world..... 1 John 5:4
o I will give to eat..... Rev 2:7
o shall not be hurt..... Rev 2:11
o shall inherit all ..... Rev 21:7

OVERSEER
to the Shepherd and *O*.... 1 Pet 2:25

OVERSEERS
you, serving as *o* ..... 1 Pet 5:2

OVERSHADOW
of the Highest will *o* .....Luke 1:35

OVERTHROWS
And *o* the mighty .....Job 12:19
o them in the night.....Job 34:25
o the words of the ..... Prov 22:12

OVERWHELMED
and my spirit was *o* .....Ps 77:3
my spirit is *o* within.....Ps 143:4

OVERWORK
Do not *o* to be rich .....Prov 23:4

OWE
O no one anything ..... Rom 13:8

OWN
He came to His *o*..... John 1:11
having loved His *o* ..... John 13:1
would love its *o* ..... John 15:19
you are not your *o* ..... 1 Cor 6:19
But each one has his *o* ..... 1 Cor 7:7
For all seek their *o*.....Phil 2:21
from our sins in His *o*..... Rev 1:5

OX
shall not muzzle an *o* ..... Deut 25:4
o knows its owner.....Is 1:3
Sabbath loose his *o*.....Luke 13:15
shall not muzzle an *o* ..... 1 Cor 9:9

P

PAIN
p you shall bring .....Gen 3:16
p as a woman in .....Is 13:8
Why is my *p* perpetual..... Jer 15:18
shall be no more *p* ..... Rev 21:4

PAINED
My heart is severely *p*.....Ps 55:4
I am *p* in my very..... Jer 4:19

PAINS
The *p* of death.....Ps 116:3
having loosed the *p*.....Acts 2:24

PALACE(S)
enter the King's *p*.....Ps 45:15
guards his own *p*.....Luke 11:21
evident to the whole *p*.....Phil 1:13
Out of the ivory *p*.....Ps 45:8

PALM
p branches in their..... Rev 7:9

PALMS
struck Him with the *p* ....Matt 26:67

PANGS
The *p* of death.....Ps 18:4
labors with birth *p* ..... Rom 8:22

PARABLE(S)
do You speak this *p*.....Luke 12:41
rest it is given in *p*.....Luke 8:10

PARADISE
will be with Me in *P*.....Luke 23:43
in the midst of the *P* ..... Rev 2:7

PARDON
He will abundantly *p* .....Is 55:7
p all their iniquities..... Jer 33:8

PARDONING
is a God like You, *p* ..... Mic 7:18

PARENTS
will rise up against *p* .....Matt 10:21
has left house or *p*.....Luke 18:29
disobedient to *p* ..... Rom 1:30

PART
chosen that good *p*.....Luke 10:42
you, you have no *p* ..... John 13:8
For we know in *p* ..... 1 Cor 13:9
shall take away his *p*.....Rev 22:19

PARTAKER
in hope should be *p* ..... 1 Cor 9:10
Christ, and also a *p*..... 1 Pet 5:1

PARTAKERS
Gentiles have been *p* ..... Rom 15:27
know that as you are *p* .... 2 Cor 1:7
qualified us to be *p* .....Col 1:12

PARTIALITY
that God shows no *p*.....Acts 10:34
doing nothing with *p* .....1 Tim 5:21
good fruits, without *p* ....James 3:17

PASS
I will *p* over you ..... Ex 12:13
When you *p* through the.....Is 43:2
and earth will *p* .....Matt 24:35

PASSED
forbearance God had *p* ... Rom 3:25
High Priest who has *p*.....Heb 4:14
know that we have *p* .... 1 John 3:14

PASSES
of Christ which *p*.....Eph 3:19

PASSION(S)
uncleanness, *p* .....Col 3:5
gave them up to vile *p* ..... Rom 1:26

PASSOVER
It is the LORD's *P*..... Ex 12:11
I will keep the *P*.....Matt 26:18
indeed Christ, our *P*..... 1 Cor 5:7
By faith he kept the *P*.....Heb 11:28

PASTORS
and some *p* and .....Eph 4:11

PASTURE(S)
the sheep of Your *p* .....Ps 74:1
in and out and find *p* ..... John 10:9
to lie down in green *p* .....Ps 23:2

PATH
You will show me the *p* .....Ps 16:11

PATHS
He leads me in the *p*.....Ps 23:3
Make His *p* straight .....Matt 3:3
and make straight *p*.....Heb 12:13

PATIENCE
'Master, have *p* .....Matt 18:26
and bear fruit with *p*.....Luke 8:15
labor of love, and *p*..... 1 Thess 1:3
faith, love, *p* .....1 Tim 6:11
your faith produces *p* .....James 1:3
p have its perfect.....James 1:4
in the kingdom and *p* .....Rev 1:9

PATIENT
rejoicing in hope, *p* ..... Rom 12:12
the weak, be *p*..... 1 Thess 5:14

PATRIARCHS
begot the twelve *p*.....Acts 7:8

PATTERN
p which you were.....Ex 26:30
as you have us for a *p* .....Phil 3:17
p shown you on the .....Heb 8:5

PEACE
you, And give you *p* ..... Num 6:26
both lie down in *p* .....Ps 4:8
p have those who .....Ps 119:165
I am for *p*.....Ps 120:7
war, And a time of *p*..... Ecc 3:8
Father, Prince of *P* .....Is 9:6
keep him in perfect *p* .....Is 26:3
p they have not.....Is 59:8
slightly, Saying, '*P*..... Jer 6:14
place I will give *p* .....Hag 2:9
is worthy, let your *p* .....Matt 10:13
that I came to bring *p* .....Matt 10:34
And on earth *p* .....Luke 2:14
if a son of *p* is there.....Luke 10:6
that make for your *p* .....Luke 19:42
leave with you, My *p* .....John 14:27
Me you may have *p* ..... John 16:33
Grace to you and *p* .....Rom 1:7
by faith, we have *p* .....Rom 5:1
God has called us to *p* .... 1 Cor 7:15
p will be with you ..... 2 Cor 13:11
Spirit is love, joy, *p* .....Gal 5:22
He Himself is our *p*.....Eph 2:14
and the *p* of God.....Phil 4:7
And let the *p* of God .....Col 3:15
faith, love, *p* .....2 Tim 2:22
meaning "king of *p*,".....Heb 7:2

PEACEABLE
is first pure, then *p*.....James 3:17

PEACEABLY
on you, live *p* ..... Rom 12:18

PEACEMAKERS
Blessed are the *p*.....Matt 5:9

PEARL
had found one *p* .....Matt 13:46

PEARLS
nor cast your *p* .....Matt 7:6
gates were twelve *p* ..... Rev 21:21

PENTECOST
P had fully come ..... Acts 2:1

PEOPLE
will take you as My *p* ..... Ex 6:7
p shall be my *p* ..... Ruth 1:16
p who know the joyful .....Ps 89:15
We are His *p* and the.....Ps 100:3
"Blessed is Egypt My *p* .....Is 19:25
to make ready a *p* .....Luke 1:17
take out of them a *p*..... Acts 15:14
who were not My *p*..... Rom 9:25

they shall be My *p* ..... 2 Cor 6:16
LORD will judge His *p* .....Heb 10:30
but are now the *p* ..... 1 Pet 2:10
tribe and tongue and *p* ..... Rev 5:9
they shall be His *p* ..... Rev 21:3

PERCEIVE
seeing, but do not *p* .....Is 6:9
may see and not *p* ..... Mark 4:12

PERDITION
except the son of *p* .....John 17:12
revealed, the son of *p* ... 2 Thess 2:3
who draw back to *p* .....Heb 10:39

PERFECT
Noah was a just man, *p* .....Gen 6:9
Father in heaven is *p* .....Matt 5:48
they may be made *p* ..... John 17:23
and *p* will of God..... Rom 12:2
when that which is *p* .... 1 Cor 13:10
present every man *p* .....Col 1:28
good gift and every *p* ....James 1:17
in word, he is a *p* .....James 3:2
p love casts out fear..... 1 John 4:18

PERFECTED
third day I shall be *p* .....Luke 13:32
or am already *p* .....Phil 3:12
Son who has been *p* .....Heb 7:28

PERFECTION
let us go on to *p* .....Heb 6:1

PERISH
so that we may not *p* .....Jon 1:6
little ones should *p* .....Matt 18:14
in Him should not *p* ..... John 3:16
they shall never *p* ..... John 10:28
among those who *p* .... 2 Thess 2:10
that any should *p* ..... 2 Pet 3:9

PERISHABLE
do it to obtain a *p* ..... 1 Cor 9:25

PERISHED
Truth has *p* and has..... Jer 7:28

PERISHING
We are *p* .....Matt 8:25

PERMITTED
p no one to do them.....Ps 105:14
we are *p* ..... 2 Cor 4:8

PERSECUTE
when they revile and *p*.....Matt 5:11

PERSECUTED
If they *p* Me..... John 15:20
p, but not forsaken..... 2 Cor 4:9

PERSECUTION
p arises because of.....Matt 13:21
At that time a great *p* ..... Acts 8:1
do I still suffer *p* .....Gal 5:11

PERSECUTOR
a blasphemer, a *p* .....1 Tim 1:13

PERSEVERANCE
tribulation produces *p* .....Rom 5:3

PERSON
do not regard the *p* .....Matt 22:16
express image of His *p* .....Heb 1:3

PERSUADE
"You almost *p* me ..... Acts 26:28

PERSUADED
neither will they be *p*.....Luke 16:31
p that He is able .....2 Tim 1:12

PERVERSE
your way is *p* ..... Num 22:32
p man sows strife ..... Prov 16:28
from this *p* generation..... Acts 2:40

PERVERT
"You shall not *p*..... Deut 16:19
p the gospel of Christ .....Gal 1:7

PESTILENCE(S)
from the perilous *p* .....Ps 91:3
Before Him went *p* .....Hab 3:5
will be famines, *p* .....Matt 24:7

PHARISEE
to pray, one a *P* .....Luke 18:10

PHILOSOPHERS
p encountered him .....Acts 17:18

PHILOSOPHY
cheat you through *p* ..... Col 2:8

PHYSICIAN(S)
have no need of a *p* .....Matt 9:12
her livelihood on *p* .....Luke 8:43

PIECES
they took the thirty *p* .....Matt 27:9

PIERCE
a sword will *p* .....Luke 2:35

PIERCED
p My hands and My feet....Ps 22:16
whom they have *p* .....Zech 12:10
of the soldiers *p* ..... John 19:34
p themselves through.....1 Tim 6:10
and they also who *p* ..... Rev 1:7

PILGRIMS
we are aliens and *p*..... 1 Chr 29:15
were strangers and *p*.....Heb 11:13

PILLAR
and she became a *p* .....Gen 19:26
and by night in a *p*..... Ex 13:21
the living God, the *p* .....1 Tim 3:15

PILLARS
break their sacred *p*..... Ex 34:13
Blood and fire and *p*.....Joel 2:30
and his feet like *p* ..... Rev 10:1

PIT
who go down to the *p*.....Ps 28:1
a harlot is a deep *p* ..... Prov 23:27
my life in the *p*..... Lam 3:53
up my life from the *p*.....Jon 2:6
into the bottomless *p* ..... Rev 20:3

PITY
for someone to take *p*.....Ps 69:20
p He redeemed them .....Is 63:9
just as I had *p* .....Matt 18:33

PLACE
Come, see the *p* .....Matt 28:6
My word has no *p* ..... John 8:37
I go to prepare a *p*..... John 14:2
might go to his own *p*..... Acts 1:25

PLACES
And the rough *p* .....Is 40:4
They love the best *p* .....Matt 23:6
in the heavenly *p*..... Eph 1:3

PLAGUE(S)
bring yet one more *p* ..... Ex 11:1
p that are written ..... Rev 22:18

PLANK
First remove the *p* .....Matt 7:5

PLANS
He makes the *p* of the .....Ps 33:10
that devises wicked *p* .....Prov 6:18

PLANT
A time to *p*..... Eccl 3:2
Him as a tender *p*..... Is 53:2
p of an alien vine..... Jer 2:21
p which My heavenly .....Matt 15:13

PLANTED
shall be like a tree *p* .....Ps 1:3
by the roots and be *p*.....Luke 17:6
I *p*, Apollos watered ..... 1 Cor 3:6

PLEASANT
food, that it was *p* .....Gen 3:6
how good and how *p* .....Ps 133:1

PLEASE
in the flesh cannot *p* .....Rom 8:8
p his neighbor for his ..... Rom 15:2
he may *p* the Lord..... 1 Cor 7:32
is impossible to *p* Him.....Heb 11:6

PLEASED
Then You shall be *p* .....Ps 51:19
in whom I am well *p* .....Matt 3:17
God was not well *p* ..... 1 Cor 10:5
testimony, that he *p* .....Heb 11:5

PLEASING
sacrifice, well *p*.....Phil 4:18
for this is well *p*.....Col 3:20
in you what is well *p* .....Heb 13:21

PLEASURE
Do good in Your good *p* ....Ps 51:18
p will be a poor man..... Prov 21:17
shall perform all My *p*.....Is 44:28
your Father's good *p* .....Luke 12:32
to the good *p* of His .....Eph 1:5
for sin You had no *p*.....Heb 10:6
My soul has no *p* .....Heb 10:38
p that war in your .....James 4:1

PLEASURES
Your right hand are *p* .....Ps 16:11
cares, riches, and *p* .....Luke 8:14
to enjoy the passing *p* .....Heb 11:25

PLOW
put his hand to the *p*.....Luke 9:62

PLUCK
p the heads of grain..... Mark 2:23

PLUCKED
cheeks to those who *p* .....Is 50:6
And His disciples *p* .....Luke 6:1
you would have *p* .....Gal 4:15

PLUNDER
p the Egyptians.....Ex 3:22
The *p* of the poor is.....Is 3:14
house and *p* his goods....Matt 12:29

PLUNDERED
a people robbed and *p*.....Is 42:22
"And when you are *p* ..... Jer 4:30

PLUNDERING
me Because of the *p*.....Is 22:4
accepted the *p* of your.....Heb 10:34

POISONED
p by bitterness .....Acts 8:23

POMPOUS
and a mouth speaking *p* .... Dan 7:8

PONDER
P the path of your .....Prov 4:26

PONDERED
p them in her heart .....Luke 2:19

PONDERS
p all his paths.....Prov 5:21

POOR
p will never cease..... Deut 15:11
So the *p* have hope .....Job 5:16
I delivered the *p*.....Job 29:12
p shall eat and be .....Ps 22:26
But I am *p* and needy .....Ps 40:17
Let the *p* and needy .....Ps 74:21
He raises the *p*..... Ps 113:7
slack hand becomes *p* .....Prov 10:4
p man is hated even..... Prov 14:20
has mercy on the *p* ..... Prov 14:21
who oppresses the *p* ..... Prov 14:31
p reproaches his .....Prov 17:5
Do not rob the *p* ..... Prov 22:22
that same *p* man..... Eccl 9:15
The alien or the *p* ..... Zech 7:10
"Blessed are the *p* .....Matt 5:3
p have the gospel .....Matt 11:5
"For you have the *p* .....Matt 26:11
sakes He became *p* ..... 2 Cor 8:9
should remember the *p* .....Gal 2:10
God not chosen the *p* .....James 2:5
wretched, miserable, *p* ..... Rev 3:17

PORTION
O LORD,You, are the *p* .....Ps 16:5
heart and my *p* forever .....Ps 73:26
You are my *p* .....Ps 119:57
I will divide Him a *p* .....Is 53:12
rejoice in their *p* .....Is 61:7
The *P* of Jacob is not ..... Jer 10:16
"The LORD is my *p* .....Lam 3:24
and appoint him his *p* ....Matt 24:51
to give them their *p*.....Luke 12:42
give me the *p* .....Luke 15:12

POSSESS
descendants shall *p*.....Gen 22:17
p the land which.....Josh 1:11
"By your patience *p*.....Luke 21:19
p his own vessel ..... 1 Thess 4:4

POSSESSION(S)
as an everlasting *p*.....Gen 17:8
and an enduring *p*.....Heb 10:34
and sold their *p*.....Acts 2:45

POSSIBLE
God all things are *p*.....Matt 19:26
p that the blood .....Heb 10:4

POUR
p My Spirit on your .....Is 44:3
P out Your fury..... Jer 10:25
That I will *p* out My.....Joel 2:28
"And I will *p*.....Zech 12:10
angels, "Go and *p*.....Rev 16:1

POURED
I am *p* out like water .....Ps 22:14
grace is *p* upon Your.....Ps 45:2
strong, Because He *p*.....Is 53:12
and My fury will be *p*..... Jer 7:20
broke the flask and *p* ..... Mark 14:3
I am already being *p*.....2 Tim 4:6
whom He *p* out on us .....Titus 3:6

POVERTY
leads only to *p* ..... Prov 14:23
p put in all the.....Luke 21:4
and their deep *p* .....2 Cor 8:2
p might become rich.....2 Cor 8:9
tribulation, and *p*.....Rev 2:9

POWER
that I may show My *p* .....Ex 9:16
him who is without *p*.....Job 26:2
p who can understand.....Job 26:14
p belongs to God .....Ps 62:11
p Your enemies shall.....Ps 66:3
gives strength and *p* .....Ps 68:35
a king is, there is *p*..... Eccl 8:4
No one has *p* over the ..... Eccl 8:8
'Not by might nor by *p*..... Zech 4:6
the kingdom and the *p*.....Matt 6:13
the Son of Man has *p* .....Matt 9:6
Scriptures nor the *p*.....Matt 22:29
p went out from Him.....Luke 6:19
are endued with *p* .....Luke 24:49
I have *p* to lay it ..... John 10:18
"You could have no *p*.... John 19:11
you shall receive *p*..... Acts 1:8
though by our own *p*.....Acts 3:12
man is the great *p* .....Acts 8:10
"Give me this *p* .....Acts 8:19
for it is the *p*..... Rom 1:16
saved it is the *p*..... 1 Cor 1:18
Greeks, Christ the *p*..... 1 Cor 1:24
that the *p* of Christ..... 2 Cor 12:9
greatness of His *p* .....Eph 1:19
the Lord and in the *p*.....Eph 6:10
to His glorious *p*.....Col 1:11
the glory of His *p* ..... 2 Thess 1:9
of fear, but of *p*.....2 Tim 1:7
by the word of His *p*.....Heb 1:3
p of death, that .....Heb 2:14
as His divine *p*..... 2 Pet 1:3
Dominion and *p* .....Jude 25
to him I will give *p*.....Rev 2:26
honor and glory and *p* ..... Rev 5:13

POWERFUL
of the LORD is *p*.....Ps 29:4
of God is living and *p*.....Heb 4:12

POWERS
principalities and *p*.....Col 2:15
word of God and the *p*.....Heb 6:5

PRAISE
p shall be of You in.....Ps 22:25
the people shall *p*.....Ps 45:17
P is awaiting You.....Ps 65:1
Let all the peoples *p*.....Ps 67:3
p shall be continually.....Ps 71:6
And the heavens will *p* .....Ps 89:5
Seven times a day I *p*.....Ps 119:164
that has breath *p*.....Ps 150:6
Let another man *p* .....Prov 27:2
let her own works *p*..... Prov 31:31
And your gates *P* .....Is 60:18
He makes Jerusalem a *p*.....Is 62:7
For You are my *p*..... Jer 17:14
Me a name of joy, a *p*..... Jer 33:9
give you fame and *p* .....Zeph 3:20
You have perfected *p* .....Matt 21:16
men more than the *p*..... John 12:43
p is not from men but..... Rom 2:29
Then each one's *p* ..... 1 Cor 4:5
should be to the *p*.....Eph 1:12
to the glory and *p*.....Phil 1:11
I will sing *p* to You .....Heb 2:12
the sacrifice of *p*.....Heb 13:15
and for the *p* of those ..... 1 Pet 2:14
saying, "*P* our God..... Rev 19:5

PRAISED
daily He shall be *p*.....Ps 72:15
LORD's name is to be *p*.....Ps 113:3
and greatly to be *p*.....Ps 145:3
the Most High and *p*..... Dan 4:34

PRAISES
it is good to sing *p*.....Ps 147:1
and he *p*..... Prov 31:28

PRAISEWORTHY
if there is anything *p* .....Phil 4:8

PRAISING
They will still be *p* .....Ps 84:4
of the heavenly host *p*.....Luke 2:13
in the temple *p*.....Luke 24:53

PRAY
at noon I will *p* .....Ps 55:17
who hate you, and *p*.....Matt 5:44
"And when you *p* .....Matt 6:5
manner, therefore, *p*.....Matt 6:9
"Watch and *p*.....Matt 26:41
"Lord, teach us to *p* .....Luke 11:1
"And I will *p*..... John 14:16
I do not *p* for the ..... John 17:9
"I do not *p* for ..... John 17:20
p without ceasing..... 1 Thess 5:17
Brethren, *p* for us..... 1 Thess 5:25
Let him *p* .....James 5:13
to one another, and *p* .....James 5:16
say that he should *p* ..... 1 John 5:16

PRAYED
p more earnestly .....Luke 22:44
p earnestly that it .....James 5:17

PRAYER
p made in this place.....2 Chr 7:15
And my *p* is pure.....Job 16:17
A *p* to the God of my.....Ps 42:8
P also will be made.....Ps 72:15
He shall regard the *p*.....Ps 102:17
to the LORD, But the *p* .....Prov 15:8
go out except by *p*.....Matt 17:21
all night in *p* to God.....Luke 6:12
continually to *p*..... Acts 6:4
where *p* was.....Acts 16:13
steadfastly in *p* ..... Rom 12:12
to fasting and *p*..... 1 Cor 7:5
always with all *p* .....Eph 6:18
but in everything by *p*.....Phil 4:6
the word of God and *p* .....1 Tim 4:5
And the *p* of faith.....James 5:15

PRAYERS
though You make many *p* ....Is 1:15
pretense make long *p* .....Matt 23:14
fervently for you in *p*.....Col 4:12
p may not be hindered..... 1 Pet 3:7
which are the *p*..... Rev 5:8

PREACH
time Jesus began to *p*.....Matt 4:17
you hear in the ear, *p* .....Matt 10:27
P the gospel to the .....Luke 4:18
And how shall they *p* .... Rom 10:15
p Christ crucified ..... 1 Cor 1:23
I or they, so we *p*..... 1 Cor 15:11
P the word.....2 Tim 4:2

PREACHED
p that people ..... Mark 6:12
out and *p*..... Mark 16:20
of sins should be *p*.....Luke 24:47
p Christ to them ..... Acts 8:5
lest, when I have *p*..... 1 Cor 9:27
than what we have *p*.....Gal 1:8
the gospel was *p*.....Heb 4:2
also He went and *p* ..... 1 Pet 3:19

PREACHES
the Jesus whom
Paul *p* ..... Acts 19:13
p another Jesus ..... 2 Cor 11:4
p any other gospel .....Gal 1:9
p the faith which he.....Gal 1:23

PREACHING
p Jesus as the.....Acts 5:42
not risen, then our *p* ..... 1 Cor 15:14

PRECEPTS
all His *p* are sure .....Ps 111:7
how I love Your *p* .....Ps 119:159

PRECIOUS
P in the sight of the.....Ps 116:15
She is more *p* than.....Prov 3:15
p things shall not.....Is 44:9
if you take out the *p*..... Jer 15:19
farmer waits for the *p* .....James 5:7
more *p* than gold..... 1 Pet 1:7
who believe, He is *p*..... 1 Pet 2:7
p in the sight of..... 1 Pet 3:4

PREDESTINED
foreknew, He also *p*..... Rom 8:29
having *p* us to .....Eph 1:5
inheritance, being *p*.....Eph 1:11

PREEMINENCE
He may have the *p*.....Col 1:18
loves to have the *p*..... 3 John 9

PREPARE
p a table before me in.....Ps 23:5
P the way of the LORD ..... Mark 1:3
p a place for you ..... John 14:2

PREPARED
for whom it is *p* .....Matt 20:23
Which You have *p* .....Luke 2:31
mercy, which He had *p*... Rom 9:23
things which God has *p*... 1 Cor 2:9
Now He who has *p* ..... 2 Cor 5:5
p beforehand that we .....Eph 2:10
God, for He has *p*.....Heb 11:16

PRESENCE
themselves from the *p*.....Gen 3:8
went out from the *p* .....Gen 4:16
P will go with you..... Ex 33:14
afraid in any man's *p* ..... Deut 1:17
p is fullness of joy .....Ps 16:11
shall dwell in Your *p* .....Ps 140:13
not tremble at My *p* ..... Jer 5:22
shall shake at My *p*.....Ezek 38:20
and drank in Your *p* .....Luke 13:26
full of joy in Your *p* .....Acts 2:28
but his bodily *p*..... 2 Cor 10:10
obeyed, not as in my *p* .....Phil 2:12

PRESENT
we are all *p* before .....Acts 10:33
evil is *p* with me ..... Rom 7:21
p your bodies a living..... Rom 12:1
or death, or things *p* ..... 1 Cor 3:22
absent in body but *p* ..... 1 Cor 5:3
that He might *p* .....Eph 5:27
p you faultless.....Jude 24

PRESERVE
He shall *p* your soul.....Ps 121:7
The LORD shall *p*.....Ps 121:8
loses his life will *p*.....Luke 17:33
every evil work and *p* ....2 Tim 4:18

PRESERVES
For the LORD *p* the.....Ps 31:23
p the souls of His.....Ps 97:10
who keeps his way *p* ..... Prov 16:17

PRICE
one pearl of great *p* .....Matt 13:46
were bought at a *p*..... 1 Cor 6:20

PRIDE
p serves as.....Ps 73:6
By *p* comes nothing..... Prov 13:10
P goes before ..... Prov 16:18
her daughter had *p* .....Ezek 16:49
was hardened in *p*..... Dan 5:20
For the *p* of the.....Zech 11:3

evil eye, blasphemy, *p*.... Mark 7:22
p he fall into the.....1 Tim 3:6
eyes, and the *p*.....1 John 2:16

PRIEST
he was the *p* of God.....Gen 14:18
p forever According.....Ps 110:4
So He shall be a *p*.....Zech 6:13
and faithful High *P*.....Heb 2:17
we have a great High *P*....Heb 4:14
p forever according .....Heb 5:6
Christ came as High *P*.....Heb 9:11

PRIESTHOOD
p being changed.....Heb 7:12
has an unchangeable *p* .....Heb 7:24
generation, a royal *p* ..... 1 Pet 2:9

PRINCE
is the house of the *p*.....Job 21:28
Everlasting Father, *P*.....Is 9:6
Until Messiah the *P* ..... Dan 9:25
days without king or *p*.....Hos 3:4
p asks for gifts..... Mic 7:3
"and killed the *P*.....Acts 3:15
His right hand to be *P*.....Acts 5:31
the *p* of the power.....Eph 2:2

PRISON
and put him into the *p*.....Gen 39:20
Bring my soul out of *p* .....Ps 142:7
in darkness from the *p*.....Is 42:7
the opening of the *p*.....Is 61:1
John had heard in *p*.....Matt 11:2
I was in *p* and you .....Matt 25:36

PRIZE
the goal for the *p*.....Phil 3:14

PROCEEDS
by every word that *p*..... Deut 8:3
by every word that *p*.....Matt 4:4
Spirit of truth who *p*..... John 15:26

PROCLAIM
began to *p* it freely..... Mark 1:45
knowing, Him I *p* .....Acts 17:23
drink this cup, you *p*..... 1 Cor 11:26

PROCLAIMED
p the good news .....Ps 40:9
he went his way and *p* ....Luke 8:39

PROCLAIMS
good news, Who *p* .....Is 52:7

PROFANE
and priest are *p* ..... Jer 23:11
tried to *p* the temple .....Acts 24:6
But reject *p* and old .....1 Tim 4:7

PROFANED
and *p* My Sabbaths.....Ezek 22:8

PROFESS
They *p* to know God.....Titus 1:16

PROFIT
For what *p* is it to.....Matt 16:26
"For what will it *p* ..... Mark 8:36
"For what *p* is it to .....Luke 9:25
her masters much *p*.....Acts 16:16
brought no small *p*.....Acts 19:24
what is the *p* of.....Rom 3:1
seeking my own *p*..... 1 Cor 10:33
Christ will *p* you.....Gal 5:2
about words to no *p*.....2 Tim 2:14
them, but He for our *p*.....Heb 12:10
What does it *p*.....James 2:14
sell, and make a *p* .....James 4:13

PROFITABLE
It is doubtless not *p*.....2 Cor 12:1
of God, and is *p* .....2 Tim 3:16

PROFITS
have not love, it *p*..... 1 Cor 13:3

PROMISE
"Behold, I send the *P* .....Luke 24:49
but to wait for the *P*.....Acts 1:4
"For the *p* is to you .....Acts 2:39
for the hope of the *p* .....Acts 26:6
p might be sure..... Rom 4:16
Therefore, since a *p* .....Heb 4:1
to the heirs of *p* .....Heb 6:17
did not receive the *p* .....Heb 11:39

PROMISES
For all the *p* of God.....2 Cor 1:20
his Seed were the *p*.....Gal 3:16
having received the *p* .....Heb 11:13
great and precious *p*.....2 Pet 1:4

PROPERLY
Let us walk *p* ..... Rom 13:13

PROPHECY
to another *p*..... 1 Cor 12:10
for *p* never came by.....2 Pet 1:21
is the spirit of *p*.....Rev 19:10
of the book of this *p*.....Rev 22:19

PROPHESIED
Lord, have we not *p*.....Matt 7:22
and the law *p* .....Matt 11:13

PROPHESIES
p edifies the church ..... 1 Cor 14:4

PROPHESY
prophets, "Do not *p*.....Is 30:10
The prophets *p* falsely..... Jer 5:31
your daughters shall *p* .....Joel 2:28
Who can but *p* .....Amos 3:8
saying, "*P* to us.....Matt 26:68
your daughters shall *p* .....Acts 2:17
in part and we *p* ..... 1 Cor 13:9

PROPHET
raise up for you a *P* ..... Deut 18:15
"I alone am left a *p*..... 1 Kin 18:22
I ordained you a *p*.....Jer 1:5
The *p* is a fool .....Hos 9:7
Nor was I a son of a *p* ....Amos 7:14
send you Elijah the *p*..... Mal 4:5
p shall receive a.....Matt 10:41
p is not without honor....Matt 13:57
by Daniel the *p* ..... Mark 13:14
is not a greater *p* .....Luke 7:28
it cannot be that a *p*.....Luke 13:33
who was a *P*.....Luke 24:19
"Are you the *P*..... John 1:21
"This is truly the *P* ..... John 6:14
with him the false *p* .....Rev 19:20

PROPHETIC
p word confirmed.....2 Pet 1:19

PROPHETS
the Law or the *P*.....Matt 5:17
is the Law and the *P*.....Matt 7:12
or one of the *p* .....Matt 16:14
the tombs of the *p* .....Matt 23:29
indeed, I send you *p*.....Matt 23:34
one who kills the *p*.....Matt 23:37
Then many false *p* .....Matt 24:11
Moses and the *p* .....Luke 16:29
are sons of the *p*.....Acts 3:25
p did your fathers not.....Acts 7:52
"To Him all the *p*.....Acts 10:43
do you believe the *p*.....Acts 26:27
by the Law and the *P* ..... Rom 3:21
have killed Your *p* ..... Rom 11:3
to be apostles, some *p* .....Eph 4:11
this salvation the *p*..... 1 Pet 1:10
because many false *p* ..... 1 John 4:1
found the blood of *p* .....Rev 18:24

PROPITIATION
set forth as a *p*..... Rom 3:25
to God, to make *p*.....Heb 2:17
He Himself is the *p* ..... 1 John 2:2
His Son to be the *p* ..... 1 John 4:10

PROSPER
they *p* who love you .....Ps 122:6
of the LORD shall *p* .....Is 53:10
against you shall *p*.....Is 54:17
up as he may *p* ..... 1 Cor 16:2
I pray that you may *p*.....3 John 2

PROSPERITY
p all your days..... Deut 23:6
p the destroyer.....Job 15:21
Now in my *p* I said .....Ps 30:6
has pleasure in the *p* .....Ps 35:27
When I saw the *p* .....Ps 73:3
I pray, send now *p* .....Ps 118:25
that we have our *p* .....Acts 19:25

PROSPEROUS
will make your way *p*.....Josh 1:8

PROUD
tongue that speaks *p* .....Ps 12:3
And fully repays the *p*.....Ps 31:23
does not respect the *p* .....Ps 40:4
a haughty look and a *p* .....Ps 101:5
p He knows from afar .....Ps 138:6
Everyone *p* ..... Prov 16:5
by wine, He is a *p*.....Hab 2:5
He has scattered the *p*.....Luke 1:51
"God resists the *p*..... 1 Pet 5:5

PROVERB(S)
of a drunkard Is a *p*.....Prov 26:9
one shall take up a *p* ..... Mic 2:4
to the true *p*.....2 Pet 2:22
three thousand *p* ..... 1 Kin 4:32
in order many *p*..... Eccl 12:9

PROVIDE
"My son, God will *p*.....Gen 22:8
"*P* neither gold nor .....Matt 10:9
if anyone does not *p* .....1 Tim 5:8

PROVOKE
"Do they *p* Me to..... Jer 7:19
you, fathers, do not *p* .....Eph 6:4

PROVOKED
p the Most High.....Ps 78:56
his spirit was *p* .....Acts 17:16
seek its own, is not *p*..... 1 Cor 13:5

PRUDENCE
To give *p* to the.....Prov 1:4
wisdom, dwell with *p* .....Prov 8:12
us in all wisdom and *p* .....Eph 1:8

PRUDENT
p man covers shame..... Prov 12:16
A *p* man conceals..... Prov 12:23
The wisdom of the *p*.....Prov 14:8
p considers well..... Prov 14:15
heart will be called *p* ..... Prov 16:21
p man foresees evil.....Prov 22:3
Therefore the *p*.....Amos 5:13
from the wise and *p* .....Matt 11:25

PRUNES
that bears fruit He *p* ..... John 15:2

PSALM(S)
each of you has a *p*..... 1 Cor 14:26
to one another in *p*.....Eph 5:19
Let him sing *p*.....James 5:13

PUNISH
p the righteous is..... Prov 17:26
Shall I not *p* them for .....Jer 5:9

PUNISHED
p them often in every .....Acts 26:11
These shall be *p*..... 2 Thess 1:9

PUNISHMENT
p is greater than I.....Gen 4:13
you do in the day of *p* .....Is 10:3
p they shall perish..... Jer 10:15
not turn away its *p*.....Amos 1:3
into everlasting *p* .....Matt 25:46
p which was inflicted ..... 2 Cor 2:6
Of how much worse *p* .....Heb 10:29
sent by him for the *p* ..... 1 Pet 2:14
the unjust under *p*..... 2 Pet 2:9

PURE
a mercy seat of *p* gold..... Ex 25:17
'My doctrine is *p* .....Job 11:4
that he could be *p*.....Job 15:14
of the LORD are *p* .....Ps 12:6
ways of a man are *p* .....Prov 16:2
a generation that is *p*..... Prov 30:12
things indeed are *p* ..... Rom 14:20
whatever things are *p*.....Phil 4:8
keep yourself *p* .....1 Tim 5:22
p all things are *p* .....Titus 1:15
above is first *p* .....James 3:17
babes, desire the *p* ..... 1 Pet 2:2
just as He is *p*..... 1 John 3:3

PURGED
away, And your sin *p* .....Is 6:7

PURIFIED
all things are *p*.....Heb 9:22
Since you have *p*..... 1 Pet 1:22

PURIFIES
hope in Him *p* himself.... 1 John 3:3

PURIFY
and *p* your hearts.....James 4:8

PURIFYING
p their hearts by.....Acts 15:9
sanctifies for the *p* .....Heb 9:13

PURIM
called these days *P* .....Esth 9:26

PURITY
spirit, in faith, in *p* .....1 Tim 4:12

PURPOSE
A time for every *p*..... Eccl 3:1
But for this *p* I came..... John 12:27
by the determined *p*.....Acts 2:23
to fulfill His *p*.....Rev 17:17

PURSUE
p righteousness..... Rom 9:30
P love..... 1 Cor 14:1

Q

QUAIL
and it brought *q*.....Num 11:31

QUARRELSOME
but gentle, not *q* .....1 Tim 3:3

QUENCH
Many waters cannot *q* .....Song 8:7
flax He will not *q* .....Matt 12:20
q all the fiery.....Eph 6:16
Do not *q* the Spirit ..... 1 Thess 5:19

QUICKLY
with your adversary *q*.....Matt 5:25
"Surely I am coming *q* ....Rev 22:20

QUIET
aspire to lead a *q*..... 1 Thess 4:11
a gentle and *q* spirit..... 1 Pet 3:4

QUIETNESS
a handful with *q*..... Eccl 4:6
In *q* and confidence.....Is 30:15
of righteousness, *q*.....Is 32:17
that they work
in *q*..... 2 Thess 3:12

R

RABBI
be called by men, '*R* .....Matt 23:7

RACA
to his brother, '*R* .....Matt 5:22

RACE
man to run its *r*.....Ps 19:5
r is not to the swift..... Eccl 9:11
I have finished the *r*.....2 Tim 4:7
with endurance the *r* .....Heb 12:1

RAIN
had not caused it to *r*.....Gen 2:5
And the *r* was on the.....Gen 7:12
I will *r* down on him.....Ezek 38:22
given you the former *r* .....Joel 2:23
the good, and sends *r* .....Matt 5:45
"and the *r* descended.....Matt 7:25
r that often comes.....Heb 6:7
that it would not *r* .....James 5:17

RAINBOW
"I set My *r* in the.....Gen 9:13
and there was a *r* .....Rev 4:3

RAISE
third day He will *r*.....Hos 6:2
in three days I will *r* ..... John 2:19
and I will *r* him up at..... John 6:40
and the Lord will *r*.....James 5:15

RAISED
be killed, and be *r* .....Matt 16:21
Just as Christ was *r* .....Rom 6:4
Spirit of Him who *r*..... Rom 8:11
"How are the dead *r* ..... 1 Cor 15:35
the dead will be *r* ..... 1 Cor 15:52
and *r* us up together .....Eph 2:6

RAISES
"For as the Father *r*..... John 5:21
but in God who *r*..... 2 Cor 1:9

RANSOM
to give His life a *r*..... Mark 10:45
who gave Himself a *r* .....1 Tim 2:6

RANSOMED
And the *r* of the LORD .....Is 35:10
redeemed Jacob, And *r*.... Jer 31:11

RASHLY
and do nothing *r*.....Acts 19:36

RAVENS
"Consider the *r* .....Luke 12:24

READ
day, and stood up to *r* .....Luke 4:16
hearts, known and *r* ..... 2 Cor 3:2

READY
and those who were *r*.....Matt 25:10
"Lord, I am *r* .....Luke 22:33
Be *r* in season and out.....2 Tim 4:2
and always be *r* ..... 1 Pet 3:15

REAP
they neither sow nor *r*.....Matt 6:26
you knew that I *r*.....Matt 25:26

REAPED
You have *r* iniquity.....Hos 10:13

REAPING
r what I did not.....Luke 19:22

REAPS
sows and another *r* ..... John 4:37

REASON
"Come now, and let us *r* .....Is 1:18
who asks you a *r*..... 1 Pet 3:15

REBEL
if you refuse and *r*.....Is 1:20

REBELLING
more against Him By *r*.....Ps 78:17

REBELLION
hearts as in the *r* .....Heb 3:8

REBELLIOUS
day long to a *r* people.....Is 65:2

REBUKE
Turn at my *r*.....Prov 1:23
R a wise man .....Prov 9:8
r is better Than love .....Prov 27:5
R the oppressor .....Is 1:17
sins against you, *r*.....Luke 17:3
Do not *r* an older man.....1 Tim 5:1
who are sinning *r*.....1 Tim 5:20
"The Lord *r* you.....Jude 9
"As many as I love, I *r*..... Rev 3:19

REBUKED
r the winds and the.....Matt 8:26
r their unbelief..... Mark 16:14
but he was *r* for his.....2 Pet 2:16

RECEIVE
believing, you will *r*.....Matt 21:22
and His own did not *r*..... John 1:11
will come again and *r*..... John 14:3
the world cannot *r* ..... John 14:17
Ask, and you will *r* ..... John 16:24
"*R* the Holy Spirit..... John 20:22
"Lord Jesus, *r*.....Acts 7:59
r the Holy Spirit.....Acts 19:2
R one who is weak..... Rom 14:1
r the Spirit by the.....Gal 3:2
suppose that he will *r* .....James 1:7

RECEIVED
But as many as *r* ..... John 1:12
for God has *r* him..... Rom 14:3
For I *r* from the Lord.... 1 Cor 11:23
r Christ.....Col 2:6
R up in glory .....1 Tim 3:16

RECEIVES
r you *r* Me.....Matt 10:40
and whoever *r* Me..... Mark 9:37

RECONCILE
and that He might *r* .....Eph 2:16

RECONCILED
First be *r* to your .....Matt 5:24
we were *r*..... Rom 5:10
Christ's behalf, be *r* ..... 2 Cor 5:20

RECONCILIATION
now received the *r* ..... Rom 5:11
to us the word of *r*..... 2 Cor 5:19

RECONCILING
cast away is the *r* ..... Rom 11:15
God was in Christ *r*..... 2 Cor 5:19

REDEEM
But God will *r* my soul .....Ps 49:15
r their life from.....Ps 72:14
was going to *r* Israel.....Luke 24:21
r those who were.....Gal 4:5
us, that He might *r*..... Titus 2:14

REDEEMED
Let the *r* of the LORD .....Ps 107:2
r shall walk there .....Is 35:9
sea a road For the *r*.....Is 51:10
And you shall be *r*.....Is 52:3
and *r* His people .....Luke 1:68
Christ has *r* us from.....Gal 3:13
that you were not *r* ..... 1 Pet 1:18
were slain, And have *r* ..... Rev 5:9

REDEEMER
For I know that my *R* .....Job 19:25
Our *R* from Everlasting.....Is 63:16

REDEEMING
r the time .....Eph 5:16

REDEMPTION
those who looked
for *r*.....Luke 2:38
your *r* draws near .....Luke 21:28
grace through the *r*..... Rom 3:24
the adoption, the *r*..... Rom 8:23
sanctification and *r*..... 1 Cor 1:30
In Him we have *r* .....Eph 1:7
for the day of *r*.....Eph 4:30
obtained eternal *r*.....Heb 9:12

REFINED
us as silver is *r*.....Ps 66:10

REFINER
He will sit as a *r*..... Mal 3:3

REFRESHED
his spirit has been *r* ..... 2 Cor 7:13
for he often *r*.....2 Tim 1:16

REFRESHING
r may come from the.....Acts 3:19

REFUGE
eternal God is your *r* ..... Deut 33:27
God is our *r* and .....Ps 46:1
who have fled for *r* .....Heb 6:18

REGENERATION
to you, that in the *r* .....Matt 19:28
the washing of *r* .....Titus 3:5

REGULATIONS
yourselves to *r* .....Col 2:20

REIGN
"And He will *r*.....Luke 1:33
righteousness will *r*..... Rom 5:17
so grace might *r* ..... Rom 5:21
do not let sin *r*..... Rom 6:12
For He must *r* till He..... 1 Cor 15:25
of Christ, and shall *r*..... Rev 20:6

REIGNED
so that as sin *r* ..... Rom 5:21
You have *r* as kings..... 1 Cor 4:8
And they lived and *r*..... Rev 20:4

REIGNS
to Zion, "Your God *r*.....Is 52:7
Lord God Omnipotent *r* ....Rev 19:6

REJECT
"All too well you *r*..... Mark 7:9
R a divisive man.....Titus 3:10

REJECTED
He is despised and *r* .....Is 53:3
r Has become the .....Matt 21:42
many things and be *r* ....Luke 17:25
Moses whom they *r* .....Acts 7:35
to a living stone, *r* ..... 1 Pet 2:4

REJECTS
he who *r* Me *r* .....Luke 10:16

REJOICE
R in the LORD.....Ps 33:1
of Your wings I will *r* .....Ps 63:7
Let them *r* before God.....Ps 68:3
Let the heavens *r*.....Ps 96:11
Let the earth *r*.....Ps 97:1
We will *r* and be glad.....Ps 118:24
She shall *r* in time to ..... Prov 31:25
R, O young man ..... Eccl 11:9
your heart shall *r*.....Is 66:14
Do not *r* over me ..... Mic 7:8
do not *r*.....Luke 10:20
you would *r* .....John 14:28
but the world will *r* .....John 16:20
and your heart will *r*.....John 16:22
R with those who ..... Rom 12:15
and in this I *r* .....Phil 1:18
faith, I am glad and *r*.....Phil 2:17
R in the Lord always .....Phil 4:4
R always ..... 1 Thess 5:16
yet believing, you *r* ..... 1 Pet 1:8

REJOICED
And my spirit has *r*.....Luke 1:47
In that hour Jesus *r*.....Luke 10:21
Abraham *r*..... John 8:56

REJOICES
glad, and my glory *r* .....Ps 16:9
but *r* in the truth..... 1 Cor 13:6

REJOICING
come again with *r* .....Ps 126:6
he went on his way *r*.....Acts 8:39
confidence and the *r*.....Heb 3:6

RELIGION
in self-imposed *r*.....Col 2:23
and undefiled *r* .....James 1:27

RELIGIOUS
things you are very *r* .....Acts 17:22

REMAIN
that My joy may *r* .....John 15:11
your fruit should *r*.....John 15:16
"If I will that he *r*.....John 21:22
the greater part *r*..... 1 Cor 15:6
are alive and *r*..... 1 Thess 4:15
the things which *r* .....Rev 3:2

REMAINS
"While the earth *r* .....Gen 8:22
Therefore your sin *r*.....John 9:41
There *r* therefore a.....Heb 4:9

REMEMBER
"*R* the Sabbath day.....Ex 20:8
But we will *r* the name.....Ps 20:7
r Your name in the.....Ps 119:55
R now your Creator..... Eccl 12:1
r the former things.....Is 43:18
and their sin I will *r* ..... Jer 31:34
In wrath *r* mercy .....Hab 3:2
And to *r* His holy.....Luke 1:72
"*R* Lot's wife.....Luke 17:32
r the words of the.....Acts 20:35
R that Jesus Christ.....2 Tim 2:8
R those who rule .....Heb 13:7

REMEMBERED
Then God *r* Noah .....Gen 8:1
r His covenant with ..... Ex 2:24
r His covenant forever .....Ps 105:8
yea, we wept When we *r*....Ps 137:1
And Peter *r* the word.....Matt 26:75
r the word of the Lord....Acts 11:16

REMEMBRANCE
r my song in the night.....Ps 77:6
Put Me in *r*.....Is 43:26
do this in *r* of Me.....Luke 22:19
do this in *r* of Me..... 1 Cor 11:24

REMISSION
for the *r*..... Mark 1:4
Jesus Christ for the *r* .....Acts 2:38
where there is *r* .....Heb 10:18

REMNANT
The *r* will return .....Is 10:21
time there is a *r* ..... Rom 11:5

REMOVE
r this cup from Me .....Luke 22:42
r your lampstand..... Rev 2:5

REMOVED
Though the earth be *r* .....Ps 46:2
And the hills be *r*.....Is 54:10
this mountain, 'Be *r* .....Matt 21:21

RENDER
What shall I *r* to the.....Ps 116:12
"*R* therefore to Caesar....Matt 22:21

RENEW
r a steadfast.....Ps 51:10
on the LORD Shall *r* .....Is 40:31

RENEWED
that your youth is *r*.....Ps 103:5
inward man is being *r* .... 2 Cor 4:16
and be *r* in the spirit .....Eph 4:23

RENEWING
transformed by the *r*..... Rom 12:2

REPAID
Shall evil be *r*..... Jer 18:20

REPAY
again, I will *r*.....Luke 10:35
they cannot *r*.....Luke 14:14
R no one evil for evil ..... Rom 12:17
is Mine, I will *r*..... Rom 12:19
r their parents.....1 Tim 5:4

REPENT
I abhor myself, And *r* .....Job 42:6
"R, for the kingdom .....Matt 3:2
you *r* you will all .....Luke 13:3
said to them, "*R* .....Acts 2:38
men everywhere to *r* .....Acts 17:30
be zealous and *r* ..... Rev 3:19

REPENTANCE
you with water unto *r*.....Matt 3:11
a baptism of *r* for the..... Mark 1:4
persons who need no *r*....Luke 15:7
renew them again to *r*.....Heb 6:6
found no place for *r*.....Heb 12:17
all should come to *r* .....2 Pet 3:9

REPENTED
it, because they *r* .....Matt 12:41

REPROACH
R has broken my heart .....Ps 69:20
with dishonor comes *r*.....Prov 18:3
not remember the *r*.....Is 54:4
Because I bore the *r*..... Jer 31:19
these things You *r*.....Luke 11:45
lest he fall into *r* .....1 Tim 3:7
esteeming the *r* .....Heb 11:26
and without *r* .....James 1:5

REPROACHED
If you are *r* for the..... 1 Pet 4:14

REPROOF
for doctrine, for *r*.....2 Tim 3:16

REPUTATION
seven men of good *r* .....Acts 6:3
made Himself of no *r*.....Phil 2:7

REQUESTS
r be made known .....Phil 4:6

REQUIRE
offering You did not *r* .....Ps 40:6
what does the LORD *r* ..... Mic 6:8

REQUIRED
your soul will be *r*.....Luke 12:20
him much will be *r*.....Luke 12:48

RESERVED
"I have *r* for Myself..... Rom 11:4
r in heaven for you ..... 1 Pet 1:4
habitation, He has *r* .....Jude *6*

RESIST
r an evil person.....Matt 5:39
r the Holy Spirit.....Acts 7:51
R the devil and he .....James 4:7

RESISTED
For who has *r* His will..... Rom 9:19
for he has greatly *r* .....2 Tim 4:15
You have not yet *r* .....Heb 12:4

RESISTS
"God *r* the proud .....James 4:6
for "God *r* the proud ..... 1 Pet 5:5

REST
is the Sabbath of *r*..... Ex 31:15
to build a house of *r*..... 1 Chr 28:2
R in the LORD.....Ps 37:7
fly away and be at *r*.....Ps 55:6
"This is the *r*.....Is 28:12
is the place of My *r* .....Is 66:1
and I will give you *r*.....Matt 11:28
shall not enter My *r* .....Heb 3:11
remains therefore a *r*.....Heb 4:9
that they should *r*.....Rev 6:11
"that they may *r* .....Rev 14:13
But the *r* of the dead.....Rev 20:5

RESTED
He had done, and He *r*.....Gen 2:2
"And God *r* on the.....Heb 4:4

RESTORE
R to me the joy .....Ps 51:12
"So I will *r* to you .....Joel 2:25
and will *r* all things.....Matt 17:11
You at this time *r* .....Acts 1:6
who are spiritual *r* .....Gal 6:1

RESTORES
He *r* my soul.....Ps 23:3

RESTS
r quietly in the heart..... Prov 14:33

RESURRECTION
to her, "I am the *r*.....John 11:25
them Jesus and the *r* .....Acts 17:18
the likeness of His *r*.....Rom 6:5
say that there is no *r*..... 1 Cor 15:12
and the power of His *r* .....Phil 3:10
obtain a better *r*.....Heb 11:35
This is the first *r*.....Rev 20:5

RETURN
womb, naked shall he *r*.... Eccl 5:15
Let him *r* to the LORD.....Is 55:7
me, and I will *r* ..... Jer 31:18
"*R* to Me..... Zech 1:3
he says, 'I will *r* .....Matt 12:44

RETURNED
astray, but have now *r* .... 1 Pet 2:25

RETURNING
r evil for evil or..... 1 Pet 3:9

RETURNS
As a dog *r* to his own .... Prov 26:11
"A dog *r* to his own.....2 Pet 2:22

REVEAL
the Son wills to *r* Him ....Matt 11:27
r His Son in me.....Gal 1:16

REVEALED
things which are *r*..... Deut 29:29
righteousness to be *r* .....Is 56:1
the Son of Man is *r* .....Luke 17:30
the wrath of God is *r* ..... Rom 1:18
glory which shall be *r*..... Rom 8:18
the Lord Jesus is *r*..... 2 Thess 1:7
lawless one will be *r* ..... 2 Thess 2:8
ready to be *r* in the ..... 1 Pet 1:5
when His glory is *r* ..... 1 Pet 4:13
r what we shall be..... 1 John 3:2

REVELATION
Where there is no *r*..... Prov 29:18
it came through the *r*.....Gal 1:12
spirit of wisdom and *r*.....Eph 1:17
r He made known to.....Eph 3:3
and glory at the *r* ..... 1 Pet 1:7

REVERENCE
and *r* My sanctuary ..... Lev 19:30
God acceptably with *r*.....Heb 12:28

REVERENT
man who is always *r* ..... Prov 28:14
their wives must be *r*.....1 Tim 3:11

REVILE
are you when they *r*.....Matt 5:11
r God's high priest .....Acts 23:4

REVILED
crucified with Him *r* ..... Mark 15:32
who, when He was *r*.....1 Pet 2:23

REVIVAL
give us a measure of *r*.....Ezra 9:8

REVIVE
Will You not *r* us.....Ps 85:6
two days He will *r*.....Hos 6:2

REWARD
exceedingly great *r*.....Gen 15:1
look, And see the *r*.....Ps 91:8
Behold, His *r* is with .....Is 40:10
for great is your *r*.....Matt 5:12
you, they have their *r*.....Matt 6:2
no means lose his *r*.....Matt 10:42
we receive the due *r*.....Luke 23:41
will receive his own *r*..... 1 Cor 3:8
cheat you of your *r*.....Col 2:18
for he looked to the *r*.....Heb 11:26
quickly, and My *r*.....Rev 22:12

REWARDS
Whoever *r* evil for..... Prov 17:13
And follows after *r*.....Is 1:23

RICH
Abram was very *r*.....Gen 13:2
The *r* and the poor.....Prov 22:2
r rules over the poor.....Prov 22:7
r man is wise in his..... Prov 28:11
Do not curse the *r* ..... Eccl 10:20
it is hard for a *r* .....Matt 19:23
to you who are *r*.....Luke 6:24
the *r* man's table.....Luke 16:21
for he was very *r*.....Luke 18:23
You are already *r*..... 1 Cor 4:8
though He was *r*..... 2 Cor 8:9
who desire to be *r* .....1 Tim 6:9
of this world to be *r* .....James 2:5
you say, 'I am *r*.....Rev 3:17

RICHES
R and honor are .....Prov 8:18
R do not profit .....Prov 11:4
in his *r* will fall ..... Prov 11:28
of the wise is their *r*..... Prov 14:24
and *r* are an..... Prov 19:14
of the LORD Are *r*.....Prov 22:4
r are not forever ..... Prov 27:24
do you despise the *r*.....Rom 2:4
make known the *r*..... Rom 9:23
what are the *r* .....Eph 1:18
show the exceeding *r*.....Eph 2:7
the unsearchable *r* .....Eph 3:8
r than the treasures.....Heb 11:26
To receive power
and *r* .....Rev 5:12

RICHLY
Christ dwell in you *r*.....Col 3:16
God, who gives us *r* .....1 Tim 6:17

RIGHT
the *r* of the firstborn ..... Deut 21:17
"Is your heart *r* ..... 2 Kin 10:15
Lord, "Sit at My *r* .....Ps 110:1
a way which seems *r*..... Prov 14:12
clothed and in his *r*..... Mark 5:15
to them He gave the *r*..... John 1:12
your heart is not *r* .....Acts 8:21
seven stars in His *r* ..... Rev 2:1

RIGHTEOUS
also destroy the *r*.....Gen 18:23
and they justify the *r* ..... Deut 25:1
that he could be *r* .....Job 15:14
"The *r* see it and.....Job 22:19
r shows mercy and.....Ps 37:21
I have not seen the *r*.....Ps 37:25
The LORD loves the *r*.....Ps 146:8
r is a well of life..... Prov 10:11
r will be gladness ..... Prov 10:28
r will be delivered ..... Prov 11:21
r will be recompensed ... Prov 11:31
the prayer of the *r*..... Prov 15:29
r are bold as a lion .....Prov 28:1
r considers the cause .....Prov 29:7
Do not be overly *r*..... Eccl 7:16
event happens to the *r*..... Eccl 9:2
with My *r* right hand .....Is 41:10
By His knowledge My *r* .....Is 53:11
The *r* perishes .....Is 57:1
they sell the *r* .....Amos 2:6
not come to call the *r*.....Matt 9:13
r men desired to see.....Matt 13:17
r will shine forth as.....Matt 13:43
that they were *r* .....Luke 18:9
this was a *r* .....Luke 23:47
"There is none *r*..... Rom 3:10
r man will one die .....Rom 5:7
Jesus Christ the *r* ..... 1 John 2:1

RIGHTEOUSLY
should live soberly, *r* ..... Titus 2:12
to Him who judges *r* ..... 1 Pet 2:23

RIGHTEOUSNESS
it to him for *r*.....Gen 15:6
I put on *r* .....Job 29:14
I call, O God of my *r* .....Ps 4:1
from the LORD, And *r*.....Ps 24:5
shall speak of Your *r*.....Ps 35:28
the good news of *r* .....Ps 40:9
heavens declare His *r*.....Ps 50:6
R and peace have.....Ps 85:10
R will go before Him .....Ps 85:13
r endures forever.....Ps 111:3
r delivers from death .....Prov 10:2
The *r* of the blameless .....Prov 11:5
the way of *r* is life ..... Prov 12:28
R exalts a nation ..... Prov 14:34
He who follows *r*..... Prov 21:21
R lodged in it.....Is 1:21
in the LORD I have *r*.....Is 45:24
r will be forever.....Is 51:8
I will declare your *r* .....Is 57:12
r as a breastplate.....Is 59:17
r goes forth as.....Is 62:1
THE LORD OUR *R*..... Jer 23:6
to David A Branch
of *r*..... Jer 33:15
The *r* of the righteous....Ezek 18:20
who turn many to *r*..... Dan 12:3
to fulfill all *r* .....Matt 3:15
exceeds the *r* of the.....Matt 5:20
to you in the way of *r* .....Matt 21:32
For in it the *r*..... Rom 1:17
even the *r* of God..... Rom 3:22
accounted to him for *r*..... Rom 4:22
r will reign in life..... Rom 5:17
might reign through *r*..... Rom 5:21
ignorant of God's *r*..... Rom 10:3
might become the *r*..... 2 Cor 5:21
the breastplate of *r*.....Eph 6:14
not having my own *r* .....Phil 3:9
r which we have .....Titus 3:5
not produce the *r*.....James 1:20
a preacher of *r* ..... 2 Pet 2:5
a new earth in which *r* .... 2 Pet 3:13
who practices *r*..... 1 John 2:29
He who practices *r*..... 1 John 3:7

RIGHTLY
wise uses knowledge *r* .....Prov 15:2
r dividing the word .....2 Tim 2:15

RISE
for He makes His sun *r* ....Matt 5:45
third day He will *r*.....Matt 20:19
third day He will *r*.....Luke 18:33
be the first to *r*.....Acts 26:23
in Christ will *r*..... 1 Thess 4:16

RISEN
there has not *r* .....Matt 11:11
disciples that He is *r*.....Matt 28:7
"The Lord is *r*.....Luke 24:34
then Christ is not *r*..... 1 Cor 15:13
if Christ is not *r*..... 1 Cor 15:17
But now Christ is *r*..... 1 Cor 15:20

RIVER(S)
peace to her like a *r*.....Is 66:12
he showed me a pure *r*..... Rev 22:1
By the *r* of Babylon.....Ps 137:1
All the *r* run into the..... Eccl 1:7
his heart will flow *r*..... John 7:38

ROARING
and the waves *r*.....Luke 21:25
walks about like a *r* ..... 1 Pet 5:8

ROARS
"The LORD *r* from.....Amos 1:2
as when a lion *r*..... Rev 10:3

ROBBER
is a thief and a *r* ..... John 10:1
Barabbas was a *r* ..... John 18:40

ROBBERS
also crucified two *r* ..... Mark 15:27
Me are thieves and *r*..... John 10:8

ROBBERY
did not consider it *r* ..... Phil 2:6

ROBE
'Bring out the best *r*.....Luke 15:22
on Him a purple *r*..... John 19:2
Then a white *r* was ..... Rev 6:11

ROBES
have stained all My *r*.....Is 63:3
go around in long *r*.....Luke 20:46
clothed with white *r*..... Rev 7:9

ROCK
you shall strike the *r*.....Ex 17:6
and struck the *r* .....Num 20:11
For their *r* is not ..... Deut 32:31
"The LORD is my *r*.....2 Sam 22:2
And who is a *r* .....2 Sam 22:32
Blessed be my *R*.....2 Sam 22:47
For You are my *r*.....Ps 31:3
r that is higher than.....Ps 61:2
been mindful of the *R*.....Is 17:10
shadow of a great *r*.....Is 32:2
his house on the *r*.....Matt 7:24
r I will build My.....Matt 16:18
stumbling stone and *r*..... Rom 9:33
R that followed them..... 1 Cor 10:4

ROD
Your *r* and Your staff.....Ps 23:4
shall come forth a *R* .....Is 11:1
rule them with a *r* ..... Rev 2:27

ROOM
you a large upper *r* ..... Mark 14:15
no *r* for them in the.....Luke 2:7
into the upper *r*.....Acts 1:13

ROOT
day there shall be a *R*.....Is 11:10
because they had no *r*.....Matt 13:6
of money is a *r*.....1 Tim 6:10
lest any *r* of .....Heb 12:15
I am the *R* and the ..... Rev 22:16

ROOTED
r and built up in Him.....Col 2:7

ROSE
end Christ died and *r*..... Rom 14:9
buried, and that He *r*..... 1 Cor 15:4
Jesus died and *r*..... 1 Thess 4:14

RULE
And he shall *r* .....Gen 3:16
puts an end to all *r*..... 1 Cor 15:24
let the peace of God *r*.....Col 3:15
Let the elders who *r*..... 1 Tim 5:17
Remember those
who *r* .....Heb 13:7

RULER
to Me The One to be *r* ..... Mic 5:2
by Beelzebub, the *r*.....Matt 12:24
the *r* of this world .....John 12:31
'Who made you a *r* .....Acts 7:27

RULERS
And the *r* take counsel .....Ps 2:2
"You know that the *r*.....Matt 20:25
which none of the *r*..... 1 Cor 2:8
powers, against the *r*.....Eph 6:12

RULES
That the Most High *r*..... Dan 4:17
that the Most High *r* ..... Dan 4:32
r his own house well.....1 Tim 3:4

RUN
r and not be weary.....Is 40:31
us, and let us *r* .....Heb 12:1

S

SABAOTH
S had left us a ..... Rom 9:29
ears of the Lord of *S*.....James 5:4

SABBATH(S)
"Remember the *S* ..... Ex 20:8
S was made for man..... Mark 2:27
S you shall keep ..... Ex 31:13

SACRIFICE
to the LORD than *s* .....Prov 21:3
For the LORD has a *s* .....Is 34:6
of My offerings they *s* .....Hos 8:13
LORD has prepared a *s* .....Zeph 1:7
desire mercy and not *s*.....Matt 9:13
an offering and a *s*.....Eph 5:2
put away sin by the *s*.....Heb 9:26
no longer remains a *s*.....Heb 10:26
offer the *s* of praise.....Heb 13:15

SACRIFICED
s their sons And their.....Ps 106:37

SACRIFICES
The *s* of God are a .....Ps 51:17
multitude of your *s*.....Is 1:11
priests, to offer up *s*.....Heb 7:27
s God is well pleased.....Heb 13:16

SAINTS
s who are on the earth .....Ps 16:3
does not forsake His *s*.....Ps 37:28
Is the death of His *s*.....Ps 116:15
war against the *s*..... Dan 7:21
Jesus, called to be *s* ..... 1 Cor 1:2
the least of all the *s*.....Eph 3:8
be glorified in His *s*..... 2 Thess 1:10
all delivered to the *s* .....Jude 3
shed the blood of *s*.....Rev 16:6

SALT
shall season with *s*..... Lev 2:13
"You are the *s* .....Matt 5:13
s loses its flavor..... Mark 9:50

SALVATION
still, and see the *s*..... Ex 14:13
S belongs to the LORD.....Ps 3:8
is my light and my *s* .....Ps 27:1
God is the God of *s* .....Ps 68:20
joy in the God of my *s*..... Hab 3:18
raised up a horn of *s*.....Luke 1:69
"Nor is there *s*.....Acts 4:12
the power of God to *s*..... Rom 1:16
now is the day of *s*..... 2 Cor 6:2
work out your own *s* .....Phil 2:12
chose you for *s* ..... 2 Thess 2:13
neglect so great a *s* .....Heb 2:3

SAMARITAN
a drink from me, a *S*..... John 4:9

SANCTIFICATION
will of God, your *s* ..... 1 Thess 4:3

SANCTIFIED
they also may be *s* ..... John 17:19
but you were *s* ..... 1 Cor 6:11
for it is *s* by the.....1 Tim 4:5

SANCTIFIES
For both He who *s* .....Heb 2:11

SANCTIFY
s My great name .....Ezek 36:23
"*S* them by Your..... John 17:17
that He might *s*.....Eph 5:26

SANCTUARY
let them make Me a *s* ..... Ex 25:8
and the earthly *s* .....Heb 9:1

SAND
descendants as the *s*.....Gen 32:12
innumerable as the *s* .....Heb 11:12

SAT
into heaven, and *s*..... Mark 16:19
And He who *s* there was..... Rev 4:3

SATAN
before the LORD, and *S* .....Job 1:6
"Away with you, *S* .....Matt 4:10
"Get behind Me, *S*.....Matt 16:23
"How can *S* cast out ..... Mark 3:23
S has asked for you .....Luke 22:31
to the working of *S*..... 2 Thess 2:9
known the depths of *S* ..... Rev 2:24
years have expired, *S* ..... Rev 20:7

SATIATED
s the weary soul ..... Jer 31:25
that are never *s*..... Prov 30:15
of His soul, and be *s* .....Is 53:11

SATISFIED
I shall be *s* when I.....Ps 17:15

SATISFIES
s the longing soul.....Ps 107:9

SATISFY
s us early with Your .....Ps 90:14
long life I will *s*.....Ps 91:16
for what does not *s* .....Is 55:2

SAVE
Oh, *s* me for Your .....Ps 6:4
s the children of the.....Ps 72:4
s the souls of the .....Ps 72:13
That it cannot *s*.....Is 59:1
s you And deliver you ..... Jer 15:20
other, That he may *s*.....Hos 13:10
JESUS, for He will *s*.....Matt 1:21
s his life will .....Matt 16:25
s that which was .....Matt 18:11
let Him *s* Himself if.....Luke 23:35
but to *s* the world ..... John 12:47
the world to *s* sinners.....1 Tim 1:15

SAVED
"He *s* others.....Matt 27:42
That we should be *s*.....Luke 1:71
"Your faith has *s* .....Luke 7:50
might be *s*..... John 3:17
them, saying, "Be *s* ..... Acts 2:40
what must I do to be *s*.... Acts 16:30
which also you are *s*..... 1 Cor 15:2
grace you have been *s*.....Eph 2:8
to His mercy He *s*.....Titus 3:5
of those who are *s*.....Rev 21:24

SAVIOR
I, the LORD, am your *S* .....Is 60:16
rejoiced in God my *S*.....Luke 1:47
the city of David a *S* .....Luke 2:11
up for Israel a *S*.....Acts 13:23
God, who is the *S*.....1 Tim 4:10
and *S* Jesus Christ .....Titus 2:13

SCALES
on it had a pair of *s*..... Rev 6:5

SCARLET
your sins are like *s*.....Is 1:18

SCATTERED
"Israel is like *s* sheep..... Jer 50:17
the sheep will be *s*..... Mark 14:27

SCOFFER(S)
"He who corrects a *s* .....Prov 9:7
s is an abomination.....Prov 24:9

SCORPIONS
on serpents and *s* .....Luke 10:19
They had tails like *s*..... Rev 9:10

SCOURGE
will mock Him, and *s* ... Mark 10:34

SCOURGES
s every son whom .....Heb 12:6

SCRIBES
"Beware of the *s* ..... Mark 12:38

SCRIPTURE(S)
S cannot be broken..... John 10:35
All *S* is given by .....2 Tim 3:16
S must be fulfilled..... Mark 14:49

SCROLL
eat this *s*..... Ezek 3:1
the sky receded as a *s* ..... Rev 6:14

SEA
drowned in the Red *S*..... Ex 15:4
who go down to the *s* .....Ps 107:23
and the *s* obey Him.....Matt 8:27
throne there was a *s* ..... Rev 4:6
there was no more *s* ..... Rev 21:1

SEAL
stands, having this *s* .....2 Tim 2:19

SEALED
by whom you were *s* .....Eph 4:30

SÉANCE
"Please conduct a *s* .....1 Sam 28:8

SEARCH
glory of kings is to *s* .....Prov 25:2
s the Scriptures..... John 5:39

SEARCHED
s the Scriptures.....Acts 17:11

SEARCHES
For the Spirit *s*..... 1 Cor 2:10

SEASON
Be ready in *s* and out .....2 Tim 4:2

SEASONS
the times and the *s*..... 1 Thess 5:1

SEAT
shall make a mercy *s*..... Ex 25:17
before the judgment *s*.... 2 Cor 5:10

SECRET
s things belong ..... Deut 29:29
In the *s* place of His.....Ps 27:5
Father who is in the *s*.....Matt 6:6

SECRETLY
He lies in wait *s* .....Ps 10:9

SECRETS
For He knows the *s*.....Ps 44:21
God will judge the *s*..... Rom 2:16

SECURELY
nation that dwells *s*..... Jer 49:31

SEDUCED
flattering lips she *s*.....Prov 7:21

SEE
in my flesh I shall *s*.....Job 19:26
For they shall *s* God .....Matt 5:8
seeing they do not *s*.....Matt 13:13
rejoiced to *s* My day ..... John 8:56
They shall *s* His face ..... Rev 22:4

SEED(S)
He shall see His *s*.....Is 53:10
S were the promises .....Gal 3:16
you are Abraham's *s* .....Gal 3:29
the good *s* are the.....Matt 13:38

SEEK
pray and *s* My face .....2 Chr 7:14
S the LORD while He.....Is 55:6
s, and you will find .....Matt 7:7
of Man has come to *s* ....Luke 19:10
"You will *s* Me and ..... John 7:34
For all *s* their own.....Phil 2:21
s those things which.....Col 3:1

SEEKING
like a roaring lion, *s*..... 1 Pet 5:8

SEEKS
There is none who *s* ..... Rom 3:11

SEEMS
is a way which *s*..... Prov 14:12

SEEN
s God face to face.....Gen 32:30
No one has *s* God at ..... John 1:18
s Me has *s* the ..... John 14:9
things which are not *s*.... 2 Cor 4:18

SELF-CONTROL
gentleness, *s*.....Gal 5:23
to knowledge *s* ..... 2 Pet 1:6

SELF-SEEKING
envy and *s* exist.....James 3:16

SEND
"Behold, I *s* you out .....Matt 10:16
has sent Me, I also *s* ..... John 20:21

SENSUAL
but is earthly, *s*.....James 3:15

SENT
unless they are *s*..... Rom 10:15

SEPARATES
who repeats a matter *s*.....Prov 17:9

SEPARATION
the middle wall of *s* .....Eph 2:14

SERAPHIM
Above it stood *s*.....Is 6:2

SERIOUS
therefore be *s* and ..... 1 Pet 4:7

SERPENT
s was more cunning.....Gen 3:1
"Make a fiery *s* ..... Num 21:8
Moses lifted up the *s*..... John 3:14

SERVANT(S)
s will rule over a son .....Prov 17:2
good and faithful *s*.....Matt 25:21
are unprofitable *s*.....Luke 17:10

SERVE(S)
to be served, but to *s* .....Matt 20:28
but through love *s*.....Gal 5:13
"If anyone s Me ..... John 12:26

SERVICE
is your reasonable *s*..... Rom 12:1
with good will doing *s*.....Eph 6:7

SERVING
fervent in spirit, *s*..... Rom 12:11

SETTLED
O LORD,Your word is *s* ....Ps 119:89

SEVENTY
"*S* weeks are ..... Dan 9:24

SEVERE
not to be too *s* .....2 Cor 2:5

SHADOW
In the *s* of His hand .....Is 49:2
the law, having a *s*.....Heb 10:1

SHAKE
s the earth.....Is 2:19
I will *s* all nations.....Hag 2:7

SHAKEN
not to be soon *s* ..... 2 Thess 2:2

SHAME
never be put to *s*.....Joel 2:26
to put to *s* the wise..... 1 Cor 1:27
glory is in their *s* .....Phil 3:19

SHAMEFUL
For it is *s* even to.....Eph 5:12

SHARE
to do good and to *s* .....Heb 13:16

SHARING
for your liberal *s*..... 2 Cor 9:13

SHARP
S as a two-edged sword.....Prov 5:4

SHARPEN
s their tongue like a.....Ps 64:3

SHARPNESS
I should use *s* ..... 2 Cor 13:10

SHEATH
your sword into the *s* .... John 18:11

SHEAVES
Bringing his *s*.....Ps 126:6
gather them like *s* ..... Mic 4:12

SHED
which is *s* for many .....Matt 26:28

SHEDDING
blood, and without *s* .....Heb 9:22

SHEEP
s will be scattered .....Zech 13:7
having a hundred *s*.....Luke 15:4
and I know My *s* ..... John 10:14
"He was led as a *s*.....Acts 8:32

SHEET
object like a great *s*.....Acts 10:11

SHELTER(S)
the LORD will be a *s*.....Joel 3:16
s him all the day long.... Deut 33:12

SHEOL
not leave my soul in *S*.....Ps 16:10
the belly of *S* I cried .....Jon 2:2

SHEPHERD(S)
The LORD is my *S*.....Ps 23:1
His flock like a *s*.....Is 40:11
'I will strike the *S*.....Matt 26:31
"I am the good *s* ..... John 10:11
the dead, that great *S* .....Heb 13:20
S the flock of God ..... 1 Pet 5:2
when the Chief *S*..... 1 Pet 5:4
"And I will give you *s*..... Jer 3:15
s have led them astray ..... Jer 50:6

SHIELD
I am your *s* .....Gen 15:1
truth shall be your *s*.....Ps 91:4
all, taking the *s* .....Eph 6:16

SHINE
LORD make His face *s* ..... Num 6:25
among whom you *s* .....Phil 2:15

SHINED
them a light has *s*.....Is 9:2

SHINES
heed as a light that *s*..... 2 Pet 1:19

SHINING
light is already *s* ..... 1 John 2:8

SHIPWRECK
faith have suffered *s* .....1 Tim 1:19

SHOOT
They *s* out the lip .....Ps 22:7

SHORT
have sinned and fall *s* ..... Rom 3:23

SHORTENED
those days were *s*.....Matt 24:22

SHOUT
heaven with a *s*..... 1 Thess 4:16

SHOW
a land that I will *s* .....Gen 12:1
s Him greater works..... John 5:20

SHOWBREAD
s which was not lawful ....Matt 12:4

SHOWERS
make it soft with *s*.....Ps 65:10

SHREWDLY
because he had dealt *s* ....Luke 16:8

SHRINES
who made silver *s* .....Acts 19:24

SHRIVELED
You have *s* me up .....Job 16:8

SHUFFLES
with his eyes, He *s* .....Prov 6:13

SHUNNED
feared God and *s* evil .....Job 1:1

SHUT(S)
For you *s* up the .....Matt 23:13
s his eyes from seeing.....Is 33:15
who opens and no one *s* ..... Rev 3:7

SICK
I was *s* and you.....Matt 25:36
faith will save the *s*.....James 5:15

SICKLE
"Thrust in Your *s* ..... Rev 14:15

SICKNESS
will sustain him in *s*..... Prov 18:14
"This *s* is not unto ..... John 11:4

SICKNESSES
And bore our *s*.....Matt 8:17

SIDE
The LORD is on my *s*.....Ps 118:6

SIFT
s the nations with the .....Is 30:28

SIGH
our years like a *s*.....Ps 90:9

SIGHING
For my *s* comes before.....Job 3:24

SIGHT
and see this great *s* ..... Ex 3:3
by faith, not by *s* ..... 2 Cor 5:7

SIGN(S)
will give you a *s*.....Is 7:14
seeks after a *s* .....Matt 12:39
For Jews request a *s* ..... 1 Cor 1:22
and let them be for *s*.....Gen 1:14
cannot discern the *s*.....Matt 16:3
did many other *s* ..... John 20:30

SILENCE
That You may *s* .....Ps 8:2
seal, there was *s* ..... Rev 8:1

SILENT
season, and am not *s* .....Ps 22:2

SILK
covered you with *s*..... Ezek 16:10

SILLY
They are *s* children..... Jer 4:22

SILVER
may buy the poor for *s*.....Amos 8:6
him thirty pieces of *s*.....Matt 26:15

SIMILITUDE
been made in the *s*.....James 3:9

SIMPLE
making wise the *s* .....Ps 19:7

SIN
and be sure your *s* ..... Num 32:23
Be angry, and do not *s*.....Ps 4:4
s is always before me.....Ps 51:3
soul an offering for *s* .....Is 53:10
And He bore the *s*.....Is 53:12
who takes away the *s*..... John 1:29
"He who is without *s* ..... John 8:7
convict the world of *s*..... John 16:8
s entered the world ..... Rom 5:12
s is not imputed ..... Rom 5:13
s shall not have..... Rom 6:14
Shall we *s* because we..... Rom 6:15
Him who knew no *s*..... 2 Cor 5:21
man of *s* is revealed..... 2 Thess 2:3
we are, yet without *s* .....Heb 4:15
do it, to him it is *s*.....James 4:17
say that we have no *s*..... 1 John 1:8
and he cannot *s* ..... 1 John 3:9

SINCERE
and from *s* faith.....1 Tim 1:5

SINCERITY
simplicity and godly *s* .... 2 Cor 1:12

SINFUL
from me, for I am a *s*.....Luke 5:8
become exceedingly *s* ..... Rom 7:13

SING
Let him *s* psalms .....James 5:13

SINGERS
The *s* went before .....Ps 68:25

SINGING
His presence with *s*.....Ps 100:2
and spiritual songs, *s*.....Eph 5:19

SINK
I *s* in deep mire.....Ps 69:2
to *s* he cried out.....Matt 14:30

SINNED
You only, have I *s* .....Ps 51:4
"Father, I have *s* .....Luke 15:18
for all have *s* and ..... Rom 3:23
that we have not *s*..... 1 John 1:10

SINNER(S)
s who repents than .....Luke 15:7
the ungodly and the *s*..... 1 Pet 4:18
in the path of *s*.....Ps 1:1

the righteous, but *s* .....Matt 9:13
while we were still *s* .....Rom 5:8
many were made *s*..... Rom 5:19
the world to save *s*.....1 Tim 1:15
such hostility from *s* .....Heb 12:3

SINS
from presumptuous *s*.....Ps 19:13
You, Our secret *s*.....Ps 90:8
The soul who *s* shall.....Ezek 18:4
if your brother *s* .....Matt 18:15
s according to the..... 1 Cor 15:3
the forgiveness of *s*.....Eph 1:7
If we confess our *s* ..... 1 John 1:9
propitiation for our *s* ..... 1 John 2:2

SIT(S)
but to *s* on My right .....Matt 20:23
"*S* at My right hand .....Heb 1:13
I will grant to *s* ..... Rev 3:21
It is He who *s* above ..... Is 40:22
so that he *s* as God..... 2 Thess 2:4

SKIN
God made tunics of *s*.....Gen 3:21
LORD and said, "*S* .....Job 2:4
Ethiopian change his *s*..... Jer 13:23

SKULL
to say, Place of a *S*.....Matt 27:33

SLACK
The Lord is not *s* ..... 2 Pet 3:9

SLAIN
is the Lamb who was *s*..... Rev 5:12

SLANDER
whoever spreads *s* ..... Prov 10:18

SLANDERERS
be reverent, not *s* .....1 Tim 3:11

SLAUGHTER
led as a lamb to the *s*.....Is 53:7
as sheep for the *s* ..... Rom 8:36

SLAVE
commits sin is a *s*..... John 8:34
should no longer be *s* .....Rom 6:6

SLAY
s the righteous .....Gen 18:25

SLEEP
God caused a deep *s*.....Gen 2:21
neither slumber nor *s* .....Ps 121:4
He gives His beloved *s* .....Ps 127:2
and many *s*..... 1 Cor 11:30
We shall not all *s*..... 1 Cor 15:51

SLEEPLESSNESS
in labors, in *s* ..... 2 Cor 6:5

SLEEPS
"Our friend Lazarus *s*.... John 11:11

SLEPT
I lay down and *s*.....Ps 3:5

SLING
he had, and his *s* .....1 Sam 17:40

SLIP
Their foot shall *s* ..... Deut 32:35

SLIPPERY
set them in *s* places.....Ps 73:18

SLOW
hear, *s* to speak, *s*.....James 1:19

SLUGGARD
will you slumber, O *s*.....Prov 6:9

SLUMBERING
upon men, While *s*.....Job 33:15

SMALL
And I saw the dead, *s*..... Rev 20:12

SMELL(S)
and he smelled the *s* .....Gen 27:27
s the battle from afar.....Job 39:25

SMITTEN
Him stricken, *S*.....Is 53:4

SMOOTH
And the rough places *s* .....Is 40:4

SMOOTH-SKINNED
man, and I am a *s*.....Gen 27:11

SNARE
is a fowler's *s* .....Hos 9:8
it will come as a *s*.....Luke 21:35
and escape the *s* .....2 Tim 2:26

SNARED
All of them are *s*.....Is 42:22

SNARES
who seek my life lay *s*.....Ps 38:12

SNATCH
neither shall anyone *s* ... John 10:28

SNATCHES
s away what was.....Matt 13:19

SNEER
And you *s* at it ..... Mal 1:13

SNIFFED
They *s* at the wind ..... Jer 14:6

SNOW
shall be whiter than *s* .....Ps 51:7
shall be as white as *s*.....Is 1:18

SOAKED
Their land shall be *s* .....Is 34:7

SOBER
the older men be *s*..... Titus 2:2

SOBERLY
think, but to think *s* ..... Rom 12:3

SODOMITES
nor homosexuals, nor *s*.... 1 Cor 6:9

SOJOURNER(S)
no *s* had to lodge.....Job 31:32
are strangers and *s* ..... Lev 25:23

SOLD
s his birthright .....Gen 25:33
s all that he had.....Matt 13:46
but I am carnal, *s* ..... Rom 7:14

SOLDIER(S)
hardship as a good *s*.....2 Tim 2:3
s twisted a crown ..... John 19:2

SOLITARY
God sets the *s* in.....Ps 68:6

SOMETHING
thinks himself to be *s* .....Gal 6:3

SON
Me, 'You are My *S* .....Ps 2:7
is born, Unto us a *S* .....Is 9:6
fourth is like the *S*..... Dan 3:25
will bring forth a *S*.....Matt 1:21
"This is My beloved *S*.....Matt 3:17
Jesus,You *S* of God.....Matt 8:29
are the Christ, the *S*.....Matt 16:16
Whose *S* is He .....Matt 22:42
of the *S* of Man.....Matt 24:37
'I am the *S* of God .....Matt 27:43
of Jesus Christ, the *S*..... Mark 1:1
out, the only *s* .....Luke 7:12
The only begotten *S*..... John 1:18
that this is the *S*..... John 1:34
of the only begotten *S* ..... John 3:18
S can do nothing ..... John 5:19
s abides forever ..... John 8:35
you believe in the *S* ..... John 9:35
I said, 'I am the *S* ..... John 10:36
behold your *s* ..... John 19:26
Jesus Christ is the *S*..... Acts 8:37
by sending His own *S*.....Rom 8:3
not spare His own *S* ..... Rom 8:32
live by faith in the *S* .....Gal 2:20
God sent forth His *S* .....Gal 4:4
the knowledge of the *S* .....Eph 4:13
"You are My *S* .....Heb 1:5
though He was a *S*.....Heb 5:8
but made like the *S*.....Heb 7:3
"This is My beloved *S*..... 2 Pet 1:17
denies the *S*..... 1 John 2:23
One like the *S* of Man ..... Rev 1:13

SONG(S)
Sing to Him a new *s* .....Ps 33:3
He has put a new *s* .....Ps 40:3
I will sing a new *s* .....Ps 144:9
they sang a new *s*..... Rev 5:9
my Maker, Who gives *s*....Job 35:10
and spiritual *s* .....Eph 5:19

SONS
s shall come from afar .....Is 60:4
He will purity the *s* .....Mal 3:3
you may become *s* ..... John 12:36
who are of faith are *s* .....Gal 3:7
the adoption as *s* .....Gal 4:5
in bringing many *s*.....Heb 2:10
speaks to you as to *s*.....Heb 12:5

SOON
For it is *s* cut off .....Ps 90:10

SORCERESS
shall not permit a *s* ..... Ex 22:18

SORCERY
idolatry, *s*.....Gal 5:20

SORES
and putrefying *s* .....Is 1:6

SORROW
multiply your *s* .....Gen 3:16
s is continually.....Ps 38:17
And He adds no *s*..... Prov 10:22
Your *s* is incurable..... Jer 30:15
them sleeping from *s* .....Luke 22:45
s will be turned.....John 16:20
s produces
repentance..... 2 Cor 7:10
s as others who..... 1 Thess 4:13
no more death, nor *s* ..... Rev 21:4

SORROWFUL
But I am poor and *s* .....Ps 69:29
he went away *s*.....Matt 19:22
soul is exceedingly *s*.....Matt 26:38
and I may be less *s* .....Phil 2:28

SORROWS
s shall be multiplied.....Ps 16:4
by men, A Man of *s* .....Is 53:3
are the beginning of *s*.....Matt 24:8

SORRY
s that He had made
man.....Gen 6:6
For you were made *s* ..... 2 Cor 7:9

SOUGHT
I *s* the LORD.....Ps 34:4
s what was lost .....Ezek 34:4

SOUL
with all your *s*..... Deut 6:5
"My *s* loathes my life.....Job 10:1
s draws near the Pit.....Job 33:22
will not leave my *s*.....Ps 16:10
converting the *s*.....Ps 19:7
He restores my *s* .....Ps 23:3
you cast down, O my *s*.....Ps 42:5
Let my *s* live.....Ps 119:175
No one cares for my *s* .....Ps 142:4
me wrongs his own *s*.....Prov 8:36
When You make His *s* .....Is 53:10
s delight itself.....Is 55:2
The *s* of the father As..... Ezek 18:4
able to destroy both *s* .....Matt 10:28
and loses his own *s*.....Matt 16:26
with all your *s*.....Matt 22:37
your whole spirit, *s* ..... 1 Thess 5:23
to the saving of the *s* .....Heb 10:39
his way will save a *s*.....James 5:20
health, just as your *s*..... 3 John 2

SOULS
And will save the *s*.....Ps 72:13
And he who wins *s* ..... Prov 11:30
unsettling your *s*.....Acts 15:24
is able to save your *s* .....James 1:21

SOUND
voice was like the *s*.....Ezek 43:2
do not *s* a trumpet.....Matt 6:2
s words which you.....2 Tim 1:13

SOUNDNESS
him this perfect *s*.....Acts 3:16

SOUNDS
a distinction in the *s* ..... 1 Cor 14:7

SOW
s trouble reap.....Job 4:8
Those who *s* in tears.....Ps 126:5
Blessed are you who *s*.....Is 32:20
"They *s* the wind.....Hos 8:7
s is not made alive.....1 Cor 15:36

SOWER
"Behold, a *s* went.....Matt 13:3

SOWN
s spiritual things.....1 Cor 9:11
of righteousness is *s*.....James 3:18

SOWS
s the good seed is the.....Matt 13:37
'One *s* and another.....John 4:37
for whatever a man *s*.....Gal 6:7

SPARE
He who did not *s*.....Rom 8:32
if God did not *s*.....2 Pet 2:4

SPARES
s his rod hates his.....Prov 13:24

SPARKLES
it is red, When it *s*.....Prov 23:31

SPARKS
to trouble, As the *s*.....Job 5:7

SPARROW(S)
s has found a home.....Ps 84:3
than many *s*.....Matt 10:31

SPAT
Then they *s* on Him.....Matt 27:30

SPEAK
only the word that I *s*.....Num 22:35
oh, that God would *s*.....Job 11:5
And a time to *s*.....Eccl 3:7
s anymore in His name.....Jer 20:9
or what you should *s*.....Matt 10:19
to you when all men *s*.....Luke 6:26
s what I have seen.....John 8:38
He hears He will *s*.....John 16:13
Spirit and began to *s*.....Acts 2:4

SPEAKING
envy, and all evil *s*.....1 Pet 2:1

SPEAKS
to face, as a man *s*.....Ex 33:11
God has sent *s*.....John 3:34
When he *s* a lie.....John 8:44
he being dead still *s*.....Heb 11:4
of sprinkling that *s*.....Heb 12:24

SPEAR(S)
His side with a *s*.....John 19:34
And their *s* into.....Is 2:4

SPECK
do you look at the *s*.....Matt 7:3

SPECTACLE
you were made a *s*.....Heb 10:33

SPEECH
one language and one *s*.....Gen 11:1
his *s* contemptible.....2 Cor 10:10
s always be with grace.....Col 4:6

SPEEDILY
I call, answer me *s*.....Ps 102:2

SPEND
you *s* money for.....Is 55:2
amiss, that you may *s*.....James 4:3

SPEW
nor hot, I will *s*.....Rev 3:16

SPIES
men who had been *s*.....Josh 6:23

SPIN
neither toil nor *s*.....Matt 6:28

SPINDLE
her hand holds the *s*.....Prov 31:19

SPIRIT
And the *S* of God was.....Gen 1:2
S shall not strive.....Gen 6:3
S that is upon you.....Num 11:17
portion of your *s*.....2 Kin 2:9
Then a *s* passed.....Job 4:15
hand I commit my *s*.....Ps 31:5
The *s* of a man is the.....Prov 20:27
s will return to God.....Eccl 12:7
S has gathered them.....Is 34:16
I have put My *S*.....Is 42:1
"The *S* of the Lord.....Is 61:1
S entered me when He.....Ezek 2:2
and a new *s*.....Ezek 18:31
"I will put My *S*.....Ezek 36:27
walk in a false *s*.....Mic 2:11
and He saw the *S*.....Matt 3:16
I will put My *S*.....Matt 12:18
S descending upon.....Mark 1:10
s indeed is willing.....Mark 14:38
go before Him in the *s*.....Luke 1:17
manner of *s* you are of.....Luke 9:55
hands I commit My *s*.....Luke 23:46
they had seen a *s*.....Luke 24:37
"God is *S*.....John 4:24
I speak to you are *s*.....John 6:63
"the *S* of truth.....John 14:17
but if a *s* or an angel.....Acts 23:9
the flesh but in the *S*.....Rom 8:9
does not have the *S*.....Rom 8:9
s that we are children.....Rom 8:16
what the mind of the *S*.....Rom 8:27
to us through His *S*.....1 Cor 2:10
gifts, but the same *S*.....1 Cor 12:4
but the *S* gives life.....2 Cor 3:6
Now the Lord is the *S*.....2 Cor 3:17
Having begun in the *S*.....Gal 3:3
has sent forth the *S*.....Gal 4:6
with the Holy *S*.....Eph 1:13
the unity of the *S*.....Eph 4:3
stand fast in one *s*.....Phil 1:27
S expressly says that.....1 Tim 4:1
S who dwells in us.....James 4:5
made alive by the *S*.....1 Pet 3:18
do not believe every *s*.....1 John 4:1
you know the *S*.....1 John 4:2
has given us of His *S*.....1 John 4:13
S who bears witness.....1 John 5:6
not having the *S*.....Jude 19
I was in the *S* on the.....Rev 1:10
him hear what the *S*.....Rev 2:7
And the *S* and the.....Rev 22:17

SPIRITS
Who makes His angels *s*.....Ps 104:4
heed to deceiving *s*.....1 Tim 4:1

SPIRITUAL
s judges all things.....1 Cor 2:15
However, the *s* is not.....1 Cor 15:46
s restore such a one.....Gal 6:1

SPIRITUALLY
s minded is life.....Rom 8:6

SPITEFULLY
for those who *s*.....Matt 5:44

SPITTING
face from shame and *s*.....Is 50:6

SPOKE
"No man ever *s*.....John 7:46
I was a child, I *s*.....1 Cor 13:11
in various ways *s*.....Heb 1:1
s as they were moved.....2 Pet 1:21

SPONGE
them ran and took a *s*.....Matt 27:48

SPOT(S)
church, not having *s*.....Eph 5:27
Himself without *s*.....Heb 9:14
These are *s* in your.....Jude 12

SPRING
Truth shall *s* out of.....Ps 85:11
s send forth fresh.....James 3:11

SPRINGING
a fountain of water *s*.....John 4:14

SPRINKLED
having our hearts *s*.....Heb 10:22

SPRINKLING
s that speaks.....Heb 12:24

SPROUT
and the seed should *s*.....Mark 4:27

STAFF
this Jordan with my *s*.....Gen 32:10
Your rod and Your *s*.....Ps 23:4
on the top of his *s*.....Heb 11:21

STAMMERING
s tongue that you.....Is 33:19

STAMPING
At the noise of the *s*.....Jer 47:3

STAND
one shall be able to *s*.....Deut 7:24
lives, And He shall *s*.....Job 19:25
ungodly shall not *s*.....Ps 1:5
not lack a man to *s*.....Jer 35:19
And who can *s* when He.....Mal 3:2
that kingdom cannot *s*.....Mark 3:24
he will be made to *s*.....Rom 14:4
Watch, *s* fast in the.....1 Cor 16:13
for by faith you *s*.....2 Cor 1:24
having done all, to *s*.....Eph 6:13
S therefore.....Eph 6:14
of God in which you *s*.....1 Pet 5:12
"Behold, I *s* at the.....Rev 3:20

STANDING
they love to pray *s*.....Matt 6:5
and the Son of Man *s*.....Acts 7:56

STANDS
him who thinks he *s*.....1 Cor 10:12

STAR(S)
He made the *s* also.....Gen 1:16
For we have seen His *s*.....Matt 2:2
born as many as the *s*.....Heb 11:12
Bright and Morning *S*.....Rev 22:16

STATE
learned in whatever *s*.....Phil 4:11

STATURE
in wisdom and *s*.....Luke 2:52

STATUTE(S)
shall be a perpetual *s*.....Lev 3:17
the *s* of the LORD are.....Ps 19:8
Teach me Your *s*.....Ps 119:12

STAY
S here and watch.....Matt 26:38

STEADFAST
brethren, be *s*.....1 Cor 15:58
soul, both sure and *s*.....Heb 6:19
Resist him, *s* in the.....1 Pet 5:9

STEADFASTLY
s set His face to go.....Luke 9:51
And they continued *s*.....Acts 2:42

STEADFASTNESS
good order and the *s*.....Col 2:5

STEADILY
could not look *s*.....2 Cor 3:13

STEADY
and his hands were *s*.....Ex 17:12

STEAL
"You shall not *s*.....Ex 20:15
thieves break in and *s*.....Matt 6:19
night and *s* Him away.....Matt 27:64

STEM
forth a Rod from the *s*.....Is 11:1

STENCH
there will be a *s*.....Is 3:24
this time there is a *s*.....John 11:39

STEP
s has turned from the.....Job 31:7

STEPS
The *s* of a good man.....Ps 37:23
And established my *s*.....Ps 40:2
the LORD directs his *s*.....Prov 16:9
should follow His *s*.....1 Pet 2:21

STEWARD
be blameless, as a *s*.....Titus 1:7

STEWARDS
of Christ and *s*.....1 Cor 4:1

STEWARDSHIP
entrusted with a *s*..... 1 Cor 9:17

STICK
'For Joseph, the *s* .....Ezek 37:16

STICKS
a man gathering *s* .....Num 15:32

STIFF
rebellion and your *s*..... Deut 31:27

STIFF-NECKED
"You *s* and.....Acts 7:51

STILL
When I awake, I am *s* .....Ps 139:18
sea, "Peace, be *s* ..... Mark 4:39

STILLBORN
burial, I say that a *s* ..... Eccl 6:3

STINGS
like a serpent, And *s*..... Prov 23:32

STIR
I remind you to *s* .....2 Tim 1:6

STIRRED
So the LORD *s* up the .....Hag 1:14

STIRS
It *s* up the dead for.....Is 14:9

STOCKS
s that were in the ..... Jer 20:2

STOIC
and *S* philosophers .....Acts 17:18

STOMACH
Foods for the *s* ..... 1 Cor 6:13

STOMACH'S
little wine for your *s* .....1 Tim 5:23

STONE
him, a pillar of *s* .....Gen 35:14
s shall be a witness.....Josh 24:27
s which the builders.....Ps 118:22
I lay in Zion a *s* .....Is 28:16
take the heart of *s* .....Ezek 36:26
will give him a *s* .....Matt 7:9
s will be broken.....Matt 21:44
s which the builders.....Luke 20:17
those works do you *s*.....John 10:32
Him as to a living *s*..... 1 Pet 2:4

STONED
s Stephen as he was .....Acts 7:59
They were *s*.....Heb 11:37

STONES
Abraham from these *s* .....Matt 3:9
command that these *s* .....Matt 4:3

STONY
fell on *s* ground ..... Mark 4:5

STOOPED
And again He *s* down..... John 8:8

STORM
He calms the *s* .....Ps 107:29
for a shelter from *s* .....Is 4:6

STRAIGHT
Make *s* in the desert A.....Is 40:3
and make *s* paths for.....Heb 12:13

STRANGE
s thing happened..... 1 Pet 4:12

STRANGER(S)
and loves the *s*..... Deut 10:18
I was a *s* and you .....Matt 25:35
know the voice of *s*..... John 10:5
you are no longer *s*.....Eph 2:19

STRAP
than I, whose sandal *s*..... Mark 1:7

STRAW
stones, wood, hay, *s*..... 1 Cor 3:12

STRAYED
Yet I have not *s* .....Ps 119:110
some have *s*.....1 Tim 6:10

STREET(S)
In the middle of its *s*..... Rev 22:2
You taught in our *s*.....Luke 13:26

STRENGTH
s no man shall.....1 Sam 2:9
The LORD is the *s* .....Ps 27:1
is our refuge and *s* .....Ps 46:1
They go from *s* to.....Ps 84:7
S and honor are her..... Prov 31:25
might He increases *s* .....Is 40:29
O LORD, my *s* and my ..... Jer 16:19
were still without *s*.....Rom 5:6
s is made perfect ..... 2 Cor 12:9

STRENGTHEN
And He shall *s* .....Ps 27:14
S the weak hands.....Is 35:3
s your brethren.....Luke 22:32
s the things..... Rev 3:2

STRENGTHENED
unbelief, but was *s* ..... Rom 4:20
stood with me and *s*.....2 Tim 4:17

STRENGTHENING
s the souls of the .....Acts 14:22

STRENGTHENS
through Christ who *s*.....Phil 4:13

STRETCHED
I have *s* out my hands .....Ps 88:9
"All day long I have *s*.... Rom 10:21

STRETCHES
For he *s* out his hand.....Job 15:25

STRICKEN
of My people He was *s*.....Is 53:8

STRIFE
man stirs up *s* ..... Prov 15:18
even from envy and *s*.....Phil 1:15
which come envy, *s* .....1 Tim 6:4

STRIKE
The sun shall not *s*.....Ps 121:6
"*S* the Shepherd ..... Zech 13:7
'I will *s* the Shepherd.....Matt 26:31

STRIPES
s we are healed.....Is 53:5
s you were healed ..... 1 Pet 2:24

STRIVE
"My Spirit shall not *s*.....Gen 6:3
"*S* to enter through .....Luke 13:24
the Lord not to *s*.....2 Tim 2:14

STRONG
The LORD *s* and mighty .....Ps 24:8
S is Your hand.....Ps 89:13
"When a *s* man .....Luke 11:21
We then who are *s*..... Rom 15:1
weak, then I am *s*..... 2 Cor 12:10
my brethren, be *s* .....Eph 6:10
were made *s* .....Heb 11:34

STRONGHOLD
of my salvation, my *s* .....Ps 18:2

STRUCK
s the rock twice ..... Num 20:11
the hand of God has *s* .....Job 19:21
Behold, He *s* the rock.....Ps 78:20
in My wrath I *s* .....Is 60:10
s the head from the..... Hab 3:13
took the reed and *s* .....Matt 27:30

STUBBORN-HEARTED
"Listen to Me, you *s*.....Is 46:12

STUBBORNNESS
do not look on the *s*..... Deut 9:27

STUDIED
having never *s* ..... John 7:15

STUMBLE
have caused many to *s*..... Mal 2:8
you will be made to *s* .....Matt 26:31
immediately they *s*..... Mark 4:17
who believe in Me to *s* ... Mark 9:42
For we all *s* in many .....James 3:2

STUMBLING
the deaf, nor put a *s*..... Lev 19:14
But a stone of *s* .....Is 8:14
Behold, I will lay *s* ..... Jer 6:21
I lay in Zion a *s* ..... Rom 9:33
this, not to put a *s*..... Rom 14:13
of yours become a *s*..... 1 Cor 8:9
and "A stone of *s*..... 1 Pet 2:8
to keep you from *s* .....Jude 24

STUPID
hates correction is *s*.....Prov 12:1

SUBDUE
s all things to.....Phil 3:21

SUBJECT
for it is not *s* .....Rom 8:7
Let every soul be *s*..... Rom 13:1
all their lifetime *s* .....Heb 2:15

SUBJECTION
put all things in *s*.....Heb 2:8

SUBMISSION
his children in *s* .....1 Tim 3:4

SUBMISSIVE
Yes, all of you be *s*..... 1 Pet 5:5

SUBMIT
Therefore *s* to God.....James 4:7
s yourselves to every ..... 1 Pet 2:13

SUBSTANCE
Bless his *s* ..... Deut 33:11

SUCCESS
please give me *s* .....Gen 24:12
But wisdom brings *s*..... Eccl 10:10

SUCCESSFUL
Joseph, and he was a *s*.....Gen 39:2

SUDDENLY
s there was with the.....Luke 2:13

SUE
s you and take away.....Matt 5:40

SUFFER
for the Christ to *s* .....Luke 24:46
Christ, if indeed we *s*..... Rom 8:17
in Him, but also to *s*.....Phil 1:29

SUFFERED
s these things and to.....Luke 24:26
for whom I have *s* .....Phil 3:8
after you have *s* ..... 1 Pet 5:10

SUFFERING(S)
anyone among you *s* .....James 5:13
I consider that the *s* ..... Rom 8:18
perfect through *s* .....Heb 2:10

SUFFERS
Love *s* long and is..... 1 Cor 13:4

SUFFICIENCY
but our *s* is from God ..... 2 Cor 3:5

SUFFICIENT
S for the day is Its.....Matt 6:34

SUM
How great is the *s* .....Ps 139:17

SUMPTUOUSLY
fine linen and fared *s*.....Luke 16:19

SUN
So the *s* stood still.....Josh 10:13
s shall not strike you .....Ps 121:6
s returned ten degrees.....Is 38:8
The *s* and moon grow .....Joel 2:10
s shall go down on the ..... Mic 3:6
for He makes His *s* .....Matt 5:45
the *s* was darkened.....Luke 23:45
do not let the *s* .....Eph 4:26
s became black as ..... Rev 6:12
had no need of the *s* ..... Rev 21:23

SUPPER
to eat the Lord's *S*..... 1 Cor 11:20
took the cup after *s* ..... 1 Cor 11:25
together for the *s*..... Rev 19:17

SUPPLICATION
by prayer and *s* .....Phil 4:6

SUPPLIES
by what every joint *s*.....Eph 4:16
SUPPLY
And my God shall *s*.....Phil 4:19
SUPPORT
this, that you must *s*.....Acts 20:35
SURE
s your sin will find.....Num 32:23
call and election *s*.....2 Pet 1:10
SURETY
Be *s* for Your servant.....Ps 119:122
Jesus has become a *s*.....Heb 7:22
SURROUND
LORD, mercy shall *s*.....Ps 32:10
SURROUNDED
also, since we are *s*.....Heb 12:1
SUSPICIONS
reviling, evil *s*.....1 Tim 6:4
SUSTAIN
S me with cakes of.....Song 2:5
SWADDLING
Him in *s* cloths.....Luke 2:7
SWALLOW
a gnat and *s* a camel.....Matt 23:24
SWEAR
'You shall not *s*.....Matt 5:33
began to curse and *s*.....Matt 26:74
SWEARING
By *s* and lying.....Hos 4:2
SWEARS
but whoever *s* by the.....Matt 23:18
SWEAT
His *s* became like.....Luke 22:44
SWEET
s are Your words.....Ps 119:103
but it will be as *s*.....Rev 10:9
SWEETNESS
mouth like honey in *s*.....Ezek 3:3
SWELLING
they speak great *s*.....2 Pet 2:18
SWIFT
let every man be *s*.....James 1:19
SWIM
night I make my bed *s*.....Ps 6:6
SWOON
As they *s* like the.....Lam 2:12
SWORD
s which turned every.....Gen 3:24
The *s* of the LORD is.....Is 34:6
'A *s* is sharpened.....Ezek 21:9
Bow and *s* of battle I.....Hos 2:18
to bring peace but a *s*.....Matt 10:34
for all who take the *s*.....Matt 26:52
the *s* of the Spirit.....Eph 6:17
than any two-edged *s*.....Heb 4:12
mouth goes a sharp *s*.....Rev 19:15
SWORDS
shall beat their *s*.....Is 2:4
SWORE
So I *s* in My wrath.....Heb 3:11
SWORN
"By Myself I have *s*.....Gen 22:16
"The LORD has *s*.....Heb 7:21
SYMBOLIC
which things are *s*.....Gal 4:24
SYMPATHIZE
Priest who cannot *s*.....Heb 4:15
SYMPATHY
My *s* is stirred.....Hos 11:8
SYNAGOGUE
but are a *s* of Satan.....Rev 2:9

T

TABERNACLE
t He shall hide me.....Ps 27:5
I will abide in Your *t*.....Ps 61:4
And will rebuild the *t*.....Acts 15:16
and more perfect *t*.....Heb 9:11
TABERNACLES
Feast of *T* was at hand.....John 7:2
TABLE(S)
prepare a *t* before me.....Ps 23:5
dogs under the *t*.....Mark 7:28
of the Lord's *t*.....1 Cor 10:21
and overturned the *t*.....Matt 21:12
TABLET
is engraved On the *t*.....Jer 17:1
TAKE
t Your Holy Spirit.....Ps 51:11
"*T* My yoke upon.....Matt 11:29
and *t* up his cross.....Mark 8:34
My life that I may *t*.....John 10:17
TAKEN
He was *t* from prison.....Is 53:8
one will be *t* and the.....Matt 24:40
until He is *t* out of.....2 Thess 2:7
TALEBEARER
t reveals secrets.....Prov 11:13
TALENT
went and hid your *t*.....Matt 25:25
TALK
shall *t* of them when.....Deut 6:7
TALKED
within us while He *t*.....Luke 24:32
TALKERS
both idle *t* and.....Titus 1:10
TARES
the *t* also appeared.....Matt 13:26
TARGET
You set me as Your *t*.....Job 7:20
TARRY
come and will not *t*.....Heb 10:37
TASTE
Oh, *t* and see that the.....Ps 34:8
might *t* death for.....Heb 2:9
TASTED
t the heavenly gift.....Heb 6:4
TAUGHT
as His counselor has *t*.....Is 40:13
from man, nor was I *t*.....Gal 1:12
TAXES
t to whom *t*.....Rom 13:7
TEACH
"Can anyone *t*.....Job 21:22
T me Your paths.....Ps 25:4
t you the fear of the.....Ps 34:11
t transgressors Your.....Ps 51:13
So *t* us to number our.....Ps 90:12
t you again the first.....Heb 5:12
TEACHER
for One is your *T*.....Matt 23:8
know that You are a *t*.....John 3:2
named Gamaliel, a *t*.....Acts 5:34
a *t* of the Gentiles in.....1 Tim 2:7
TEACHERS
than all my *t*.....Ps 119:99
prophets, third *t*.....1 Cor 12:28
and some pastors and *t*.....Eph 4:11
desiring to be *t*.....1 Tim 1:7
there will be false *t*.....2 Pet 2:1
TEACHES
the Holy Spirit *t*.....1 Cor 2:13
the same anointing *t*.....1 John 2:27
TEACHING
"*t* them to observe all.....Matt 28:20
t every man in all.....Col 1:28
TEAR(S)
I, even I, will *t*.....Hos 5:14
will wipe away every *t*.....Rev 21:4
my couch with my *t*.....Ps 6:6
mindful of your *t*.....2 Tim 1:4
it diligently with *t*.....Heb 12:17
TELL
"Who can *t* if God.....Jon 3:9
t him his fault.....Matt 18:15
whatever they *t*.....Matt 23:3
He comes, He will *t*.....John 4:25
TEMPERATE
prize is *t* in all.....1 Cor 9:25
husband of one wife, *t*.....1 Tim 3:2
TEMPEST
And suddenly a great *t*.....Matt 8:24
TEMPLE(S)
So Solomon built the *t*.....1 Kin 6:14
LORD is in His holy *t*.....Ps 11:4
One greater than the *t*.....Matt 12:6
"Destroy this *t*.....John 2:19
your body is the *t*.....1 Cor 6:19
grows into a holy *t*.....Eph 2:21
sits as God in the *t*.....2 Thess 2:4
and the Lamb are its *t*.....Rev 21:22
t made with hands.....Acts 7:48
TEMPORARY
which are seen are *t*.....2 Cor 4:18
TEMPT
t the LORD your God.....Matt 4:7
does He Himself *t*.....James 1:13
TEMPTATION
do not lead us into *t*.....Matt 6:13
man who endures *t*.....James 1:12
TEMPTED
forty days, *t* by Satan.....Mark 1:13
lest you also be *t*.....Gal 6:1
in all points *t*.....Heb 4:15
TEMPTER
Now when the *t* came.....Matt 4:3
TENDER
your heart was *t*.....2 Kin 22:19
TENDERHEARTED
to one another, *t*.....Eph 4:32
TENT
earthly house, this *t*.....2 Cor 5:1
TENTS
Than dwell in the *t*.....Ps 84:10
TERRESTRIAL
bodies and *t* bodies.....1 Cor 15:40
TERRIBLE
is great and very *t*.....Joel 2:11
TERRIFY
me with dreams And *t*.....Job 7:14
TERRIFYING
t was the sight.....Heb 12:21
TERROR
are nothing,You see *t*.....Job 6:21
not be afraid of the *t*.....Ps 91:5
TERRORS
consumed with *t*.....Ps 73:19
TEST
said, "Why do you *t*.....Matt 22:18
T all things.....1 Thess 5:21
but *t* the spirits.....1 John 4:1
TESTED
God *t* Abraham.....Gen 22:1
Where your fathers *t*.....Heb 3:9
though it is *t* by fire.....1 Pet 1:7
TESTIFIED
who has seen has *t*.....John 19:35
which He has *t*.....1 John 5:9
TESTIFY
t what We have.....John 3:11
t that the Father.....1 John 4:14

TESTIFYING
was righteous, God *t* .....Heb 11:4

TESTIMONIES
those who keep His *t*.....Ps 119:2
t are my meditation.....Ps 119:99

TESTIMONY
two tablets of the *T*.....Ex 31:18
under your feet as a *t*.....Mark 6:11
no one receives His *t*.....John 3:32
not believed the *t* .....1 John 5:10
For the *t* of Jesus is.....Rev 19:10

TESTING
came to Him, *t* Him .....Matt 19:3

TESTS
men, but God who *t*..... 1 Thess 2:4

THANK
"I *t* You, Father.....Matt 11:25
t You that I am not .....Luke 18:11

THANKFUL
as God, nor were *t* ..... Rom 1:21

THANKS
the cup, and gave *t* .....Matt 26:27
T be to God for His..... 2 Cor 9:15

THANKSGIVING
His presence with *t*.....Ps 95:2
into His gates with *t* .....Ps 100:4
supplication. with *t*.....Phil 4:6

THIEF
do not despise a *t*.....Prov 6:30
because he was a *t*..... John 12:6
Lord will come as a *t*.....2 Pet 3:10

THINGS
in heaven give good *t*.....Matt 7:11
kept all these *t*.....Luke 2:51
share in all good *t*.....Gal 6:6

THINK(S)
t you have eternal..... John 5:39
not to *t* of himself ..... Rom 12:3
Yet the LORD *t* upon
me .....Ps 40:17
For as he *t* in his .....Prov 23:7
t he stands take heed ... 1 Cor 10:12

THIRST
those who hunger and *t*.....Matt 5:6
in Me shall never *t*..... John 6:35
anymore nor *t* anymore....Rev 7:16

THIRSTS
My soul *t* for God.....Ps 42:2
saying, "If anyone *t* ..... John 7:37
freely to him who *t* .....Rev 21:6

THIRSTY
I was *t* and you gave .....Matt 25:35

THORN
a *t* in the flesh was..... 2 Cor 12:7

THORNS
Both *t* and thistles it .....Gen 3:18
some fell among *t* .....Matt 13:7
wearing the crown of *t*.... John 19:5

THOUGHT(S)
You understand my *t* .....Ps 139:2
I *t* as a child ..... 1 Cor 13:11
The LORD knows the *t* .....Ps 94:11
unrighteous man his *t* .....Is 55:7
"For My *t* are not your.....Is 55:8
Jesus, knowing their *t*.....Matt 9:4
heart proceed evil *t*.....Matt 15:19
The LORD knows the *t*.... 1 Cor 3:20

THREAT
shall flee at the *t*.....Is 30:17

THREATEN
suffered, He did not *t* ..... 1 Pet 2:23

THREE
hope, love, these *t* ..... 1 Cor 13:13

THROAT
t is an open tomb ..... Rom 3:13

THRONE(S)
Your *t*, O God, is.....Ps 45:6
Lord sitting on a *t* .....Is 6:1
"Heaven is My *t*.....Is 66:1
for it is God's *t*.....Matt 5:34
will give Him the *t* .....Luke 1:32
"Your *t*, O God, is .....Heb 1:8
come boldly to the *t*.....Heb 4:16
My Father on His *t* ..... Rev 3:21
I saw a great white *t*..... Rev 20:11

THROW
t Yourself down .....Matt 4:6

THROWN
neck, and he were *t* ..... Mark 9:42

THRUST
and rose up and *t* .....Luke 4:29

THUNDER
The voice of Your *t*.....Ps 77:18
the voice of loud *t* ..... Rev 14:2

THUNDERED
"The LORD *t* from.....2 Sam 22:14

THUNDERINGS
the sound of mighty *t*..... Rev 19:6

THUNDERS
The God of glory *t* .....Ps 29:3

TIDINGS
I bring you good *t* .....Luke 2:10

TILL
no man to *t* the ground.....Gen 2:5

TILLER
but Cain was a *t* .....Gen 4:2

TIME
pray to You In a *t* .....Ps 32:6
for the *t* is near..... Rev 1:3

TIMES
the signs of the *t*.....Matt 16:3
not for you to know *t* .....Acts 1:7
last days perilous *t*.....2 Tim 3:1

TITHE(S)
And he gave him a *t*.....Gen 14:20
For you pay *t* of mint .....Matt 23:23
and to bring the *t* ..... Neh 10:37
Bring all the *t*..... Mal 3:10

TITHING
the year of *t*..... Deut 26:12

TITTLE
away, one jot or one *t* .....Matt 5:18

TODAY
T I have begotten You.....Ps 2:7
t you will be with Me ....Luke 23:43
"*T*, if you will hear.....Heb 3:7

TOMB(S)
in the garden a new *t* .... John 19:41
like whitewashed *t*.....Matt 23:27

TOMORROW
drink, for *t* we die .....Is 22:13
do not worry about *t* .....Matt 6:34
what will happen *t*.....James 4:14

TONGUE
remember you, Let my *t* ....Ps 137:6
forever, But a lying *t* ..... Prov 12:19
t breaks a bone..... Prov 25:15
t should confess that .....Phil 2:11
does not bridle his *t*.....James 1:26
no man can tame the *t* ....James 3:8
every nation, tribe, *t*..... Rev 14:6

TONGUES
From the strife of *t*.....Ps 31:20
speak with new *t*..... Mark 16:17
divided *t*, as of fire.....Acts 2:3
I speak with the *t* ..... 1 Cor 13:1

TOOTH
eye for an eye and a *t* .....Matt 5:38

TOPHET
the high places of *T* ..... Jer 7:31

TORCH
and like a fiery *t*.....Zech 12:6

TORCHES
When he had set the *t* ..... Judg 15:5
come with flaming *t* ..... Nah 2:3

TORMENT
You come here to *t* .....Matt 8:29
t ascends forever.....Rev 14:11

TORMENTED
And they will be *t* ..... Rev 20:10

TORMENTS
"And being in *t*.....Luke 16:23

TORN
of the temple was *t* .....Matt 27:51

TOSSED
t to and fro and .....Eph 4:14

TOWER
t whose top is in the .....Gen 11:4
a watchman in the *t*.....Is 21:5

TRADITION
transgress the *t*.....Matt 15:2
according to the *t*.....Col 2:8

TRAIN
T up a child in the.....Prov 22:6

TRAINING
bring them up in the *t* .....Eph 6:4

TRAITOR(S)
also became a *t*.....Luke 6:16
t, headstrong.....2 Tim 3:4

TRAMPLE
serpent you shall *t* .....Ps 91:13
swine, lest they *t* .....Matt 7:6

TRAMPLED
t the Son of God.....Heb 10:29
the winepress was *t*..... Rev 14:20

TRANCE
t I saw a vision .....Acts 11:5

TRANSFIGURED
and was *t* before them .....Matt 17:2

TRANSFORMED
this world, but be *t*..... Rom 12:2

TRANSGRESSED
"Yes, all Israel has *t*..... Dan 9:11
t your commandment....Luke 15:29

TRANSGRESSES
Whoever *t* and does
not .....2 John 9

TRANSGRESSION(S)
no law there is no *t*..... Rom 4:15
deceived, fell into *t* .....1 Tim 2:14
mercies, Blot out my *t*.....Ps 51:1
For I acknowledge my *t*.....Ps 51:3
was wounded for our *t*.....Is 53:5
For the *t* of My people .....Is 53:8

TRANSGRESSOR(S)
I make myself a *t* .....Gal 2:18
Then I will teach *t*.....Ps 51:13
numbered with the *t*.....Is 53:12

TRAP(S)
of Israel, As a *t* .....Is 8:14
for me, And from the *t*.....Ps 141:9

TREACHEROUSLY
"This man dealt *t* .....Acts 7:19

TREAD(S)
You shall *t* upon the.....Ps 91:13
an ox while it *t* .....1 Tim 5:18
t the winepress..... Rev 19:15

TREASURE
and you will have *t* .....Matt 19:21
he who lays up *t*.....Luke 12:21
But we have this *t* ..... 2 Cor 4:7

TREASURED
t the words of His .....Job 23:12

TREASURES
it more than hidden *t* .....Job 3:21
I will give you the *t*.....Is 45:3
for yourselves *t* .....Matt 6:19
are hidden all the *t* .....Col 2:3
riches than the *t* .....Heb 11:26

TREATY
Now Solomon made a *t* ... 1 Kin 3:1

TREE
you eaten from the *t*.....Gen 3:11
t Planted by the.....Ps 1:3
like a native green *t*.....Ps 37:35
t bears good fruit .....Matt 7:17
His own body on the *t*..... 1 Pet 2:24
the river, was the *t*.....Rev 22:2

TREES
late autumn *t* without.....Jude 12
the sea, or the *t*.....Rev 7:3

TREMBLE
That the nations may *t*.....Is 64:2
they shall fear and *t* ..... Jer 33:9

TREMBLING
in fear, and in much *t*..... 1 Cor 2:3
t you received..... 2 Cor 7:15
flesh, with fear and *t* .....Eph 6:5

TRENCH
and he made a *t* ..... 1 Kin 18:32

TRESPASSES
forgive men their *t*.....Matt 6:14
not imputing their *t* ..... 2 Cor 5:19
who were dead in *t*.....Eph 2:1

TRIAL
concerning the fiery *t*..... 1 Pet 4:12

TRIBE(S)
the Lion of the *t*..... Rev 5:5
blood Out of every *t* ..... Rev 5:9
t which are scattered.....James 1:1

TRIBULATION
there will be great *t* .....Matt 24:21
world you will have *t* .... John 16:33
with her into great *t* ..... Rev 2:22
out of the great *t* ..... Rev 7:14

TRIBULATIONS
t enter the kingdom.....Acts 14:22
but we also glory in *t* .....Rom 5:3
t that you endure ..... 2 Thess 1:4

TRIED
A *t* stone, a precious.....Is 28:16

TRIMMED
and *t* their lamps.....Matt 25:7

TRIUMPH
always leads us in *t* ..... 2 Cor 2:14

TRIUMPHED
the LORD, For He has *t*..... Ex 15:1

TRODDEN
t the winepress alone .....Is 63:3

TROUBLE
few days and full of *t* .....Job 14:1
t He shall hide me.....Ps 27:5
not in *t* as other men .....Ps 73:5
will be with him in *t* .....Ps 91:15
Savior in time of *t* ..... Jer 14:8
there are some who *t* .....Gal 1:7

TROUBLED
worried and *t* .....Luke 10:41
shaken in mind or *t* ..... 2 Thess 2:2

TROUBLES
Out of all their *t*.....Ps 25:22
will be famines and *t*..... Mark 13:8
him out of all his *t*.....Acts 7:10

TROUBLING
wicked cease from *t* .....Job 3:17

TRUE
He who sent Me is *t*..... John 7:28
Indeed, let God be *t* .....Rom 3:4
whatever things are *t* .....Phil 4:8
Him who is *t* ..... 1 John 5:20
for these words are *t* ..... Rev 21:5

TRUMPET
deed, do not sound a *t*.....Matt 6:2
t makes an uncertain ..... 1 Cor 14:8
For the *t* will sound ..... 1 Cor 15:52

TRUST
T in the LORD.....Ps 37:3
T in the LORD with all .....Prov 3:5
Do not *t* in a friend..... Mic 7:5
who *t* in riches..... Mark 10:24

TRUSTED
"He *t* in the LORD.....Ps 22:8
"He *t* in God.....Matt 27:43

TRUSTS
But he who *t* in the .....Ps 32:10

TRUTH
led me in the way of *t* .....Gen 24:48
Behold,You desire *t* .....Ps 51:6
t shall be your shield.....Ps 91:4
And Your law is *t* .....Ps 119:142
t is fallen in the .....Is 59:14
called the City of *T* ..... Zech 8:3
you shall know the *t*..... John 8:32
"I am the way, the *t* ..... John 14:6
He, the Spirit of *t* ..... John 16:13
to Him. "What is *t*..... John 18:38
who suppress the *t*..... Rom 1:18
but, speaking the *t* .....Eph 4:15
your waist with *t* .....Eph 6:14
I am speaking the *t*.....1 Tim 2:7
they may know the *t* .....2 Tim 2:25
the knowledge of the *t* .....2 Tim 3:7
that we are of the *t* ..... 1 John 3:19
the Spirit is *t* ..... 1 John 5:6

TUNIC(S)
Also he made him a *t* .....Gen 37:3
the LORD God made *t*.....Gen 3:21

TURN
you shall not *t*..... Deut 17:11
"Repent, *t* away from ..... Ezek 14:6
on your right cheek, *t*.....Matt 5:39
t them from darkness.....Acts 26:18

TURNING
marvel that you are *t*.....Gal 1:6
or shadow of *t* .....James 1:17

TURNS
A soft answer *t* .....Prov 15:1
that he who *t*.....James 5:20

TUTOR
the law was our *t* .....Gal 3:24

TWO
T are better than one..... Eccl 4:9
t shall become one.....Matt 19:5
new man from the *t*.....Eph 2:15

TYPE
of Adam, who is a *t* ..... Rom 5:14

U

UNAFRAID
Do you want to be *u* ..... Rom 13:3

UNBELIEF
because of their *u*.....Matt 13:58
help my *u*..... Mark 9:24
did it ignorantly in *u*.....1 Tim 1:13
enter in because of *u* .....Heb 3:19

UNBELIEVERS
yoked together with *u* .... 2 Cor 6:14

UNBELIEVING
Do not be *u*..... John 20:27
u nothing is pure..... Titus 1:15
"But the cowardly, *u*..... Rev 21:8

UNCIRCUMCISED
not the physically *u* ..... Rom 2:27

UNCLEAN
I am a man of *u* lips.....Is 6:5
man common or *u*.....Acts 10:28
there is nothing *u* ..... Rom 14:14
that no fornicator, *u*.....Eph 5:5

UNCLEANNESS
men's bones and all *u*.....Matt 23:27
flesh in the lust of *u* ..... 2 Pet 2:10

UNDEFILED
incorruptible and *u* ..... 1 Pet 1:4

UNDERSTAND
if there are any who *u*.....Ps 14:2
hearing, but do not *u*.....Is 6:9
"Why do you not *u*..... John 8:43
lest they should *u*.....Acts 28:27
some things hard to *u*..... 2 Pet 3:16

UNDERSTANDING
His *u* is infinite .....Ps 147:5
lean not on your own *u*.....Prov 3:5
u will find good .....Prov 19:8
His *u* is unsearchable .....Is 40:28
also still without *u*.....Matt 15:16
also pray with the *u*..... 1 Cor 14:15
the Lord give you *u*.....2 Tim 2:7
Who is wise and *u*.....James 3:13

UNDERSTANDS
There is none who *u*..... Rom 3:11

UNDERSTOOD
Then I *u* their end .....Ps 73:17
clearly seen, being *u*..... Rom 1:20

UNDIGNIFIED
I will be even more *u*.....2 Sam 6:22

UNDISCERNING
u, untrustworthy..... Rom 1:31

UNEDUCATED
that they were *u* .....Acts 4:13

UNFAITHFUL
way of the *u* is hard..... Prov 13:15

UNFORGIVING
unloving, *u* ..... Rom 1:31

UNFRUITFUL
and it becomes *u* ..... Mark 4:19

UNGODLINESS
heaven against all *u*..... Rom 1:18

UNGODLY
u shall not stand.....Ps 1:5
Christ died for the *u* .....Rom 5:6

UNHOLY
the holy and *u*..... Ezek 22:26

UNINTENTIONALLY
kills his neighbor *u* ..... Deut 4:42

UNITE
U my heart to fear .....Ps 86:11

UNITY
to dwell together in *u* .....Ps 133:1
to keep the *u* of the.....Eph 4:3

UNJUST
commended the *u*.....Luke 16:8
of the just and the *u*.....Acts 24:15
For God is not *u*.....Heb 6:10

UNKNOWN
To The *U* God.....Acts 17:23

UNLEAVENED
the Feast of *U* Bread.....Ex 12:17

UNLOVING
untrustworthy, *u*..... Rom 1:31

UNMERCIFUL
unforgiving, *u* ..... Rom 1:31

UNPROFITABLE
'We are *u* servants .....Luke 17:10
for that would be *u* .....Heb 13:17

UNPUNISHED
wicked will not go *u* ..... Prov 11:21

UNQUENCHABLE
up the chaff with *u*.....Matt 3:12

UNRIGHTEOUS
u man his thoughts .....Is 55:7
u will not inherit the ..... 1 Cor 6:9

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS
all ungodliness and *u* ..... Rom 1:18
cleanse us from all *u*..... 1 John 1:9
All *u* is sin..... 1 John 5:17

UNSEARCHABLE
u are His judgments..... Rom 11:33

UNSPOTTED
to keep oneself *u* .....James 1:27

UNTRUSTWORTHY
undiscerning, *u*..... Rom 1:31

UNWISE
Therefore do not be *u*.....Eph 5:17

UNWORTHY
u manner will be ..... 1 Cor 11:27

UPHOLD
U me according to.....Ps 119:116

UPHOLDS
LORD *u* all who fall .....Ps 145:14

UPPER
show you a large *u*..... Mark 14:15

UPRIGHT
u is His delight.....Prov 15:8

UPRIGHTNESS
princes for their *u* ..... Prov 17:26

UPROOT
u the wheat with.....Matt 13:29

URIM
Thummim and Your *U*.... Deut 33:8

US
"God with *u* .....Matt 1:23
If God is for *u*..... Rom 8:31
of them were of *u*..... 1 John 2:19

USE
who spitefully *u* you .....Matt 5:44
u liberty as an.....Gal 5:13

USELESS
one's religion is *u* .....James 1:26

USING
u liberty as a ..... 1 Pet 2:16

USURY
'Take no *u* or..... Lev 25:36

UTTERANCE
the Spirit gave them *u*.....Acts 2:4

UTTERED
which cannot be *u*..... Rom 8:26

UTTERMOST
u those who come.....Heb 7:25

UTTERS
Day unto day *u* speech.....Ps 19:2

V

VAGABOND
v you shall be on the .....Gen 4:12

VAIN
the people plot a *v*.....Ps 2:1
you believed in *v* ..... 1 Cor 15:2

VALIANT
They are not *v* for the.....Jer 9:3

VALIANTLY
God we will do *v* .....Ps 60:12

VALOR
a mighty man of *v*.....1 Sam 16:18

VALUE
of more *v* than they .....Matt 6:26

VALUED
It cannot be *v* in the.....Job 28:16

VANISH
knowledge, it will *v*..... 1 Cor 13:8

VANISHED
and He *v* from their .....Luke 24:31

VANITY
of vanities, all is *v* ..... Eccl 1:2

VAPOR
best state is but *v*.....Ps 39:5
It is even a *v* that.....James 4:14

VARIATION
whom there is no *v* .....James 1:17

VEGETABLES
and let them give us *v* ..... Dan 1:12
is weak eats only *v*..... Rom 14:2

VEHEMENT
of fire, A most *v*.....Song 8:6

VEIL
v of the temple was.....Matt 27:51
Presence behind the *v* .....Heb 6:19

VENGEANCE
V is Mine ..... Deut 32:35

VENOM
It becomes cobra *v*.....Job 20:14

VESSEL(S)
like a potter's *v* .....Ps 2:9
for he is a chosen *v*.....Acts 9:15
treasure in earthen *v* ..... 2 Cor 4:7

VEXED
grieved, and I was *v*.....Ps 73:21

VICE
as a cloak for *v* ..... 1 Pet 2:16

VICTIM
And plucked the *v*.....Job 29:17

VICTORY
v that has overcome ..... 1 John 5:4

VIEW
"Go, *v* the land.....Josh 2:1

VIGILANT
Be sober, be *v* ..... 1 Pet 5:8

VIGOR
nor his natural *v*..... Deut 34:7

VILE
them up to *v* passions..... Rom 1:26

VINDICATED
know that I shall be *v*.....Job 13:18

VINDICATION
Let my *v* come from .....Ps 17:2

VINE
"I am the true *v*..... John 15:1

VINEDRESSER
and My Father is the *v* .... John 15:1

VINEGAR
As *v* to the teeth and..... Prov 10:26

VINES
foxes that spoil the *v* .....Song 2:15

VINEYARD
Who plants a *v* and..... 1 Cor 9:7

VIOLENCE
was filled with *v* .....Gen 6:11
of heaven suffers *v*.....Matt 11:12

VIOLENT
haters of God, *v* ..... Rom 1:30

VIPER(S)
And stings like a *v* ..... Prov 23:32
to them, "Brood of *v* .....Matt 3:7

VIRGIN
v shall conceive .....Is 7:14
"Behold, the *v* shall.....Matt 1:23

VIRGINS
who took their lamps .....Matt 25:1

VIRTUE
to your faith *v* ..... 2 Pet 1:5

VISAGE
was marred more than.....Is 52:14

VISIBLE
that are on earth, *v* .....Col 1:16

VISION
in a trance I saw a *v* .....Acts 11:5
to the heavenly *v*.....Acts 26:19

VISIONS
young men shall see *v*.....Joel 2:28

VISIT
orphans and .....James 1:27

VISITATION
God in the day of *v* ..... 1 Pet 2:12

VISITED
Israel, for He has *v*.....Luke 1:68

VISITING
v the iniquity of the..... Ex 20:5

VISITOR
am a foreigner and a *v*.....Gen 23:4

VITALITY
v was turned into the.....Ps 32:4

VOICE(S)
fire a still small *v*..... 1 Kin 19:12
if you will hear His *v* .....Ps 95:7
"The *v* of one crying .....Matt 3:3
And suddenly a *v* .....Matt 3:17
for they know his *v*..... John 10:4
the truth hears My *v*..... John 18:37
If anyone hears My *v*..... Rev 3:20
And there were loud *v*..... Rev 11:15

VOID
they are a nation *v* ..... Deut 32:28
heirs, faith is made *v* ..... Rom 4:14

VOLUME
In the *v* of the book.....Heb 10:7

VOLUNTEERS
Your people shall be *v* .....Ps 110:3

VOMIT
returns to his own *v*.....2 Pet 2:22

VOW
for he had taken a *v*.....Acts 18:18

VOWS
to reconsider his *v*..... Prov 20:25

W

WAGE(S)
w the good warfare.....1 Tim 1:18
For the *w* of sin is ..... Rom 6:23
Indeed the *w* of the.....James 5:4

WAILING
There will be *w*.....Matt 13:42

WAIT
w patiently for Him .....Ps 37:7
those who *w* on the.....Is 40:31
To those who eagerly *w*....Heb 9:28

WAITED
w patiently for the.....Ps 40:1
Divine longsuffering *w* ... 1 Pet 3:20

WAITING
ourselves, eagerly *w* ..... Rom 8:23
from that time *w*.....Heb 10:13

WAITS
the creation eagerly *w*..... Rom 8:19

WALK
w before Me and be.....Gen 17:1
Yea, though I *w* .....Ps 23:4
W prudently when you ..... Eccl 5:1
"This is the way, *w*.....Is 30:21
be weary, they shall *w* .....Is 40:31
w humbly with your God.... Mic 6:8
W while you have the ... John 12:35
so we also should *w*.....Rom 6:4
For we *w* by faith..... 2 Cor 5:7
W in the Spirit .....Gal 5:16
And *w* in love.....Eph 5:2
that you may *w* worthy.....Col 1:10
and they shall *w* .....Rev 3:4

WALKED
Methuselah, Enoch *w*.....Gen 5:22
The people who *w*.....Is 9:2
in which you once *w*.....Eph 2:2

WALKS
the LORD your God *w*.... Deut 23:14
is the man Who *w*.....Ps 1:1
he who *w* in darkness ... John 12:35
adversary the devil *w*..... 1 Pet 5:8

WALL(S)
then the *w* of the city.....Josh 6:5
you whitewashed *w*.....Acts 23:3
a window in the *w* ..... 2 Cor 11:33
Now the *w* of the city.....Rev 21:14
By faith the *w* of.....Heb 11:30

WANDERED
They *w* in deserts and.....Heb 11:38

WANDERERS
And they shall be *w*.....Hos 9:17

WANT
I shall not *w* .....Ps 23:1

WANTING
balances, and found *w* ..... Dan 5:27

WANTON
have begun to grow *w*....1 Tim 5:11

WAR
"There is a noise of *w*..... Ex 32:17
w may rise against.....Ps 27:3
shall they learn *w*.....Is 2:4
going to make *w*.....Luke 14:31
You fight and *w*.....James 4:2
fleshly lusts which *w*..... 1 Pet 2:11
judges and makes *w*..... Rev 19:11

WARFARE
to her, That her *w* .....Is 40:2
w entangles .....2 Tim 2:4

WARN
w those who are ..... 1 Thess 5:14

WARNED
Then, being divinely *w*.....Matt 2:12
Who *w* you to flee.....Matt 3:7

WARNING
w every man and .....Col 1:28

WARPED
such a person is *w* .....Titus 3:11

WARRING
w against the law of ..... Rom 7:23

WARRIOR
He runs at me like a *w* .....Job 16:14

WARS
you will hear of *w*.....Matt 24:6
Where do *w* and fights....James 4:1

WASH
w myself with snow.....Job 9:30
W me thoroughly.....Ps 51:2
w His feet with her .....Luke 7:38
said to him, "Go, *w* ..... John 9:7
w the disciples' ..... John 13:5
w away your sins .....Acts 22:16

WASHED
w his hands before.....Matt 27:24
But you were *w* ..... 1 Cor 6:11
Him who loved us and *w*.... Rev 1:5

WASHING
us, through the *w* .....Titus 3:5

WASTE
the cities are laid *w*.....Is 6:11
"Why this *w* .....Matt 26:8

WASTED
this fragrant oil *w* ..... Mark 14:4

WATCH
is past, And like a *w* .....Ps 90:4
"*W* therefore .....Matt 24:42

WATCHES
Blessed is he who *w* .....Rev 16:15

WATCHFUL
But you be *w* in all.....2 Tim 4:5

WATCHING
he comes, will find *w*.....Luke 12:37

WATER
Eden to *w* the garden .....Gen 2:10
I am poured out like *w*.....Ps 22:14
For I will pour *w*.....Is 44:3
given you living *w*..... John 4:10
rivers of living *w* ..... John 7:38
can yield both salt *w* .....James 3:12
the Spirit, the *w*..... 1 John 5:8
are clouds without *w* .....Jude 12
let him take the *w* ..... Rev 22:17

WATERED
I planted, Apollos *w*..... 1 Cor 3:6

WATERS
me beside the still *w* .....Ps 23:2
Though its *w* roar and.....Ps 46:3
your bread upon the *w*..... Eccl 11:1
thirsts, Come to the *w* .....Is 55:1
fountain of living *w* ..... Jer 2:13
living fountains of *w*..... Rev 7:17

WAVERING
of our hope without *w*.....Heb 10:23

WAY(S)
As for God, His *w* .....2 Sam 22:31
the LORD knows the *w* .....Ps 1:6
Teach me Your *w*.....Ps 27:11
in the *w* everlasting .....Ps 139:24
w that seems right ..... Prov 14:12
The *w* of the just is .....Is 26:7
wicked forsake his *w*.....Is 55:7
And pervert the *w*.....Amos 2:7
he will prepare the *w*.....Mal 3:1
and broad is the *w* .....Matt 7:13
will prepare Your *w*.....Matt 11:10
to him, "I am the *w* ..... John 14:6
to him the *w* ..... Acts 18:26
to have known the *w*..... 2 Pet 2:21
For all His *w* are..... Deut 32:4
transgressors Your *w* .....Ps 51:13
w please the LORD .....Prov 16:7
"Stand in the *w*..... Jer 6:16
and owns all your *w* ..... Dan 5:23
w are everlasting.....Hab 3:6
unstable in all his *w*.....James 1:8
and true are Your *w* ..... Rev 15:3

WEAK
gives power to the *w* .....Is 40:29
knee will be as *w*.....Ezek 7:17
but the flesh is *w* .....Matt 26:41
Receive one who is *w*..... Rom 14:1
God has chosen the *w*.... 1 Cor 1:27
We are *w* ..... 1 Cor 4:10
w I became as *w*..... 1 Cor 9:22
For when I am *w* ..... 2 Cor 12:10

WEAKER
the wife, as to the *w*..... 1 Pet 3:7

WEAKNESS(ES)
w were made strong .....Heb 11:34
also helps in our *w*..... Rom 8:26

WEALTH
W gained by..... Prov 13:11

WEALTHY
rich, have become *w*..... Rev 3:17

WEAR
'What shall we *w*.....Matt 6:31

WEARIED
You have *w* Me with .....Is 43:24
therefore, being *w*..... John 4:6

WEARINESS
say, 'Oh, what a *w* ..... Mal 1:13

WEARISOME
and much study is *w*..... Eccl 12:12

WEARY
shall run and not be *w* .....Is 40:31
And let us not grow *w*.....Gal 6:9
do not grow *w* in..... 2 Thess 3:13

WEATHER
'It will be fair *w* .....Matt 16:2

WEDDING
day there was a *w*..... John 2:1

WEEK(S)
the first day of the *w* .....Matt 28:1
w are determined..... Dan 9:24

WEEP
A time to *w*..... Eccl 3:4
You shall *w* no more .....Is 30:19
are you who *w* .....Luke 6:21
do not *w* .....Luke 23:28
w with those who *w*..... Rom 12:15

WEEPING
the noise of the *w*.....Ezra 3:13
They shall come
with *w*..... Jer 31:9
There will be *w*.....Matt 8:12
by the tomb *w*..... John 20:11

WEIGH
O Most Upright,You *w*.....Is 26:7

WEIGHED
You have been *w* ..... Dan 5:27

WEIGHS
eyes, But the LORD *w* .....Prov 16:2

WEIGHT
us lay aside every *w* .....Heb 12:1

WEIGHTIER
have neglected the *w*.....Matt 23:23

WELFARE
does not seek the *w* ..... Jer 38:4

WELL
have done *w*..... Prov 31:29
wheel broken at the *w*..... Eccl 12:6
"Those who are *w* .....Matt 9:12
said to him, '*W* done .....Matt 25:21

WELLS
These are *w* without .....2 Pet 2:17

WENT
They *w* out from us ..... 1 John 2:19

WEPT
out and *w* bitterly.....Matt 26:75
saw the city and *w*.....Luke 19:41
Jesus *w*..... John 11:35

WET
his body was *w* with..... Dan 4:33

WHEAT
w falls into the..... John 12:24

WHISPERINGS
backbitings, *w*.....2 Cor 12:20

WHITE
clothed in *w* garments..... Rev 3:5
behold, a *w* horse..... Rev 6:2
and made them *w* ..... Rev 7:14

WHOLE
w body were an eye..... 1 Cor 12:17

WHOLESOME
not consent to *w* words....1 Tim 6:3

WHOLLY
w followed the LORD ..... Deut 1:36

WICKED
w shall be silent.....1 Sam 2:9
w shall be no more .....Ps 37:10
if there is any *w*.....Ps 139:24
w forsake his way.....Is 55:7
And desperately *w*..... Jer 17:9
the sway of the *w*..... 1 John 5:19

WICKEDNESS
LORD saw that the *w*.....Gen 6:5
in the tents of *w*.....Ps 84:10
man repented of
his *w* .....Jer 8:6
is full of greed and *w*.....Luke 11:39
sexual immorality, *w*..... Rom 1:29
and overflow of *w*.....James 1:21

WIDE
open your hand *w*..... Deut 15:8
w is the gate and.....Matt 7:13
to you, our heart is *w*..... 2 Cor 6:11

WIDOW
the fatherless and *w* .....Ps 146:9
How like a *w* is she.....Lam 1:1
Then one poor *w*.....Mark 12:42
w has children or .....1 Tim 5:4

WIDOWS
w were neglected .....Acts 6:1
visit orphans and *w*.....James 1:27

WIFE
and be joined to his *w*.....Gen 2:24
w finds a good thing..... Prov 18:22
But a prudent *w*..... Prov 19:14
"Go, take yourself a *w*.....Hos 1:2
divorces his *w*..... Mark 10:11
'I have married a *w*.....Luke 14:20
"Remember Lot's *w*.....Luke 17:32
so love his own *w*.....Eph 5:33
the husband of one *w*..... Titus 1:6
bride, the Lamb's *w*.....Rev 21:9

WILDERNESS
I will make the *w*.....Is 41:18
of one crying in the *w* .....Matt 3:3
the serpent in the *w*..... John 3:14

WILES
to stand against the *w* .....Eph 6:11

WILL
w be done On earth as .....Matt 6:10
but he who does the *w* .....Matt 7:21
not My *w* .....Luke 22:42
flesh, nor of the *w*..... John 1:13
not to do My own *w*..... John 6:38
w is present with me ..... Rom 7:18
and perfect *w* of God..... Rom 12:2
works in you both to *w* .....Phil 2:13
according to His own *w*.....Heb 2:4
work to do His *w*.....Heb 13:21

WILLFULLY
For if we sin *w*.....Heb 10:26
For this they *w*..... 2 Pet 3:5

WILLING
If you are *w* and .....Is 1:19
The spirit indeed is *w*.....Matt 26:41
w that any should ..... 2 Pet 3:9

WILLS
to whom the Son *w*.....Matt 11:27
it is not of him who *w* ..... Rom 9:16
say, "If the Lord *w* .....James 4:15

WIND
the chaff which the *w*.....Ps 1:4
reed shaken by the *w*.....Matt 11:7
"The *w* blows where..... John 3:8
of a rushing mighty *w*..... Acts 2:2

WINDS
be, that even the *w*.....Matt 8:27

WINE
W is a mocker.....Prov 20:1
love is better than *w*.....Song 1:2
Yes, come, buy *w* .....Is 55:1
they gave Him sour *w*.....Matt 27:34
do not be drunk with *w*.....Eph 5:18
not given to much *w*..... Titus 2:3

WINEPRESS
"I have trodden the *w*.....Is 63:3
into the great *w* .....Rev 14:19
Himself treads the *w* .....Rev 19:15

WINESKINS
new wine into old *w* .....Matt 9:17

WING(S)
One *w* of the cherub ..... 1 Kin 6:24
the shadow of Your *w*.....Ps 36:7
With healing in His *w* ..... Mal 4:2

WINS
w souls is wise..... Prov 11:30

WIPE
w away every tear.....Rev 21:4

WISDOM
for this is your *w*..... Deut 4:6
man who finds *w*.....Prov 3:13
Get *w*.....Prov 4:5
is the beginning of *w*.....Prov 9:10
w is justified by her .....Matt 11:19
Jesus increased in *w*.....Luke 2:52
riches both of the *w*..... Rom 11:33
the gospel, not with *w* .... 1 Cor 1:17
w of this world..... 1 Cor 3:19
not with fleshly *w* ..... 2 Cor 1:12
all the treasures of *w*.....Col 2:3
If any of you lacks *w*.....James 1:5
power and riches and *w* ... Rev 5:12

WISE
Do not be *w* in your.....Prov 3:7
who wins souls is *w*..... Prov 11:30
Therefore be *w* as .....Matt 10:16
five of them were *w*.....Matt 25:2
to God, alone *w* ..... Rom 16:27
Where is the *w*..... 1 Cor 1:20
not as fools but as *w*.....Eph 5:15
able to make you *w* .....2 Tim 3:15

WISER
he was *w* than all men ... 1 Kin 4:31
of God is *w* than men ..... 1 Cor 1:25

WITCHCRAFT
is as the sin of *w*.....1 Sam 15:23

WITHER(S)
also shall not *w*.....Ps 1:3
The grass *w*.....Is 40:7
The grass *w*..... 1 Pet 1:24

WITHHOLD
good thing will He *w* .....Ps 84:11

WITHOUT
pray *w* ceasing ..... 1 Thess 5:17
w works is dead .....James 2:26

WITHSTAND
you may be able to *w* .....Eph 6:13

WITNESS
all the world as a *w* .....Matt 24:14
This man came for a *w* ..... John 1:7
do not receive Our *w*..... John 3:11
Christ, the faithful *w* ..... Rev 1:5
beheaded for their *w* ..... Rev 20:4

WITNESSES
"You are My *w* .....Is 43:10
presence of many *w*.....1 Tim 6:12
so great a cloud of *w* .....Heb 12:1

WIVES
Husbands, love your *w* .....Eph 5:25
w must be reverent .....1 Tim 3:11

WOMAN
She shall be called *W*.....Gen 2:23
whoever looks at a *w* .....Matt 5:28
Then the *w* of Samaria..... John 4:9
"W, behold your ..... John 19:26
natural use of the *w*..... Rom 1:27
His Son, born of a *w*.....Gal 4:4
w being deceived.....1 Tim 2:14
w clothed with the sun..... Rev 12:1

WOMB
in the *w* I knew you.....Jer 1:5
is the fruit of your *w*.....Luke 1:42

WOMEN
O fairest among *w* .....Song 1:8
w will be grinding.....Matt 24:41
are you among *w* .....Luke 1:28
admonish the young *w*..... Titus 2:4
times, the holy *w*..... 1 Pet 3:5

WONDER
marvelous work and a *w* ....Is 29:14

WONDERFUL
name will be called *W*.....Is 9:6

WONDERFULLY
fearfully and *w* made .....Ps 139:14

WONDERS
signs, and lying *w* ..... 2 Thess 2:9

WONDROUS
w works declare that.....Ps 75:1

WONDROUSLY
God, Who has dealt *w*.....Joel 2:26

WOOL
They shall be as *w* .....Is 1:18
hair were white like *w* ..... Rev 1:14

WORD
w is very near you ..... Deut 30:14
w I have hidden.....Ps 119:11
w is a lamp to my feet ....Ps 119:105
Every *w* of God is pure ....Prov 30:5
the *w* of our God .....Is 40:8
for every idle *w* .....Matt 12:36
The seed is the *w*.....Luke 8:11
beginning was the *W* ..... John 1:1
W became flesh and ..... John 1:14
Your *w* is truth ..... John 17:17
Let the *w* of Christ.....Col 3:16
to you in *w* only ..... 1 Thess 1:5
by the *w* of His power.....Heb 1:3
For the *w* of God is .....Heb 4:12
does not stumble in *w* .....James 3:2
through the *w* of God..... 1 Pet 1:23
let us not love in *w*..... 1 John 3:18
name is called The *W*.....Rev 19:13

WORDS
Let the *w* of my mouth.....Ps 19:14
The *w* of the wise are..... Eccl 12:11
pass away, but My *w*.....Matt 24:35
You have the *w* of..... John 6:68
not with wisdom of *w*..... 1 Cor 1:17
those who hear the *w*..... Rev 1:3

WORK
day God ended His *w*.....Gen 2:2
the *w* of Your fingers .....Ps 8:3
w is honorable and .....Ps 111:3
will bring every *w*..... Eccl 12:14
"This is the *w* of God..... John 6:29
"I must *w* the works ..... John 9:4
know that all things *w* .... Rom 8:28
Do not destroy the *w*..... Rom 14:20
abounding in the *w*..... 1 Cor 15:58
If anyone will not *w*.... 2 Thess 3:10
but a doer of the *w*.....James 1:25

WORKER(S)
w is worthy of his .....Matt 10:10
w who does not need.....2 Tim 2:15
we are God's fellow *w*..... 1 Cor 3:9

WORKMANSHIP
For we are His *w*.....Eph 2:10

WORKS
are Your wonderful *w*.....Ps 40:5
And let her own *w* ..... Prov 31:31
"For I know their *w* .....Is 66:18
show Him greater *w*..... John 5:20
w that I do he will do..... John 14:12
might stand, not of *w* ..... Rom 9:11
same God who *w*..... 1 Cor 12:6
not justified by the *w*.....Gal 2:16
Now the *w* of the flesh .....Gal 5:19
not of *w*, lest anyone .....Eph 2:9
for it is God who *w*.....Phil 2:13
but does not have *w*.....James 2:14
also justified by *w* .....James 2:25
"I know your *w*..... Rev 2:2
their *w* follow them ..... Rev 14:13
according to their *w*..... Rev 20:12

WORLD(S)
"The field is the *w*.....Matt 13:38
He was in the *w*..... John 1:10
God so loved the *w* ..... John 3:16
His Son into the *w* ..... John 3:17
w cannot hate you..... John 7:7
You are of this *w*..... John 8:23
overcome the *w*..... John 16:33
w may become guilty ..... Rom 3:19
be conformed to
this *w*..... Rom 12:2
loved this present *w*.....2 Tim 4:10
Do not love the *w*..... 1 John 2:15
w is passing away..... 1 John 2:17
also He made the *w* .....Heb 1:2

WORM
But I am a *w*.....Ps 22:6
w does not die.....Mark 9:44

WORRY
to you, do not *w*.....Matt 6:25

WORRYING
w can add one.....Matt 6:27

WORSHIP
come to *w* Him.....Matt 2:2
w what you do not.....John 4:22
the angels of God *w*.....Heb 1:6

WORSHIPED
on their faces and *w*.....Rev 11:16

WORSHIPER
if anyone is a *w*.....John 9:31

WORTHLESS
Indeed they are all *w*.....Is 41:29

WORTHLESSNESS
long will you love *w*.....Ps 4:2

WORTHY
present time are not *w*.... Rom 8:18
to walk *w*.....Eph 4:1
the world was not *w*.....Heb 11:38
"*W* is the Lamb who.....Rev 5:12

WOUND
And my *w* incurable..... Jer 15:18
and his deadly *w*.....Rev 13:3

WOUNDED
But He was *w* for our.....Is 53:5

WOUNDS
Faithful are the *w*.....Prov 27:6

WRATH
speak to them in His *w*.....Ps 2:5
Surely the *w* of man.....Ps 76:10
So I swore in My *w*.....Ps 95:11
W is cruel and anger a.....Prov 27:4
in My *w* I struck you.....Is 60:10
w remember mercy.....Hab 3:2
For the *w* of God is..... Rom 1:18
up for yourself *w*.....Rom 2:5
nature children of *w*.....Eph 2:3
sun go down on your *w*....Eph 4:26
Let all bitterness, *w*.....Eph 4:31
holy hands, without *w*.....1 Tim 2:8
So I swore in My *w*.....Heb 3:11
not fearing the *w*.....Heb 11:27
for the *w* of man.....James 1:20
of the wine of the *w*.....Rev 14:8
for in them the *w*.....Rev 15:1
fierceness of His *w*.....Rev 16:19

WRESTLE
For we do not *w*.....Eph 6:12

WRETCHED
w man that I am..... Rom 7:24
know that you are *w*.....Rev 3:17

WRETCHEDNESS
let me see my *w*.....Num 11:15

WRINKLE
not having spot or *w*.....Eph 5:27

WRITE
w them on their hearts.....Heb 8:10

WRITING(S)
the *w* was the *w*.....Ex 32:16
do not believe his *w*.....John 5:47

WRITTEN
tablets of stone, *w*.....Ex 31:18
your names are *w*.....Luke 10:20
"What I have *w*.....John 19:22

WRONG
done nothing *w*.....Luke 23:41
But he who does *w*.....Col 3:25

WRONGED
We have *w* no one..... 2 Cor 7:2

WRONGS
me *w* his own soul.....Prov 8:36

WROUGHT
And skillfully *w*.....Ps 139:15

Y

YEAR(S)
the acceptable *y*.....Is 61:2
of sins every *y*.....Heb 10:3
and for days and *y*.....Gen 1:14
lives are seventy *y*.....Ps 90:10
when He was twelve *y*....Luke 2:42
with Him a thousand *y*.....Rev 20:6

YES
let your 'Y' be 'Y,'.....Matt 5:37

YESTERDAY
For we were born *y*.....Job 8:9

YOKE
"Take My *y* upon you.....Matt 11:29

YOKED
Do not be unequally *y*....2 Cor 6:14

YOUNG
I have been *y*.....Ps 37:25
she may lay her *y*.....Ps 84:3
I write to you, *y*.....1 John 2:13

YOUNGER
Likewise you *y* people.....1 Pet 5:5

YOURS
the battle is not *y*.....2 Chr 20:15
Y is the kingdom.....Matt 6:13
all Mine are *Y*.....John 17:10
for I do not seek *y*.....2 Cor 12:14

YOUTH
the sins of my *y*.....Ps 25:7
and *y* are vanity..... Eccl 11:10
I have kept from
my *y*.....Matt 19:20

YOUTHFUL
Flee also *y* lusts.....2 Tim 2:22

YOUTHS
y shall faint and be.....Is 40:30

Z

ZEAL
The *z* of the LORD
of.....2 Kin 19:31
"*Z* for Your house has..... John 2:17
that they have a *z*..... Rom 10:2

ZEALOUS
z for good works.....Titus 2:14